

A SEMANTIC ANALYSIS OF THE URHOBO KINSHIP TERMS

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A RESEARCH WORK

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APPROVAL

This is to certify that this project was carried out by FLOURISH OSEMEGBE ENAKIRERHI (Miss), MAT. NO. ART2000531, in the Department of Linguistics Studies, Faculty of Arts, University of Benin, Benin City.

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PLAGIARISM CERTIFICATION

I, **FLOURISH OSEMEGBE ENAKIRERHI (Miss)**, with matriculation number **ART2000531** declare that this work titled “A Semantic analysis of the Urhobo kinship terms” has successfully passed the anti-plagiarism test (with a score of _____%), and so does not violate any copyright regulations.

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DEDICATION

In profound gratitude, this project is dedicated to God Almighty and to my family, whose untiring love and encouragement have been my guiding light. I am also grateful to my mentors and friends whose wisdom and support have enriched this journey. Finally, I dedicate this work to all those who strive for knowledge and progress.

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ABSTRACT

This research work on a semantic analysis of the Urhobo kinship system, aims to discuss kinship terms in the Urhobo language, analyzing their semantic meanings, the specific terms used for various family relationships and socio-cultural connections within Urhobo society. The study employs both primary and secondary methods of data collection, focusing on direct personal interviews with community members and inlook by a native speaker. The study applies Frame Semantics Theory (Charles Fillmore, 1975). Using a descriptive approach and qualitative data analysis techniques, the research examines various kinship terms. The findings reveal that a structured kinship system in the Urhobo community, categorizing kinship terms into descent, siblingship, and affinity, with a focus on consanguinal relationships. Together, these terms demonstrate the Urhobo people's respect for family bonds and their significance in maintaining social harmony. This study also shows that the Urhobo kinship system is more than a way of describing relationships—it is a key part of passing down cultural values and societal norms.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background of the Story

This study examines the semantic structure of kinship terms in Urhobo. Kinship terms refer to the words used in a language to identify family relationships based on factors such as blood relations and gender. The meanings and organization of these terms form a part of the grammar and formal features of any language, including its dialects. While most languages share basic kinship terms like "father," "mother," "brother," and "sister," each society often has a unique kinship system that may vary widely from one language to another.

In linguistics, all human languages possess a kinship system, which is evident in their forms of address. Without exception, kinship systems consider factors such as sex, age, generation, blood relations, and marriage within a society (Wen & Min, 2007, as cited by Oyioka et al., 2015, p. 896). According to Salawu (2007), there are two main aspects of kinship: biological and socio-cultural. He further explains that biological kinship arises from blood relations or descent,

where individuals share a common ancestor or lineage. Essentially, biological kinship means that the people involved are descended from the same forefathers, and descent cannot be separated from blood relations. In Igbo culture, kinship through the mother's lineage is uncommon but present in certain areas.

The second aspect, as described by Salawu, is socio-cultural, which he refers to as "man-made." Here, society defines kinship beyond biological ties. In Urhobo society, this means that kinship can be determined by social constructs, including relationships such as mother's family, father's family, peers or age mates, and neighbours. This demonstrates that kinship in Urhobo culture is both biologically and socially defined. This study will focus on the nature, classification, and meanings of kinship terms in Urhobo, using Semantic Theory.

1.1 Methodology

In this study, data collection methods included observation, oral information and archival materials. Archival materials, particularly articles by previous researchers in related fields, were gathered from libraries. Primary data was collected in Delta State, where the Urhobo language is spoken, through oral interviews conducted by the researcher. Being a native speaker of Urhobo, the

researcher also used personal knowledge of the language, comparing it with responses from interviewees to ensure accuracy.

Secondary data was gathered from various written sources, including scholarly articles, textbooks, newspapers, official documents, and journal articles on kinship terms. All data collected was documented for analysis. Data analysis will be conducted descriptively, using Semantic Theory to provide a semantic interpretation of the kinship terms studied. This approach will help determine how the terms are used appropriately. The selected data will be categorized into different types for analysis.

1.2 Urhobo Language and Its Speakers

Urhobo is a language spoken by Urhobo people. The Urhobos are an ethnic group located in southern Nigeria, primarily in the northwestern part of the Niger Delta. They are the largest ethnic group in Delta State, which is one of Nigeria's 36 states, and have a population estimated at around four million. The Urhobos share social and cultural ties with the Edo people, as their ancestors and are thought to have migrated from the ancient Benin Kingdom. They live between latitudes 6° and 5°15' North and longitudes 5°40' and 6°25' East, covering areas in Delta and

Bayelsa States. Their neighbors include the Isoko to the southeast, Itsekiri and Ijaw to the west, Edo (Bini) to the north, Ijaw to the south, and the Ukwuani people to the northeast. The Urhobo population includes several dialects, with Isoko and Okpe being prominent dialectal groups.

The Urhobo language has various dialects, some of which have developed distinct identities. The Niger River is central to Urhobo life, shaping cultural customs and practices. The community holds annual fishing festivals, like the Ohworu festival in Evwreni, celebrating their connection to water. In marriage, Urhobo traditions include elaborate ceremonies, prayers to ancestors (Eriwin) and God (Oghene), and traditional rites conducted at the bride's ancestral home. At present there are twenty-two clans in Urhobo land and most of the clans are made up of groups of villages; some of the major dialects of Urhobo are Isoko (also has sub-dialects such as Erhowa, Enwhe and Iyede), Central Urhobo (Agbarho-Ughelli dialect), Okpe, Ughievwien, Uvwie, Agbon, Avwraka (Abraka), Udu, Ofoni, Orogun, Agbarha.

1.3 Aim and Objectives of the Study

This study aims to investigate and categorize kinship terms in the Urhobo language, analyzing their semantic meanings and the specific terms used for various family relationships and socio-cultural connections within Urhobo society.

The study set the following research objectives:

- i. To identify common kinship terms used in the Urhobo language.
- ii. To analyze the semantic meanings of these kinship terms within the context of Urhobo society.
- iii. To examine different kinship terms used for different kin relationship in Urhobo society.
- iv. To categorize specific terms used to denote both family relationships and socio-cultural connections within Urhobo society.

1.4 Statement of the Problem

Despite the current advancement in the research of kinship terms, extensive research is yet to be done on many languages of which the Urhobo language is a part of. The Urhobo people recognize diverse kinship relationships within their community, spanning up to four generations and including patrilineal,

matrilineal, and in-law connections. However, there are little or no documented records of any research done on kinship terms in Urhobo Kingdom. The reason for this dearth of information is not unconnected with the absence of the culture of writing in Urhobo language with its diacritics and total reliance on the human memory and oral tradition for information dissemination. These kinship terms, which also reflect social relationships, remain underexplored in linguistic studies. Mashiri (2003) notes a lack of research on kinship terms in African languages and cultures, while Fasold (1990) highlights insufficient attention to indigenous languages, including the Urhobo language, which is regarded as a minority language. This study seeks to address this gap by identifying kinship terms and clarifying the meanings of the kinship terms in the Urhobo language and also documenting the study

1.5 Research Questions

The study addresses the following important research questions: -

- i. What are the common kinship terms used in the Urhobo language?
- ii. What are the semantic meanings of these kinship terms within the context of Urhobo society?

iii. How do different kinship terms correspond to various kin relationships in Urhobo society?

iv. How are specific terms categorized to denote both family relationships and socio-cultural connections within Urhobo society?

