ẸDO ANTHROPONYMS: A MORPHO-SEMANTIC STUDY

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A PROJECT WORK SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LINGUISTICS STUDIES, FACULTY OF ARTS, UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN CITY, IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF BACHELOR OF ARTS (B.A.) DEGREEE IN LINGUISTICS STUDIES

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APPROVAL PAGE

I, **Success Abieyuwa OMOKARO**, is a student of the Department of Linguistics, Faculty of Arts in the University of Benin with Matriculation number **ART2100825** in fulfilment of the requirement for the award of Bachelor of Art Degree of the University of Benin. This project has not been previously submitted for any degree. All references have been duly referenced and acknowledged.

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PLAGIARISM CERTIFICATION

I, **Success Abieyuwa OMOKARO,** with matriculation number **ART2100825,** declare that this work titled **ẸDO ANTHROPONYMS: A MORPHO-SEMANTIC STUDY** has successfully passed the anti-plagiarism test and does not violate any copyright regulation.

_____

Success Abieyuwa OMOKARO

DEDICATION

I dedicate this research to Almighty God, who gave me the strength, wisdom and knowledge to do this project to a successful end and saw me through my academic years in the University of Benin.

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My heartfelt gratitude is to God Almighty for His strength and grace during the course of this entire program. His love has been so good and sufficient in keeping me.

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates Ẹdo personal names from a morpho-semantic perspective to show how the internal structure of names and the cultural context of the Ẹdo people work together to create meaning. Data for the study were collected through oral interviews with native speakers and from published sources. The names were analyzed using basic morphological description and the Principle of Compositionality, which states that the meaning of a complex word is derived from the meanings of its parts.

The findings reveal that Ẹdo names are not mere labels but meaningful expressions that reflect the people's worldview, beliefs, and social values. The study shows that Ẹdo names come from several sources, including kinship, birth circumstances, personal traits, religious beliefs, and the cultural understanding of destiny and reincarnation. Each category of names carries messages about identity, family structure, moral behavior, spirituality, and the historical pride of the Ẹdo people. The analysis demonstrates that Ẹdo names serve as tools for preserving cultural heritage, transmitting values, and reinforcing the social structure of the community.

This work contributes to existing knowledge by providing a detailed linguistic analysis of Ẹdo anthroponyms and by showing how language encodes cultural knowledge. It also emphasizes the need to document and preserve Ẹdo names for future generations, as they remain an important part of the people's linguistic and cultural identity.

CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND OF STUDY

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Morphosemantics is the field of linguistics that covers topics which fall between morphology and semantics. Morphology has been defined as “the study of word structure as well as the grammatical rules with which words are formed” (Hayes 2021:19). The basic unit of description in morphology is the morpheme. It is considered the smallest meaningful unit of language, and may be free occurring independently of other morphemes or bound to other morphemes. Semantics is the branch of linguistics that studies “meaning as it is conveyed by language” (Hayes 2021:311). Apart from the meaning inherent in the words of a language and the combinations, meaning can also gotten from other sources like our culture and knowledge of the world.

An *anthroponym* is “a proper name that only names a person, but does not "attribute" any qualities to him” (Chornous 2021:18). This name signifies identity, distinguishing a person from objects, places and other things that also bear names (Esimaje & Ojukwu 2019:62). Beyond their use for identification, they serve as

linguistic forms that convey ideas, beliefs, and emotions. In African societies, names are not just arbitrarily selected words but rather they are expressions that reflect the beliefs of the people and their thoughts about the world and human life within the world (Ogie 2002). Names are one of the means used to portray the unique ideology prevalent in a given society, and to identify the individuals who make up such a society (Aigbedo 2018:277). Through naming, people communicate experiences such as joy, pain, gratitude, and hope. Thus, a name is not only a word in the lexicon but also an expression of the speaker's perception of the world. In linguistics, names are studied under the field of *onomastics* or *onomatology* which means the systematic investigation of the nature of names. The field studies names such as those of people (anthroponym), animals (zoonym), places (toponym), ethnic groups (ethonym) etc. (Terminology of the International Council of Onomastic Sciences (ICOS)).

