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## Phonological patterning of words of Ogidi dialect and Standard Igbo

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### Abstract

*The Igbo language is multi-dialected. It comprises many varieties but among all, the standard Igbo has been universally accepted by the native speakers of the language to be used in education and for wider communication throughout the Igbo speaking areas of the nation. Many varieties of the Igbo language differ in sounds and sound patterning. This paper investigates the differences in the phonological patterning of lexical words in Ogidi variant of Igbo and standard Igbo using the Comparative Method as the theoretical framework, and the descriptive approach to data analysis. This phonological patterning would sometimes involve the alternation of the standard Igbo /s/, /r/ and /w/ with /ts/, /l/ and /b/ respectively in the Ogidi variant. The paper tries to find out in what words such alternation occurs. Among other things, it discovers that the standard Igbo /s/ is not found in Ogidi-Igbo, and so, the dialect substitutes it with /ts/ which is found as the closest-match phoneme for /s/ in Ogidi. For /r/ and /l/ phonemes, they are observed to be in free variation in most words, though with few exceptions in words like ọ́rìà 'sickness', ríó 'beg/plea' and ùrìóm̄ 'a sign made by hand in rejection of evil'. Then, the substitution of standard Igbo /w/ with /b/ in the Ogidi-Igbo occurs most times, but not entirely, mainly in words containing the inceptive extensional suffix -we/-wa 'start/begin to'.*

## **1.0 Introduction**

The Igbo language has so many dialects which to a large extent are mutually intelligible and Ogidi dialect is one of them. Ogidi is a geographical dialect found in Idemili North Local Government Area, Anambra State. According to Nwaozuzu (2008), Ogidi is classified as one of the dialects belonging to the East Niger Group of Dialects (ENGD). It is found in Anambra State; one of the five states in the South Eastern Nigeria. In Ogidi speech community, there are nine villages: Ire, Uru, Ezi-Ogidi, Nkwelle Ogidi, Aboh Ogidi, Ogidi-Ani, Umuru, Iyi-enu and Ikenga. That is why Ogidi is known as "Ogidi - Ebo Teete" (meaning 'Ogidi, a town of nine villages.' These nine villages are further grouped into four quarters: Ire, Uru, Ezinkwo and Ikenga. As a competent native speaker of the Ogidi-Igbo, and also having a good knowledge of the standard Igbo, I have observed that there is a considerable level of mutual intelligibility among the speakers of Ogidi variant of Igbo and the standard Igbo.

However, one notion that is highly regarded in linguistics is that every language is unique. This is to say that no language is inferior as long as the study of linguistics is concerned. Therefore, the Ogidi dialect of Igbo is unique in its peculiarity. Generally, languages and dialects in particular possess many interesting attributes that attract linguistic investigations. One of such language universals is the wide range of sounds by every language. Though a language may have many sounds but not all of them are linguistically relevant. Those sounds that are used are the sounds that are distinctive in a language, and these distinctive sounds are the phonemes of a language. Then, how the phonemes are arranged or patterned is language specific. This means that how the sounds are patterned for the realization of morphemes and words may

differ from one language to another, thus phonological patterning of words.

Wardhaugh (2000) states that phonological difference is one of the areas of differences that makes a variety stand out as a dialect. In other words, the sounds of different dialects of a language can never be the same. They may have most of the sounds in common but there must be some differences in their sounds and patterning to show that they are not the same. Therefore, it is not surprising that there is a phonological difference between the standard Igbo and Ogidi variant of Igbo. However, some phonemes could be substituted in some words with other phonemes without any change in the meaning of the words. In such a case, the phonemes involved are in free variation. For example, the standard Igbo phoneme /l/ in the word ‘ulo’ ‘house’ is in free variation with one of these phonemes /n, j/ in some Igbo dialects: for instance, the Onicha Igbo uses /n/ in place of /l/ in the word and Ngwa /j/ in the place of /l/. That is, the standard Igbo ‘ulo’ is realized as /ʊnɔ/ and /ʊjɔ/ in Onicha and Ngwa respectively.