1.6 Scope/ Limitation of Study

This study focuses on analyzing kinship terms in the Urhobo language, particularly their meanings and the specific terms used for different family relationships and socio-cultural connections within Urhobo society. The research will concentrate solely on the Urhobo language and will gather data from Delta State and Bayelsa State, where the language is predominantly spoken. Kinship terms form a core vocabulary that is unlikely to be influenced by borrowing, making this study representative of the Urhobo language as a whole.

The study will specifically apply semantic analysis using Semantics theory. While previous studies on Urhobo kinship terms exist, few have categorized these terms based on family relationships and socio-cultural connections. It is important to note that kinship terms are fundamentally social in nature. However, some limitations in this study's scope should be recognized.

1.7 Significance of Study

This study is important because it helps us understand the meanings and cultural roles of kinship terms in the Urhobo language. By identifying and analyzing these terms, the research supports the documentation and preservation of the Urhobo language, which is valuable as languages around the world face decline. The results will be useful for linguists and other researchers who study kinship, social organization, and language preservation. By examining how kinship terms in Urhobo convey ideas of social rank, cultural values, and relationships, this study will offer a better view of kinship within African languages. It may also help learners of the language and the Urhobo-speaking community to connect more deeply with their language and culture.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

2.0 Introduction

This chapter presents a literature review on the semantic structure of kinship terms in Urhobo, covering key concepts essential for understanding kinship terminology. It is divided into three main sections: the first deals with the conceptual framework, the second reviews selected previous studies on the topic, and the third outlines the specific focus of this study.

2.1 CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

This section discusses the key concepts relevant to this study, including Kinship terms, semantics, socio-cultural connection, and family.

2.1.1 KINSHIP

Kinship is a system of social organization based on actual family ties (Carsten, 2004). It arises from the close relationships among members of a community who trace their descent from common ancestors. According to Alhusani, Pandian, and Alshabani (2016), kinship is one of the universal domains shared by all languages and cultures. Aroh (2011) refers kinship as the relationship

between individuals based on blood ties, marriage, adoption, or any other means recognized by a given society. Trask (2007:128) describes kinship as the system of terms available in a language for identifying relatives. Kinship can be found in all areas of the society where people exist. Although customs vary as which bonds are accorded more weight and how it defines individuals and roles that society expects them to play.

Dattamajumdar (2010:180) in his work further states that kinship relations are terms used to refer to those who are related to us through blood and marriage. Kinship is commonly viewed based on genealogy.

2.1.2 TYPES OF KINSHIP

Kinship is the most universal and basic of all human relationships and is based on ties of blood, marriage, or adoption. There are two basic kinds of kinship ties in sociology; those based on blood that trace descent, those based on marriage, adoption, or other connections.

2.1.2.1 Consanguineal Kinship

This kinship is based on blood or birth; the relationship between parents and children as well as siblings. This is the most basic and universal form of kin

relation. It involves people who are directly related which includes direct blood relatives such as parents and children, and siblings.

2.1.2.2 Affinal Kinship

This kinship is based on marriage. The relationship between husband and wife is also considered a basic. It includes relationships between spouses, such as husband and wife. Marriage creates kinship ties between individuals and their in-laws. This bond is established only after marriage. Thus, marriage creates a host of relationships which are called Affinal kinship, the relationship of husband with wife, father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, sister-in-law , brother-in-law, is of affinal nature.

2.1.3 SEMANTICS

Semantics is a branch of linguistics focused on the study of language meaning. It extends into grammar, including the rules governing word forms and sentence structure in a specific language. Semantics deals with the linguistic aspects related to the meaning of words. Palmer (2002:1) describes it technically as "the study of meaning." According to Otor (2005:1), semantics is essentially a systematic approach to understanding how meaning is conveyed in language.

Oxford Dictionary of English Grammar (1994: 355), outlined that semantics is the study or analysis of the relationship between linguistic forms and their meanings.

In semantics, there is the Lexical semantics and post-lexical semantics. Lexical semantics basically involves a discernment of underlined meaning of a word or lexical item which is evaluated from three perspective: Form, Reality and Function whereby the Form signifies a means of expression, the Reality signifies the image or mental picture of what is being expressed and the Function is the interpretation or meaning of the expressed. Post-Lexical semantics is the study of the meaning of linguistic expressions beyond the level of the word. It also involves an aspect of Pragmatics which deals with meaning in context and the different extra Linguistics factors that contribute to meaning derivation. Semantics generally deals with the evaluation of the interpretive of expressions in a language which can be seen as meaning of words used in a language.

2.1.4 SOCIAL-CULTURAL CONNECTIONS:

This means related to the different groups of people in society and their habits, traditions, and beliefs. "Socio-cultural" refers to a wide array of societal and cultural influences that impact thoughts, feelings, behaviors, and ultimately health

outcomes (Gonzalez and Birnbaum-Weitzman, 2020). Most languages if not all may share certain common basic kinship terms, such as father, mother, brother, and sister; but societies may have different kinship systems. Ferraro and Andreatta (2010) acknowledged that kinship system in each culture is at the heart of the social structure that helps regulate marriage relations, inheritance, social status and residence. Relationships recognized within a community that extend beyond biological ties, often including social bonds like in-laws or close friends considered family.

Socio-cultural is the involvement in social interactions and activities structured according to cultural norms that influences psychological development (Scott & Palincsar, 2013).

2.1.5 FAMILY

This family is the basic unit structure of the Urhobo kinship, a social unit typically consisting of individuals related by blood, marriage, or adoption. Family is the most universal group. It is the first institution in the history of men. It has existed in every society and is found in all parts of the world. In this sense, Mair (1972 cf. Okodudu 2010) defines the family as a domestic group in which parents

and children live together, and in its elementary form consists of a couple and their children.

Duberman and Hartjen (1979 cf. Ingiabuna et al. 2003) define a family as a universal institution whose most important functions are to socialise and nurture the younger generation. No culture or society has ever existed without some form of a family organisation. No other group is so universal as the family is. One can then talk of various types or forms of family, including primary, secondary, single parent, nuclear, and extended (Knuttila 2005). Understanding family in the context of Urhobo society helps to identify how kinship terms categorize relatives and reflect social hierarchies and obligations. There are different types of family which are:

2.1.5.1 NUCLEAR FAMILY

This is a family unit consisting of an adult male (husband) and female (wife) and a child/child. It is regarded by some sociologists as the basic universal form of family structure. The term “nuclear family” is commonly used in the United States, where it was first coined by the sociologist Talcott Parsons in 1955. The nuclear family is also known as the elementary family. The nuclear family is regarded as

the basic unit of kinship structure. Fox (1967:36) defines the most basic family as the nucleus or elementary unit of social organization also known as conjugal family, such a family consists of a man, woman which is the wife and their children. It consists of two parents and children. The children can be biological or adopted. This is the basic structure for kinship system in the Urhobo land.

