

DOCUMENTATION OF SELECTED FLORA AND FAUNA TERMS IN OBOLO LANGUAGE

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Abstract

Flora and fauna are essential components of the natural environment, varying significantly across geographical regions. Hence, language is not just a matter of words and rules, but also of the cultural and environmental context in which it is used. This paper discusses the terms for flora and fauna in Obolo, their categorization, semantic fields, and conceptual categories. Additionally, it examines the cultural significance of these terms. Finally, it investigates whether there are loanwords or linguistic influences from other languages on Obolo's terms for flora and fauna. Data for the study were gathered from existing literature, notably Ikpa Mbuban (The Bible in Obolo, Nigeria, Protestant Version), and elicited from competent native speakers. The methodology is simply descriptive. A total of 91 terms representing fauna and 63 terms denoting flora were collected and analyzed. The research findings revealed that Obolo has terms or lexical items for flora and fauna, although these terms are limited in the language lexicon. Certain flora and fauna lack Obolo names due to ecological divergence or differences. Notably, the Obolo people's ecological setting influences their lexicon, with more terms for aquatic flora and fauna than terrestrial. Names for flora and fauna not found in the Obolo-speaking regions or ecosystem are absent in the language. It is evident that different tribes and groups have distinct terms for plants and animals, and a speaker's knowledge of these terms can significantly enhance effective communication, cultural understanding, and environmental awareness. It is recommended that Obolo people should become familiar with the terms used in referring to flora and fauna in Obolo language not just for effective communication in the language but also for cultural awareness.

1.0 Introduction

Flora and fauna are essential components of the natural environment, varying significantly across geographical regions. As Crystal (2000:18) notes, "language is not just a matter of words and rules, but also of the cultural and environmental context in which it is used." Obolo is a Lower Cross River language, and part of the Benue-Congo branch of the Atlantic-Congo language family. It is spoken in southern Nigeria in the Andoni Local Government Area of Rivers State, and in the Eastern Obolo Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State. According to the National Bureau of Statistics (2011), there are about 318,000 native speakers of Obolo, which is also known as Andone, Andoni or Andonni. Dialects of Obolo include Ibot Obolo, Okoroete, Iko, Ataba, Unyeada, and Ngo. The prestige dialect is Ngo, which is spoken in the central part of the Obolo-speaking region. The Obolo language has a rich vocabulary describing the unique plant and animal life of the area. However, this cultural heritage is facing significant threats due to globalization, urbanization, and the decline of traditional practices.

According to Nida (2004:23), "the loss of linguistic diversity is not just a matter of language, but also of culture and identity." The Obolo language, like many others, is experiencing a loss of cultural-specific terms, particularly in the domains of flora and fauna. This erosion of vocabulary affects not only the language's lexical diversity but also the cultural identity and traditional knowledge of the Obolo people. As Al-Kasimi (1977:12) observes, "culture-bound words... pose a huge challenge to

translators and lexicographers." The transmission of this knowledge from older generations to younger ones is hindered, and the vocabulary is becoming increasingly threatened. As a result of globalization, urbanization, and the decline of traditional practices, it's becoming more difficult to express certain concepts, items or ideas in our native languages, which Obolo is a big part of, and one of such areas is the terms used to refer to things in our ecosystem, which is the motivation behind this work.

In the words of Surukat (2009:45), "flora and fauna items are ecologically regarded as culture-specific words, and as such, have posed great difficulty for translators." This challenge is exacerbated by the scarcity of linguistic resources and dictionaries for Obolo. As Baker (2011:103) notes, "the provision of equivalence is a semantic problem that bilingual dictionary compilers must surmount." Linguistic resources for Obolo lack adequate coverage of flora and fauna terms, making it essential to document and preserve this vocabulary.

Crystal (2000:20) emphasizes the importance of language documentation, stating that "language documentation is not just a matter of recording language, but also of preserving cultural heritage." This study aims to address the gap in documentation by exploring the flora and fauna vocabulary of Obolo, providing a comprehensive understanding of the language's ecological vocabulary.

According to Williamson (1972), "the study of language is not complete without the study of its cultural context." This paper explores the following objectives: identification and categorization of selected flora and fauna terms in Obolo, identification of their semantic fields and conceptual categories associated with the language's terms for flora and fauna, and finally observes if there are loanwords or linguistic influences from other languages on the language's flora and fauna lexical items.

