Disappearing Lexemes in the Igbo Language: An Effect of Language Variation and Change

Language variation which is a precondition for language change, results from many factors such as age, gender, social class, language contact, etc. Lexical variation and consequent change could be as a result of technological and societal changes. Igbo language does not have a long history of writing and many words must have disappeared in the past unrecorded. This paper discusses the disappearing lexemes in the everyday speech of especially younger speakers of different dialects of Igbo. In their present usage of the Igbo language, some words are fast becoming obsolete and rarely used in communication. This is probably as a result of modernity and sometimes because the items which such words refer to are now rare to find or no longer exist. The researchers used structured checklist to collect from elderly speakers of the Igbo language names of such objects and concepts which are gradually getting out of use. The paper provides ample examples of such words as collected from different Igbo dialect areas and expresses the obvious fear that with the passage of time, such words would completely disappear from the Igbo lexicon. The paper concludes on the note that there is urgent need to conduct multimedia documentation of these lexical items before they completely disappear from the Igbo lexicon. These documented lexical items could serve as a database for term creation for modern items, concepts and ideas in the contemporary Igbo society.

Keywords: Disappearing Lexemes, Language Change, Igbo Language, Cultural Dynamism, Language Documentation

Introduction

Languages change over time. Language change is a universal phenomenon. Languages with long history of writing have been shown to have changed over time and many words have been lost or replaced with newer words. This change is apparent in the language use of the younger generation. When changes occur in people’s language, the language owners observe that their language is changing. Sometimes, older people complain and usually put blames on social institutions, cultural imperialism by other cultures or public appearances of modern leaders.
It is important to take into consideration the language acquisition process in this research. A child starts speaking a language from the age of two and most likely acquires a native speaker competence at the age of five. However, the acquisition of lexical items is a continuous process throughout one’s life. It is assumed that a child of six to probably fifteen years, or little more, may not have acquired so many words of the language, especially those words that are not part of everyday expressions. In fact, the number of words known to the child is determined by his level of exposure to the language. It is however assumed that, by the age of twenty, a native speaker of a language should have been exposed to at least ninety percent of the words of the language. It is equally important to note that knowledge of a word could be active or passive. Active knowledge involves knowing the meaning of the word and using it while passive knowledge involves knowing the meaning but not using it. Different words have different degree of use. There are words that are frequently used which we call everyday use but there are words that are infrequent. The frequency of a word is determined by two major factors which are: readily availability of concept/idea represented by the word, availability or non-availability of synonyms. When concepts or ideas are always there in a society, there must be words to express them in the day to day use of the language. If concepts/ideas/objects are rarely available, the words representing them may not be readily available in the mental lexicon of the speakers. Sometimes, borrowing from another language that is contact with the language in question will take place when the word for the concept is not readily available. This paper takes into consideration, the above factors in determining whether a word is still actively in use or obsolete in the Igbo language.

The Igbo language has witnessed a rapid decline in its lexicon since the last four decades. This is as a result of the spread of modernism. Advancement in technology has given rise to many instruments such as radio, television, computer, cell phone and play station. These modern gadgets as good as they are have negative effect on the development of our indigenous languages. Children spend a lot of time watching foreign movies and cartoons that
indoctrinate them into foreign cultures and values. These days, most parents hardly make out time to tell folk stories to their kids. As a result of this, many Igbo children born in the last two to three decades do not know the names of many Igbo traditional concepts and objects. It is surprising to note that many children who one can be assumed to be fluent in the Igbo language do not use such words as "ngàji ‘spoon’ and "ugànị ‘famine’. It is interesting to note that many children who are assumed to be fluent in Igbo prefer to use the English equivalents for such readily available words and concepts in Igbo as with the case with "ngàji ‘spoon’ and other such common items. In some other cases, it is simply because the concepts or objects are rarely seen or occur any more. This is the case with "ugànị ‘famine’ and many others.