Another instance of phonological difference is seen in Eme (2005), using the Igbo phoneme /h/ in the word ‘ahia’ (market); she states that the standard Igbo phoneme /h/ in the ahia is in free variation with one of the phonemes /ɸ β f v ʃ ʃʷz/ in some Igbo dialects. For instance, the Ikeduru Igbo uses /z/ in place of /h/ in the word. That is, the standard Igbo ‘ahia’ is realized as /áʒá/ in the dialect. The Adazi-Nnukwu Igbo uses the voiceless bilabial fricative /ɸ/ to substitute /h/ to have /áɸíá/ ‘market’. In the same vein, the Ogidi Igbo uses the phoneme /f/ to substitute /h/ to have /áfíá/ in the dialect. This means that in the Igbo dialects for example, the appropriate segments substitute /h/ wherever, the standard Igbo word /áhíá/ is involved.

This study adopts the Comparative Method as a theoretical framework. The Comparative Method was developed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century for the reconstruction of Proto-Indo-European and was subsequently applied to the study of other language families. In linguistics, Comparative Method is a technique for studying the development of languages by performing a feature-by-feature comparison of two or more languages with common descent from a shared ancestor. It is used to discover the development of phonological, morphological and other linguistic systems, comparing related words and expressions in languages or dialects derived from it, to confirm or to refute hypothetical relationship between languages.

The Comparative Method framework is significant in phonological analysis in the sense that it is used to compare and examine the phonemes of languages to determine their similarities and differences and how they are patterned. Therefore, the present study uses the framework to compare and examine features of some phonemes of standard Igbo and Ogidi dialect, then using descriptive approach to explain how they are patterned, that is, the phonemic alternations that exist in the two speech forms.

## **2.0 Literature Review**

Scholars like Westermann and Ward (1990) and Wardhaugh (1998) assert that languages and dialects differ from each other in some respects. In their discussion of the difficulties of learning a new language, Westermann and Ward (1990:1) explain that language differ from each other in such areas as grammar, idiom, vocabulary, production of the sounds which makeup the language, in the way sounds are linked together to make words a sentence etc. This tells us that the phonological patterning of the two words

of a language or dialect is just only a part of a whole of differing elements between two languages or dialects.

Abercrombie (1967: 76) in his discussion of the phonological patterning of words in languages, points out that “every language has some structural regularities, and this produces in the speakers of the language a deep noted habits of speech which are difficult to change.” So slangs, expressions, borrowed words and trade name conform to the pattern. He explains that words which are newly invented into a language or dialect could either be accepted or rejected basically on whether or not they conform to the phonological patterning of the language or dialect. For example, in English, the speech sound that ends the word *sing*/sɪŋ/- the velar nasal [ŋ] cannot begin a word in English but in Vietnamese the velar nasal [ŋ] can begin a word, e.g *Nyuyen*, a name in Vietnamese. So, in English, a word like /ŋɪs/ is not accepted in the language because it is not a permissible patterning in English. By this, we see that speakers of a language or dialect often find it difficult to produce words, phonological patterns of which go against the permissible phoneme combination of their variety.

Lyons (1981:86) states that "segments are substitutable for one another...". Once the substitution occurs in the environment without bringing about a meaning difference, the segments involved are said to be in free variation. In other words, some segments can be in free variation in a language. For instance, in English, /i/ and /ɛ/ are in free variation in the following words, and are acceptable in the pronunciation of the words:

- |     |                                   |               |
|-----|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| Ia. | [ɪk'sɛntrɪk] / [ɛk'sɛntrɪk]       | 'eccentric'   |
| b.  | [ɪgzæmɪ'neɪʃən] / [ɛgzæmɪ'neɪʃən] | 'examination' |
| c.  | [ɪgzæmpl] / [ɛgzæmpl]             | 'example'     |
- Yul-Ifode (1999:37)

The case is the same in the Luba language, the standard form of the language has the t/f as free variants as could be seen in the following words:

- |     |                     |                 |
|-----|---------------------|-----------------|
| 2a. | [butuku] / [bufuku] | 'night'         |
| b.  | [dituku] / [difuku] | 'day'           |
| c.  | [dituwa] / [difuwa] | 'cooking stone' |

This is similar to what happens in Ogidi variant of Igbo, where the standard Igbo voiced alveolar trill/r/ is in free variation with the Ogidi-Igbo voiced alveolar lateral /l/ in most words such as: standard Igbo ebere, efere, ụdara and araare being realized as /èbélé/ 'mercy', /éfélé/ 'plate', /ùdàrà/ 'apple', and /árá/ 'breast' respectively in Ogidi-Igbo, though there are few exceptions.