2.1.5.2 EXTENDED FAMILY

An extended family is a family that extends beyond the nuclear family of parents and their children to include aunts, uncles, grandparents, cousins, nieces, nephews or other relatives, all living nearby or in different locations. The formation of the extended family involve joining of the nuclear family of a married adult to that of their parents'. In this type of family, the conjugal (nuclear) family is extended by the addition of other closely related kin (grandparents, aunts, uncles, nephews, brothers and their wives, cousins, sisters and their husbands, etc.). Giddens (1997) writes: 'When close relatives other than a married couple and their children live in the same household or in close and continuous relationship with one another, we speak of extended family. Extended families are typical of collective cultures where all family members are interdependent and share family

responsibilities including children roles (Waites, 2009; strong et al, 2008). It consists of several related individual families by blood or marital ties. This family structure is also recognized in the Urhobo land kinship system.

2.1.5.3 STEP FAMILY

A stepfamily is when two separate families merge into one. It is formed by the marriage or long-term cohabitation of two individuals, when one or both have at least one child from a previous relationship. The individual who is not the biological parent of the child or children is referred to as the stepparents. Step-families are also called blended families. This can go several different ways, like two divorced parents with one or more children blending families, or one divorced parent with kids marrying someone who has never been married and has no kids. Step families can be formed after a divorce or death of a parent in a nuclear family or when a single parent chooses a long-term partner. Children may also be part of two step-families if both parents remarry. Blended families results when a widow or widower with their children by a first marriage enters into a second marriage into which children are born. This gives relationships of half-siblings, step-parents

and step-children. The Urhobo kinship system does not recognize this family structure, it's against their tradition.

2.1.5.4 POLYGAMOUS FAMILY

This goes beyond the nuclear family structure in the sense that a man is married to more than one wife at the same time. Polygamy is the marriage of either a husband to multiple wives or a wife to multiple husbands. Polygyny is the marriage of one man to multiple women, while polyandry is the marriage of multiple men to one woman. Polygamy is a type of relationship that typically involves a person marrying more than one partner. In Urhobo land a man is allowed to marry more than one wife and the children will be recognized to be a part of the family tree, the wives families will be recognized as in-laws. Polygamy involves at least three individuals (a person married to two different spouses), but there is no limit to how many spouses a person in this type of relationship may have. In the Urhobo system, the wives and their children are recognized according to hierarchy in order of the first wife and all of responsibilities in the society.

2.2 PREVIOUS STUDY

Numerous studies have been conducted on kinship terms in various communities. However, there has been limited or no comprehensive study focusing on the kinship terminology of the Urhobo community. Notable scholars in the field include Onwukwe, Ofoha, and Nwaeze (2021) who investigated the meanings and structure of kinship terms in the Ibeme dialect. Their research focused on how these terms are organized and how they create a network of related meanings. Using data from interviews with twenty elderly individuals and local titleholders, they found that Ibeme kinship terms reflect details about family lineage—such as patrilineal and matrilineal descent—along with age differences and gender distinctions. These aspects are unique compared to other Igbo-speaking regions. The study identified three primary categories in Ibeme kinship: lineage, sibling relationships, and marital connections. It concluded that kinship terms, as a core part of any linguistic community, can differ significantly even within dialects of the same language.

Mwebia (2006) study on "A lexical pragmatic analysis of sense relations in Kimeru (a Bantu language spoken by the Ameru people of Kenya), focuses on

discussing word meaning in Kimeru and their sense relations in detail". She discussed briefly the different senses of the Kimeru kinship terms of women. Nadimpalli et al (2014) in their journal, International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention wrote on "Kinship Terms in Telugu and English". Every language has its own kinship terms or terms of address that indicate some relation. All these terms are purely based on relation. While terms of address are used to address someone who can be a relative, kinship terms are those which have reference. For instance, we use mummy while speaking to mother and a term like mother when speaking about her. The kinship terms are based on the biological connection and there is a distinction made between relatives of descent and relatives of marriage. Since Telugu community, which is a pure Dravidian race in South India, practiced the joint family system till 20th century, they needed particular terms for each relation to address someone in the same home without using a roundabout term. In the northern part of India too, where indo Aryan languages are spoken, there are particular terms for each relation because of being close to one another physically. On the other hand, English employs less terms to refer to relations. As cited by Nadimpalli, Roger Brown in his book 'Words &

Things' (1958) referring to kinship, states that the discrepancy which is of utmost interest to Whorf is the case in which one language has a single category and a single name while another language has more than one category and more than one name.

Eze (2023) examined the concept of kinship and related terminology among the Igbo people, explaining that kinship structures are based on the bonds between community members who share a common ancestor. The study emphasized that kinship serves as a foundation for close connections within the community. However, it noted that, like other elements of Igbo culture, the importance of kinship ties is gradually fading. He argued that language and culture are intertwined, so as cultural practices decline, the language that expresses them also diminishes. This study aimed to document Igbo kinship ties and terms, using observations and recorded sources for data. Eze observed that both the significance of kinship and the terms used to express it are declining, and this work serves to preserve these cultural values.

In similar note, Batic (2023) studied the semantic complexity of Hausa kinship terms. This study examines the detailed meanings within Hausa kinship

terms, aiming to quantify the amount of semantic information each term conveys. Each kin term is defined by a set of specific characteristics (like properties and relationships) that outline family connections. To measure complexity, characteristics such as "x is male" or "x is married to y" are represented as logical predicates. These characteristics are then organized in a feature matrix, where each kin term is assigned values on a truth table. Using a calculation method based on predicate logic, the complexity of each term is determined using a formula from Lehmann (1978), adapted from earlier work by Carnap and Bar-Hillel (1952). By defining kinship terms in this structured matrix, the study allows for several benefits: (a) comparing kinship terms across different languages, (b) consistently handling terms with multiple meanings based on their internal and external aspects, and (c) exploring kinship systems through either genealogical or algebraic models.

Arungo (2016) conducted a semantic analysis of Ekegusii kinship terms, focusing on how the community's language reflects various familial relationships. Kinship terms represent genealogical connections, such as those between parents and children, spouses, and siblings. While kinship concepts are broadly similar across cultures, each language uses unique terms shaped by cultural context.

Arungo's study aimed to find out the cultural meanings of Ekegusii kinship terms through Fillmore's Frame Semantics theory, with a focus on the Abagusii people and the Maate (or Ekemaate) dialect in Kisii County. Primary data was gathered through interviews with elderly men and women in Gucha South Sub-County, supplemented by secondary data from Joseph Mandi's *Chingencho chie'ekegusii* (2011). The research revealed that the Abagusii kinship system is primarily patrilineal, extending across the entire paternal clan and using classificatory terms that apply to multiple relations. Some kinship terms can fit within different conceptual frames, including frames of attitude and function, which reflect the community's cultural beliefs.