The doctrines of Christianity have also discouraged people from using certain words relating to some Igbo traditional cultural activities. Most of these cultural activities are seen as ‘pagan’ practices especially by the members of the modern Pentecostal churches. There is a conscious effort by members of the Pentecostal movement to disassociate themselves from anything their ‘pagan’ fore bearers were known for. They even go as far as rejecting names given to them by their parents. They will hardly use words that have to do with traditional practices even though most of these words have nothing to do with religion and belief. The cohesion of the society has also been affected by formal education and the modern lifestyle such that the people no longer take part in ‘primitive’ cultural events. For these reasons, the rate of the use of traditional Igbo words has dropped drastically as most people no longer have interest in them. As these words are abandoned the society has lost most of its values. This paper sets out to find out some of these Igbo words that are becoming obsolete and the rate at which different generations of Igbo speakers use them.

The rest of the paper is divided as follows. Section 2 discusses the relationship between language variation and language change and their relationship with cultural change which could lead to loss of words and creation of new ones. Section 3 is on the methodology for data collection and
analysis. Section 4 presents the list of words we consider obsolete or becoming obsolete and their categorization. In section 5, we employ some statistical tools in analyzing some few selected words to show the level of familiarity and use of such words by different generations of Igbo speakers. Section 6 is the conclusions and recommendations.

On Language Variation and Change and its Relationship to Cultural Change

An interesting relationship has been observed between language variation and language change. Language variation is a precondition for language change. This presupposes that patterns of language variation are crucial for a full understanding of language change over time. Agbedo (2001:44) notes that an individual’s language behavior changes in accordance with the demands of his everyday interaction as determined also by the social context. This implies that language change is an intrinsic part of the process of everyday use of language. A related term is language attrition which Köpke & Schmid, (2004:5) define as “the non-pathological decrease in a language that had previously been acquired by an individual”. Language attrition occurs when there is change in the linguistic behavior of a speaker of a language. It could occur probably be as a result of the acquisition of a second language and less use of the first language. It could affect an individual or the society. When it affects the society, it is usually described as a form of language shift. In the case of disappearing words, it may not be as a result of forgetting or losing the L1 words, but that of non-transfer of the L1 words to the children. This is largely caused by cultural and technological changes in the society.

Cultural dynamism is a characteristic of every human society. Linguists have long realized the importance of the connection between language and culture. This is because the lexicon of a language tells the story of the culture of those who speak the language. Changes in material culture, in lifestyles, and in institutions have led to losses and gains in the lexicon (Johnson, 1996).
Globalization has in one way or the other affected many societies in the world and consequently their languages. The Igbo society has changed from one that was predominantly rural, with an economy based almost solely on agriculture, to one with a majority of its population in urban areas with modern amenities and some level of technological advancements. Meillet (1921) was one of the first historical linguists to study the role of sociological factors in linguistic change. His work, as interpreted in Nerlich (1992:177), explained semantic change based on (1) relationships between words and other words, (2) relationships between words and objects, and (3) relationships between words and the differential usage of them by speakers of different social groups. Johnson (1996) investigates lexical change and variation in the Southeastern United States between 1930 and 1990. This book discusses words used in the Southeast and how they have changed over time. It also describes how the lexicon varies according to the speaker's age, race, education, sex, and place of residence. The results show that region was the most important factor in differentiating dialects in the 1930s but that it was the least important element in the 1990s.

There is an insignificant amount of scholarly work on language variation and change in Igbo. A notable work is Agbedo’s (2001) study of linguistic variation and change in the Enugwu-Ezike dialect of Igbo. Using a wide range of social factors such as region, age, contact, gender and education in measuring the patterns of linguistic variation in the dialect under study, the research identifies region as the most significant factor for variation. Of all the linguistic levels, vocabulary is the most sensitive to language change since it is tied referentially to the culture. It is on this note that this present study seeks to investigate lexical change in the Igbo language.
Methodology

The data for this study were collected from three dialect/subcultural areas in Igboland: Nnewi, Nkwelle Ezunaka and Issele-Uku. The choice of these dialects was not motivated by any other reason except convenience. The researchers are from these areas and/or have some relations from these areas. Coincidentally, Nnewi represents an urban settlement, Issele-Uku represents a semi urban settlement while Nkwelle Ezunaka represents a rural settlement.

