

Greeting Pattern in Ngwa

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Abstract

This study examines greeting pattern in Ngwa dialect of the Igbo language. The specific objectives are to identify the greeting pattern, find out how turn taking works in Ngwa Igbo and explores the sociolinguistic factors that influence greeting in Ngwa. The study adopts the conversational analysis as its theoretical framework for analysis with focus on the formal aspect of the theory which is concerned with how conversation works, what rules are observed, how sequencing is achieved (i.e. turn taking, pausing and interrupting). The data were collected through introspection and unstructured oral interviews. The study discovers different pattern of greeting in Ngwa ranging from time of the day greeting, farewell greeting, welcome greeting, social activity greeting, commiserative greeting and commendation greeting. The study finds out that turn taking, adjacency pairs and sequencing are core parts of Ngwa greeting that cannot be neglected. The study also discovers that sociolinguistic factors such as age, sex, level of education, norms and values, peer group and social status affect greeting in Ngwa. The study therefore recommends this study as reference material for schools and other studies for a wider knowledge of sociolinguistics.

Keywords: sociolinguistics, Language-Igbo, dialect-Ngwa, greeting pattern, turn taking

1. Introduction

The knowledge of a language is not restricted to knowledge about the grammatical rules in the language. The basic discourse rules or conversational routines of the language are also included. The pattern of greeting used by the speakers of a language make up an example of the routine. As human beings, we live in a world where a healthy communication is a requisite to a healthy relationship with our neighbours, families, friends, and with the entire society at large. As it stands, no man is an island. We all need recognition in the environment we find ourselves. One of the ways that can be achieved, is through greeting, which forms the course of the study. Greeting is

an important part of the communicative competence necessary for being a member of any speech community. They are often one of the first verbal routines learned by children. According to Akindele (2007), greetings involve the exchange of expression, pleasantries or good wishes between two people or a group of people interacting for the purpose of establishing interpersonal relationship. Greetings are one of the cherished core values that facilitates interpersonal relationships and cooperative reality in Igbo traditional culture. It appears that in the contemporary society, especially as a result of influence of foreign languages and culture, the value attached to greeting and respect for others are grossly waning and more among the younger generation. Some also greet in a non-conforming manner that the socio-cultural value inherent in the Igbo traditional pattern of greeting is apparently absent. As a result, some people have been flagrantly contemptuous and snubbed away noble opportunities or relationships that would have helped in improving their individual lives and the society in general (Udeagha, 2020). The study observes that sometimes, in language learning, greeting in the particular language being taught, comes first, before the learning of other aspects of the language. When we greet, we portray respect towards one another, we show that we acknowledge the one whom we greet, it reveals politeness, and so on. Greeting can be verbal or nonverbal. To Every language, there is a system of doing things. As societies differ, so do their pattern of greeting. Greeting may be universal but it possesses distinctiveness in various languages.

The concept of communicative competence is the ability of a native speaker to speak and understand his/her language and to use it as appropriate. It “subsumes the social determinants of linguistic behaviour, including such environmental matters as the relationship between the speakers and hearers, and the pressures which stem from the time and place of speaking” (Crystal 2003:88). The study of greeting as a concept has attracted a lot of researchers. As every concept has their branch under linguistics where they fall under, greeting falls under the sociolinguistic aspect of linguistics, in that it deals with people's interaction with their various language or dialect in their respective societies. In greeting, several factors are considered, such as status, age, gender, context/situation, etc. Different speech communities have their different conversational norms and when they are ignorantly or intentionally not observed,

problems arise. When the conversational norms are not known, the communicative goal may be hindered or defeated.

The foregoing reveals that greeting is a universal feature which is however culture-dependent. Greeting serves to foster social relationship and to indexicalise parameters like equality and inequality. It provides the platform for inquiring about each other's health and welfare, showing delight with one who is joyful and commiserating with one who is sorrowful. The Igbos should continue to make conscientious efforts in the preservation of their social norms and cultural values, which have shaped and sustained the society since time immemorial. It surmises that greeting in Igbo traditional culture is key relational oil that lubricates and maintains collective survival of the Igbo race. The topic of interest is the sociolinguistic study of patterns of greeting in Ngwa. Ngwa is an Igbo group that constitute the largest and most populous sub-ethnicity, or clan, in southeastern Nigeria. In this work, there will be a discussion and investigation of the greeting pattern in Ngwa, how sequencing, adjacency pairs and turn taking is an important aspect of the Ngwa greeting, while focusing on turn taking (the manner in which orderly conversation normally takes place), its applicability in the dialect, and the various factors involved in taking turns in the dialect. It has been noticed that some of the native speakers (especially the young) of the dialect have deviated from the conventional greeting pattern, due to western influence, absence and other factors.