Nwosu (2014) conducted a socio-semantic analysis of kinship terms in English, Igbo, and Yoruba, examining the cultural and social factors influencing the use of these terms. The study challenges the misconception that English has more kinship terms than Igbo and Yoruba, arguing that while English is widely spoken among the Igbo and Yoruba, their languages have equivalent terms and more, though social and cultural factors limit their usage. The study used a descriptive and comparative approach to analyze the similarities and differences in

kinship terms across the three languages. Data was collected through English kinship terms from reading materials, radio, and television, as well as oral interviews with elderly Yoruba speakers and the researchers' personal observations as native Igbo speakers. The findings revealed no language being superior in the use of kinship terms. The study concluded that kinship terms in English are not synonymous with those in Igbo and Yoruba due to differences in cultural and family systems.

2.3 CONCERN OF THE PRESENT STUDY

The present study is focused on the semantic analysis of kinship terms in the Urhobo language. Urhobo society has a complex family structure that includes relationships on both the father's and mother's sides, extended relations, as well as connections through marriage. These kinship terms not only identify family members but also reflect social connections. Since previous studies on African languages often overlook kinship terms, this research will focus on identifying, analyzing, and organizing these terms to better understand how family and social relationships are expressed in Urhobo culture. This study will help speakers and non-speakers of Urhobo to understand how kinship system works and it will help

sharpen the knowledge of people in the society about what kinship terms is, how it is used in the society or should be used in the society, and how they differ from one speech community to another.

CHAPTER THREE

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.0 Introduction

The theoretical framework adopted in this study is Frame Semantics Theory (Charles Fillmore, 1975). Frame Semantics emphasizes that the meanings of words are understood through their connections to larger conceptual structures known as "frames." These frames provide the background knowledge and context that shape and specify word meanings. Frame Semantics reveals how words are rooted within and shaped by cultural and social contexts, making this approach particularly valuable for the semantic structure of kinship terms within the Urhobo community.

3.1 Frame Semantics Theory (FST)

The term frame semantics was coined by the founder of the theory, Charles Fillmore, in the 1970s. Frame Semantics is a descriptive theory within semantics, designed to explain how meanings in language are understood through complex mental structures called "frames." These frames provide the network of related concepts and background information that help define words and phrases. Frame

Semantics is based on the idea that meanings of words depend on a network of related ideas or concepts, which together create what is called a "frame."

Frame semantics comprises of three principles which are; Frame, Prototype, and Profile. Fillmore's categorization of verbs and clauses through semantic roles of predicates argument were taken to be important in case frame. "Case frames characterized abstract scene or situation and therefore, understanding the verbs properties and the schematized scenes", Fillmore (1982:115). He stated that a difference was made between scene and frame, scene being seen as a cognitive, theoretical or experimental entity. Frame was seen as a linguistic one. According to Fillmore (1982), a frame is a set of related concepts, and understanding any one concept within a frame requires an understanding of all the others. When a word associated with a frame is introduced in conversation or writing, the frame's structure is activated, bringing related ideas into focus and helping shape understanding. This approach builds on earlier theories, such as Marvin Minsky's idea of frames (1975), Irving Goffman's work on social framing (1974), and Bartlett's schema theory (1932), which proposed that knowledge is organized in patterns or mental frameworks. Frame Semantics focuses on the connection

between language and mental structures, studying how words and phrases activate frames that organize our understanding of reality, or “scenes.” For example, the "Kinship" frame includes family roles (like father, mother, sibling), their attributes, and the relationships between them. These frames reflect not just linguistic but also cultural, social, and cognitive structures shaped by individual and cultural experiences.

According to Croft & Cruse (2004:16) "no concept exists autonomously; all can be understood by fitting them into our general knowledge of the world in one way or another". What matters for a semantic analysis is the relation of the profile base and also the relationships between the bases and domain.

Fillmore (1978) characterized the frame as the most central and powerful kind of domain structure, thus alluding a frame-based organization of the lexicon. The frame provides the conceptual underpinnings for related senses of a single word and semantically related word. Frame semantics describes meanings in terms of what speakers know or believe about the entities designated by those words. A word is defined in relatedness to its background frame and not in relation to other words. The main theoretic principles of frame semantics are frame, prototype and

profiling. The frame is considered as the central notion of Frame theory. In accordance to Fillmore (1982:111) the frame is understood as any system of concepts related in a way that to understand any one of them you have to understand the whole structure in which it fits and when introduced into a text or into a conversation all of the others are automatically made available

Considering the kinship term family: the concept of a family cannot be understood or interpreted in isolation. The mention of the word family brings to the mind several concepts linked to the concept. These concepts linked to family may include a father (oşę), a mother (oni) and children (oıoı) in a nuclear family setting. However, the family concept can be elaborated further to include grandparents (oşę ve onirode), uncles (oniıoıoı oşę oshare), aunts (oniıoıoı oşę aye), and cousins (eıoı iniıoıoı). Frame semantics helps in explaining how linguistic expressions ends up evoking the frame knowledge of a particular word and as a result these frames in turn helps in understanding an expression containing words. Frame semantics makes the assumption that there is always some background knowledge relative to which a word is defined making a single concept provide the background for a set of words like the concept Father 'Oşę' provides the

background for a set of words such as son 'Ọmọshare', daughter 'Ọmọtẹ', and mother 'Oni'. The notion 'Prototype' is one of the most important principles of frame semantics. Frames are prototype can be taken to be a great piece with immediate beliefs contrary to which the meaning of a word is described and interpreted. Prototype is an instance of a category or a concept that combines its most representative attributes. For example a robin is a prototype of a bird; a penguin is not. (<http://en.wiktionary>). "Prototype is the background situation in which the meaning of the word is defined," Fillmore (1982:118).

An example of prototype is Ọmọshare mẹ (Son of mine; my son). The prototype of the word son is ones' male child who honour the parents and live in harmony with his parents showing respect to them and the elders around. In the Urhobo land an adopted child is treated with more sincerity and care than the child even given birth to by the parents so he is considered to be a son also. The concept Ọmọshare mẹ can be defined in relation to other related concepts that belong to the family frame. Among the Urhobo people the term 'Ọmọshare mẹ' is not used to refer to one's own son only, it is used to refer to any young man who is under the authority of an elder.

The concept "Profiling" is a notion in which a word cannot be interpreted independently without considering other words that form it. A concept like son (Ọmọshare) will bring to mind the concepts of Father (ọsẹ) and Mother (Oni) and the kind of kinship that holds between them. Another concept like Niece or Nephew will profile other kinship concepts such as uncle and aunt and various kin relations.

Frame Semantics is useful for studying language in cultural and contextual terms, making it helpful in areas like sociolinguistics, translation studies, and cognitive linguistics. It is particularly useful in understanding how words can reflect broader cultural ideas or social structures. In translation, Frame Semantics helps examine how differences in cultural frames between languages can affect translation choices. The theory's flexibility also supports comparative studies in semantics, such as the analysis of kinship terms across cultures, where meanings may vary significantly. Frame Semantics thus provides a structured way to study how language conveys meaning and how frames are used to establish similar meanings across different languages.