Technically, this paper is essential for preserving Obolo cultural heritage and traditional knowledge, documenting the unique ecological vocabulary of the Niger Delta region, enhancing language documentation and description, and supporting language preservation and revitalization efforts. By investigating the flora and fauna terms in Obolo, this paper contributes to language typological studies, ethnolinguistic research, and language documentation, ultimately supporting the preservation of the Obolo language and culture. Furthermore, this paper can serve as a linguistic material for learning, research and reference.

2.1 Literature Review

2.1.1 Documentation

Documentation refers to the process of recording and preserving information or data in a systematic and organized manner (Yakubu, 2017). According to Olatunbosun (2014), effective documentation serves as a vital tool for knowledge sharing, decision-making, and historical record-keeping. In the context of language and cultural studies, documentation is crucial for preserving endangered languages and cultural practices (Kpolovie & Eze, 2018). As noted by Eze (2019), "documentation is essential for the sustenance of cultural heritage and national identity."

Kamwangamalu and Chumbow (2017), emphasize the importance of documentation in promoting language preservation and linguistic diversity. They argue that documentation helps to create a permanent record of a language, which can be used for language education, research, and cultural revitalization. "Language documentation has emerged as a response to the pressing need for collecting, describing, and archiving material on the increasing number of endangered languages." (Orji & Muogbo, 2018: 66).

2.1.2 Flora and Fauna

Flora and fauna refer to the plant and animal life of a particular region or ecosystem (Odum, 1971). In the context of language and culture, flora and fauna are often used as metaphors, symbols, or lexical items to convey cultural values and meanings (Achebe, 1958). According to Akpata (2017),

"the study of flora and fauna in language and culture provides insights into the intricate relationships between humans and their environment."

In their research on ecological linguistics, Mufwene (2017) and Oyetade (2014), highlight the significance of flora and fauna in shaping language, culture, and human identity. According to Oyetade (2014), the Yoruba people's reverence for the forest and its inhabitants is reflected in their language and cultural practices. Similarly, the Igbo people's agricultural traditions are embedded in their language and folklore (Achebe, 1958).

Furthermore, the study of flora and fauna in language and culture can also reveal the impact of environmental changes on human societies. As noted by Adger et al. (2014), climate change and environmental degradation can lead to language loss and cultural erosion. Therefore, documenting and preserving the cultural significance of flora and fauna is essential for maintaining linguistic and cultural diversity.

2.1.3 Terms/Lexical items

Lexical items or terms refer to words or phrases that convey specific meanings within a language. According to Anagbogu (2015), "lexical items are crucial for understanding cultural concepts, values, and beliefs." Crystal (2018), notes that lexical items can be culturally specific and may not have direct translations across languages.

In their study on lexical semantics, Saeed (2017) and Goddard (2016), emphasize the importance of understanding lexical items within their cultural context. They argue that lexical items can convey complex cultural meanings and nuances that may be lost in translation. For example, the Igbo concept of "ubuntu" (humanity towards others) is embedded in lexical items such as "ikwu" (brotherhood) and "onwa" (kinship) (Anagbogu, 2015).

Moreover, the study of lexical items can also reveal the dynamics of language contact and language change. As noted by Thomason (2015), lexical borrowing and code-switching can reflect the complex social and cultural relationships between language communities.

2.3 Empirical Studies

There seems not to be any study specifically focusing on the documentation of flora and fauna terms in Obolo language. However, several studies have investigated similar topics in other languages. So, this particular study used some earlier works done on similar topics but on other languages as foundation.

2.3.1 Flora Terminology

Oyetade (2014: 113) examined the semantic categorization of flora terms in his study on Yoruba language. He identified three main categories: trees (e.g., "igi ose" for Baobab tree), shrubs (e.g., "ireke" for Sugarcane), and herbs (e.g., "eweroko" for Leafy green vegetables). Oyetade (2014) noted that Yoruba flora terms often reflect cultural and environmental significance.

Similarly, Akpata (2017: 145) investigated flora terminology in Urhobo language. Akpata identified four categories: edible plants (e.g., "imidaka" for Cassava), medicinal plants (e.g., "iti" for lemon grass), and sacred plants (e.g., "Okpagha urhe" for Sacred tree).