Denham and Lobeck (2013) discussing sound patterning in languages, considering the distinction between the sounds /l/ and /r/, said that they are distinct phonemes in English, and to English speakers, then, the sounds seem quite different from each other but are similar in terms of their place and manner of articulation. However, other languages such as Japanese, Korean, and Hawaiian- do not have a phonemic distinction between [l] and [r] because in those languages the sounds are allophones of one phoneme. In Japanese, there is only one /r/ phoneme, though it is a bit different from American English [r], and one of the allophones of /r/ sounds more like an [l] to English speakers. And Hawaiian has no /r/, so when English words are borrowed into Hawaiian, a closest-match phoneme substitutes. In Hawaiian, therefore, the English borrowing *Merry Christmas* is pronounced as *Meli Kalikimaka* (Hawaiian lacks the /s/ phoneme). (cf. Denham and Lobeck, 2013 p106). In Ogidi-Igbo, /l/ and /r/ are distinct phonemes, just the same way we have it in English, and are similar in terms of their place and manner of articulation, but both are

found to be in free variation in most words in Ogidi dialect. In the case of /s/ and /ts/, what happens in Ogidi-Igbo is similar to what is seen in Hawaiian /l/ for /r/. The Ogidi-Igbo has no /s/ of the standard Igbo. Therefore, the dialect uses the voiceless alveolar affricate /ts/ to substitute the standard Igbo voiceless alveolar fricative /s/, since that (/ts/) is seen as the closest-match phoneme in the dialect.

Using comparative method, and descriptive method of analysis, Ajubee and Kammelu (2007) carried out a study on the vowel harmony systems of Igbo and Yoruba. Placing the features of vowel systems of both languages side-by-side, they observe that Igbo has harmony sets marked as [+ATR] /e i o u/ and [-ATR] /a ɪ ɔ ʊ/ while Yoruba has harmony sets marked as [+ATR] /e o/ and [-ATR] /eɔ/ including a neutral vowel /a/ which co-occurs freely with the vowels in each set. This affects how the sounds that make up the lexical items are patterned in the languages.

Eme and Mbagwu (2007) is a paper on phonological patterning of words in Akpo and standard Igbo. Using the comparative method, they observed a consistent difference in the phonological patterning of words in the two variants of Igbo which involves the substitution or alternation of the standard Igbo labialized velar nasal /ŋ<sup>w</sup>/ or labial velar approximant /w/ with bilabial nasal /m/ in Akpo Igbo. The study also employed descriptive approach in data analysis. Among other findings, they discover that /nw/ is substituted with /m/ mostly when the verb root 'nwe' is involved, but only in some specified contexts such as could be seen in the examples below:

3. S. I:                    Ò nwèrè ihe mere?  
Akpo:                   Ò mere ihe mere ni?  
Gloss:                   Was there anything that happened?

4. S.I: O nwèrè onye kwụ ya n'azụ.  
Akpo: O mere onye kwụ ya n'azụ.  
Gloss: There is somebody supporting him.

The scholars also observed that when the verb root /ŋ<sup>w</sup>e/ applies to mean 'have', the /ŋ<sup>w</sup>e/ is not substituted with /m/.

5. S.I: O nwèrè ọba ji.  
Akpo: O nwere ọba ji.  
Gloss: He has a yam barn.

6. S.I: Anyi nwèrè otu ụlọ.  
Akpo: Anyi nwèrè otu ụlọ.  
Gloss: We have a house.

Eme and Mbagwu (2007:74) show also that the labial velar approximant /w/ in standard Igbo is substituted with the bilabial nasal /m/ in some words of Akpo-Igbo. Such substitution, they say, occurs mainly in words containing the inceptive extensional suffix -we/-wa 'begin to/start'. Instances are shown in the examples below:

7. S.I: bewe akwa.  
Akpo: beme akwa.  
Gloss: start crying.
8. S.I: tųwa ya okwute.  
Akpo: tųma ya okwute.  
Gloss: start throwing stones at it.