This study examines anthroponyms, with a focus on personal names that reveal how the Ẹdo people use language to communicate about life, religion, and culture. Ẹdo names are structured as simple, compound and complex words which express both lexical and contextual meanings based on the culture of the people.

For instance, the name *Eghosa* → *Ẹghẹ* (time) + *Osa* (God) "God's time" shows how the language combines morphemes to encode meaning. The name also reflects the people's belief in a supreme being referred to as God. By examining the internal structure of names, this project will be able to explain how this language operates as a system of signs that correlate to meaning.

1.1 THE ẸDO LANGUAGE AND ITS SPEAKERS

The term 'Ẹdo' denotes two distinct concepts. One it refers to the indigenous people of Orẹdo, Orhiọnmwọ, Uhunmwọdẹ, Ọvia north east, Ọvia south west, Egọ and Ikpoba-Ọkha local government areas of Edo state. These people share a common cultural heritage and historical tradition and political aspiration. The people are also referred to as 'Bini's' (Agheyisi, 1986). They hold in high esteem their cultural, historical, religious and social heritage with the Oba of Benin, the symbol and custodian of their culture.

Two, the term Ẹdo refers to the language of these people. It is highly homogenous with little dialectal variations like the forms spoken in the Ọza communities at the borders between the Edo and Delta states. As a language, the term Ẹdo is closely associated with other languages like Esan, Ora, Emai, and so

on. With these languages, Ẹdo constitutes a family referred to as Edoid group of languages (Elugbe 1989). This group is genetically classified as part of the Kwa branch of the Niger Congo languages (Greenberg 1966).

The Ẹdo language has three lexically distinct tones: High, Low, and Down-stepped High. It also has a rising tone, which only contrasts the low tone in monosyllabic verbs (Omozuwa, 2013). The basic order of constituents in a sentence is Subject-Verb-Object (Imasuen 2010). The language has a standard orthography approved by the defunct Bendel State Ministry of Education in 1974 (Agheyisi, 1986: xii). Prior to the cancellation of the National Language Policy, it was available as a subject at primary, secondary and tertiary levels of education.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

Although personal names have been studied from cultural and anthropological perspectives, there is limited research that treats Ẹdo personal names. Existing works focus on the cultural significance of naming. There is therefore a gap in the linguistic analysis of Ẹdo names particularly in understanding how form and meaning interact within the Ẹdo naming system.

This study fills this gap by conducting a morphosemantic analysis, focusing on how Ẹdo personal names encode meaning through their internal structure and interpretation.

1.3 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The aim of this project is to examine how the linguistic expression of Ẹdo personal names communicate meaning. The work has the following specific objectives.

1. Identify and analyse the morphological structure of Ẹdo personal names
2. Describe the semantic interpretation of these names
3. Explain how these names reflect Ẹdo cultural worldview.

1.4 METHODOLOGY

This study adopted the qualitative approach to research. This approach was adopted because it aligns with the aim and objectives of the study. Data were collected from both primary and secondary sources. The primary data were obtained through oral interviews with native Ẹdo speakers residing in Benin City. The study worked with three respondents: two males and one female between the ages of 30 and 70 years. They were purposively selected because they know the

cultural meanings attached to names and the circumstances surrounding their usage. The interviews were conducted in Ẹdo and English languages, depending on the participants' preference. The purpose was to validate the data generated from secondary sources. Those sources include published studies (Ogie 2002 and Aigbedo 2018) as well as the following online repositories.

- Edo/African Names and Meanings Online Dictionary (https://edoworld.net)
- Edo People Names and Meaning (https://edopeople.ca)
- Edo Names and their meaning Culture (https://nairaland.com)
- 200 Unique Edo Names and their meanings (https://edoupdates.com)

Names collected from these sources were grouped into categories such as kinship-based names, religious names and circumstantial names. The names were codified in the standard orthography and are presented as textual examples throughout the work. Data analysis involved a descriptive morpheme-by-morpheme analysis of each name, followed by a general appraisal of the morphological processes employed in their derivation. The analysis also covered the compositional and the culture dependent meanings. For the cultural contexts,

the project followed the descriptive patterns adopted in Aigbedo (2018) and Ogie (2002). For compositional analysis, the project used the Principle of Compositionality as applied in Usenbo (2023).