2. Literature review

Omeke (2000) examines greetings in Ibagwa-Aka dialect. The objectives of the study are to look at some factors that influence greeting in Ibagwa- Aka, cover all the greetings there are in Ibagwa- Aka and show the different ways of greeting at different times. The theoretical framework adopted for the data analysis is the speech act theory. The findings of the study are that greeting is universal and it cuts across cultures, there are forms of greeting such as salutary, commiserative and commendation. Greeting has different characteristics like it is culture specific, universal and unique. There are different greeting patterns and there are factors determining greeting in the Ibagwa- Aka dialect such as sex, age, social status, and

situation. This study is similar to the current study with reasons that both focus on greeting patterns but the difference is in the dialect studied.

Onyi (2000) examines greetings in Isuochi speech community. The objective of the study is to probe into greetings as it concerns Isuochi speech community adopting a sociolinguistic approach. The theoretical framework adopted in the data analysis of the research is Brown and Levinson's politeness theory. The findings of the study are that greeting in Isuochi perform series of functions such as reinforcement of social relations and interactions and maintenance of relevance and gratitude. This study is similar to the current study because they both adopt the concept of greeting as its focus, though differences exist in the dialect and methodology used.

Nwachukwu (2006) examines greeting in Ibeku speech community. The objective of the study is to discover the factors that affect greetings in Ibeku speech community and find out how greetings in Ibeku can be achieved. The findings reveal that the modern way of greeting is greatly influencing the Ibeku speech community's way of greeting, the value that was earlier attached to Ibeku's greeting pattern is greatly depreciating and also finds out that greeting in Ibeku can be achieved both verbally and non-verbally but must be done in an appropriate manner. This study is similar to the current study as both explore greeting but in different speech community. Also, the current study adopts conversational analysis.

Okoye (2007) examines greetings in Nimo speech community. The objective of the study is to find out the type of value and regard which Nimo people attach to their greeting and factors that affects greetings in Nimo. The study took a descriptive approach. The findings of the study reveal that greeting in Nimo is used to show respect, show appreciation for favour and sympathise or console mourners and the research discovered the factors that influence greeting in Nimo which include social class, age, sex, and context. This study is similar to the current study given that both focus on greetings, though difference is in the speech community and language adopted. Conversation analysis makes up the theoretical framework for the current study.

Okoli (2007) examines the greeting patterns of Ajalli speech community of Orumba North L.G.A. The objective of the study is to look into the Ajalli greeting to discover whether etiquette plays a part in the greetings. The theoretical framework adopted in the study is Brown and Levinson politeness theory. The findings are that greeting in Ajalli constitute etiquette in the community; it marks proper socialization, stands as an obligation that when not fulfilled, attracts hatred or social outcast to the offender, and the absence of it is marked and negatively evaluated. This study is similar to the current study in that they both look at greeting pattern but have different speech community and language as their focus.

Izuogu (2009) examines the greeting patterns in Isuochi speech community of Umunne-Ochi L.G.A. The objective of the study is to discover whether the greeting pattern of Isuochi is disappearing. The study adopts Brown and Levinson's politeness theory in its analysis of the data gathered. The findings of the study shows that there is less or no value attached to greeting despite its role in the community. This study is similar to the current study in that they both look at greeting patterns but the difference is in the choice of the language used and the speech community selected.

Simon (2009) examines the sociolinguistic study of greetings in Igbo land using the Ugwu-Langwu speech community as the case study. The objective of the study is to find out the factors that affect greetings in Ugwu-Langwu speech community. The findings of the study discovered factors that influence greetings such as gender differentiation, age difference, level of social relationship, social status and situation/context. This study is similar to the current study in that they both focus on greeting patterns but have differences in the choice of language and speech community. The current study examines greeting pattern in Ngwa dialect of igbo.

Shabeeb (2010) observes the speech act of greeting from a theoretical reading. The objective of the study is to Examine the theoretical views adopted by linguists, philosophers and researchers concerning: Definitions, classifications, types (forms and formulas), strategies of the speech act of greeting. The finding of the study is that the speech act of greeting, like many other speech acts, has its pragmatic meanings, such meanings are affected by cultural perspectives and greeting has a set of syntactic,

semantic and pragmatic structures that distinguish its usage. The two studies are both similar as they probe into greeting but the difference exist as the current study uses a dialect and also the conversation analysis

Ayagwa (2013) examines the sociolinguistic study of patterns of greetings in Tiv and Etulo. The objective of the study is to identify the different factors influencing greetings in Tiv and Etulo speech communities. The theoretical framework adopted in the study is the ethnography of communication theory. The finding reveals that factors like age, sex, and social class affiliation play significant role as sociolinguistic variables that influence greeting. This study is similar to the current study as both look at greeting patterns but differ in the choice of dialect used.