2.3.2 Fauna Terminology

In his study on Igbo language, Anagbogu (2015: 67) analyzed fauna terminology and identified five categories: mammals (e.g., "Enyi" for Elephant), birds (e.g., "nwa okuko" for Chicken), reptiles (e.g., "agwo" for Snake), fish (e.g., "azu" for Fish), and insects (e.g., "ijiji" for Fly).

Eze (2019) examined fauna terminology in Efik language and identified three categories: land animals (e.g., "enin" for Elephant), water animals (e.g., "afiom" for Crocodile), and air animals (e.g., "ekamba inuen" for Eagle).

2.3.3 Lexical Items and Cultural Significance

Kpolovie and Eze (2018) investigated the cultural significance of flora and fauna lexical items in Kalabari language. They found that certain lexical items convey cultural values and beliefs. Below are some examples given according to Kpolovie & Eze (2018: 112):

- i. "ikaki" (Tortoise) symbolizes wisdom
- ii. "Nji" (Fish) represents abundance

These studies demonstrate the importance of documenting flora and fauna terms in languages, highlighting their cultural significance, and environmental relevance.

2.4 Theoretical Framework

This research adopted Einar Haugen's theory of Ecological Linguistics to document selected flora and fauna terms in the Obolo language. The Ecological Linguistics Theory was proposed by a Norwegian-American linguist known as Einar Haugen (1972). It was further developed by Salikoko Mufwene (1997) and Alwin Fill (2001). This theory emerged in the 1970s, drawing from linguistics, anthropology, and ecology. Haugen's seminar work introduced the concept of "language ecology," which was later expanded by Mufwene and Fill.

At its core, Ecological Linguistics views language as an integral part of the ecosystem, interconnected with the natural environment and human culture. This theory posits that language reflects and shapes environmental perceptions and attitudes, influences human relationships with nature, and is shaped by and adapts to environmental contexts. The key principles of Ecological Linguistics include: language as part of the ecosystem, language and environment interdependence, and language use having ecological consequences.

2.5 Summary of Literature Review

This chapter emphasizes the significance of flora and fauna terms, or lexical items, used in languages. A thorough examination of various empirical investigations informed the theoretical framework. A critical review of related studies reveals that no work seems to have been done on the documentation of flora and fauna terms in Obolo. This current study aims to bridge this gap by documenting selected flora and fauna terms in the Obolo language, exploring their categorization, semantic fields, and conceptual categories.

3.0 Research Methodology

The flora and fauna terms in Obolo were examined using a descriptive research methodology. This descriptive approach aids documentation and categorization of terms used in the language to refer to flora and fauna, identification of their semantic fields, as well as their conceptual categories. It will also investigate loanwords or linguistic influences from other languages on the lexical items for flora and fauna in the Obolo language.

The sampling frame encompasses Obolo native speakers who, have resided in Obolo-speaking communities for at least 10 years, are proficient in speaking and understanding the Obolo language, and represent diverse age groups (40-80 years). From this sampling frame, a purposive sample of 40 participants was selected based on the following criteria: age, continuous stay in Obolo, proficiency in the language, and come from different Obolo communities. Purposive sampling was employed to ensure that participants possess the necessary language proficiency and cultural knowledge. This method allows for the selection of information-rich cases, providing valuable insights into the Obolo language and culture.

This paper employed oral interviews via phone call conversations with older competent native speakers. The investigator also conferred with family members who have attained a level of proficiency in the language. Data for the paper were gathered from existing literature especially Ikpa

Mbuban (The Bible in Obolo, Nigeria, Protestant Version) and some online resources. Also, data were elicited from competent native speakers through sessions of intensive interviews.

4.1 Data Presentation and Analysis

Flora and fauna refer to the plants and animals found in a particular region or environment. When we talk about terms or lexical items for flora and fauna, we are discussing the specific words used to describe these plants and animals in a language. The presentation and analysis of data will go hand in hand.

4.2 Categorization of Flora and Fauna Terms in Obolo

There are different methods of categorizing flora and fauna terms or lexical items in a language. This study employs only four methods, which are taxonomic, semantic, ecological, and cultural classification methods.

4.2.1 Taxonomic Categorization

Taxonomic classification, also known as taxonomy, is the process of grouping living things into categories based on their shared characteristics and evolutionary relationships. This classification system helps scientists and researchers understand the diversity of life and the relationships between different species. The data presented in the following tables below are the classification of some Obolo terms for plants and animals based on taxonomic categorization.