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This research is significant because it demonstrates how linguistic theory particularly morphology, and semantics can be applied to the analysis of African personal names. It strengthens onomastics by treating names not as mere cultural symbols but as structured forms that carry meaning.

The study also contributes to Ẹdo linguistics by documenting and analyzing name forms that may otherwise disappear under the pressure of globalization and modernization. By focusing on the linguistic and semantic composition of names, it helps to preserve valuable linguistic data for future research.

Additionally, the findings will provide useful material for comparative linguistic studies in onomastics**.** Students and researchers will benefit from the study's integration of theoretical and descriptive linguistics, while language planners may find it relevant for promoting indigenous language awareness and identity.

1.6 SUMMARY

This chapter introduced the study with a background on the Ẹdo language, the research problem, the aim and objectives, significance of the study and research methodology. The chapter shows the need to study Ẹdo personal names from a morphosemantic perspective.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter reviews existing literature on personal names in Ẹdo and related languages. It is divided into four sections: conceptual review, previous studies, concern of the present study and a summary.

2.1 CONCEPTUAL REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Morpho-semantic analysis focuses on how words, phrases and sentences communicate meanings that words convey in different contexts. This is important to this project because a name is not just a word or a group of words. “Several factors determine the choice of names. Some of them are the place of birth, the time, day, or season of birth, the circumstances surrounding the birth, the position of the child in the family, the worldview of the society, the beliefs of the parents, events that require lasting remembrance, and many others. For these reasons, names are often ambiguous, possessing two, or even polysemic meanings” (Esimaje & Ojukwu 2019:64).

According to Ogie (2002), bestowing personal names is a joyous occasion among the Ẹdo people because children are regarded as wealth and as instruments of lineage continuity. The parents, the head of the extended family (i.e. *Ọka-ẹgbẹ*), members of immediate and extended family (i.e. *ẹgbẹ*) as well as friends and well-wishers are usually present at the occasion. During the ceremony, which is referred to as *izọmọ*, the ancestral spirits are invoked for blessings. The items used include: coconut (which represents wealth that the child will bring to the family), *orhue* (white chalk – which symbolizes purity and happiness), *ẹvbẹẹ* (kolanuts - used for invoking ancestral blessings for the child) and *onwọn* (honey - which symbolizes the sweetness of life).

. Edo names also reflect linguistics creativity, as a name can have multiple layers of meaning. They can be used to make statements, offer advice and even warnings. Consider the name *Aizẹhinọmọ,* which is popularly reduced to *Aizẹ.*

A	**i**	**zẹ**	**ẹhi**	**ne**	**ọmọ**
One	NEG	choose	guardian angel	for	child

"A child's destiny is not chosen by the parents"

From this example, *Aizẹ* simply says that a child's life is to be nurtured not controlled by the parents, but it has a deeper meaning in the Ẹdo social-cultural setting. It reflects the society's belief in the existence of beings like guardian angels. Names which contain the morpheme *ẹhi* are given to reaffirm the belief that a person's sojourn on earth is predetermined by the supernatural. Such names are given with the hope that the guardian angel of the name bearer will be benevolent to him/her. Thus, one may not fully understand the meaning of a name without a knowledge of the morphology and semantics of the name as well as the bearer's cultural background.

2.2 PREVIOUS STUDIES

Over the past few years many scholars have studied morphology and personal names. Some studies have explored the structure of names, others have looked at how names express cultural identity and social values. Previous studies on Ẹdo morphology include Usenbo & Yuka (2025), Edionhon & Evbayiro (2024) and Omoregbe & Evbayiro (2022). All of them used descriptive methods of analysis. They discussed evaluative morphology, reduplication and derivational morphology in Ẹdo.