Ekanjume-ilongo (2013) examines greetings in Akóóse: A sociolinguistic approach. The study looks at the day-to-day interactional discourse of the Bakossi people of the southwest province of Cameroon through the act of greeting. The study examines the various type of greetings found within the community, nature of these greetings and factors that lead to the choice of one greeting over the other. The paper equally tries to bring out the functions of greetings in the lives of the Bakossi people. The analysis shows that greeting is a normal sociolinguistic custom used by the Bakoosi people to establish interpersonal relationship. The study also reveals that the age factor, time and context of situation determine the choice of greetings in Akóóse as well as who greets first, with age being the dominant factor. This work and the current work are similar because they both have the same focus but different approach.

Mbam (2013) examines politeness strategies in Izhi speech community and its sociolinguistic implications. The objectives of the study are to examine the greeting patterns in Izhi and ascertain the politeness strategies fulfilled. The study adopts the Brown and Levinson's politeness theory as a framework for analysis of the data gathered for the research. The findings reveals that the greeting patterns are salutary, exhortative and commiserative and the politeness strategies fulfilled are positive politeness strategy and bald on record politeness strategies. The study is similar to the current study as both look at greeting patterns but the difference is in the language used. The previous study adopts the Izhi language.

Idoko (2014) examines the sociolinguistic study of patterns of greetings in Enugu-Ezike and Igala dialect. The objectives of the study are to find out the forms of greetings in Enugu-Ezike and Igala communities and find out the factors that affect greeting in the two communities. The theoretical framework adopted in the study is the ethnography of communication theory. The findings of the study are; verbal and nonverbal forms exist in the language. The verbal form of greetings exist as time of the day greeting, wellbeing greetings, welcome/farewell greeting, commiserative greeting and exhortative greetings while non-verbal forms are handshake, handwave, nodding the head and kneeling and the factors affecting greetings are age, sex, social class affiliation, level of education and social status. This study is similar to the current study but both differ in the choice of dialect used.

Chamo (2015) analyses the pragmatic differences in greeting by doing a comparative study of Hausa and English languages, from a sociolinguistics point of view, which considers greetings as cultural phenomena that have functions and meanings. The objective of the study is to examine the functions, situations and the major forms of Hausa and English greetings. The study adopts the ethnography of communication theory. The finding establishes that there is a strong interface between a language of the people and their culture, and the forms of greetings for Hausa is time-free greeting, time-bound greeting, and festivity informal greeting while for English, there is time-free greeting, time-bound greeting and seasonal (in)formal greetings. The previous and current study are both similar in that they look into greeting but differences exist as the former uses language while the latter uses dialect. The current study adopts the theory of conversational analysis.

Mmadike and Okoye (2015) study patterns of greeting in Etulo. The study focuses on the patterns of greeting used by the Etulo. This study is purely descriptive. The findings show that such variables as age, status, sex and context determine the type of greeting that will be used. The study notes that greeting serves as a conversational routine. The study also finds out that greeting is found to have propositional content. The study is similar to the current study as both examine greeting patterns but differ in the language under study. The current study examines

greeting pattern in Ngwa dialect of Igbo, focusing on turn taking as an aspect of conversational analysis.

Shleykina (2016) discusses the speech act of greetings used by the Russian EFL. The objective of the study is to investigate semantic formulas in the speech act of greeting performed by Russian EFL learners, comparing the non-native speakers' and native speakers' production of semantic formulas in terms of their number, frequency, and content. The findings of the study shows that the Non-native speakers significantly deviate from the Native speakers' in terms of number, frequency, and content of greetings strategies, namely, greetings proper, phatic questions and phrases, address terms, and situational greetings, resulting from negative paragrammatic and sociopragmatic transfer, lack of appropriate linguistic means, or not fully developed pragmatic competence. The previous and current study are similar in that they both examine greeting but the current study uses a dialect while adopting the theory of conversational analysis.

Udeagha (2020) examines values of greetings in Igbo traditional culture and the contemporary society. This study attempts to underscore the values of greetings by highlighting its essential elements in Igbo traditional culture. The study surmises that greeting in Igbo traditional culture is a key relational oil that lubricates and maintains collective survival of the Igbo race. This study is similar to the current one as both focus on the greeting in Igbo greeting patterns but the difference is in that the previous study looks at greeting patterns generally in Igbo traditional society while the current study examines greeting patterns in Ngwa dialect of Igbo, using conversational analysis as its theoretical framework.

Mamah, Eze, Odeh and Nwosu (2021) observes the issues of greeting in Enugwu Ezike dialect. The objectives of the study are to identify different types of greetings in Enugwu Ezike, examine the extent to which other dialect, standard Igbo and English language are preferred in greetings in Enugwu Ezike and also to proffer measures through which the greeting patterns can be revitalized. The findings of the study show that greetings in Enugwu Ezike have so many types ranging from daily greetings, eulogy, pedigree, farewell greetings, etc and these types of greeting have different ways

through which they are presented. The study also discovers that the speakers of Enugwu Ezike dialect prefer to use other types of greeting from other dialect, standard Igbo and even English language, thereby endangering the greeting patterns of their dialect. This study is similar to the current study because they both study greeting as their focus though the difference is in the dialect used. The previous study is descriptive while the current study adopts the conversational analysis as the theory.

