

**A SEMANTIC REVIEW OF SONGS AND RITUALS USED IN THE EDO  
TRADITIONAL MARRIAGE CEREMONY**

**BY**

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## APPROVAL

I certify that this work was carried out Ehiorobo Osagumwenro in the Department of Linguistics Studies, University of Benin, under my supervision.

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## **DEDICATION**

This research is dedicated to God Almighty, for his inspiration, guidance, sustenance, protection and knowledge to successfully do this work. To my mum, dad, siblings, friends and loved ones for their immersed support and inspiration, in times of lack and needs, as your efforts were fully appreciated.

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I want to use this medium to express my profound gratitude to my Supervisor, Dr Mrs O.V Evbayiro for her scholarly advice all through this work, also not forgetting Dr. Williams Aigbedo, Mr A. Evbayiro, Dr. Osaigbovo Evbuomwan, Prof. C.U.C Ugorji, Dr. Mrs. E.O Ikoyo Eweto, Dr. Mrs. P.O Solomon Etefia and Mr. Edionhon, for their support throughout my academic journey. Also to my beloved mother, father, siblings, and friends, for their support, as well as encouragements, I say thank you.

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## **ABSTRACT**

The Edo people of Nigeria have a rich cultural heritage and their traditional marriage are marked by variety of songs and rituals that carries significance meaning. This project aims at conducting a semantic review of the songs and rituals use in the Edo traditional marriage ceremony through an interdisciplinary approach that combines linguistics analysis, and cultural interpretation. This study seeks to explore the linguistic, cultural, and social dimensions of these songs and rituals by delving into the lyrics of the songs and also by analyzing the symbolic significance of various rituals. This study employed data collected from participation observation at a selected traditional marriage in Benin using a phone camera, and also the interviews of native speaker who are well grounded in the Edo marriage rituals. In analyzing the marriage song, the difference level of translation will be use to analyze the lyrics of the songs. By the end of this research

# CHAPTER ONE

## 1.0 General Introduction

A semantic review is an analytical process that focuses on the meaning and interpretation of content typically text or language-based materials it involves a detailed examination of how words, phrases, symbols, and concepts within the content convey meaning. A semantic review aims to explore the layers of meaning and the relationship between Language element within a specific content or text.

The Edo traditional marriage ceremony is a cultural event that is deeply rooted in the history and tradition of the Edo people, and it holds great significance. In the Edo traditional marriage ceremony, families come together to celebrate the union of a man and a woman. This ceremony involves various songs and rituals. Songs play a vital role in the ceremony, it serves as entertainment and it is also use as a communicative method. This study provides a semantic review of those songs and rituals used in the Edo traditional marriage ceremony by analyzing the lyrics of the songs and also the significance of the rituals.

## 1.1 Statement of the problem

In the setting of Edo traditional wedding traditions, there is a complex tapestry of songs and rituals that are essential to maintaining social identity and cultural legacy. However, there is a notable lack of a thorough semantic study of these songs and rites in current scholarly discourse. By undertaking a full semantic examination to reveal the underlying

linguistic, symbolic, and cultural meanings hidden within the songs and rituals used during traditional Edo marriage rites, this research effort seeks to close this gap. The preservation and documentation of the cultural history of the Edo people will be aided by an understanding of the semantic intricacies of these practices, which will also provide light on their relevance to modern society and their potential for adaptation and evolution.

## **1.2 The Research Question**

1. What are the semantic significance of the songs and rituals use in the Edo traditional marriage ceremony
2. How does the semantic review of songs and rituals use in the Edo traditional marriage ceremony affect how people experience and understand Edo cultural customs during a marital festival?
3. How does the semantic review of songs and rituals use in the Edo traditional marriage ceremony helps in preserving this cultural practices?

## **1.3 Objective Of The Study**

1. This aim to explore the semantic significance of the songs and rituals use in the Edo traditional marriage ceremony
2. This study aim to analyze how the semantic review of songs and rituals used in the Edo traditional marriage ceremony influences people's experience and understanding of Edo cultural customs during a marital festival.

3. This study aim to assess how the semantic review of songs and rituals used in the Edo traditional marriage ceremony contributes to the preservation of these cultural practices.

#### **1.4 Method Of Data Collection**

Method of data collection on the project topic, a semantic review of songs and rituals use in the Edo traditional marriage ceremony is the method of participate observation and interviews of native speakers who are knowledgeable in Edo traditional marriage songs and rituals. The interviews were conducted in person. The data for this research work was collected from the wedding ceremony of Lydia Ighodaro and Abel Asuenimen at 21,Osagiede street, urora.

#### **1.5 The Language And The Culture Of The People**

Èdo can be described as the general name given to a group of people who have a common ancestor and a common language, as it is spoken in seven out of the eighteen Local Government Areas (LGAs) of the Èdo state, with its standard form used within the Benin Metropolis in the Orèdo Local Government Area. The seven local government areas include; Orèdo, Ikpoba-Okha, Egor, Ovia South-West, Ovia North-East, Uhunmwòdè and Orhìonmwòn. It is largely an homogenous language, but dialectal varieties are attested in some related communities located in some of the local government areas listed above. Such varieties include Oza Nogogo, Oza Aibiokunla or Odiguetue, Ehòr, Ovia etc.