The words were collected from elderly speakers from these communities who are 60 years and above by listening and interacting with them. Majority of these elders are monolingual Igbo speakers. The vitality of the collected words were examined using structured questionnaire designed to find out the familiarity with the words, knowledge of their meanings and usage by the speakers. The questions were just just three: (1) Have you heard the word before? (2) Do you know the meaning of the word? (3) Do you make use of the word in daily conversation or as the need arises? Our respondents were selected from three different age brackets representing different generations of Igbo speakers: 15 – 39, 40 – 59, 60 and above. There is no convenient generational index to classify the Igbo speakers but we take it that 15-39 represents those who born and bred with the period of computer evolution in Nigeria. 40-50 represents the post independence group, while 60 and above represent those born before independence. We deliberately left out those below 15 years because it is natural that their level of acquisition of the lexicon of the language will be low. A total number of 90 respondents from the three communities were used for the study (15-39= 32, 40-59= 30, 60 and above = 28). All of them are fluent native speakers of Igbo but bilingual in English and Igbo. Since we could not possibly present a statistical representation of all the words in a short paper like this, only data on few words are statistically presented to give a graphic picture of how the words are faring among different generations of the speakers. For the statistics, simple percentage was used in
obtaining the values of the words as used by different age groups. The results are presented in bar charts for better appreciation.

The Data

We present below 30 words which from our investigations are rarely used nowadays. We term these words obsolete or disappearing because many younger speakers of the language have either not heard the word or do not know their meanings. Even many of the older speakers who know the meanings of the words hardly use them nowadays.

These terms were loosely grouped together in seven categories: (1) cosmetics/fashion, (2) housing/furniture, (3) food/cooking items, (4) religion, (5) health, (6) greetings and (7) miscellaneous. We use the following abbreviations to show the source of the words: N = Nneewi, NE = Nkwelle Ezunaka, IU = Issele-Uku and C = common to the three dialects.

1. Cosmetics/fashion

égbúgbú  tattoo (C)
úrì  make up for women (C)
ótańjelé  local eye pencil (C)
ufie  a reddish powder for beautification (C)

2. Housing/furniture

ńkpú  room (NE)
ńkpúkè  woman’s bedroom/house (C)
ókpógá  a type of chair (C)
óché ́ékwū  kitchen stool (C)
úkó  shelf/counter (C)
3. Cooking items

ekwú  kitchen (C)
ngígã  basket hanging (over a heath) (C)
ékú  wooden spoon (C)
òkú  clay bowl (C)
mkpilite  a small wooden mortar (IU)

4. Religion/belief

ókpëši  symbol of divinity (C)
ókwú álùsì  shrine (C)
ògbòdù  the uninitiated (into the masquerade cult) (N, NE)

5. Health

ńchichè  yaw disease (N)
ákpàtà  measles (NE)
áñbálá  measles (N)
áfúfú  measles (IU)
ótólò  diarrhea (C)
ekpenta  leprosy (C)

6. Greetings

ómùú  greeting for an elderly man (N)
ómùú  greeting for an elderly woman (N)

7. Miscellaneous

úgànjì  famine (N)
mpanaka  lantern (C)
mìbùrù  stick (that is aimed and thrown at a tree top) (C)
éjú  earthenware (C)
mkpà  scissors (C)
The words above will fall into two broad groups: extinct words and disappearing words.

**Extinct Words**

Some words were observed to be obsolete because the objects/concepts they denote are no longer in existence. For example, ọkụ, ẹjụ. Words like ọmụụ and ọmụ in Nnewi which are greeting words are completely dead. Nobody uses them any more.

**Disappearing Words**

These are words which Igbo speakers showing a highly proficient lexical knowledge are not always able to recall because the objects/concepts they denote are disappearing or the English equivalents are more frequently used. Instances are: mkpuke, mbụrụ, ńchiche.