2.1 Theoretical framework

The theory adopted is the conversation analysis by Sacks (1974). This theory is adopted for this research because of its tenet of analysing dialogues. There are two aspects under this theory; the formal and content aspects, as enunciated by Mey (2001). Content aspects comprises of what the conversation is all about, how the topics are explicitly announced or presupposed or hidden while the formal aspects are concerned with how conversation works, what rules are observed, how sequencing is achieved (turn-taking, pausing, interrupting etc.) This implies that every conversation must have a subject matter. The communication or discussion on this subject matter can be implicit or explicit. It is explicit if the speaker makes clear his point in a non-figurative language. It is implicit when the speaker allows his hearer to use his cognition to decipher the message the speaker wants to communicate. The notion of turn taking are explored. For this study, the formal aspect will be employed. Sequencing which refers to the pattern a discourse follows, adjacency pairs which is an action-reaction component responsible for question and answer or command and response and turn taking which is the major focus, will be looked into.

In conversation analysis, turn-taking is a term for the manner in which orderly conversation normally takes place. A basic understanding can come right from the term itself. It is the notion that people in conversation take turns in speaking. Turn taking rules according to Clift (2016):

- i. participant A selects participant B, then B is required to speak at the first turn/transition relevant place, (TRP).
- ii. if participant B does not commence any other party can self-select and utilize their conversation turn.

- iii. in the absence of (i) and (ii) then participant A many continue.

Turn allocation components refer to who will speak next and this is determined via two methods, either the current speaker will allocate the next turn, or a speaker will self-select (Clift 2016). Turn constructional units determine when the next speaker should take their turn. In order to communicate successfully, an interactant must understand and subscribe to the interaction rules of his culture when there is a violation to interaction rules, it provides information about how an individual's orientation is towards his or her fellow interactants. One of the turns eliciting signals is adjacency pairs (Orestrom, 1983) in which the first part uttered by a speaker demands the second part to be uttered by the next speaker so they can form a pair. Eye contact is also a turn eliciting signal especially in the British culture, where the speaker looks away during his/her turn and looks back to the listener in his/her eye at the turn-end (Cook, 1989). In conversation, interrupting a speaker is disrespectful in many communities; as observed by Agbedo (2012), in Ezikeoba elders' council in Enugu state, Nigeria.

3. Data presentation and analysis

Greeting pattern in Ngwa

Like every other speech community, Ngwa places much focus on the verbal greeting patterns. Verbal forms of greeting involve the use of utterances and vocalisation. Verbal greeting are greetings that requires more time to be prepared, expressed and decoded, which may be less subject to conscious monitoring and interpretation (Forgas, 1985). Verbal messages are better recalled than non-verbal signals, particularly with reference to one's own verbal productions. Collins (2014) defines verbal greetings as the act or words of one who greets. Verbal greeting is about language, both written and spoken. In general, verbal greeting refers to our use of words while greeting. Verbal greeting is categorized into time of the day, welcome, commiserative and commendation greeting pattern in this study. These patterns will be discussed below:

3.1.1 Time of the day greeting

In Ngwa, there is one way of greeting in the morning, afternoon or evening. The greeting for all time of the day is same. In Ngwa, "Dèdè" is used for elderly men. 'Dàdà' is used for elderly women when greeting. One thing to note as earlier stated, is

that there has to be a response to greeting for greeting to be said to have been achieved.

Table A: Greeting for the elders

Greeting initiated by the younger one	Gloss	Response from the elder	Gloss
1. Dèdè (Mr/Sir/Brother) dàdà (Mrs/Ma/Aunty/Sister) máazì (Good morning, afternoon and good evening)	Good morning good afternoon and good evening	Ndè (Same)	Thanks, same to you
2. Náwo (blessing)	You are blessed	Nná- nwàfo (blessing son/daughter of the son)	You are blessed son/ daughter of the soil
3. Kaá nká (get old)	Live long!	Nká mú ná gị (Aging of the two of us)	long life to us!
4. Dàbírí (Rest)	Rest well	Dábírikwa/ Dàbírí n' óché ézè (rest too/ rest on the throne)	Rest well on the king's throne

In table (A) above, the greeting is in a statement format. Each of the greeting has their responses following respectively as seen in the table. *Dèdè/dàdà máazì* can be used in greeting an elder depending on their gender. For an elderly female, you use *dàdà*, for elderly male, you use *Dèdè*. *Nwá ohúhú* refers to a non-native of Ngwa. Notwithstanding, one is seen as a son/daughter of the soil if he greets in the Ngwa dialect. *Nwáfo* depends on the context, it can either refer to a son or a

daughter. Sequencing, adjacency pairs and turn taking form the overall greeting in Ngwa. These greetings produce adjacency pairs as the responses are identified as a follow up of the greeting. The Ngwa greeting has a sequence, it takes a pre-sequencing ordering, that is no (1) has to come before no (2) can, and (3) before (4), as seen in the table above. The call and response nature of the greeting indicates turn taking, the elder doesn't greet unless initiated by the younger one. The Ngwa greeting manifest some pragmatic features such as marking social bond and marking high moral standards. Two levels of pragmatic roles supported by pragmatic features were manifested in the greeting such as pragmatic acts and politeness.