The Edo language has thirty-nine alphabet, which includes: twelve vowels, in which seven are oral vowels (a, e, ɛ, i, o, ɔ, u), and five nasal vowels (an, ɛn, in, ɔn, un), and twenty-seven consonant sounds, out of which twentytwo are oral consonants (b, d, f, g, gb, gh,h, k, kh,kp, l, p, rh, rr, r, s, t, v, vb, w, y, z ), and give nasals (m, mw, n, nw, ny).

EDO is equally the native name for the city where the Oba resides; the name 'Edo' has a unique origin which is traceable to oral account particularly that recorded by a foremost Edo writer, Egharevba (1986), "A Short History of Benin". Edo language which is under investigation, is an Edoid language, as it is spoken in Edo state and located in the Southern part of Nigeria.

Edoid is the linguistic label used to refer to the group of related languages. The Edoid language are a few dozen languages spoken in Southern Nigeria, in the former Bendel State. The name Edoid derives from its most widely spoken member, Edo, the language of Benin City, which has 25 million native and secondary speakers.

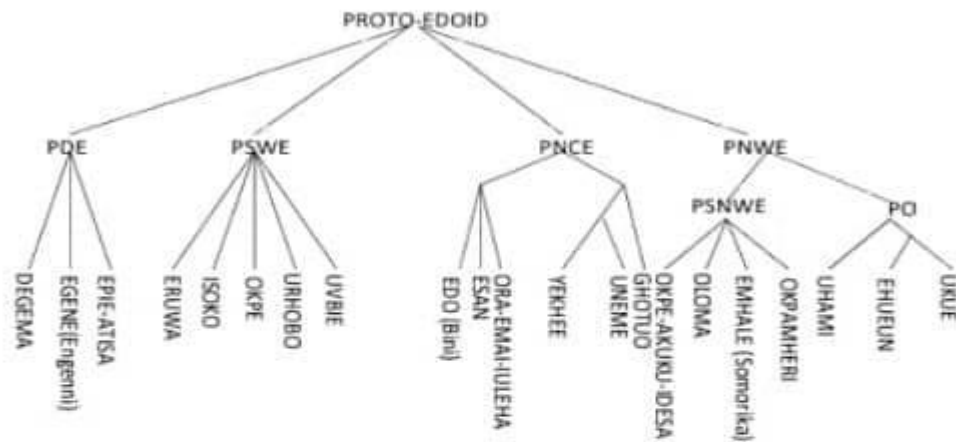
The term "Edoid" is used to refer to the group of genetically-related languages which fall under the 'Kwa' division of the Niger-Congo phylum (Greenberg, 1963). The designation of the generic term 'Edoid' by Elugbe, has helped to some extent in resolving the nomenclatural problem of distinguishing between the single language 'Edo' and other related languages like: Esan, Etsako, Ora and so on. Elugbe's Edoid classification, as earlier said, has helped to some extent in resolving the nomenclatural problem of

distinguishing between the single language and other related languages. It divides the Edoid languages into two subgroups:

1. Northwestern Edoid (also known as Etsako, Edo, and Esan)
2. Southeastern Edoid (also known as Esan)

Northwestern Edoid includes the Edo language, which is spoken by the Edo people of Nigeria, as well as several closely related languages spoken in the Etsako and Ishan regions of Nigeria.

Southeastern Edoid includes the Esan language, which is spoken by the Esan people of Nigeria, as well as several closely related languages spoken in the southeastern region of Nigeria.



KEY:  
 PDE: PROTO DELTA EDOID  
 PSWE: PROTO SOUTH WESTERN EDOID  
 PNCE: PROTO NORTH CENTRAL EDOID  
 PNWE: PROTO NORTH WESTERN EDOID  
 PSNWE: PROTO SOUTH NORTH WESTERN EDOID  
 PO: PROTO OSSE

Elugbe classification (1989)

The Edo people were primarily farmers, engaged in agriculture and fishing to sustain their livelihoods. They cultivated crops such as yam, cassava, maize, and palm produce. The Edo people also had a skilled class that specialized in various crafts, including bronze casting, wood carving, weaving, and pottery. These crafts were highly valued and played a significant role in the economic and cultural life of the Edo people. They also have a rich

and vibrant culture that spans centuries, characterized by distinct traditions, art forms, language, and social customs

In the 17th and 18th centuries, the Edo people were carved out of the Benin Kingdom to form their own territory and engage in cultural activities. This is why, in the earliest centuries, when Edo became a state on its own, Benin City became the capital. The Edo people are situated in Nigeria's Edo State, which gained its name from the majority population of Benin City, the region's most famous historical hub and the Edo people's core capital homeland. The political and administrative limits of the Edo state cover a large number of similar groups in close proximity to the Edo people. The majority of these clans may trace their origins to Benin City, the ancient capital of the Benin people. Several Afemai sub-groups, the Esan people of Edo state, and the Akoko Edo people who live on the state's northern boundaries are examples of such nearby groups. The Mid-Western Region of Nigeria, commonly known as the old Bendel state, was a part of early post-colonial Nigeria before becoming the Edo state. The Edo, Urhobo, Esan, and other people with ties to the Edo can be seen in this region's impact and culture.