For naming, there are also previous published studies on Ẹdo personal names. For example, Ogie (2002) discussed Edo personal names and worldview. It focuses on the sociocultural significance of Edo names, classifying and discussing them according to socio- cultural beliefs. For data analysis, each name was broken into its constituent morphological parts and the meanings of the names were examined. The study revealed that there are common onomastic factors which underlie the naming of children in the Edo society. It concluded that naming in the Edo context, is a tool for transmitting beliefs, history and useful information about the ethos of the people.

Aigbedo (2018) investigated the sociolinguistic nature of Ẹdo personal names with a view to gaining the relevant insight into the socio-cultural context of the language and how it affects the general world view of the people. For data collection, the study employed direct interview of aged native speakers of the language. It also used the consultation of published sources especially on names and culture relevant to the study. Data analysis involved the decomposition of these names into their component units and the interpretation of these component units

relative to the circumstances of naming. The study found out that names represent an important aspect of the semantics of Ẹdo language.

Esimaje & Ojukwu (2019) examine personal names in Igbo and Itsekiri languages, with the aim of showing how the peoples' worldviews are reflected and sustained through names. The study adopted the semiotic approach of Saussure and Pierce with a focus on the connotative and ideological meanings of names in the two cultures. The data consists of 77 names; 38 from Igbo culture and 39 from Itsekiri culture. The research established pattern of names and classified them according to their orders of signification: denotative and connotative. For some names, there is a third level of signification; this is the ideological level of meaning which results from the denotative and connotative levels. The study concludes that Igbo and Itsekiri cultures ascribe significance to names.

2.3 THE CONCERN OF THE PRESENT STUDY

A review of existing literature on Edo personal names shows that previous work has focused on the cultural, social or religious functions of names. These studies have contributed to our understanding of naming practices in Edo society. However, limited attention has been given to the morphosemantic analysis of Edo

names. Like the previous studies, this project will use data from interviews and existing materials. It will also adopt a morpheme-by-morpheme style of analysis. The difference between this work and previous studies is the selection of names.

2.4 SUMMARY

This chapter reviewed previous works on Ẹdo morphology. It also looked at works on personal names in Ẹdo and related languages.

CHAPTER THREE

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on the theoretical framework for the research on a morphosemantic analysis of personal names in Edo. The project will be using basic morphological description to analyse the internal structure of personal names. This involves dividing a word into its constituent morphemes and providing the lexical meanings or stating the grammatical features of such morphemes. For the compositional aspect of meaning, this study will use the Principle of Compositionality.

3.1 THE PRINCIPLE OF COMPOSITIONALITY

Compositionality "refers to any theoretical framework which derives the meaning of larger expressions from smaller ones" Cann (1993:3). The principle states that "the meaning of a complex word results from the meanings of its constituents and the manner in which they were combined" (Pelletier, 1994:11). Compositionality entails computing the meanings of complex words from the meanings of their constituent parts. It assumes that each lexical item in a complex

expression has an explicit interpretation (lexical and grammatical meaning). Merging these bits of meaning ultimately derive the meaning of the complex form.

However, there are different opinions about the use of this principle. Pelletier (1994) notes over three hundred arguments against it, and less than a dozen to support it. Fábregas and Scalise (2012: 152-181) sift through these arguments noting how they affect the use of compositionality as a tool for mapping out lexical meanings. The book confirms there are opposing views on the use of this principle; it points out the opposition is not simply two-way.

On the one hand, studies like Fodor and Lepore (1998) out-rightly reject the principle. Others like Hale and Keyser (1993) and Harley and Noyer (2000) which uphold the principle, but from different theoretical perspectives. Despite the arguments against the use of compositionality, Usenbo (2023) shows this principle can serve as a guide in the analyses of Ẹdo language. That study used it for explaining Ẹdo numerals; these have a structure similar to that of personal names.

3.2 JUSTIFICATION OF THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The principle of compositionality is relevant to this project because it allows us to show the morphological components of each name as well as their meanings.

the morphological components of each name as well as their meanings.

1. Ewere Born during the Igue festival

This name connects the child's birth to a specific cultural celebration. Being born during the Igue festival signifies cultural significance and may imbue the child with qualities associated with the festival, such as joy, community, and renewal.