3.2 Relevance of the Theory to the Present Study

In this study on the semantic structure of kinship terms in Urhobo, Frame Semantics helps analyze how kinship terms are shaped by cultural and social contexts. The theory allows the researcher to examine how these terms are linked to broader "frames," such as familial roles, generational hierarchy, and social functions, which influence their meanings. Each kinship term activates a frame that reflects specific relationships within the family and community. In kinship relationships the concept 'Father' will bring about the background for the same set of words like 'Son and Daughter'. Thereby Son defining the conceptual background of father and mother. By applying Frame Semantics, the study can describe how Urhobo kinship terms are more than just words, and how they are rooted in cultural concepts and social structures.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.0 Introduction

In this section, we look into the data collected from Urhobo native speakers, primarily sourced from the "Urhobo Words" repository. The analysis centers only on kinship terms, utilizing both English form of it. The section will also examine different kinship terms in Urhobo, and categorize them based on specific family relationships and socio-cultural connections.

4.1 Data Presentation

S/ N	Kinship Terms in Urhobo	Gloss
1	Ọsẹ	Father
2	Oni	Mother
3	Ọmọshare	Son
4	Ọwaran	First son
5	Ọmọtẹ	Daughter
6	Ọvwọrọn	First daughter
7	Oniọvo ọsẹ ọshare	Uncle
8	Emọ iniọvo	Cousin
9	Oniọvo ọsẹ aye	Aunt
10	Oniọvo ọshare	Brother
11	Oniọvo aye	Sister
12	Ọmọsẹ ọshare	Step brother
13	Ọmọsẹ aye	Step sister
14	Ọmọ oniọvo ọshare	Nephew
15	Ọmọ oniọvo aye	Niece
16	Ọsẹrode	Grandfather
17	Onirode	Grandmother
18	Oni ro vwiẹ ọsẹwẹ	Paternal grandmother

19	Ọsẹ ro vwiẹ ọsẹwẹ	Paternal grandfather
20	Ovwromọ ẹbẹ rẹ ọsẹwẹ omoshare	Paternal grandson
21	Ovwromọ ẹbẹrẹ ọsẹwẹ omote	Paternal granddaughter
22	Oni ro vwiẹ oniwe	Maternal grandmother
23	Ọsẹ ro vwiẹ oniwe	Maternal grandfather
24	Ovwromọ ẹbẹrẹ oniwe omoshare	Maternal grandson
25	Ovwromọ ẹbẹrẹ oniwe omote	Maternal granddaughter
26	Ẹbẹrẹ oni	Maternal side
27	Ọshare	Husband
28	Aye	Wife
29	Aye ọkpako	First wife
30	Ugbophrophro	Co wife
31	Aye rẹ ọsẹmẹ	Step mother
32	Ọsẹ aye	Father in-law (husband)
33	Ọsẹ orovwe	Father in-law (wife)
34	Oni aye	Mother in-law (husband)
35	Oni orovwe	Mother in-law (wife)

36	Ọgọ	In-law
37	Ọgọ	Son in-law
38	Ayeme	Daughter in-law
39	Ọgọ me	Brother in-law (husband)
40	Ọşerome	Brother in-law (wife)
41	Oniọvo ayeme aye	sister in-law (husband)
42	Oniọvo oshareme aye	sister in-law (wife)

4.2 Data Analysis

On the basis of Parkin's (1997) classification, we categorize the Urhobo kinship terms into the following relations: descent, siblingship and affinity. The different types of kin are to be identified under Consanguineal and affinal, this is followed by the classification of the kinship systems found in Urhobo.

4.2.1 Descent (Vertical Kin Links Between Different Generations)

A descent group is a social group whose members are connected through a common ancestor, whether real or mythical (Kottak, 2004). This kin groups consisting of individuals who can trace their ancestry back to the same forebear. According to Hicks and Gwynne (1994), a descent group includes everyone who

can link themselves to a shared ancestor. Charles (2005, op cit.) further described it as a key aspect of kinship, where individuals trace their lineage through a series of parent-child connections to a common ancestor. He also highlighted that descent groups serve as an organizing principle, ranking individuals based on their genealogical ties. Membership in a descent group is determined at birth, lasts a lifetime, and is considered an ascribed status (Ingiabuna, 2012). For instance;

1. Ọṣẹ - Father
2. Oni - Mother
3. Ọmọshare - Son
4. Ọwaran - First son
5. Ọmọṭẹ - Daughter
6. Ọvworo. - First daughter
7. Ọṣẹrode - Grandfather
8. Onirode - Grandmother
9. Oni ro vwe ọṣẹwe - Paternal grandmother
10. Ọṣẹ ro vwe ọṣẹwe - Paternal grandfather
11. Ọvwromo ẹbere ọṣẹwe ọmọshare - Paternal grandson

12. Ovwromọ ẹberẹ oṣewẹ omọṭe - Paternal granddaughter
13. Oni ro vwiẹ oniwe - Maternal grandmother
14. Oṣe ro vwiẹ oniwe - Maternal grandfather
15. Ovwromọ ẹberẹ oniwe omọshare - Maternal grandson
16. Ovwromọ ẹberẹ oniwe omọṭe - Maternal granddaughter

Examining the instances provided in table 4.2.1(1-14) reveals a selection of descent kinship terms employed in the Urhobo community, looking at the nature of relationships among interactants. In examples (1) and (2), the terms for parents are (oṣe for father and *oni* for mother), (3) and (4) are progeny which are “omọshare” for son and “omọṭe” for daughter, as well as its peripheral elements as in example (5) and (6) which are terms denoting generational hierarchy “owaran” for first son and “ovworon” for first daughter. Illustrated in example (7) and (8) is the kinship term for extended family member which is “oṣerode” for grandfather and “onirode” for grandmother. The frame further extends to cultural and courtesy usages, where these terms transcend biological relationships and foster respect, endearment, and spiritual connections within the community.

Furthermore, the terms *oṣe* (father) and *oni* (mother) illustrate how Urhobo speakers frame respect and hierarchical roles within familial and societal contexts. While these terms are primarily used to address biological parents, they also extend to elderly community members, reflecting a broader cultural frame of honor and spiritual connection. Some men casually call younger girls *oni* (my mother) to signify ancestral ties or spiritual reincarnation.

The terms *oṃoṣhare* (son) and *oṃoṣe* (daughter) operate within a parent-offspring frame, where kinship roles are specifically tied to lineage. Modifiers such as *paternal* and *maternal* in terms like *Ovwrōmō oṣe re oṣewe oṃoṣhare* (paternal grandson) and *Ovwrōmō oni oṣe yere oni ro vwe oniwe oṃoṣhare* (maternal grandson) add specificity, reflecting the lineage-specific frame that differentiates paternal and maternal descent. The inclusion of *owaran* (first son) and *oṃworoṃ* (first daughter) further activates a generational and status frame, highlighting the roles and responsibilities traditionally assigned to firstborn children in the family.