Table B: Greeting for the young ones.

Greeting initiated by the young one	Gloss	Response	Gloss
5. <i>ì</i> (you) <i>nù</i> (suffix) <i>ótú</i> <i>ólé?</i> (how)	How are you?	<i>Avọ̀lára m ké táá</i> (come) (me) (for) (today)	I'm alive today !

This is used when young people exchange greetings amongst themselves. The first greeting in no (1) takes question and answer form. Here, it does not matter who initiates the greeting since the parties involved are of the same age grade. This pattern of greeting shows social bond, concern and politeness. Turn taking is also observed here, as, *ì nù ótú ólé?* Comes before the *Avọ̀lára m ké táá*. In the table above, adjacency pair is implied as the presence of *ì nù ótú ólé?* result to the presence of *Avọ̀lára m ké táá*. *Dèdè/dàdà* is not needed in this greeting since it is not to elders but to same age grade. Though the respects for one another still remains.

3.1.2 Work time greeting.

Greeting for work time, to anyone found in that situation. This can be used at any time of the day, for any work at all.

Table C:

Greeting	Gloss	Response	Gloss
(6) Dèdè/ dàdà (Mr/Uncle)/(Mrs/Aunty) jishiéé ike (Hold strength) jishiéé (hold on)	Uncle / brother or aunty / sister well done	Oo!	Yes! Or Okay

This is the pattern of greeting given to someone who is working, whether on the farm or at any other work place, the party been greeted affirms to the greeting by saying *Oo!* To show that he accepts the greeting and also to show acknowledgement. This pattern of greeting is not time bound. It is suitable for all time provided it's a work situation. Turn taking cannot be done away with as regards Ngwa greeting

3.1.3 Welcome Greeting

Table D:

Greeting initiated by the young one	Gloss	Response	Gloss
(7) òdí nwé óbénà (They) (have) (this place)	Owners of the house	ee! (Yes)	Yes
(8) únù àvọ̀là (You (plural) (come out)	Have you woken today?	ì bìàlà? (You) (come)	Welcome

This greeting is used to welcome people back home or bid them farewell when going out. They carry good wishes to the receiver(s). This greeting is used by someone who came visiting or by the owners of a house welcoming a visitor. Either ways, the greeting has to take place to show regards to the owners of a house or the owners acknowledging their visitors.

3.1.4 Commendation greeting:

These greetings are used to show approval present regard express good opinion and give strong encouragement to urge the recipient.

Table E:

Greeting initiated by the young one	Gloss	Response	Gloss
(9) Í(you) gbáliálà (done well)	You have done well	Oó! (Yes) gì(you) Ígbáliákwálà (did well too)	Yes, you too have done well.

This Greetings are used to commend one who has accomplished a task. This greeting is used for both male and female, *dèdè* or *dàdà* can be added when an elderly person is involved. In Ngwa commendation greeting, there is no presence of male chauvinism.

3.1.5 Social activity greetings

Social activity greetings are used by youths or adults during important meetings. They carry with them goodwill. The gathering been greeted returns the greeting in union. It shows solidarity.

Table F:

Greeting initiated by the young one	Gloss	Response	Gloss
(10) ñdí (Our) óbékányì (people of our land) mmá mmá (well done) Nù (suffix)	Our people, I greet you	ee! (yes)	Yes
(11) Ríé (merry, dine, enjoy, cheers) nù (Suffix)	Be merry	Isééé (So shall it be)	So shall it be

In a typical Ngwa social gathering, there is a distinctive way of greeting, whether titled or not titled members of the society. Pre-sequencing is observed in this greeting as seen in ‘*ñdí Óbékányì*’ which is the pre-sequence, preceding the actually greeting ‘*mmá mmá*’. Turn taking also occurs as the greeting precedes the response.

3.1.6 Commiserative greetings

These kinds of greetings are used to show sympathy, pity, condolence and solidarity to someone who is aggrieved, bereaved or in despair. They are used to comfort the recipient of such greetings in their trying times.