## CHAPTER TWO

### 2.0 Introduction

In this chapter, works relevant to this study, as well as documents written by scholars will be reviewed and also the different terminologies and the theory adopted for this research will be discussed.

### 2.1 Language

Sapir (1921) define language as a purely human non-instinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions, and desires, by means of voluntarily produced symbols. According to Sapir, language is a tool used exclusively by humans to express themselves and no other living thing. This mode of communication is regarded as "means of voluntarily produced symbols" by this, Sapir argued that language is communicated through "symbols," such as vocal signs or patterns, rather than just words. According to Sapir, using this tool for communication is not something that people are compelled to do; rather, it is a voluntary act by which we can express ourselves freely while using established "symbols." To put it another way, language is frequently described as the words we use, none of which symbolize or explicitly convey an action, goal,

According to Dingemane (2010: 102), He defines language as "a set of shared conventions used by a community of speakers to communicate meaning." It emphasizes the social aspect of language, and it places less emphasis on the cognitive aspects.

According to Henry Sweet (2014), language is the expression of ideas by means of speech-sound combine into words, words are combine into sentences, the combination answering to that of ideas into thoughts

Bernard and George (1941) formulated the definition: A language as system of arbitrary vocal symbols by means of which a social group cooperates.

Language has a few different components, like syntax (the structure of sentences), morphology (the structure of words), and phonology (the sounds of the language) etc. There are also different levels of language, like the level of sounds, words, sentences, and meaning, and there are other aspects of language like intonation, which is the rise and fall of the voice, and prosody which is the rhythm and stress of speech.

## **2.2 Semantics**

As a word, semantics was first used by Michel Bréal, a French philologist (a language historian), in 1883. He studied how languages are organized, how languages change as time passes, and the connections within languages.

Lyons (1997) defined Semantics is concerned with the study of meaning in language. Its principal aim is to account for the meaning of words and other elements of language and to explain the way in which these combine to form the meanings of sentences.

Leech (1981) defined "semantics as a linguistics field that is concerned with the systematic study of meaning. It is concerned with the meanings of words, the meanings of

combinations of words into phrases and sentences, and the meanings of utterances in context.

Löbner (2013) suggests that semantics is about expression meaning. To explain the descriptive meaning, the explanation will refer to the relationship between meaning, reference, and truth.

### **2.3 Marriage**

According to Westermarck (2018) is the relationship of one or more men to one or more women which is recognized by custom or law and involves certain rights and duties both in case of parties entering the union and in case of children born out of union.

Bradbury (1995), believe that marriage holds a central place in the Benin society and among the Benin people. It is regulated by customs down to the smallest details. This simply points to the fact that traditional marriage ceremony in the Benin society is conducted according to the laid down rules of the people while the language use is one of the manifestation of such rules. These rules are never violated which points to the fact that the language use in traditional marriage ceremony can never be justified for any other varieties of the language in order not to violate the norms of the custom and tradition of the people as displayed in their marriage ceremony.

Havilland (1996) define marriage as a transaction and resulting contract in which a woman and a man are recognized by society as having a continuing claim to the right of sexual access to one another, and in which the woman involved is eligible to bear children.

## **2.4. Song**

According to Griffiee (1992), Songs are one of the most captivating and culturally rich resources that can be easily used in language classrooms. As Griffiee say that “the word song refers to pieces of music that have words, especially popular songs such as those one hears on the radio. In the same field, Griffiee also states that: Songs have elements in common with speech and poetry, they are a unique form. Both songs and speech are vocally produced, are linguistically meaningful and have melody. Both songs and poetry use words to convey meaning, both are usually written down before publication, both can be put to music and both can be listened to. Finally, it shows that a song is a piece of musical composition of words, verse, or poem which is sung or uttered with modulation of the voice which expresses the thought and feeling. Song is powerful. Many people can be moved to tears or other strong emotions by music, and song can acquire strong emotional.

## **2.5 Proverbs**

Wolfgang (1993) A proverb is a short, generally known sentence of the folk which contains wisdom, truth, morals and traditional views in a metaphorical, fixed and memorizable form and which is handed down from generation to generation.

## **2.6 Rituals**

Catherine (1985) introduces the study of ritual theory, the present the idea of dichotomies and how they differentiate between conceptual blueprint (such as belief and myths) and ritual (something acted out). Ritual is seen as a performance of conceptual orientations. Bell integrates the ideas and theories of Edward Shils, Durkheim, Stanley Tambian and Claude Levi Strauss all pertaining to ritual studies. Ritual is understood as a structural mechanism that reintegrate the two opposing dichotomies of the belief and behavior dichotomy. In the sense of community, ritual is seen as a way to create a collective set of belief or ideals. In an ever changing society ritual is the bridge between tradition and constant social change.