4.2.1.1 Fauna

4.2.1.1 (a) Mammals

Table 1: Terms for Mammals in Obolo

S/N	Category	Obolo Term	English Meaning	Scientific Name
A (i)	Ungulates	ogaañ	Antelope	Sylvicapra grimmia
(ii)		aligo	Camel	Camelus dromedarius
(iii)		Eriembuuk	Cow	Bos taurus
B(i)	Primates	mkpinyoñ	Ape	Pan troglodytes
(ii)		mkpinyoñ	Monkey	Cercopithecidae spp.
C(i)	Carnivores	ibo nriok	Bear	Ursus arctos
(ii)		Ibo	Dog	Canis lupus familiaris
(iii)		Eyinyi	Elephant	Loxodonta Africana

4.2.1.1 (b) Birds

Table 2: Terms for Birds in Obolo

S/N	Category	Obolo Term	English Meaning	Scientific Name
A (i)	Water birds	Ekerekwukwu	Dove	Columba livia
(ii)		aba okuket	Heron	Ardea spp.
B(i)	Birds of Prey	Igo	Eagle	Aquila spp.
(ii)		mkpukpo ararañ	Falcon	Falconidae spp.
(iii)		Akwanakwa	Hawk	Accipitridae spp.
C(i)	Other Birds	usuñ	Partridge	Perdicinae spp.
(ii)		nriok	Peacock	Pavo cristatus

4.2.1.1 (c) Reptiles

Table 3: Terms for Reptiles in Obolo

S/N	Category	Obolo Term	English Meaning	Scientific Name
A (i)	Snakes	ijo ulu	Cobra	Naja spp.
(ii)		ijijinu or Ulu	Snake	Serpentes spp.
B (i)	Lizards	Okube	Chameleon	Chamaeleonidae spp.
(ii)		Oban-uwu	Gecko	Gekkota spp.
C (i)	Other reptiles	Asakuut	Crocodile	Crocodylus niloticus
(ii)		Ikwut	Tortoise	Testudines spp.

4.2.1.1 (d) Amphibians**Table 4: Terms for Amphibians in Obolo**

S/N	Category	Obolo Term	English Meaning	Scientific Name
A (i)		Àkwòók	Frog	Ranidae spp.

4.2.1.1 (e) Fish and Sea Creatures**Table 5: Terms for Fish and Sea Creatures in Obolo**

S/N	Category	Obolo Term	English Meaning	Scientific Name
A (i)	Fish	iriñ	Fish	Various species
(ii)		Efrima	Shark	Selachimorpha spp.
B(i)	Mollusks	nl̩ri	Clam	Veneridae spp.
(ii)		Efie	Oyster	Ostrea spp.
C(i)	Crustaceans	Uka	Crab	Brachyura spp.

4.2.1.1 (f) Insects**Table 6: Terms for Insects in Obolo**

S/N	Category	Obolo Term	English Meaning	Scientific Name
A (i)	Flying Insects	akwòók	Bee	Apidae spp.
(ii)		Ekpukaka	Butterfly	Lepidoptera
B (i)	Crawling insects	Atat	Ant	Formicidae spp.
(ii)		Ikap	Flea	Siphonaptera spp.

4.2.1.2 Flora**4.2.1.2 (a) Trees****Table 7 : Terms for Trees in Obolo**

S/N	Category	Obolo Term	English Meaning	Scientific Name
A (i)	Fruit Trees	Appo	Apple	Malus domestica
(ii)		ukwaba	Avocado	Persea Americana
B (i)	Evergreen Trees	uti olik	Cydar	Cedrus spp.
(ii)		uti siperes	Cypress	Cupressus spp.

4.2.1.2 (b) Shrubs and Herbs**Table 8: Terms for Shrubs and Herbs in Obolo**

S/N	Category	Obolo Term	English Meaning	Scientific Name
A (i)	Spices and herbs	Kumìn	Cumin	Cuminum cyminum
(ii)		Isop	Hyssop	Hyssopus officinalis
B (i)	Other shrubs and herbs	Alò	Aloe	Aloe vera
(ii)		arañ igwa	Balm	Melissa officinalis

Others are crops, fruits, flowers, grasses, and other plants.