Grandparental and grandchild terms, such as *oṣerode* (grandfather) and *Oni ro vwe oṣewe* (paternal grandmother), extend the descent frame across multiple generations, underscoring the continuity of lineage. These terms not only describe

familial relationships but also convey cultural expectations tied to ancestry. The distinctions between paternal and maternal descent terms reflect the identity frame, where language encodes an individual's place within the broader familial and cultural structure.

The term "Oni ro vwe ọsewe" (Paternal grandmother) in example (9) evokes the *Grandparent frame*, specifically focusing on the role of the paternal grandmother. Within this frame, the term identifies the female parent of the addressee's father. It reflects the patrilineal nature of descent in Urhobo society, where paternal relatives are distinctly acknowledged. Similarly, "ose ro vwe ọsewe" (Paternal grandfather) in example (10) also activates the *grandparent frame*, but it specifies the male parent of the addressee's father. The term underscores the grandfather's position as a figure of authority and a custodian of family traditions within the paternal lineage.

In example (11), the term "Ovwrom eberẹ ọsewe ọmọshare" (Paternal grandson) activates the *descendant frame*, identifying the male grandchild within the paternal lineage. This term reflects the value placed on male descendants as carriers of the family name and heritage. The grandson is seen as a link in the

continuation of the paternal lineage and is expected to uphold family traditions. In contrast, the term "Ovwromọ ẹberẹ ọsewe ọmọte" (Paternal granddaughter) as seen in example (12) also fits within the descendant frame, but it focuses on the female grandchild in the paternal lineage. While she does not carry the family name, her role in maintaining family relationships and transmitting cultural values is recognized and appreciated.

Observing the terms in examples (13) and (14), "Oni ro vwiẹ oniwe" (Maternal grandmother) and "Ọse ro vwiẹ oniwe" (Maternal grandfather) activates the maternal kinship frame and refers to the female and male parent. This highlights the equal recognition of maternal ties in Urhobo society, emphasizing the grandmother's nurturing role and her contributions to the family's cultural and social fabric. Similarly, in example (15) and (16) "Ovwromọ ẹberẹ oniwe ọmọshare" (Maternal grandson) and "Ovwromọ ẹberẹ oniwe ọmọte" (Maternal granddaughter) evoke the *maternal descendant frame*. These terms reflect the roles of male and female grandchildren within the maternal lineage, emphasizing their importance in bringing family unity and connections.

4.2.2 Siblingship (Kin Links Between Brothers and Sisters):

A sibling relationship signifies the bond and familial ties between brothers and sisters. This connection is typically defined by shared experiences and interactions within the family unit, emphasizing the importance of these relationships in a spiritual and social context.

- | | | |
|------------------------|---|--------------|
| 17. Oniḡovo ḡḡḡ ḡshare | - | Uncle |
| 18. Emo iniḡovo | - | Cousin |
| 19. Oniḡovo ḡḡḡ aye | - | Aunt |
| 20. Oniḡovo ḡshare | - | Brother |
| 21. Oniḡovo aye | - | Sister |
| 22. Ḡmo oniḡovo ḡshare | - | Nephew |
| 23. Ḡmo oniḡovo aye | - | Niece |
| 24. Ḡmoḡḡḡ ḡshare | - | Step brother |
| 25. Ḡmoḡḡḡ aye | - | Step sister |

In Urhobo, the provided examples in 4.2.2 (17-25) illustrate the sibling relationship. In example (17), term like "*Oniṣovo oṣẹ oshare*" (uncle) highlight the brother of one's father, marking a specific paternal relationship. This reflects the importance of uncles as significant figures within the extended family, often providing guidance and acting as secondary father figures. In example (18), the term "*Emo iniṣovo*" (cousin) emphasizes the connection between individuals related through a shared uncle or aunt. The use of "*Emo*" (child) paired with "*iniṣovo*" (the child of one's uncle or aunt) highlights the extended family network's significance in Urhobo culture. Cousins are valued as essential parts of one's social network. "*Oniṣovo oṣẹ aye*" (aunt) as seen in example (19), refers to the sister of one's father, using "*aye*" (female) to specify the relationship. The paternal aunt has an important role in nurturing and supporting the family, with her position often characterized by respect and reverence.

Similarly, in example (20) and (21) the terms "*Oniṣovo oshare*" (brother) and "*Oniṣovo aye*" (sister) refer to male and female siblings, respectively. The specificity of these terms is essential for understanding the relationships within the nuclear family. Looking at example (22) and (23), the terms "*Ọmọ oniṣovo oshare*"

(nephew) and "Ọmọ oniọvo aye" (niece) reflect the roles of the children of one's brother. Nephews and nieces are part of the extended family circle, expected to show respect to their uncles and aunts and participate in cultural and familial traditions. In examples (24) and (25), "ọmọse ọshare" (step-brother) and "ọmọse aye" (step-sister) show how non-biological relationships are integrated into the family structure. The use of "Ọmọse" (step-relative) indicates that these siblings are considered part of the family due to marriage rather than biological connection.

4.2.3 Affinity (kin relation by and through marriage)

Affinity refers to kinship relations formed through marriage. According to Read (2015, p.61), these are ties that connect individuals to their spouse's family members. Marriage creates a bond not only between the couple but also between their respective families. A man, for instance, forms connections with his wife's relatives, and similarly, a woman builds relationships with her husband's family. These connections result in the establishment of multiple new family relationships following marriage.

26.	Eberẹ oni	-	Maternal side
27.	Ọshare	-	Husband
28.	Aye	-	Wife
29.	Aye ọkpako	-	First wife
30.	Ugbophrophro	-	Co wife
31.	Aye rẹ ọsẹmẹ	-	Step mother
32.	Ọsẹ aye	-	Father in-law (husband)
33.	Ọsẹ orovwẹ	-	Father in-law (wife)
34.	Oni aye	-	Mother in-law (husband)
35.	Oni orovwẹ	-	Mother in-law (wife)
36.	Ọgọ	-	In-law
37.	Ọgọ	-	Son in-law
38.	Ayemẹ	-	Daughter in-law
39.	Ọgọmẹ	-	Brother in-law (husband)
40.	Ọsẹrọmẹ	-	Brother in-law (wife)
41.	Oniọvo ayemẹ aye	-	Sister in-law (husband)
42.	Oniọvo ọsharemẹ aye	-	Sister in-law (wife)

Furthermore, in example (26), the address term "*Eḅere oni*" is used to indicate maternal relations, emphasizing on maternal ties within the kinship system. This term reflects the respect and significance placed on the mother's lineage in the Urhobo community. Similarly, in examples (27) and (28), "*Oshare*" refers to the husband, while "*Aye*" designates the wife. These terms are central to marital relationships and emphasize the roles and mutual respect between spouses in the society. The term "*Aye*" extends to recognize the woman's role as a wife, which often involves managing family responsibilities and maintaining household harmony.