Eme and Mbagwu (2007) is different from the present study in the sense that the scholars compared the phonological patterning of words between Akpo and standard Igbo while this study is on phonological patterning of words between Ogidi and standard



Igbo. Though both works are similar but the dialects the phonological patterning of words are compared with standard Igbo differ, and the phonemes substituted are not the same; thus the former is Akpo while the latter is Ogidi. One of the differences observed between the reviewed work of Eme and Mbagwu and the present study is that while /w/ in standard Igbo is substituted with /m/ in Akpo variant of Igbo, it is substituted with /b/ in Ogidi variant of the standard Igbo but in a similar manner.

Egwuonwu (2017) investigates the Arondizuogu dialect of the Igbo language. In the study, he compares the dialect with the standard Igbo in order to ascertain the areas of convergences and differences between them, using the descriptive approach in the analysis of his data. In the study, he observed that the alveolar nasal /n/ is used in almost all environments where the standard Igbo uses /l/ as in:

9.	Arondizuogu	Igbo	Gloss
	/ana/	/ala/	land
	/uno/	/ulo/	house
	/ogonogo/	/ogologo/	tall
	/ini/	/ili/	grave
	/one/	/ole/	how many

He says that the reason for the above might be because the two consonant sounds are alveolar consonants sounds. In the present study on Ogidi-Igbo, what is observed is that /l/ is used in almost all environments where the standard Igbo uses /r/, still because both phonemes share the place of articulation as in Arondizuogu. In addition, the study acknowledges that this r/l substitution in Ogidi dialect mostly occurs when the phonemes are found in between two vowels. Also in Arondizuogu, Egwuonwu observes

that some other consonants in the dialect are in free variation with some consonants used in the standard Igbo as in:

10.	Arondizuogu Dialect	Standard Igbo	English
	nni /nni/	nri /nri/	food
	eghu /eyu/	ewu /ewu/	goat
	oso /oso/	ose /ose/	pepper

In the above examples, /n/ and /r/, /y/ and /w/, /o/ and /e/ respectively occupy the same environment and are phonetically different, yet they do not bring meaning difference.

Mbah and Benjamin (2017) in line with comparative method, studied the tone systems of Ibibio and Igbo. They observe that both languages are tone languages, operating two stable tones namely: the high and the low. For the down-stepped tone in both languages, they observed that the tone appears to be a junction tone, which yields a new meaning of the lexical items which are either concatenated or juxtaposed. Tone is observed to make lexical and grammatical functions. However, there are differences between their tone patterning, observed that word order of lexical items in the Igbo and Ibibio noun and adjective phrase differs, whereas the adjective precedes the noun in Ibibio, the reverse is the case in Igbo. This invariably affects the tone behavior in the languages.

Another noticeable difference in the two languages is the treatment of tonal processes such as glide in the language. In Ibibio there are said to be glides which though exist in Igbo but are not treated as tone type but results of tonal processes. E.g. in Igbo ọkụkọ - LHL could be reduced to a low rising glide if the initial voiceless velar plosive [k] is elided. This type of feature is regarded as a glide in Ibibio.

11.	inân	'four'	H-HL
	unên	'hen'	L-HL
	wàná	'share'	L-LH

This is to say that in Igbo glides, there is always some phonological processes underlying such glides like elision. All these differences observed in Ibibio and Igbo languages determine how words are patterned in both languages. From the works reviewed so far, it is noteworthy that this present study aligns with the previous studies of phonology using the comparative framework and descriptive method of data analysis, but none of the works compares the phonological patterning of words of the Ogidi variant of Igbo with the standard Igbo. This study hereby fills the gap.