4.2.2 Semantic Categorization

This is the process of grouping words or concepts based on their meanings, relationships, or functions within a language or culture. It involves identifying and organizing lexical items (words or phrases) into categories that share similar semantic properties. Below is the semantic categorization of the fauna and flora lexical items in Obolo language:

4.2.2.1 Fauna Semantic Categorization**4.2.2.1 (a) Food Sources****Table 9: Food Sources**

S/N	Obolo Term	English Meaning	Semantic Category
(i)	Eriembuuk	Cow	Meat Source
(ii)	Ebot	Goat	Meat Source
(iii)	irin	Fish	Seafood
(iv)	efrima	Shark	Seafood

4.2.2.1 (b) Pets/Companions**Table 10 : Pets/Companions**

S/N	Obolo Term	English Meaning	Semantic Category
(i)	Ibo	Dog	Pet
(ii)	Inyinya	Horse	Pet

4.2.2.1 (c) Wild Animals**Table 11: Wild Animals**

S/N	Obolo Term	English Meaning	Semantic Category
(i)	ogaañ	Antelope	Game Animal
(ii)	Eyinyi	Elephant	Large mammal
(iii)	Ekpuuruk	Fox	Wild carnivore

4.2.2.1 (d) Insects**Table 12: Insects**

S/N	Obolo Term	English Meaning	Semantic Category
(i)	Atat	Ant	Insect
(ii)	akwook	Bee	Insect
(iii)	Ananjin	Fly	Insect

4.2.2.2 Flora Semantic Categorization**4.2.2.2 (a) Food Sources****Table 13: Food Sources**

S/N	Obolo Term	English Meaning	Semantic Category
(i)	Amangoro	Mango	Fruit
(ii)	alimon	Almond	Nut
(iii)	Obruji	Cassava	Root crop

4.2.2.2 (b) Medicinal Plants**Table 14: Medicinal Plants**

S/N	Obolo Term	English Meaning	Semantic Category
(i)	Alò	Aloe	Medicinal herb
(ii)	arañ igwa	Balm	Medicinal herb
(iii)	nlulut	Scent leaf	Medicinal herb

4.2.3 Ecological Categorization

"Ecological classification is the process of grouping organisms or habitats into categories based on their shared characteristics or relationships" (Begon et al. 2006: 5). The data presented below shows the ecological categorization of some of the Obolo flora and fauna terms.

4.2.3.1 Fauna Ecological Categorization

4.2.3.1 (a) Terrestrial Animals

- I). ogaan (Antelope): Savannah/grassland
- II). eriembuuk (Cow): Grassland/savannah/Domesticated
- III). eboto (Goat): Mountainous/rocky

4.2.3.1 (b) Aquatic Animals

- I). irin (Fish): Freshwater/marine
- II). efrima (Shark): Marine
- III). nlori (Clam): Marine

4.2.3.1 (c) Aerial Animals

- I). ekerekwukwu (Dove): Forest/savannah
- II). igo (Eagle): Mountainous/rocky
- III). mkpukpo araraan (Falcon): Grassland/savannah

4.2.3.2 Flora Ecological Categorization

4.2.3.2 (a) Trees

- I). uti olik (Cedar): Mountainous/rocky
- II). uti siperes (Cypress): Wetland
- III). uti koo (Palm Tree): Coastal

4.2.3.2 (b) Shrubs and Herbs

- I). alo (Aloe): Arid/dry
- II). araan igwa (Balm): Wetland
- III). isop (Hyssop): Mediterranean

4.2.3.2 (c) Crops

- I). obruji (Cassava): Tropical forest
- II). akpa (Corn): Temperate/grassland
- III). igwaa (Three-leaved yam): Tropical forest

4.2.4 Cultural Categorization and Significance

Cultural classification refers to the process of grouping objects, concepts, or phenomena based on their cultural significance, meaning, or values within a particular society or community. Below are some flora and fauna terms in Obolo, along with their respective cultural significance, values, and meanings within the Obolo speech community.

4.2.4.1 Fauna Cultural Categorization

4.2.4.1 (a) Food Sources

- I). Ebot (Goat): Common meat source, used in rituals. It also symbolizes foolishness.
- II). Aron (Sheep): Symbolizes humility.
- III). Irin (Fish): Staple food source, representing prosperity and abundance. It is used in traditional festivals.

4.2.4.1 (b) Totemic Animals

- I). Igo (Eagle): it represents strength and power.
- II). Ekerekwukwu (Dove): Symbolizes purity.
- III). Egbe-àtat (Lion): it's associated with bravery, royalty and affluence.