2. Edugie: Born on a festive day

This name represents a birth that coincides with a celebratory occasion. It emphasizes the joyous nature of the child's arrival, suggesting that the child is a source of happiness and festivity, mirroring the celebratory spirit of the day.

3.3 SUMMARY

This chapter has presented the theoretical framework used for analyzing personal names in Edo language. It also showed how the principle of compositionality can be applied in the study of names.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents and analyzes the data for this research. The data is presented in the standard orthography of the language. Data analysis follows a morpheme-by morpheme interpretation of names; it also provides some information on the cultural contexts that decide how these names are given.

4.1 NAMES BASED ON KINSHIP

The Edo people have a strong kinship system that defines family roles, responsibilities an inheritance. Kinship is both patriarchal and patrilineal, meaning that lineage is traced through the male line. This is observed in three areas: the place of the father, the place of the children, family and relations.

1. **Erharuyi**

Erha ọre uyi

Father is prestige

“A child’s honour is derived from the father”.

This name highlights the importance of paternal lineage and honor in shaping a child’s identity. It reflects a cultural belief that a father's reputation directly influences the social standing of his children, emphasizing the connection of family honor and personal identity within the community.

2. **Erhahọn**

Erha ọre a họn

Father is we hear

“The word of the father is supreme”

This name emphasises the authority of the father in family decision-making. It illustrates a situation where the father's opinions guide family dynamics, reinforcing respect for male authority and the wisdom traditionally associated with elders.

3. **Erhabo**

Erha ẹrọ bọ

Father is protects

“The father is a protector”

This name signifies the protective role of the father. It emphasizes the cultural expectation that fathers serve as guardians and providers, reflecting the societal belief in paternal responsibility for the safety and well-being of the family.

4**. Erhabude**

Erha ẹro buu Ude

Father is give advice

“The father gives advice”

This points to the father`s role as a mentor and guide within the family. It highlights the value placed on paternal wisdom, suggesting that fathers are trusted sources of knowledge and guidance, reinforcing their integral role in shaping the moral and ethical development of children.

5. **Aghabiọmọghibiọmwa**

A gha biẹ ọmọ ọmọ ghi biẹ ọmwa

We when born child child will born person

“When one has a child, the child looks after the parents in old age”

This name reflects a reciprocal relationship between parents and children. It reflects the belief in filial piety, where children are expected to care for their parents, emphasizing the importance of family support systems.

6. **Ogbomo**

ogbe ọre ọghe ọmọ

Extended family is own child

“The extended family belongs to the child.”

This indicates the child’s integral role within a broader familial network. It reflects cultural values prioritizing community and collective identity, illustrating how individual identity is shaped by one’s connections to the extended family, reinforcing a sense of belonging and responsibility.

7. **Aibangbe**

A i ban ẹgbẹe

We NEG disown family

“One cannot renounce his extended family.”

This name signifies the enduring bonds of kinship. It reflects the deep-rooted belief that family ties are lifelong commitments, emphasizing loyalty and the idea that one's identity is inseparable from their extended family's legacy.

8. **Ogbeiwiri**

Ogbẹ i wiri

Lineage NEG lost

"Through the extended family system, a lineage is never lost."

This highlights the role of extended family in preserving lineage and heritage. It underscores the value placed on ancestral connections and the importance of family networks in maintaining society's continuity.

4.2 NAMES WHICH DEPICTS THE ẸDO WORLD VIEW

The Edo people believe that the world is divided into two interconnected realms; the visible world of humans and the invisible world of spirit. Life is guided by *Osalobua* "God", lesser divinities and ancestors, who are believe to influence human existence.

9. **Idukpaye**

Idu kpẹẹ aye

Ẹdo last long remembrance

“The Edo land has been in existence for ages.”

This name emphasizes the historical depth and longevity of the Edo kingdom. It reflects a profound connection to the land, highlighting the cultural belief in the continuity and resilience of the Edo people over time.

10. **Ẹdosọmwa**

Ẹdo sẹẹ ọmwa

Ẹdo surpass person

“The Edo land is greater than the individual”

This name signifies the collective identity of the Edo people. It shows the importance of community, suggesting that personal identity is intertwined with the larger identity of the Edo society.