### **3.0 Substitution**

There are some Igbo dialects whose speakers find it very difficult to use and understand the standard Igbo. This is as a result of lower degree of intelligibility between such dialects and the standard Igbo. However, as the researcher said earlier, Ogidi-Igbo speakers are able to comprehend and use the standard Igbo as observed by the researcher, who is a native speaker. This is to say that there is a considerable degree of intelligibility between the Ogidi-Igbo and the standard Igbo. Its position as a full-fledged dialect is shown among others by phonological patterning as could be seen in this paper.

### **4.0 Data Presentation and Analysis**

This study uses the Comparative Method to compare and examine features of some phonemes of the standard Igbo and the Ogidi dialect, then, employed the descriptive approach to explain how

they are patterned, that is, the phonemic alternations that exist in the two speech forms. The alternate phonemes in standard Igbo and Ogidi variant of Igbo are here presented side-by-side first, to compare and examine their features. Then, using data from the two speech forms to explain the nature of phonemic alternations/substitutions observed in them. The phonemes in question are shown and described below.

**12. Standard Igbo**

/s/ voiceless alveolar fricative

/r/ voiced alveolar trill

/w/ voiced labialized velar approximant

**Ogidi Variant**

/ts/ voiceless alveolar affricate

/l/ voiced alveolar lateral

/b/ voiced bilabial plosive

Looking at these phonemes above, we observe that the standard Igbo /s/ has the same voicing and place of articulation with Ogidi-Igbo /ts/ which it alternates with, but both only differ in their manner of articulation. Also, the standard Igbo /r/ shares the same voicing and place of articulation with Ogidi variant /l/ which is used to substitute it /r/; and differ in their manner of articulation too. Then, the standard Igbo /w/, which substitutes with the Ogidi /b/ shares the same manner of voicing but differ in place and manner of articulation.

Having compared these phonemes that are substituted with one another in standard Igbo and Ogidi dialect, we could see that the similarities observed are more than the differences, showing more relatedness to prove that there is appreciable level of intelligibility between the Ogidi-Igbo and the standard Igbo. The differences observed in the two speech forms are evinced among others by phonological patterning of words, as shown using the following data.

#### 4.1 Substitution of the Standard Igbo /s/ with /ts/ in Ogidi-Igbo

Here, the phonological patterning of words involving the substitution of the standard Igbo voiceless alveolar fricative /s/ with the voiceless alveolar affricate /ts/ in the Ogidi-Igbo is shown. The words illustrating the substitution in the sentences are italicized for easy sighting.

	<b>Standard Igbo</b>	<b>Ogidi Variant</b>	<b>Gloss</b>
13.	Ọna- <i>esi</i> nri	Ọ na- <i>etsi</i> nni	He/she is cooking.
14.	Obi na- <i>ese</i> ihe	Obi na- <i>etse</i> ife	Obi is drawing something.
15.	Ada <i>sara</i> ya okwu	Ada <i>tsaa</i> ya okwu	Ada replied him/her.
16.	Ugo na- <i>asa</i> efere	Ugo na- <i>atsa</i> efele	Ugo is washing plates.
17.	Ọ <i>sị</i> m laa	Ọ <i>tsị</i> mu naa	He/she asked me to go.
18.	Ekene <i>sị</i> na ọ ga-abia	Ekene <i>tsị</i> na ọ ya-abia	Ekene said he would come.
19.	Ume <i>siri</i> na ọ ga-anu m	Ume <i>tsiri</i> na ọ ya-anu m	Ume said he will marry me.
20.	O wee <i>sị</i> m bia	O wee <i>tsi</i> m bia	And he told me to come.
21.	Ọ choro <i>ị sị</i> ya ndo	Ọ choro <i>ị tsi</i> a ndo	He wants to say sorry to him.
22.	Ngozị hụrụ <i>osa</i>	Ngozị fụrụ <i>otsa</i>	Ngozi saw a squirrel.
23.	Wetara m <i>asisa</i>	Wetaalu m <i>atsitsa</i>	Get me a sponge.
24.	<i>Isi</i> ya buru ibu	<i>Itsi</i> e bulu ibu	His/her head is big.
25.	Ibe gbara <i>osọ</i>	Ibe gbaa <i>otsọ</i>	Ibe ran a race.
26.	Ọgọọ bụ <i>asa</i> nwanyi	Ọgọọ bụ <i>atsa</i> nwanyi	Ọgọọ is a pretty woman.
27.	Ada nọ na <i>nsọ</i> ya	Ada nọ na <i>ntsọ</i> a	Ada is in her menses.