Ikponmwonsa (2015) talks about traditional marriage rites according to Benin native law and custom. `` In Benin culture and tradition, marriage rites are held in a very high esteem, in fact almost religiously. It is often said that marriage is one of the important cardinal points of anyone's life, the other being birth and death. According to Benin culture, the forms the bedrock of any community and hence the norms and values imbibed at the family level go a long way in the achievement of success or failure of the entire community. Marriage is seen as the starting point for the formation of this important bedrock.

## **2.7 Theoretical Framework**

The descriptive analysis theory proposed by Dixon (1972) is utilized in this study of semantic review of songs and rituals used in the Edo traditional marriage ceremony. This theory focuses on describing and analyzing the features, structures, and functions of language and communication.

In the context of this study, the descriptive analysis theory is applied to analyze the semantic aspects of the songs and rituals. It involves examining the meaning, symbolism, and cultural significance embedded within the lyrics, melodies, and actions performed during the ceremony.

The theory helped in identifying patterns, themes, and motifs present in the songs and rituals, allowing for a deeper understanding of their role and purpose in the traditional marriage ceremony. It also helped to explore how language and communication are employed to convey social, cultural, and emotional messages within the Edo community.

By applying the descriptive analysis theory, researchers can conduct a comprehensive examination of the semantic features of the songs and rituals, providing a rich and detailed understanding of their cultural importance and significance. This can contribute to the preservation and documentation of Edo cultural heritage, as well as shed light on the broader field of linguistics.

## **2.8 The Concern Of Present Study**

This work unlike previous studies done on songs and rituals will be focusing on the Semantic review of songs and rituals practices that are integral to the Edo traditional marriage ceremony. Through this examination we aim to gain a deeper understanding of the cultural and symbolic significance of these elements in the context of Edo marriage tradition, it also aims at understanding the significance of songs and rituals, the underlying cultural heritage unlike other studies. In this project work I will start by explaining the meaning of Semantic review, and also listing the statement of problem, objective of the study, research questions and the Language and culture of the people. Work related to this study and the theoretical framework will be looked at. The data collected through the means of participate observation will be looked at and analyzed to show their significance to the Edo culture.

## CHAPTER THREE

### DATA PRESENTATION

#### 3.0 Introduction

This chapter focuses on data collected on songs and rituals use in the Edo traditional marriage ceremony

#### 3.1 Data Collected On Rituals And Songs

**3.1.1 Breaking Kolanut:** song associated with this ritual is

1. Oṣẹvbe gha va.

" Break kola nut"

Gha va o oh.

"Break kola nut"

Oṣẹvbe gha va oh.

" Break kola nut"

Gha va oh.

"Break"

**3.1.2 Paying The Bride Price:** This ritual is associated with the song

1. Ghọ ọmọ ghọ omo

"See the child"

Ghọ ọmọ ghọ ọmọ

"See the child"

Ọmọ nogie

"A great child"

Erha mwe ghọ ọmọ o

"My father See the child"

Iye mwe ghọ ọmọ o

"My mother See the child"

Eghe mwe gho ọmọ o

"My family See the child"

A I kpeitan ye emwe ọmọ

"You do not scold a child"

Ghọ ọmọ ghọ ọmọ

"See the child"

Ọmọ nogie

"A great child"



Fig 1

Picture from the wedding ceremony of Lydia Ighodaro and Abel Asuenimen at 21,Osagiede street, urora

In figure 1 we can see a picture of the bride's price being paid by the groom family

**3.1.3 The Covering Of A Maiden With A Veil Who Is Not The Intended Bride:** Song associated with this ritual is

Esiwo siwo asiwo

"Congratulation"

Esiwo siwo asiwo

"Congratulation"

### **3.1.4 Giving Money To The Bride's Mother:** Songs associated with this ritual include

1. Iye ọmọ rhie igho nẹ

"The child's mother has taken money"

Egbe iye ọmọ furre vbe amẹzẹ

"Her body is calm like a river"

Iye ọmọ rri igho nẹ

"The child's mother has taken money"

Egbe iye ọmọ furre vbe amẹzẹ

" Her body is calm like a river"

2. Iye ọmọ rhie igho

"The child's mother has collected money"

rhie igho

"Collect money

rhie igho

" Collect money"

ẹkpo ne u na sẹ use

"While u were suffering to raise your child"

Igbiagha vin ihue

"Protitute made mockery of you"



Fig 2

In figure 2 we can see that money is being given to the bride's mother, thanking her for taking care of the bride.