Table G:

Greeting initiated by the young one	Gloss	Response	Gloss
(12) Ghàrá (Take heart) Wá (suffix) Nke (what) mere émé (happened) e (has) méelá (happened) ọ (it) gághí (will not) íme (happen) òdó (again) tásie (take heart)	Take heart, it has happened It won't happen again, take heart	Oó (yes, okay), á (I) nùlà (have heard) M (Suffix)	Yes, I have heard

This form of greeting is used to show concern for someone's health condition or to address the bereaved. This greeting is used to comfort and console the affected individuals. Some part of Ngwa like osisioma Ngwa would say *kásie* in place of *tásie* in saying take heart. Turn taking is also observed as the greeting precedes the response.

3.2 Turn taking in Ngwa in greeting pattern

Turn-taking is a type of organisation in conversation and discourse where participants speak one at a time in alternating turns. In practice, it involves processes for constructing contributions, responding to previous comments, and transitioning to a different speaker, using a variety of linguistic and non-linguistic cues (John, 2006). Turn-taking conventions vary by culture and community. It is important to be clear from the onset that turn-taking is not the same as interrupting. In fact, interruption per se is rare when people are speaking and almost invariably seen as discourteous if not downright rude. In general, Anglophone speakers do not talk over each other and

do not break inappropriately into other people's turns. As earlier seen in the chapter two of this study, turn taking accounts for the manner in which orderly conversation normally takes place. It is important that people in conversation take turns in speaking to prevent interrupting one another and avoid turn-offs of one before his/her specific turns. Speakers indicate turn/transition relevant place (TRP) through the pause that Occurs after the first utterance from the first participant in the greeting. Turn-taking involves the awareness of how to signal that a turn is finished, how to show that one wants a turn and, having got it, how to hold it.

3.2.1 Turn taking in the time of the day greeting. (Elders)

For this objective, the turn taking in the time of the day greeting will be centered on. Turn-taking refers to the manner in which orderly conversation normally takes place. A basic understanding can come right from the term itself. It is the notion that people in conversation take turns in speaking. For instance:

(13) Dédè/ Dádá máazì (Mr/ Sir/ Brother)/ (Mrs, Ma, sister, Aunty)

Ndè (Same to you)

Náwo (You are blessed)

Nná-nwàfo (my son/daughter you are blessed)

káa nká (live long!)

Nká mụ ná gí (long life to us)

Dábírí (Rest well)

Dábíríkwá/ Dábiri n' óché ézè (Rest well on the king's throne)

The above greeting is the time of the day greeting. The first person greets with *Dédè/ Dádá mázì* which is the pre-sequence, while after quick pause, an almost instantaneous respond *Ndè* follows after from the person greeted till the greeting is exhausted. Natives of Ngwa indicates their turn/transition relevance place through the use of pause, this way, there is no interruption and everyone waits for his turn before

speaking. There are cases where this pattern of greeting is not completely utilized and it might be as a result of hurry or the person is not fully a *nwàfo* (son/daughter of the soil). For instance,

Dèdè/ Dàdà máazì

Ndè

However, turn taking is still maximized as the both speakers know when to start, and when to end, which is indicated through pauses; then allowing a successful turn construction unit. Turn taking makes up the Ngwa greeting. It can't be done away with because it will hinder the free flow, essence and effectiveness of greeting.

3.3 Sociolinguistic factors that influence greeting patterns in Ngwa

Various sociolinguistic factors affect the greeting pattern in Ngwa. Some of these factors sometimes occurs together on some occasion while some do not. These factors are as follows;

3.3.1 Age

Age is the length of time during which a being or thing has existed, length of life or existence of a person or thing. It's through age that one can determine who's older or younger. It's not about how much you are worth. In Ngwa, for instance no matter how rich a son or daughter may be, when he/she comes to see his father, he has to greet first while the father replies the greeting. Refusing to do this is seen as a sign of disrespect. According to the tradition obtainable in Ngwa, the younger people are mandated to greet the older people provided they see the older ones first. It will be disrespectful on the path of the young one for the older person to greet the younger in situations where the younger one is seen first by the older one, what the older one does is to call out the name of the young person, or call the attention of the young person so he can initiate the greeting while the appropriate response follows. In situation when the younger person is sick, and not able to initiate a greeting to an older person, it is excusable due to the situation at hand. The older person must not be so aged. Even if it is a year difference between the one greeting and the one being

greeted, respect must be shown. For instance, if there are two siblings that the age difference is a year, the older sibling is still supposed to be greeted and is qualified enough to receive the *dèdè/dàdà* pre-sequence. Age and sex, though are different terms, work hand in hand because they are both core factors in determining whether the pre-sequence will be used while greeting. Age takes up the pre-sequence based on the one being greeted is older, while sex allocates the pre-sequence on the notion that who is being greeted is either a female or a male.