From the above data, we see that substitution of the standard Igbo /s/ with /ts/ occurs in different environments in the Ogidi-Igbo. In the first four examples (13-16), /s/ is substituted with /ts/ when the verb roots *si* /sì/ 'cook', *se* /sè/ 'draw', *sa* /sà/ 'reply' and /sá/ 'wash' are involved. Then, in the next five examples (17-21), the same /s/

is still substituted with /ts/ in Ogidi-Igbo when the verb root s<sub>i</sub> /s<sub>i</sub>/ ‘say/ask/tell’ is involved. Finally, the substitution occurs in simple words of Ogidi-Igbo as could be seen in examples (22-27) of the above data as in the following words - Standard Igbo *asịsa*, *isi*, *osọ*, *asa* and *nsọ* are realized as /átsítsá/ ‘sponge’, /ítsí/ ‘head’, /ótsó/ ‘race’, /átsá/ ‘pretty’ and /ńtsó/ ‘menses’ respectively in Ogidi-Igbo.

No matter the environment of occurrence (whether word initial or medial), the phonological patterning observed here is that the substitution of the standard Igbo /s/ with the Ogidi-Igbo /ts/ occurs in the same environment without destroying the identity of the lexical items under consideration. This substitution as observed, is based on the absence of /s/ in the Ogidi-Igbo. So, the Ogidi dialect native speakers use the /ts/ in their dialect to substitute the standard Igbo /s/, as it (/ts/) stands to be the closest-match phoneme for /s/ in Ogidi variant of Igbo, seeing that both phonemes share the same voicing and place of articulation.

#### *4.2 Substitution of the Standard Igbo /r/ with /l/ in Ogidi-Igbo*

Another instance of substitution is where the standard Igbo alveolar trill /r/ is substituted with alveolar lateral /l/ in the Ogidi-Igbo. Instances of this substitution could be seen in the following simple Igbo words.

<b>Standard Igbo</b>	<b>Ogidi Variant</b>	<b>Gloss</b>
28. <i>nɾọ</i>	<i>n/ọ</i>	‘dream’
29. <i>ɾra</i>	<i>ɾla</i>	‘sleep’
30. <i>Ebere</i>	<i>Ebe/le</i>	‘name of a person’
31. <i>ɾdara</i>	<i>ɾdala</i>	‘apple’
32. <i>ara</i>	<i>ala</i>	‘breast’
33. <i>unere</i>	<i>une/le</i>	‘banana’

34.	amara	amala	'grace'
35.	efere	efele	'plate'
36.	oriri	olili	'feast'
37.	akp̄iri	akp̄ili	'throat'
38.	m̄kp̄uru	m̄kp̄ulu	'seed/fruit'
39.	okpara	okpala	'first son'
40.	okporoko	okpoloko	'stock fish'
41.	ikpere	ikpele	'knee'
42.	ekpere	ekpele	'prayer'

The data above illustrate that the alternation of the standard Igbo /r/ with /l/ in the Ogidi-Igbo occurs mainly when the phonemes are found in between two vowels (i.e. medially), more especially in between two identical vowels. The two phonemes are observed to be in free variation in the words above. However, there are few exceptions to this r/l substitution occurring as free variants in the words of Ogidi and standard Igbo. Such exceptions are evinced in words like: ọ̀rìà 'sickness', á̀rìrìó 'act of begging/plea' and ù̀rìòm̄ 'a sign made by hand in rejection of evil'.

43.	ọ̀ria	ọ̀ya	'sickness'
44.	r̄iọ	yọ	'plead/beg'
45.	ur̄iom̄	uyom̄	'a sign made by hand in rejection of evil'.