### **3.1.5 Presenting The Bride:** songs associated with this ritual include

#### 1. Ovbiqha mwę de

"The bride is coming"

de o, de

" Is coming"

Ovbiọha mwe de o, olutun ere

" The bride is coming everyone"

2. Ovbiọha mwe ze owe rre gboghodo

"My bride step forward" majestically

Ovbiọha mwe ze owe rre gboghodo

"My bride step forward majestically"

ne u do rhie umamwe gboghodo

"To take goodness majestically"

ne u do rhie utomwe gboghodo

"To take long life majestically"

Ovbiọha mwe zo owe rre gboghodo

"My bride step forward"

Ovbiọha mwe zo owe rre gboghod

" My bride step forward"

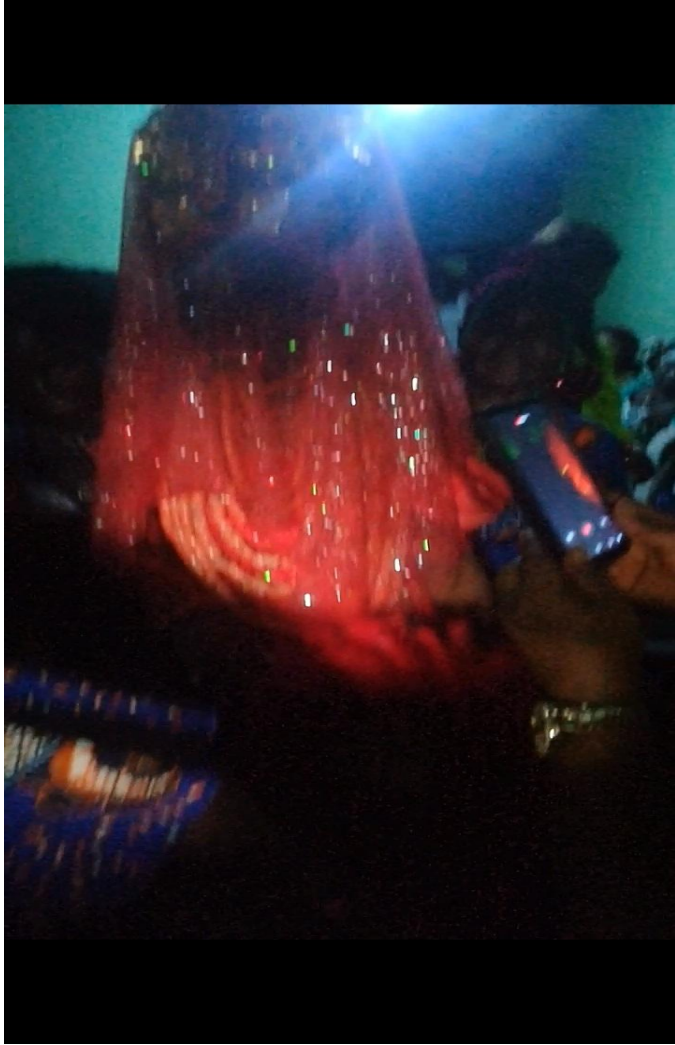


Fig 3

In figure 3 pictures of the bride matching majestically to the event room while the women sing songs of encouragement

**3.1.6 The Confirmation Of The Groom By The Bride:** This ritual is associated with song like:

Vbe a ghi u vbe ediran

"What are we doing here"

Ugie ọmọ ma do vbe ediran o

"It is the ceremony of a child we are doing here"

Ugie ọmọ

"Ceremony of a child"

Ma do vbe ediran

"We are doing here"

Ugie ọmọ

"Ceremony of a child"

Ma do vbe ediran

"We are doing here"

### **3.1.7 Offering The Bride To The Groom:** Songs associated with

this ritual includes:

1. Ọna a kha we ne a ya ọmọ ne omwasi

"This is the reason it is good to give a child to a good person"

Zomi zomi

Ona kha we ne a ya omọ ne egbesi

"This is the reason it is good to give a child to a good family"

Zomi zomi

2. Ovbiọha mi aro, aro

Bride be proud

Ovbiọha mi aro, aro

Bride be proud

Ovbiọha mi aro, aro

Bride be proud

3. Vbọkin oyemwen nọ

"What is it, is happiness"

Owe vbọkin oyemwen nọ

" I say what is it, is happiness"

Oyemwen omọ oyemwen nọ

"Happiness of a child, it is happiness"

Oyemwen igbo oyemwen nọ

"Happiness of money, it is happiness"

3. Evbu se ima obọ ima ghọghọ

" Dew has finally be given to us, we are happy"

Egohu se ima obọ ima ghọghọ

" Gold had finally be given to us, we are happy"

Ovbiọha se ima obọ ima ghọghọ

"The bride has finally be given to us"



Fig 4

Figure 4 is showing how the bride is being handed over to her new family, which is by placing her on the lap of the groom's father seven times, the seventh time he then hands her over to his son

### **3.1.8 Blessings And Consent:** songs associated with this ritual

Emwi na ghoghọ yi

"What we are happy for?"

Ẹ ghi fo vbe obọ ima hia o e

"Will not finish in our hand"

Emwi na ghoghò yi

"What are are happy for?"