4.2.4.1 (c) Companion Animals

- I). Ibo (Dog): Loyal companion, used for hunting and protection. It also symbolizes promiscuity and unfaithfulness.

4.2.4.1 (d) Omen Creatures

- I). Afiaan (Bat): it represents a messenger for bad omen and death.

II). Uchabat akukọ ibot (Hoopoe): Symbolizes a messenger of bad omen.

III). Ijijinu (Snake): Commonly used to represent diabolical messengers.

4.2.4.1 (e)Intelligence Animals

I). ikwut (Tortoise): Associated with wisdom and cunning.

4.2.4.2 Flora Cultural Categorization

4.2.4.2 (a) Medicinal Plants

I). alò (Aloe): Used for traditional medicine, skin treatments.

II). arañ igwa (Balm): Used for healing, spiritual protection.

4.3 Semantic Fields of Obolo Terms for Plants and Animals

A semantic field, also known as a conceptual field or lexical field, is a linguistic concept that refers to a network of words and meanings that are related to a particular concept, idea, or category.

4.3.1 Obolo Plant Semantic Fields

Table 15: Obolo Plant Semantic Fields

S/N	Field	Description	Examples
(i)	Food Plants	Related to edible plants	Obruji (Cassava), akpa (Corn), ukwa (Yam)
(ii)	Medicinal Plants	Related to healing plants	Nlulut (scent leaf), olubri (bitter leaf), alò (aloe), arañ igwa (balm)
(iii)	Sacred Plants	Related to revered plants	Inwa koo (palm frond)

4.3.2 Obolo Animal Semantic Fields

Table 16: Other Flora

S/N	Field	Description	Examples
(i)	Domesticated	Related to tame animals	Eriembuuk (Cow), eboto (Goat), ibo (Dog)
(ii)	Wild	Related to untame animals	Ogaan (Antelope), igo (Eagle), egbe àtat (Lion)
(iii)	Aquatic	Related to water creatures	Iriñ (Fish), efrima (Shark), asakwut (Crocodile)

4.4 Conceptual Categories of Obolo Terms for Plants and Animals

According to Lakoff (1980: 12), conceptual categories are mental frameworks that organize our experience of the world." These categories are based on shared experiences, cultural norms, and cognitive processes. Here are the conceptual categories associated with Obolo terms for plants and animals:

4.4.1 Plant Conceptual Categories

Table 17: Plant Conceptual Categories

S/N	Category	Description	Obolo Terms
(i)	Trees	Large, woody plants	Uti olifu (Olive Tree), uti figi (Fig Tree), uti koo (Palm Tree), uti olik (Cedar)
(ii)	Fruits	Edible plant products	Amangoro (Mango), ulaaja (Orange), èdosi (Lime), mfut gerep (Grapefruit)
(iii)	Vegetables	Edible plant parts	Obruji (Cassava), ukwa (Yam), mpikimpi (Potato), ikpon (Cocoyam)

4.4.2 Fauna Conceptual Categories

Table 18: Fauna Conceptual Categories

S/N	Category	Description	Obolo Terms
(i)	Domestic Animals	Tamed animals	Ibo (Dog), eriembuuk (Cow), eboto (Goat), inyinya (Horse)
(ii)	Wild Animals	Untamed animals	Ogaan (Antelope), ibo nriok (Bear), eyinyi (Elephant), egbe àtat (Lion)

(iii)	Birds	Feathered creatures	Ekerekwukwu (Dove), igo (Eagle), uchabat akukọ ibot (Hoopoe), unon (Rooster)
(iv)	Reptiles	Scaly animals	Asakuut (Crocodile), ijijinu (Snake), okube (Chameleon), ikwut (Tortoise)

4.6 Observation of Loanwords from Other Languages

Euba (2013: 56) observed that lexical borrowing is a common feature of language contact situations in Africa, where languages have interacted and influenced each other's vocabulary. As a result of this contact, linguistic borrowing occurs for terms that do not exist in one of the languages. Regarding linguistic borrowing, Obolo is no exception. There are several terms used for flora and fauna that were not originally Obolo terms. Below is a list of some loanwords used for Obolo flora and fauna, resulting from linguistic influences from other languages.