11. **Ẹdorisiagbọn**

Ẹdo ọre isi agbọn

Edo is source world

The Edo land is the origin of the world.

This name positions the Edo kingdom as central to the universe, reflecting a worldview where the land is seen as the source of all existence. It conveys a sense of pride and the belief in the sacredness and significance of Edo land.

12. **Ẹdoigiawerie**

Ẹdo i gi a werrie

Ẹdo NEG allow us turn over

"One cannot subvert Edo land."

This asserts the inviolability and strength of the Edo kingdom. It reflects a cultural ethos of resilience and resistance, emphasizing the importance of protecting the land against external threats.

13. **Agbonifo**

Agbọn i fo

World NEG finish

"The world will never end"

This suggests a belief in the eternity. It emphasizes the cyclic nature of life, despite the inevitable change and uncertainties that come with living.

14. **Agbọnkọnkọn**

Agbọn kọnkọn

World big

“The world is big.”

This name acknowledges the vastness of the world. It reflects an understanding of the complexities of existence and the connection between peoples and cultures.

15. **Osagiọbarre**

Osa ẹrọ gie ọba rre

God who send King Come

“The king is ordained by God”

This emphasizes the divine right of the king. It reflects the belief in the sacred authority of the ruler, reinforcing the notion that the king's legitimacy is derived from a higher power.

16. **Ọbasogie**

Ọba sẹẹ ogie

King surpass duke

“The king is greater than a duke”.

This underscores the hierarchical nature of governance within the kingdom. It highlights the central authority of the king, reinforcing the importance of loyalty in governance.

17. **Aiguọbasimwiotọ**

A i gue ọba simwi otọ

We NEG with king struggle land

“One doesn’t dispute the ownership of land with the king.”

This name asserts the king's absolute authority over land ownership. It reflects cultural norms surrounding land tenure, emphasizing the king's role as the ultimate judge in land-related matters.

18. **Ọbayanto**

Ọba ẹrọ yan otọ

King who own land

“The king is the owner of all lands.”

This reinforces the king's central role in land allocation and stewardship, reflecting the interconnection of land, power, and identity.

4.3 NAMES DEPICTING EVENTS AND CIRCUMSTANCES AT BIRTH

In Edo culture, the birth of a child is not regarding as an ordinary event but a scared and meaningful occurrence. It is seen as the continuation of family lineage and the fulfillment of divine destiny. They attach great importance to the circumstances surrounding the arrival of a child, as these often determine personal names and the nature of birth rituals to be performed for the child.

19. **Otasowię**

Ota sẹẹ owię

Evening surpass morning

“Evening surpasses morning”

This name signifies the specific time of day when the child was born. Evening often symbolizes reflection and calmness. In Edo culture, being born in the evening may suggest that the child embodies traits associated with introspection and serenity.

20. **Evbu**

Dew

“Dewy morning”

This name denotes the freshness and new beginnings associated with the morning. A dewy morning symbolizes renewed hope, suggesting that the child is perceived as the fulfillment of the promise of a new day.

21. **Ugbo**

Farm

“Farm”

This name connects the child’s birth to an agricultural setting. Farming is an important aspect of Edo life, and being born on a farm signifies a strong connection to the land, emphasizing values of hard work and sustenance.

22. **Idada**

Curly haired

“A child born with curly hair”

This name highlights a physical attribute which symbolizes a unique spirituality. The name reflects society’s acceptance of individual differences.

The analysis of names associated with birth circumstances in Edo culture show that the different morphemes contribute to the meaning of each name. The

names show the significance of circumstances in the expression of personal identity.

4.4 NAMES BASED ON PERSONAL TRAITS AND SOCIAL VALUES

These names are used to reflect important lessons, beliefs and life principles, they help to shape character, preserve cultural identity and pass down meaningful life values through generations.