In example (29), "*Aye okpako*" refers to the first wife, highlighting her seniority and leadership role within a polygamous family structure. This term emphasizes on her position and authority among co-wives and within the larger family unit. Example (30) introduces the term "*Ugbophrophro*" to describe a co-wife, representing the complex interpersonal dynamics in polygamous relationships. This term captures the coexistence and potential competition among wives within such family structures. Similarly, in example (31), the term "*Aye re oṣeme*" refers to a stepmother, indicating a maternal figure within blended family

contexts. This term acknowledges her role in nurturing and supporting the family, despite not being the biological mother.

Illustrating example (32), "*Ọsẹ aye*" identifies the father-in-law (wife's father), signifying the extension of kinship ties through marriage. This term reflects the respect and honor afforded to in-laws within Urhobo culture, emphasizing their pivotal role in the marital relationship and family unity. Also, in example (33), the term "*Ọsẹ orovwe*" is used to refer to the father-in-law (husband's father), signifying the kinship relationship formed between the wife and his husband's father. In example (34), "*Oni aye*" refers to the mother-in-law (wife's mother), emphasizing on the relationship between the wife and her husband's mother. Similarly, example (35) uses the term "*Oni orovwe*" to designate the mother-in-law (husband's mother), while example (36) introduces "*Ọgọ*" a general term for male in-laws, establishing the broader network of relationships formed through marriage.

In example (37), "*Ọgọ*" is also used to refer to the son-in-law, emphasizing the reciprocal responsibilities and expectations between the family of the wife and her husband. In contrast, example (38), "*Ayeme*" is the term for daughter-in-law, signifying the wife's role and integration into her husband's family. Examples (39)

and (40) refers to the relationships with brothers-in-law. "*Ọgọmẹ*" represents the brother-in-law (wife's brother), while "*Ọsẹromẹ*" specifies the brother-in-law (husband's brother). These terms emphasize the importance of familial ties and the roles these male relatives in maintaining family bonds. Examples (41) and (42) use "*Oniọvo ayemẹ aye*" and "*Oniọvo ọsharemẹ aye*" to refer to the sister-in-law (wife's sister) and sister-in-law (husband's sister), respectively.

4.2.4 Consanguineal (relation by blood)

A Consanguineal kinship is a relation by blood. Consanguineal relatives are those related by blood. A Consanguine kin is a relative by birth, a blood relative as distinguished from affines. Consanguine relations are classified as primary kin and it includes a person's father, mother, brother, sister, aunt, uncle, grandparents, daughter, son. All children, whether they are biologically related or step from step mothers they are treated based on their position; older to younger ones. The following data illustrates the Consanguineal kinship:

1. Ọsẹ - Father
2. Oni - Mother
3. Ọmọshare - Son

- | | | |
|----------------------|---|-------------|
| 4. Ọmọtẹ | - | Daughter |
| 5. Oniọvo ọshare | - | Brother |
| 6. Oniọvo aye | - | Sister |
| 7. Ọsẹrode | - | Grandfather |
| 8. Onirode | - | Grandmother |
| 9. Oniọvo ọsẹ ọshare | - | Uncle |
| 10. Oniọvo ọsẹ aye | - | Aunt |

The provided data above illustrates the consanguineal kinship system, which is based on blood relations. Consanguineal kin refers to individuals who are related by birth, distinguished from affinal kin (those related by marriage). In this kinship system, the primary kin include close relatives such as the father (Ọsẹ), mother (Oni), brother (Oniọvo ọshare), sister (Oniọvo aye), son (Ọmọshare), daughter (Ọmọtẹ), grandparents (Ọsẹrode for grandfather and Onirode for grandmother), and extended family members like uncles (Oniọvo ọsẹ ọshare) and aunts (Oniọvo ọsẹ aye). The kinship terms reflect the family structure, where roles and relationships are defined by blood ties. These terms emphasize the centrality of

direct family relationships, from the immediate nuclear family to the extended family.

4.2.5 Urhobo Elementary Family

The Urhobo kinship system is based on the elementary family as its structural unit, with the husband ('oshare') serving as the family's head, disciplinarian, and primary decision-maker. The elementary family is considered the fundamental unit of kinship culture, and the majority of Urhobo's kinship terms are derived from the relationships between spouses, parents and children, and siblings, which comprise the basic arbitrary structure. Its internal structure is explicitly recognized in linguistics. The elementary family structure shown below includes a husband (oshare), wife (aye), and children (emo).

Husband	Oshare
Wife	Aye
Son	Omoshare
First son	Owaran
First daughter	Ovwoṛo
Daughter	Omoṭe

First born Ọmọkpako

Last born Ubephrie

4.2.6 Polygamous Family Frame

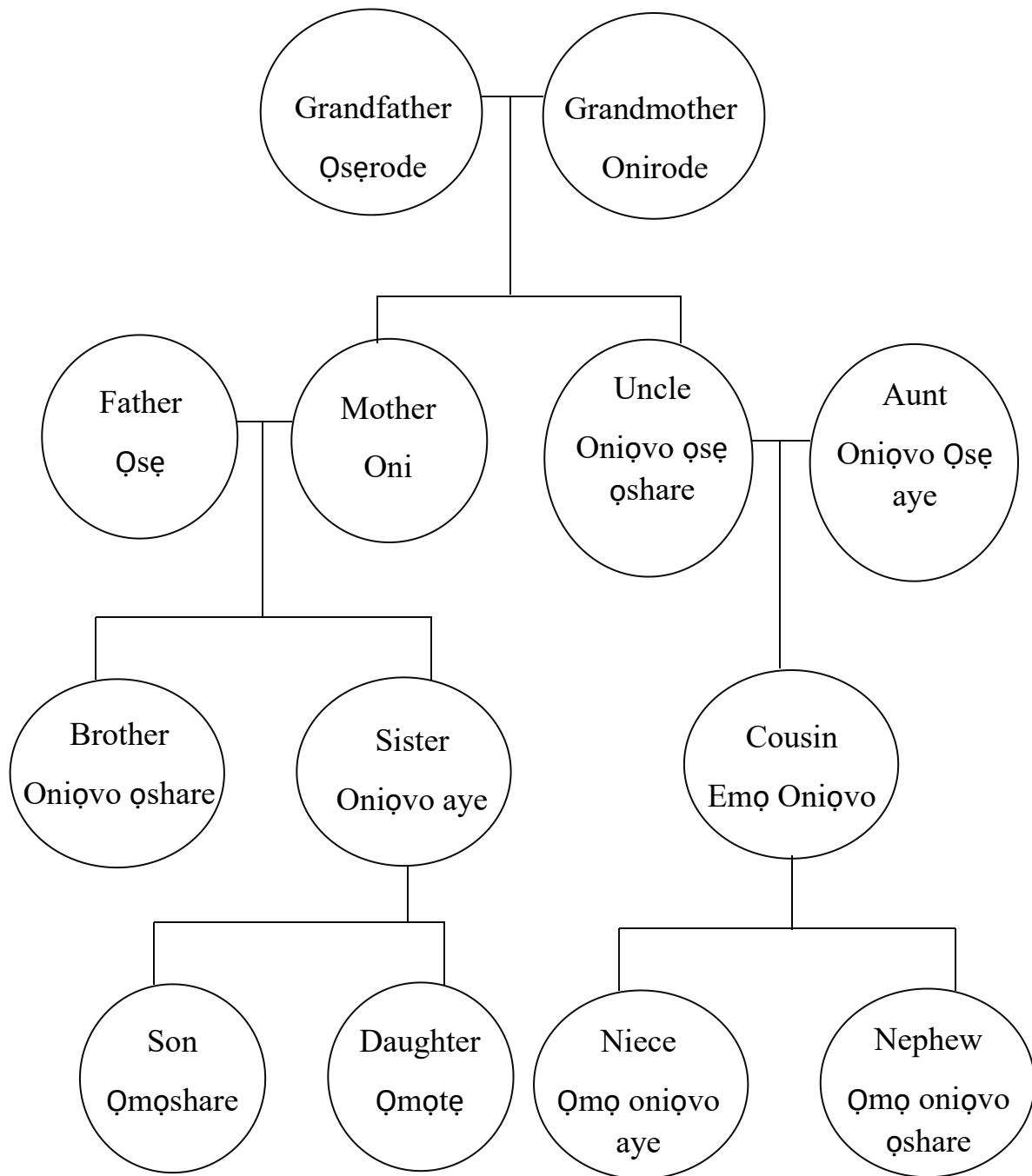
In a polygamous family, a man is permitted to have two or three wives. In the Urhobo system, the wives and their children are ranked in order of hierarchy (the first wife). In a polygamous home the children are expected to respect their stepmothers as their biological mother and showing respect for the older ones, even if they are from the other wife(s). The first son is considered the next head after the father in the Urhobo system, so he is respected by all the younger ones despite the mother who gave birth to them in the house. As the elderest child, he receives particular consideration and regard. In a polygamous household, the first wife is called "Aye ọkpako," while the remaining wives call each other "Ugbophrophro," which translates to "co-wife." The Polygamous frame is illustrated below:

Husband Ọshare

First wife Aye ọkpako

Co-wife(s) Ugbophrophro

Ọmọtẹ	-	Daughter
Oniọvo ọsẹ ọshare	-	Uncle
Emọ iniọvo	-	Cousin
Oniọvo ọsẹ aye	-	Aunt
Oniọvo ọshare	-	Brother
Oniọvo aye	-	Sister
Ọmọ oniọvo ọshare	-	Nephew
Ọmọ oniọvo aye	-	Niece
Ọsẹrode	-	Grandfather
Onirode	-	Grandmother



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, FINDINGS, AND CONCLUSION,

5.0 Introduction

This chapter deals with the summary, findings and conclusion drawn from the study.

5.1 Summary

In this study, we examined kinship terms in Urhobo. This study introduced the study's background, including its aims, research questions, significance, and methodology. It provided a comprehensive review of relevant literature. It outlined the theoretical framework guiding the study. The study also presented and analyzed the data, examining the semantic meanings and the specific terms used for various family relationships and socio-cultural connections within Urhobo society. Finally, it offered a summary, discussed findings, and presented conclusions.

5.2 Findings

The study reveals a structured kinship system in the Urhobo community, categorizing kinship terms into descent, siblingship, and affinity, with a focus on

consanguineal relationships. This classification shows the detailed relationships within the Urhobo family system and the cultural importance of these terms. Terms for descent focus on connections between generations, emphasizing on the value of family heritage and ancestry. Words like ọṣẹ (father) and oni (mother) not only describe parental roles but also show respect and hierarchy within the family and community. These terms can also carry spiritual meanings, such as when elders or younger people use oni to express reincarnation or affection. Titles like ọwaran (first son) and ọvwọrọn (first daughter) stress the importance of the eldest children and their traditional responsibilities. Grandparental terms, like ọṣẹrode (grandfather) and oni ro vwe ọṣẹwe (paternal grandmother), connect family across generations and show how grandparents preserve family traditions and culture. Specific terms for paternal and maternal relatives further highlight the cultural focus on family identity and distinct roles within the lineage.

Siblingship terms focus on the bonds between brothers and sisters as well as extended family members like uncles and aunts. Words like oniọvo ọṣẹ ọshare (uncle) and oniọvo ọṣẹ aye (aunt) emphasize the importance of paternal connections, while emo iniọvo (cousin) highlights the value placed on extended

family ties. In the immediate family, *oniṣoṣo ọshare* (brother) and *oniṣoṣo aye* (sister) define sibling roles, focusing on shared experiences and mutual responsibilities. Terms for nephews, nieces, step-brothers, and step-sisters—such as *omọ oniṣoṣo ọshare*, *omọ oniṣoṣo aye*, *omose ọshare*, and *omose aye*—show how non-biological relationships are embraced, demonstrating how marriage and other social bonds bring individuals into the family circle.

Affinity terms describe kinship ties created through marriage, showing the societal and cultural dynamics, these bonds bring. Words like *ọshare* (husband) and *aye* (wife) represent the foundation of marital relationships. Terms such as *aye okpako* (first wife) and *ugbophrophro* (co-wife) capture the complexity of polygamous families, where seniority and cooperation among wives are significant. In-laws, including *ose aye* (father-in-law) and *oni aye* (mother-in-law), reflect mutual respect and shared responsibilities between married couples and their families. Other terms like *ogọ* (son-in-law) and *ayeme* (daughter-in-law) emphasize how spouses integrate into their partner's family, building extended familial ties.

Consanguineal kinship refers to relationships based on blood, forming the core of the Urhobo kinship system. Essential terms, such as ọse (father), oni (mother), omọshare (son), and omote (daughter), along with extended relatives like ọserode (grandfather) and onirode (grandmother), highlight the importance of both immediate and extended family. These terms underline the cultural value of blood ties, with roles and relationships clearly defined in the family structure.

Overall, this study reveals the depth and cultural importance of the Urhobo kinship system. It demonstrates how language encodes relationships, lineage, and societal roles, showing how these terms not only define family ties but also reflect cultural values, respect, and community interconnectedness, how specific terms categorize to denote both family relationships and socio-cultural connections within the Urhobo society and we also discovered the semantic meanings of kinship terms within the Urhobo society.

5.3 Conclusion

The study of kinship terms in the Urhobo language showcases a complex system that reflects the cultural and social values of the community. These terms cover relationships based on descent, marriage, and sibling connections, each carrying

specific meanings and roles. Descent terms focus on lineage and ancestry, emphasizing the importance of generational ties and the preservation of family traditions. Affinity terms, related to marriage, show how individuals are integrated into extended families, while siblingship terms capture the importance of shared experiences and mutual responsibilities within both immediate and extended family units. Together, these terms demonstrate the Urhobo people's respect for family bonds and their significance in maintaining social harmony.

This study also shows that the Urhobo kinship system is more than a way of describing relationships, it is a key part of passing down cultural values and societal norms. Through these terms, roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, helping to build a strong sense of identity and connection within the family. Kinship terms are used to show respect, establish hierarchy, and strengthen relationships, highlighting the central role of family in the Urhobo community.

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