The words above are rarely used nowadays. Interestingly, the question will be how are such concepts expressed by the modern day speakers. Most of the younger who like we said earlier are bilingual in English and Igbo resort to English to express such concepts. To them, it could be analysed as borrowing because such English terms have become part and parcel of their Igbo lexicon. These are some of the recorded expressions among the younger speakers. We were able to obtain from elder speakers the same expressions. The differences are presented in Table 1 below.
Table 1. Variation in Use between Younger and Older Speakers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Younger Speakers</th>
<th>Older Speakers</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Onye lepa</td>
<td>Onye ekpenta</td>
<td>a leper (a person afflicted with leprosy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Mama m nọ na kichin</td>
<td>Nne m nọ n’ ekwu</td>
<td>My mother is in the kitchen’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 O nwere mizulu</td>
<td>Alubara na-agba ya</td>
<td>He/She is suffering from measles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Biko nye m sizos</td>
<td>Biko nye m mkpa</td>
<td>‘Please give me the scissors’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Afọ na-asa m</td>
<td>Otolo na-agba m</td>
<td>I am having diarrhea</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 1-4, the younger speakers use the English equivalents. Interestingly, when confronted, we discovered that they do not even know the Igbo equivalents for such words. In 5, the younger speakers refer to diarrhea as afọ osișa which translates as ‘running stomach’. The older people know that running stomach is a disease condition which has a name ‘ọtọlò’. There is a proverb on that: *A nyusịa nsị a kàpighị và onụ, ọ burụ nsị ọtọlọ* which literary translates as ‘If an excreta does not have a pointed tip, then it is the excreta from diarrhea’. Since the words above are rarely used by the younger people, they are gradually getting out of use and being replaced by their borrowed English equivalents.

We show in section 5 below the graphical representation of the level of familiarity, knowledge of meaning and use of few selected words among different generations of the Igbo speakers from the selected areas.

Statistical Analysis

We selected one word from each category in section 4 for statistical analysis of the responses from our respondents. Only words that are common to the three communities are subjected to this statistical analysis with the
exception of ọmụ which is found only in the Nnewi dialect/subculture. This is
to show in practical terms that the words are either obsolete or disappearing.

Table 2. Ọtanjélè ‘Local Eye Pencil’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Total No of Respondents</th>
<th>Familiarity with the Word</th>
<th>Knowledge of the Meaning of the Word</th>
<th>Usage of the s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-39</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 - 59</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above 60</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1. A Bar Chart Showing the Familiarity, Knowledge and Usage of Ọtanjélè

The analysis in table 2 shows speakers within the 15-39 and 40-59 age brackets
are familiar or know the meaning of the word otanjele. Even the among the few that
know the meaning, only an insignificant number: 6% and 13% respectively use the
word. The Older speakers know the word but only very few still use it. This is
because the local eye pencil has been replaced by the imported one. Some of the
older speakers refer to the imported eye pencil as otanjele while the majority of the
speakers refer to it as just ‘eye pencil’ without knowing that there is a perfect Igbo
equivalent. This is an indication that the word is fast disappearing.
Table 3. Mkụkụ ‘Woman’s Bedroom/ House’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Total No of Respondents</th>
<th>Familiarity with the Word</th>
<th>Knowledge of the Meaning of the Word</th>
<th>Usage of the Word</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-39</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 – 59</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above 60</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2. A Bar Chart Showing the Familiarity, Knowledge and Usage of Mkụkụ

The word *mkụkụ* is rarely used by the younger and middle generations and a good number of them do not know the meaning. The word is familiar and known by the older generations but fewer number of persons (68%) still make use of the word. This is an indication that the word is endangered and may disappear from the Igbo lexicon. Many people today simply use the borrowed word *rum.*
Table 4. Ékú ‘Big Wooden Spoon’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Total No of Respondents</th>
<th>Familiarity with the Word</th>
<th>Knowledge of the Meaning of the Word</th>
<th>Usage of the Word</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-39</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 – 59</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above 60</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3. A Bar Chart Showing the Familiarity, Knowledge and Usage of Ékú

The analysis above shows that eku scores high for familiarity and knowledge for all generations, but scores low for usage for all generations. This is because the wooden spoon has been replaced by stainless and aluminium spoons. It is rare to find the wooden spoon in homes in Igboland. The word is therefore highly endangered.
Table 5. Ọkwụ Ἀ lýṣị ‘Shrine’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Total No of Respondents</th>
<th>Familiarity with the word</th>
<th>Knowledge of the meaning of the Word</th>
<th>Usage of the Word</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-39</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 – 59</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above 60</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4. A Bar Chart Showing the Familiarity, Knowledge and Usage of Ọkwụ Ἀ lýṣị