È ghi fo vbe obọ ma hia o e

"Will not finish in our hand"

**3.1.9 Presenting The Couple To The Audience:** This ritual is associated with the song

1. Esiwo siwo asiwo

A gha biẹ ọmọ ete a ghoghò

"When a child is born we are happy"

A gha rri okhuo ete a ghoghò

"When we take a woman we are happy"

Esiwo siwo asiwo

2. Ọnailele, ọnailele

"See my choice"

Ọnailele o

"This is my choice"

Ọnailele ọnailele

" See my choice"

Ọnailele ovbiọha mwẹ o

"This is my choice of a wife"

Ọnailele o

"This is my choice"

Ọgha khon wẹ silivie ye egbe

"If you like decorate yourself with beads"

Ọnailele o

"This is my choice".

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA ANALYSIS**

#### **4.0 Introduction**

This chapter will be analyzing the data in chapter 2, by looking at the semantic meaning, how they are being use, and the important of the data to the Edo society.

#### **4.1 Semantic Analysis Of Rituals Used In The Edo Traditional Marriage Ceremony**

##### **4.1.1 Breaking Kola Nut**

The breaking of the kola nut: kola nuts are broken and shared among the elders and guest. This ritual is a symbol of hospitality, Respect between the families, and unity. It is an important ritual that symbolizes coming together of both families to celebrate and bless the couple. Kola nut is also use to render prayers. The kola nut holds cultural and symbolic significance in Edo society, often used in ceremonies, rituals, and social gatherings. It's considered a sign of hospitality, shared among guests and hosts to foster connections and build relationships. Additionally, the kola nut is believed to have spiritual properties, connecting people with their ancestors and serving as an offering to deities. Its use is deeply rooted in Edo traditions and plays a vital role in their cultural fabric.

##### **4.1.2 Paying The Bride's Price**

The paying of the bride price: In Edo culture, the bride price holds significant cultural and traditional importance. It symbolizes respect, appreciation, and recognition of the bride's

family. It serves as a way to strengthen familial ties, showcase the groom's ability to provide for his future wife, and establish a sense of responsibility. Additionally, the exchange of bride price items often involves negotiations, fostering communication and unity between the two families. However, it's essential to note that perspectives on the significance of bride price can vary within the Edo community and may evolve over time.

**4.1.3 The Covering Of A Maiden With A Veil Who Is Not The Intended Bride:** This is one of the important ritual done in an Edo traditional marriage ceremony. This ritual is done in order to know if the groom will be able to recognize his bride. This ritual is done by bringing a maiden in the bride's family covered with a veil who is not the intended bride and ask the groom if she is the one the groom replies with no. This is repeated four or five times before they bring out the bride who will stand out prominently because of her okuku (traditional hairdo).

#### **4.1.4 Giving Money To The Bride's Mother**

Giving of money to the mother of the bride: In the Edo culture, giving money to the mother of the bride carries a symbolic gesture of appreciation, respect, and recognition for the bride's upbringing and care. This practice acknowledges the role of the mother in raising and nurturing the bride, and it is a way for the groom and his family to show gratitude for her efforts. It also serves as a token of goodwill and demonstrates the groom's willingness to embrace and integrate into the bride's family. This tradition fosters positive

relationships between families and contributes to the overall unity and harmony between both sides.

#### **4.1.5 Presenting The Bride**

In Edo traditional marriage, the moment when the bride is brought out to the event room holds significant symbolism. It represents the formal introduction of the bride to her groom and his family, as well as to the larger community gathered for the celebration. This act symbolizes the transition of the bride from her family's home to her husband's family, marking the beginning of her new life as a wife and member of her husband's household. It is a moment of joy, unity, and the merging of two families, and it is often accompanied by traditional songs, dances, and rituals that celebrate the union and honor the bride's journey into her new role.

#### **4.1.6 The Confirmation Of The Groom By The Bride**

The confirmation of the groom by the bride: During this ritual the bride is called in by her father and ask if she knows the visitor (i.e her fiancé and his family). After that he will reveal to her the purpose of their visit ( i.e to ask for her hand in marriage).Finally her father would inquire her response to the marriage proposal which she will say yes, the family can then accept the drinks and kola nut.

#### **4.1.7 The Handling Of The Bride To The Groom**

The handling of the bride to the groom: This is one of the most important rituals in the Edo traditional marriage. It is done by the bride's father placing her on the lap of the groom's father seven times at seventh time the groom's father then, place the pride on the groom's lap. This ritual signify that the bride has been officially handed over to her new family and they have accepted her.

**4.1.8 Blessings And Consent:** Blessing and consent: The bride and groom receive blessing and consent from their parents, an elders or representative may seek the couple's consent to marry each other and once granted, blessing are for a successful union. Blessing a couple in the Edo culture is significant as it invokes positive energy, goodwill, and the support of the community for their marriage. It symbolizes the approval and acceptance of the union by ancestors and deities, fostering a harmonious and prosperous marital journey.

**4.1.9 Presenting The Couple To The Audience:** After the ritual and songs in the living room the couple is then presented to the audience as the new couple in town.

## **4.2 Semantic Analysis Of Songs Use In The Edo Traditional Marriage Ceremony**

1 Ovbie Oha ze Owe rre Gboghodo

Ovbie Oha ze Owe rre Gboghodo

Ne u do rhie uwa! Gboghodo

Ne u do rhie utomwe Gboghodo

Ne u do rhie ukhuegbe!