4.6.1 Obolo Fauna Loanwords

Table 19: Obolo Fauna Loanwords

S/N	Obolo Term	English Meaning	Possible Source Language	Possible Source Word
(i)	Ebot	Goat	Efik	Ebot
(ii)	Eyinyi	Elephant	Igbo	Enyi

4.6.2 Obolo Flora Loanwords

Table 20: Obolo Flora Loanwords

S/N	Obolo Term	English Meaning	Possible Sourced Language	Possible Sourced Word
(i)	Alimon	Almond	English/French	amande
(ii)	Figi	Fig	English/French	Figue
(iii)	Olifu	Olive	English/Latin	Oliva
(iv)	Popula	Poplar	English/Latin	Pōpulus

Summary of the Findings and Conclusion

This paper examined selected flora and fauna terms in Obolo language, their categorization, semantic fields, and associated conceptual categories. Additionally, it investigated loanwords and linguistic influences from other languages on Obolo's lexical items for plants and animals.

The research findings revealed that Obolo has terms or lexical items for flora and fauna, although these terms are limited in the Obolo language lexicon. Certain flora and fauna lack Obolo names due to ecological divergence or differences. Conversely, some Obolo names for animals and plants lack English equivalents. Notably, the Obolo people's ecological setting influences their lexicon, with more terms for aquatic flora and fauna than terrestrial.

The paper also explored the cultural significance of Obolo terms for flora and fauna. The researcher found that the Obolo people have numerous terms that symbolize or represent specific ideas or concepts. For instance, irin (fish) culturally symbolizes abundance, egbe-ata (lion) represents bravery, royalty, and affluence. Furthermore, the examination of loanwords and linguistic influences revealed few instances, primarily due to ecological differences. Names for flora and fauna not found in the Obolo-speaking regions or ecosystem are absent in the language.

In conclusion, the Obolo language possesses terms for plants and animals in its ecosystem, exhibiting varied categorization methods, cultural significance, and minimal loanwords. It is evident that different tribes and groups have distinct terms for plants and animals, and a speaker's knowledge of these terms can significantly enhance effective communication, cultural understanding, and environmental awareness.

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Appendix 1**4.1.1 Table 1: List of Obolo Terms for Flora**

Below are the list of flora terms in Obolo language and their respective meanings in English.

S/N	OBOLO	MEANING IN ENGLISH
01	Uti olifu (<i>“uche” for tree - Unyeada variant</i>)	Olive Tree
02	Uti figi	Fig Tree
03	Uti koo	Palm Tree
04	Uti olik	Cedar
05	Uti siperes	Cypress
06	Uti alaga	Pine
07	Alimɔn	Almond
08	Uti m̃aa	Myrrh Tree
09	Uti pɔpula	Poplar
10	Uti kasia	Cassia
11	Akasia	Acacia
12	Uti mitulu	Myrtle
13	Uti wilo	Willow
14	Uti amangoro	Mango
15	Uti esip-ebeke	Coconut Palm
16	Ayininga	Black Mangrove
17	Ngala	Red Mangrove
18	Etabaka	White Mangrove
19	Nfra-alɔm	Blueberry
20	Udan	African Star Apple
21	Sisopri	Soursop
22	Alilip	Bush Mango
23	Efe-akpa	African Pear
24	Ilolo	Plum
25	Efe	Pear
26	Appo	Apple
27	Ukwaba	Guava
28	Ata-eŋe	Avocado
29	Ata-efiañ	Plantain
30	Efiañ	Banana
31	Akput	Papaya (pawpaw)
32	Penappo	Pineapple
33	Amangoro	Mango
34	Atajalin	Tangerine
35	Mfut gerep	Grapefruit
36	Edosi	Lime
37	Ulaaja	Orange
38	Pomegaranet	Pomegranate
39	Akpa	Corn
40	Akpa bali	Barley
41	Akpa wit	Wheat
42	Arañ igwa	Balm
43	Alò	Aloe
44	Kumìn	Cumin
45	M̃nt	Mint
46	Isop	Hyssop
47	Igwaa	Three-leaved yam
48	Ukwa-mu	Water Yam

49	Ikpõn	Cocoyam
50	Mpikimpi	Potato
51	Ukwa	Yam
52	Obruji	Cassava
53	Wotamelon	Watermelon
54	Mbõm	Pumpkin
55	Kukumba	Cucumber
56	Ajakajak lili	Lily flower
57	Ajakajak rôs	Rose flower
58	Igwuru	Grasses
59	Ngwõbeke	Bamboo
60	Olik gerep	Vine
61	Nlulut	Scent leaf
62	Olubri	Bitter leaf
63	Inwa koo	Palm frond

Appendix 2

4.1.2 Table 2: List of Obolo Terms for Fauna

The following data are the list of fauna terms in Obolo language and their respective English equivalents.