22. **Egbenayalobele**

Egbe ne a ya la obele

Body that we use pass rough path

"The path to success is hard work"

This name emphasizes the importance of diligence and perseverance. It serves as a reminder that success is often achieved through hard work and determination, reinforcing the cultural belief that effort is essential for overcoming obstacles and achieving one's goals.

23. **Aghaleladia**

A gha lele adia

We if follow straight path (if one follows a straight path)

“One’s behavior is conditioned by his peers”

This name highlights the influence of social circles on individual behavior. It reflects the understanding that personal development is often shaped by relationships with others, promoting awareness of the importance of choosing positive influences and surrounding oneself with supportive peers.

24. **Akugberẹtin**

Akugbe ọre ẹtin

Unity is strength

“Unity is strength (communality)”

This name underscores the value of unity, collective effort and solidarity. It reflects the belief that working together leads to success and stronger community ties. This name promotes collaboration, mutual support and social cohesion.

25. **Aigbediọn**

A i gbe ediọn

We NEG beat elders

“One cannot beat one’s elders”

This name conveys the importance of respect for elders. It highlights the value placed on age and wisdom, reinforcing the notion that elders should be honored and their authority acknowledged.

The names analyzed in this sub-section show the moral and social values of the Edo culture. Each name reflects a specific principle that guides behavior and interactions within the community. These names serve not only as identifiers of the persons who bear them, but also as reminders of the cultural ideals that shape the actions of individuals in the Edo community.

4.5 NAMES BASED ON BELIEFS

The Edo people have rich traditional beliefs that guide their way of life. These beliefs are centered on God, lesser divinities and ancestors. They believe that every person has a destiny given by God. This destiny (known as *ehi*) is a spiritual guardian that follows a person through life. While destiny is fixed, hard work, sacrifices and prayers can help someone to accomplish it well.

26. **Ẹhiọsu**

Ẹhi	ẹrọ	su
Guardian	is	to guide spirit

“It is the guardian spirit that guides”

This name emphasizes the belief in a protective and guiding spiritual presence. It reflects the Edo understanding of destiny as influenced by spiritual guardians, suggesting that individuals are supported and guided by these entities throughout their lives.

27. **Ẹhimwẹma**

Ẹhi mwẹ maa

Guardian spirit my good

“My destiny is good”

This name expresses a positive relationship with one's guardian spirit. It reflects confidence and trust in the benevolence of spiritual influences, emphasizing a belief that one’s life is supported by positive forces that guide and protect.

28. **Aisagbọnbuọmwan**

A i sẹẹ agbọn buu ọmwa

We NEG reach world determine person

“One’s destiny is not determined”

This name suggests the belief in the fluid nature of destiny. It indicates that while certain aspects of life may be fated, there is also room for change through personal actions.

29. **Ẹrimwiigbọvo**

Ẹrinmwi i gbọvo

Spirits NEG envy

"The spirits are not envious of humans"

This name reflects a harmonious relationship between humans and spirits. It suggests a belief that spiritual entities coexist with humans without jealousy or malice, fostering a sense of peace and cooperation in the spiritual realms.

30. **Osarodion**

Osa ọre ọdiọn

God is eldest

"God comes first"

This name emphasizes the primacy and authority of God. It reflects the belief in God as the ultimate source of wisdom and guidance, reinforcing the notion of divine superiority and the importance of reverence in spiritual practices.

31. **Osarro**

Osa rrọọ

God exists

This name affirms the belief in the existence of a higher power. It serves as a declaration of faith, emphasizing the central role of God in the lives of the Edo people and their understanding of the universe.

In addition to their belief in God, the Edo people also believe that life is a cycle and that deceased persons members can return to their family line. Thus, some children are perceived as the reincarnation of their ancestors. This view is sometimes based on the behaviour of such children, birthmarks or their physical attributes. An example of a name given to such children is presented below.

32. **Iyorre**

i yo rre

I go come

"I have gone and returned"

This name embodies the concept of returning in a new life. It signifies the belief in reincarnation, suggesting that individuals may live multiple lives, returning to fulfill different roles and experiences.

The names analyzed in this sub-section reflect beliefs related to destiny, reincarnation and religious faith within Edo culture. Each name serves as a vessel for expressing how these beliefs shape individuals' understanding of life.