Looking at the examples 43-45, we could see that the /r/ of standard Igbo as found in those three examples are substituted with the voiced palatal approximant in the Ogidi-Igbo. The researcher observes that such substitution occurs when the standard Igbo /r/ precedes two consecutive vowels in a word. For example, the /r/ in 43 is found in the environment before /i/ and /a/

consecutively in *orĩa* . The same goes for the /r/ in examples 44 and 45, where the /r/ is substituted with /j/ as it /r/ is found preceding two consecutive vowels /i/ and /o/ in *rịo* and *urịom*.

#### 4.3 Substitution of Standard Igbo /w/ with /b/ in Ogidi-Igbo

This section shows that standard Igbo labial velar approximant /w/ is substituted with voiced bilabial plosive /b/in Ogidi-Igbo. The researcher observed that the substitution here does not apply wherever the standard Igbo /w/ is found. This is to say that it occurs in some words, not everywhere. The words are italicized in the sentences below.

	<b>Standard Igbo</b>	<b>Ogidi Variant</b>	<b>Gloss</b>
46.	<i>tiwe</i> nkpu	<i>tibe</i> nkpu	'start shouting'
47.	<i>chuwe</i> mmiri	<i>chube</i> mmili	'start fetching water'
48.	<i>biwe</i> akwukwo nri	<i>bibe</i> akwukwo nni	'start cutting vegetables'
49.	<i>buwe</i> ibu ndi a	<i>bube</i> ibu ndi a	'start carrying these loads'
50.	<i>mewe</i> enyi	<i>mebe</i> enyi	'start making friends'
51.	<i>dewe</i> akuko	<i>debe</i> akuko	'start writing stories'
52.	<i>kowa</i> ugbo	<i>koba</i> ugbo	'start farming'
53.	<i>jowa</i> ajuju	<i>juba</i> ajuju	'start asking questions'
54.	<i>mowa</i> nwa	<i>muba</i> nwa	'start bearing children'
55.	<i>kpawa</i> isi gi	<i>kpaba</i> isi gi	'start plaiting your hair'
56.	<i>sawa</i> ite ndi a	<i>saba</i> ite ndi a	'start washing these pots'
57.	<i>nodewe</i> ya nso	<i>nodebe</i> a nso	'stay near him/her'
58.	<i>zowe</i> m ebe a	<i>zobe</i> m ebe a	'hide me here (cause someone to be somewhere)'
59.	<i>nowa</i> ya n'och	<i>noba</i> ya n'och	'make him/her to sit (cause someone to be somewhere)'

Looking at the data above, it shows that the alternation of the standard Igbo /w/ with /b/ in the Ogidi-Igbo occurs mostly in those words having the inceptive extensional suffix -we/-wa 'start/begin to' as could be seen in examples 46-56. Notice also that there are



cases where -we/-wa may not imply inception and still the /w/ with /b/ substitution takes place. We have such cases in examples 57, 58, and 59, which is similar with Eme (2007) case in the Akpo dialect, where the standard Igbo /w/ is substituted with /m/ in Akpo-Igbo. Such according to Emenanjo (1978:100) indicates causation.

### **5.0 Summary and Conclusion**

This paper discusses the phonological patterning of words involving the substitution or alternation of /s/, /r/ and /w/ of standard Igbo with /ts/, /l/ and /b/ in the Ogidi variant of Igbo. The substitution of voiceless alveolar fricative /s/ with the voiceless alveolar affricate /ts/ takes place as a result of the absence of /s/ in Ogidi-Igbo. So, Ogidi having the /ts/, found it as the closest-match phoneme to substitute the /s/ of the standard Igbo which does not exist in their dialect. That is why the alternation of the standard Igbo /s/ with /ts/ in the Ogidi-Igbo occurs mostly in words containing the phoneme /s/. The nature of phonological patterning observed in the case of /r/ with /l/ alternation in Ogidi-Igbo is that the two phonemes are in free variation, except in few cases as shown in the paper. Finally, for the alternation of the standard Igbo /w/ with /b/ in the Ogidi-Igbo, such occurs mainly, but not exclusively, when /w/ appears in the environment of '-we/-wa' inceptive extensional suffix, as could be seen in examples 46-56. Also, in few words, the substitution of /w/ with /b/ occurs where '-we/-wa' appears as causative as seen in examples 57-59.

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