As song of this nature is very significant as it makes the consent and agreement of the bride to really marry the groom. Cases have shown that, when the bride refuses to come out of the room, it reveals her refusal to the marriage. This was observed when marriages were arranged by the bride's parent without the consent of the bride.

This song is usually sung by the bride's friends or sisters who lead her out of the room. Before the bride is led out of the room, the family of the bride usually arrange a parade of some girls in the household of the bride to escort her to the marriage scene for the groom to choose or identify his bride to be. The above song is translated as below:

Ovbioha Ze Owe rre Gboghodo

Lex. T. [BRIDE ADVERB LEG COME ELEGANTLY]

Lit. T. [Bride move LEG come elegantly]

Free T. [The bride should walk elegantly]

Ne u do rhie Uwa! Gboghodo

Lex. T. [SO 2ND COME ACQUIRE WEALTH ELEGANTLY]

Lit. T. [So you come acquire wealth elegantly]

Free T. [The bride should come to possess wealth elegantly]

Ne u do rhie Ukhuegbe Gboghodo

Lex. T. (SO 2ND COME ACQUIRE GOOD HEALTH ELEGANTLY)

Lit. T. (So you come acquire good health elegantly)

Free T. (The bride should come to have good health)

Fig. T. (Marriage wishes for the bride)

Ne u do rhie utomwe! Gboghodo

Lex. T. (SO 2ND PER. PRON. COME ACQUIRE; LONG-LIFE)

Lit. T. (So you come acquire long life elegantly)

Free T. (The bride should come to have long life elegantly)

This type of song is normally sung immediately after the families concerned have finally agreed to accept the bride price and the money being paid. The family of the bridegroom suddenly sings:

2 Evbu se Ima Obọ, Ima ghoghọ o o

Egohu se Ima obọ, Ima ghoghọ o o

Ovbiḡha se Ima obḡ, Ima ghḡghḡ ....

ḡmḡ na se Ima obḡ, Ima ghḡghḡ....

When the family of the bridegroom shout for joy of accomplishing their mission, the groom usually stands up and begin the dance of joy spraying the bride and her family with money to further express his joy.

Evbu se Ima obḡ, Ima ghḡghḡ

Lex. T. [DEW REACH 1ST PER. PL. HAND 1ST PER. PL. HAPPY]

Lit. T. [The bride has finally been given to us, we happy]

Free T. [The bride has finally been given to us, we are happy]

Egolu se Ima obḡ, Ima ghḡghḡ

Lex. T. [GOLD REACH 1ST PER. PL. HAND 1ST PER. PL. HAPPY]

Lit. T. [Bride reach we hand we happy]

Free T. [The bride has finally been given to us, we are happy]

Omọ na se Ima obọ, Ima ghoghọ

Lex. T. [CHILD THIS REACH 1ST PER PL. HAND 1ST PER PL.HAPPY]

Lit. T. [Child this reach we hand we happy]

Free T. [This child has finally been given to us, we are happy]

The term “Egolu meaning Gold in the English language which symbolizes a valuable ornament which is precious. And when the family of the groom uses this term to personify the bride, they try to infer that the bride given to them is precious and equally valuable and so they dance for joy.

3.Siwo! Siwo!! Siwo!!!

Vbe a ghi ru vbe ediran?

Ugie omọ ima do vbe eran O

Vba a ghi ru vbe ediran?

Ugie omọ ima do vbe eran o.

As songs of introduction to the ceremony, this song is sung as an opener to a happy celebration. This is usually sung by someone from the bride's family who comes out and in an outburst saying

Siwo! Siwo!! Siwo!!!

Hurray! Hurray!! Hurray!!!

This expression could be modified to suit the occasion. Also, the same person who says Siwo! Siwo!! Siwo!!! continues with the song. However, the song presented above is translated as presented below:

Vbe a ghi ru vbe ediran?

Lex. T. [what pron ING Do PLACE HERE]

Lit. T. [What we doing on here]

Free T. [What is going on here]

This expression is simply used to ask what is the course of the occasion why the people are gathering together. In order to get an answer for the question raised above, the people around or the same person would reply;

Ugie ɔmɔ ma do vbe eran o

Lex. T. [FESTIVAL CHILD IST DO PREP HERE]

Lit. T. [Festival child we do at here]

Free T. [It is a marriage ceremony]

#### 4. Emwi na ghoghọ yi

E ghi fo vbe obọ ima ya o ehe

Lex T. [THINGS THE HAPPY FOR WILL NOT FINISH IN HAND 1ST PER. OUR]

Lit T. [This thing we are happy for will not finish hand we our]

Free T. [what we are happy for will not finish from our hand]

#### 5. Ovbiọha mwẹ de

de o, de

Ovbiọha mwẹ de o, olutun ere

This type of song is used to bring the bride from her dressing room to the marriage scene.