4.6 FIXED NAMES

These are common names that are widely used across Edo society, regardless of circumstances of birth or historical events. They are regarded as permanent cultural identifiers.

33. **Okoro**

Prince

“The first male child of an Ọba”

This name signifies a special status as the firstborn son of a king. In Edo culture, the title of "prince" carries significant weight, reflecting the expectations associated with royal heritage. It underscores the importance of male offsprings in royal succession and governance.

34. **Uvbi**

Princess

“The first female child of an Ọba”

This name denotes the unique status of the firstborn daughter of a king. Similar to "Okoro," the title of "princess" is a mark of distinction, representing not the potential role of the daughter in improving the socio-political strength of the kingdom through marriage alliances.

35. **Ọdiọn** **kevbe** **Ọvbokhan**

Elder and Younger

“The older and younger sibling in a set of twins”

These names convey the status of being the first or second born twin. In the Edo culture, the elder twin is regarded with respect in terms of heritage within the family. The child is expected to be a responsible leader. The existence of these names signifies the acceptance of twins in the Edo society.

4.6 Summary

This chapter explains how language reflects the culture, beliefs, and worldview of the Ẹdo people. Edo names are very meaningful. Names based on

kinship reveal the father's dominance in Edo society, highlighting the authority of the father, the responsibilities of children, and the importance of the extended family in preserving lineage. Names that reflect the Edo worldview emphasize the greatness, antiquity, and sacredness of Edo land, showing strong communal identity and the belief in divinely ordained kingship.

In summary, this chapter shows that Edo names are not mere labels but expressions of cultural values as well. They encode moral lessons, family structure, spiritual beliefs, and history.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

This study examined Ẹdo personal names using a morpho-semantic approach. It showed that Ẹdo names are shaped by the cultural, social, and spiritual life of the Edo people. Through a morphosemantic analysis, the project showed clearly that the meaning of personal names derives from the internal structure of a such names as well as cultural knowledge.

The study shows many Ẹdo names are based on the kinship system, which is strongly patriarchal and patrilineal. These names highlight the father's authority, the responsibilities of children, and the importance of the extended family in preserving lineage. Names that reflect the Ẹdo worldview show the pride of the people in their land, their belief in divine kingship, and their understanding of life as connected to both the physical and spiritual worlds.

The research also gives insights on names given at birth which often reflect the time, place, or special events surrounding the child's arrival. Other names express personal traits and social values such as hard work, unity, respect for elders,

and moral behaviour. Spiritual and religious names reflect beliefs in destiny, reincarnation, guardian spirits, and God.

The findings reveal that Ẹdo names are rich cultural expressions that carry history, beliefs and values from one generation to the next.

5.2 CONCLUSION

Ẹdo personal names are meaningful expressions that communicate important messages about the people's culture and worldview. Each name has a morphological structure, semantic meaning and a cultural interpretation. It is only by understanding all three aspects that the true meaning becomes clear.

Ẹdo names reflect how the people understand family, community, spirituality, and life itself. They show the strong connection between language and culture, and they demonstrate how names can serve as tools for preserving tradition. Through morpho-semantic analysis, the study has shown that Ẹdo names are a valuable part of the people's heritage and deserve to be preserved and appreciated.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made to help preserve and strengthen Ẹdo naming culture

- **Parents and families should continue to give traditional Ẹdo names**, as this helps preserve cultural identity and passes important values to younger generations.
- **Schools and cultural centers should teach Ẹdo names and their meanings**, so that children and young adults can understand the cultural messages and values they carry.
- **Ẹdo names should be documented more fully**, through dictionaries, online platforms, and academic research, to prevent them from being forgotten.
- **More linguistic studies should be carried out** on Ẹdo names, especially focusing on phonology, pragmatics, and comparative studies with other languages in the Edoid family.

- **Elders and community leaders should explain the stories behind names** during naming ceremonies and family gatherings, to keep the cultural significance alive.
- **Government and cultural bodies should support programs** that promotes Ẹdo language and naming traditions through festivals, workshops, and media content.

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