3.3.2 Context/ situation

Context or situation is a set of circumstances in which one finds oneself; a state of affairs. The current position or circumstance determines the greeting pattern used between the parties involved. For instance, when a young person sees an elderly person in the day or night, the time of the day greeting pattern is used. In situation where a person is bereaved, the commiserative greeting is adopted. In situation where a farmer is seen farming, the pattern of greeting adopted is the work time greeting and when one has excellently completed a task, the pattern of greeting adopted is the commendation greeting. When a particular context does not take up its right greeting pattern, the purpose for the greeting in that context will not be realised. For instance, one cannot see an elderly person in the farm or any other work place and use a commiserative pattern to greet him when he is not in loss. Neither can a person use a work time greeting to address a person who is bereaved. The one performing the act of greeting will present himself as abnormal, because it is unreasonable to make use of the wrong greeting for a situation. There can be an instance where two patterns of greeting are used together in greeting. The time of the day greeting can be used together with the work time greeting. For instance, when a person sees a worker in his poultry, one can initiate the time of the day greeting while the work time greeting follows. Considering age and sex as a vital concern in choosing the right time of the day greeting, be it the greeting pattern for the elders or the greeting pattern for the young ones. Though the situation still remains the major focus of the greeting initiated.

3.3.3 Level of education

This refers to the extent of educational ability a person has acquired. It has to do with the academic credential or degree obtained by a person. People with western education or contacts with other tribes or states tend to adopt the greeting patterns of those places. For instance, some of the people who are well schooled and have had contacts with the world outside, tend to use good morning, good afternoon, good evening, hi, hello, how are you, hope you are fine, etc, for time of the day greeting and take heart, my condolences, cheer up, etc, instead of the allocated pattern of greeting in Ngwa. When such situation arises, the person will either be seen as an outsider or an incompetent *nwáfo*(son/daughter of the soil). This is why it is encouraged that every native of Ngwa should be taught the ways or culture of the land so as not to feel alienated or deviate from the conventional way of greeting. This factor can come in play as a result of the parents or guardian's negligence or the lack of interest of the person involved towards the land and the culture of the land. There is a saying that goes 'train up your child in the way he should grow and when he grows up, he will never depart from it'. It is believed that whatever you sow into a child at an early age, stays as a habit for him. Therefore, when a child is taught in the ways of his homeland, he will not grow to lose interest in his culture but rather grow with so much love for his land that no degree or certificate on earth can deter that and the child when the time comes, also ensures to inculcate same to his children and the circle continues. Even if he decides to go against all he has been taught, maybe for reasons of been hurt by his people or rejected by his people, the parent can be justified that they did their duty in training that child/children in the way of his land.

3.3.4 Norms and values

Values are abstract concepts that certain kinds of behaviors are good, right, ethical, moral and therefore desirable. A norm is a standard of behavior. At some point people in the society agrees to these as standards. Some people learn by being taught, but mostly we pick them up just by being exposed to them. A society can have all of the values it wants, but if it doesn't have a way of enforcing those values, then having values means nothing. Different society have their different culture. Igbo land in

general emphasises so much on respect, and one of the ways of showing respect to people is by greeting. Greeting is a very vital part of the Ngwa people. It is expected that one should greet (going from the younger to the older), whenever and wherever. Doing so shows acknowledgement, respect, unity, good manners, solidarity and oneness. Failure to do so, shows disrespect, disregard, on the part of the younger one. Greeting among one's mate is not exempted. One must show that he recognizes people and one of the ways to do that is by greeting. Unlike the western culture where a child will not greet or a child allows the adult greets first and it will not be seen as disrespect. It is seen as an insult or disrespect in Ngwa. It is expected that the child utilizes the various pattern of greeting for the right context, considering having age and sex in mind while doing so. This way, the person attracts blessing, favour, gifts, and good words for himself, and averts whatever ills such as rejection, hatred, negligence, etc, that would have come his way if he did not develop the habit of greeting both his elders or his peer group.

3.3.5 Peer group

Peer group is a group of people of approximately the same age, status, and interests. Peer group is both a social group and a primary group of people who have similar interests, age, background, or social status. The members of this group are likely to influence the person's beliefs and behaviour. Peer groups contain hierarchies and distinct patterns of behavior. When greeting your mate, the pattern used is the pattern for young ones which differs from the pattern used for the elders. It is important to note that in Ngwa, that no matter how small the age difference, respect must be shown. Greeting should not be done with the mindset of expecting a favour or gifts in return, but it should be done because it's the right thing to do provided people are involved. No man is an island. A society where no one greets is heading no way, if at all heading somewhere, is definitely to doom. Greeting is not elders-specific, it is also for young people. For instance, when two friends of the same age meet themselves, greeting should be the first step to acknowledging themselves. The context is also taken into consideration. One has to know the situation at hand before allocating the right pattern of greeting meant for that particular situation. If it's a situation of loss, the commiserative greeting should be used to sympathise with the bereaved to show interest in the person's well-being. If it is in a social activity

situation, the right pattern which is the social activity greeting should be used. If it is in a situation where a visitor comes visiting, the welcome greeting is used. While greeting, since the people involved are of the same age, the pre-sequence *dèdè/dàdà* will not be used, while the greeting sequence follows through.