Ovbiọha mwẹ de, de o, de

Lex.T [BRIDE MY IS COMING, COMING, COMING]

Lit.T. [ Bride my is coming, coming, coming]

FreT. [ my is coming, coming, coming]

Ovbiọha mwe de, olutun ere

Lex.T. [BRIDE MY IS COMING, ELDERS]

Lit.T. [ Bride my is coming, elders]

FreT. [Elders my bride is coming]

6. Iye ọmọ rhie igho ne

Egbiye ọmọ furre vbe ameze

7. Iye ọmọ rhie igho

rhie igho

rhie igho

ekpo ne u na se use

## Igbiagha vin ihue

These songs are sang after money has been given to the mother of the bride, thanking her for taking care of the bride. The bride's mother then gives half of the money to the groom's family asking them to take care of her daughter with the money.

Iyeomọ rhie igho ne

Egbiye omọ furre vbe amẹzẹ

Lex T. [ Child's mother take money, mother's body calm like river]

Lit T. [ Child's mother take money, mother's body is calm like a river]

Free T. [ The child's mother has collected money; she is calm like a river]

Iye omọ rhie igho

Lex T. [ MOTHER CHILD TAKE MONEY]

Lit T. [ Child's mother take money]

Free T. [ The child's mother has collected money]

ekpo ne u na se use

Igbiagha vin ihue

This part is talking about how the mother has struggled taking care of the child and how she was being laugh out by prostitute for keeping the child, but now she is enjoying it.

Lex T. [BAG 2ND PRO FACE SUFFERING, PROSTITUTE CUT NOSE]

Lit T. [ Bag that you face suffering, prostitute cut nose]

Free T. [While you were suffering to raise your child prostitute made mockery of you]

8. Ghọ ọmọ ghọ Ọmọ

Ghọ ọmọ ghọ ọmọ

Ọmọ nogie

Erha mwe ghọ ọmọ o

Iye mwe ghọ ọmọ o

Egbe mwe ghọ ọmọ o

A I kpeitan ye emwe ọmọ

Ghọ ọmọ ghọ ọmọ

Ọmọ nogie

Ghọ ọmọ

ọmọ nogie

Lex. T [ SEE CHILD, CHILD GREAT]

Lit. T. [ see child, see a great child]

Free.T. [ See the child, a great child]

Erha mwe ghọ ọmọ o

Lex. T [ FATHER MY SEE CHILD]

Lit. T. [ Father my see the child]

Free.T. [my father see the child]

Iye mwe ghọ ọmọ o

Lex. T [MOTHER MY SEE CHILD]

Lit. T. [ Mother my see the child]

Free.T. [my mother see the child]

Ègbe mwe ghọ ọmọ o

Lex. T [FAMILY MY SEE CHILD]

Lit. T. [ Family my see the child]

Free.T. [my family see the child]

#### **4.3 Analysis Of Proverbs In The Songs Above**

Proverbs in the songs above include

1. A I kpeitan ye ẹmwẹn ọmọ: children hold great significance as they represent the continuity of family lineage, traditions, and values. They are seen as blessings and are integral to the social fabric of the community. Children are often cherished, nurtured, and taught important cultural practices, language, and customs from a young age. According to this proverb, a child is precious, tasking, difficult, painful, and costly. A child is not something you can play with, no matter how bad a child is, the parents love and cherish them. This proverb is placing important on children.

2. Èkpo ne u na sẹ usẹ

## Igbiagha vin ihue

This proverb is placing important values on the women. Some woman decides not to give birth, some removed their child (abortion). This proverb is praising the women that decided to keep their child although they have gone through pain and suffering but at last they will eat the fruit of their labor.

3. Ovbiagha mi aro, aro: This proverb place emphasis on the bride. This proverb is telling the bride to be proud since that day is for her, also she should display some qualities.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

#### 5.1 Summary

In Chapter one, it had the general introduction where this study and what to be carried out in this work was introduced as well as the statement of problem, aims and objective, the research questions, and the methodology were discussed in view of the main work.

In chapter two the various terms used were discussed as well as the theoretical framework, were fully explained.

In chapter three, the data collected during the research of this work were presented. The rituals and the songs associated with it, were listed.

In chapter four the data in chapter three were analyzed.

#### 5.2 Findings

Based on the semantic review of songs and rituals used in Edo Traditional marriage ceremony it can be seen that:

1. This study revealed that songs and rituals used in the Edo traditional marriage ceremony have semantic significance

2. The study reveals that the semantic analysis of songs and rituals used, influenced people's experience and understanding of Edo cultural custom

during a marital festival.

3. This study reveals that the semantic review of songs and rituals contribute to the preservation of those cultural practices.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

In conclusion, the semantic review of songs and ritual use in the Edo traditional marriage ceremony sheds light on the rich cultural significance and symbolism embedded in these practices. Through the analysis of lyrics, melodies, and ceremonial elements, we've gained a deeper understanding of how music and rituals intertwine to express social bonds, values, and emotions within the Edo community. This study underscores the importance of preserving and appreciating these traditions for future generations and cultural appreciation.

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