S/N	OBOLO	MEANING IN ENGLISH
01	Ogaan	Antelope
02	Mkpinyõn	Ape
03	Ibo nriok	Bear
04	Aligo	Camel
05	Eriembuuk	Cow
06	Ogaan	Deer
07	Ibo	Dog
08	Inyinya akpan	Donkey
09	Eyinyi	Elephant
10	Ekpuuruk	Fox
11	Ogaan	Gazelle
12	Atõ	Giraffe
13	Ebot	Goat
14	Inyinya	Horse
15	Ibo oron	Hyena
16	Gwun arõõn	Lamb
17	Egbe ntõok ntõok	Leopard
18	Egbe àtat	Lion
19	Mkpinyõn	Monkey
20	Arõõn inyõn õgoõn	Mountain Sheep
21	Inyinya	Mule
22	Eriembuuk	Ox
23	Okodi	Pig
24	Orie arõõn	Ram
25	Ikpi (“ikwi” - <i>Unyeada variant</i>)	Rat
26	Arõõn	Sheep
27	Ibo oron	Wolf
28	Afian	Bat
29	Ekerekwukwu (“ekenekwukwu” - <i>Unyeada variant</i>)	Dove
30	Igo	Eagle

31	Mkpukpo ararañ	Falcon
32	Akwanakwa	Hawk
33	Aba okuket	Heron
34	Uchabat akuko ibot	Hoopoe
35	Mkpukpo ofifit	Kite
36	Wukuwuku	Ostrich
37	Ikwurikwu	Owl
38	Usuñ	Partridge
39	Nriok	Peacock
40	Ekerekwukwu	Pigeon
41	Ekuñkuñ	Quail
42	Amaañ	Raven
43	Unon	Rooster
44	Agagawaji	Sparrow
45	Aba mbese	Stork
46	Ekerekwukwu	Turtledove
47	Edene	Vulture
48	Okube	Chameleon
49	Ijo ulu	Cobra
50	Asakwut	Crocodile
51	Oban-uwu (“aban-uwo” - <i>Unyeada variant</i>)	Gecko
52	Okpok	Lizard
53	Okpok oron	Monitor Lizard
54	Ijijinu	Serpent
55	Ulu (ijijinu)	Snake
56	Ikwut	Tortoise
57	Ijijinu	Viper
58	Ikwurumu (ikwut-mu)	Sea Turtle
59	Akwook	Frog
60	Iriñ	Fish
61	Ofrikoso	Octopus
62	Efie	Oyster
63	Ntutut	Periwinkle
64	Uron	Scallop
65	Efrima	Shark
66	Atat	Ant
67	Akwook	Bee
68	ikpo-ukwa	Butterfly
69	Ariañ	Cricketer
70	Ikap	Flea
71	Ananjin	Fly
72	Ata akaka (“okpukaka” - <i>Unyeada variant</i>)	Grasshopper
73	Mkput (“Mbuk” - <i>Unyeada variant</i>)	Maggot
74	Nkarankat	Moth
75	Efereñ	Scorpion
76	Olonjin die	Spider
77	Mkput (okonini)	Worm
78	Nlori	Clam
79	Uka	Crab
80	Òtòtòk (“ékpé” - <i>Unyeada variant</i>)	Snail
81	Akaka ituuk	Locust
82	Njak mè okwaan	Seahorse

83	Alaafọ	Jellyfish
84	Ikọt	Shrimp
85	Orobonto	Prawn
86	Ìkop	Tilapia
87	Ejeke	Mullet
88	Ulu mu	Eel
89	Ewuwuk	Puffer fish
90	Èsé	Crayfish
91	Ikpañ	Stingray

The data presented above in tables 1 and 2 are the names or terms used for certain plants and animals in our ecosystem in the Obolo language. Some of these names have dialectal variants, indicating that different Obolo dialects may refer to these items differently. Notably, most of the terms presented are from the Ngo dialect, which is considered the standard dialect of the Obolo language. Additionally, this work incorporates the Unyeada dialect, and where variants exist, they are indicated.