3.3.6 Sex

Sex also called gender is the range of characteristics pertaining to, and differentiating between, femininity and masculinity. Sex refers to the biological differences between males and females. This is where the pre-sequence *dèdè/dàdà* cannot be overlooked, because it's the only way to differentiate greeting channeled to a man or greeting channeled to a woman. In Ngwa, gender determines the symbol of respect that will follow greeting. For the male gender, *dèdè* is attached to the greeting to an elder, while *dàdà* follows the greeting for the female gender while greeting an elderly person. Not for any reason should it be inter-changed, it has to follow the right format to carry the appropriate meaning. A man cannot be addressed as *dàdà*, neither can a woman be addressed as *dèdè*. It would be as though the young person is indirectly insulting or making a mockery of the elderly person, which may attract the wrath of the elderly person on the young one. As earlier mentioned, age as a factor works hand in hand with sex as they both determine whether the pre-sequence will be used and which of the pre-sequence should be used. In situation where a young person sees an elderly man and woman walking together, it doesn't matter if the child greets the woman before the man, what matters is that they are both greeted. This pre-sequence has to be used with the right pattern of greeting for a particular context. In cases where two pattern of greeting are used together in greeting, it should be properly arranged. For instance, when a man is hosting a meeting in his house, the welcome greeting and social activity greeting will be used in addressing the people. The welcome greeting will be used to welcome the visitor he is hosting, while the social activity greeting will be for the commencement of the meeting and it will serve as a way of ensuring he has the peoples' attention.

3.3.7 Social status

Social status is a person's standing or importance in relation to other people within a society. Social status is the level of social value a person is considered to hold. More specifically, it refers to the relative level of respect, honor, assumed competence, and deference accorded to people, groups, and organizations in a society. For Example, in Ngwa, for titled men, title such as Igwe or Eze is used while greeting Him. Since the titles are already available, there will not be need for the pre-sequence *dèdè/dàdà* that follows a greeting to an elderly person. There may be an instance where someone older than the king comes to see the king, in this case, the age of the person does not matter. He has to greet the king first on seeing Him. This does not mean any disrespect because the king has been put in a position that warrants everyone both young and old submitting to him. It is in not doing so that it is seen as disregards to the king and his status, which attracts punishment to the deviant. One does not need to know the king on a personal basis. Once a person sees the king, he is expected to greet on sight. In cases where it is a person who has been placed high in the society maybe because of his contribution to the growth of the land or because of what he has achieved, it is required of him to greet the elderly people if he is younger while the elderly person in turn, responds to his greeting. If he is the older one, it is expected that in that situation, he should be greeted, while he responds to the greeting. The context is also considered while greeting. It should not be heard that familiarity overrides greeting, that is, no matter how familiar one gets with another person, it should not be a hindrance to greeting.

4. Conclusion

The study examines the greeting patterns in Ngwa, adopting the theory of conversation analysis. The findings reveal several patterns of greeting in Ngwa, such as time of the day greeting, work time greeting, welcome greeting, commendation greeting, social activity and commiserative greeting. These various patterns of greeting serve as a way of acknowledging people, maintaining social bond, showing respect, showing good mannerism and promoting solidarity. Greeting takes a reciprocal turn in that the one greeting has to be responded to. The study also examines turn taking in

the time of the day greeting in Ngwa. It is observed that turn taking alongside sequencing and adjacency pairs are core aspect of Ngwa greeting.

The study explores the sociolinguistic factors affecting greeting, such as age, sex, social status, context/situation, level of education, peer group and norms and values. Sometimes, some of these variables occur at the same time or differently. Notwithstanding, these factors determine to some extent the pattern of greeting that will be adopted in different situations. Age and sex seems to be two of the most important factors that affects greeting in Ngwa, because before one greets, the age and sex of the one he wants to greet must be considered to know whether the *dèdè/ dàdà* will be introduced while greeting the person. However, there is no ranking to which these sociolinguistic factors or variables should follow.

The area of this study is on sociolinguistics which studies the complex relationship between language and society. Of all the sociolinguistic concepts, this study centers on greeting. The study discovers the patterns of greeting, finds out how turn taking works in the dialect and examines the sociolinguistic factors that affects greeting. A total number of 12 greeting tokens were collected, tone marked and translated into English by a native speaker informant. The practice of greeting is universal and culture dependent. Greeting is an essential part of appropriate socialisation and relationship formation. Among the Ngwa people, greeting shows recognition, acknowledgement and acceptability. In cases where greetings are neglected, condemnation of the person(s) involved arises. In Ngwa greeting pattern, turns are taken and if there are no response to greeting, then it is seen as a waste of time. Therefore, greeting is followed by a response and for any greeting occasion, the pattern of greeting for that context has to be exhausted. Greeting therefore forms part of the socialisation process and manifestation of the communicative competence of people.

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