Table 5 and Fig 4 show that the word okwu alusi is still very much viable. A greater percentage of the population still make use of the word. This is because even though many of the people have turned to Christians, there are still adherents to the African traditional religion and shrines are dotted here and there. Only very few persons, especially the very young ones, do not know the meaning of the word nor use it. There is even a kind of renaissance where many of the younger people are moving back to traditional worship. We can then say that this word is not disappearing soon.
Table 6. Ôtòlò ‘Diarrhea’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Total No of Respondents</th>
<th>Familiarity with the Word No.</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Knowledge of the Meaning of the Word No.</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Usage of the Word No.</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15-39</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 – 59</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above 60</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 5. A Bar Chart Showing the Familiarity, Knowledge and Usage of Ôtòlò

The word *otolo* is interesting because while there is high level of familiarity and usage of this word among the younger and middle age speakers, but lower level of knowledge of its meaning. Surprisingly, many younger speakers that use the word do not know its meaning. They use the word in a fixed abusive form: *Otolo gbagbue gi* ‘Let diarrhea kill you’, but do not know the import of the curse. The word has been replaced in normal everyday language with *afo isa* meaning ‘to have a running stomach’.
**Table 7. Ùgànị ‘Famine’**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Total No of Respondents</th>
<th>Familiarity with the Word</th>
<th>Knowledge of the Meaning of the Word</th>
<th>Usage of the Word</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-39</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 – 59</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above 60</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 6. A Bar Chart Showing the Familiarity, Knowledge and Usage of Ùgànị**

The level of familiarity, knowledge and usage of the word *ugani* is low among the younger speakers. This may be as a result of the improvement in the economic wellbeing of the people. Nobody talks about famine in modern day Igboland. There is no time in recent memory after the Nigerian civil war that recorded great scarcity of food that affected the whole society. The younger generations who are familiar with the word picked it up from folktales. Unfortunately, with the advent of western culture and civilization with associated modern amenities such as television and video games, parents no longer tell their children folkstories such as “Once upon a time there was a great famine in the land of the animals”. These could explain why the word scores low for 15-39 age bracket. Incidentally, lack of knowledge of the word is seen in
speakers between the ages of 15-20. They rather use the more generic term *aguu* ‘hunger’. The word *ugani* may soon only exist in the Igbo dictionaries.

Table 8. *Omú*ū (N) ‘Greeting’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Total No of Respondents</th>
<th>Familiarity with the Word</th>
<th>Knowledge of the Meaning of the Word</th>
<th>Usage of the Word</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-39</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 – 59</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above 60</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 7. *A Bar Chart Showing the Familiarity, Knowledge and Usage of* *Omú*ū

The word *ómú*ū is a form of greeting for male elders in Nneewi dialect, it counterpart for the female elders is *ómō*ū. Both words have become extinct. Nobody uses them any more. Many younger speakers are not familiar with the word; they do not have any knowledge of the word and do not use it at all. The older speakers (40 and above) who are familiar with the word and have the knowledge do not also use it at all because it has become old fashioned to greet the elders that way. Moreover, the greeting is erroneously associated with paganism. The last time, one of the author of this paper remembers the use of
these greeting words should be in the 70s. The words have been replaced with
the other Igbo greeting forms including the English ‘good morning, good
afternoon, good evening’.

Summary and Conclusion

The paper has attempted to present some obsolete Igbo words in the
speech of the Igbo people of southeastern Nigeria. We have shown the various
categorizations of those words and the paper identified that the older speakers
are more familiar with the words, more of them know the meaning of the
words and more of them use them regularly. The younger generations are fast
losing grasp of the words. This is a clear indication of endangerment. These
Igbo words are endangered and fast disappearing. Many of the words are being
replaced by their English counterparts in the mental lexicon of most Igbo
younger speakers

The paper observes that the main cause of the disappearance of Igbo
lexemes is westernization as a property of modernization and globalization. It
then calls for urgent documentation of Igbo lexemes. These documented
lexemes could serve as a repository for the creation of terms for modern
concepts and new technologies that come into Igbo culture. For example, the
traditional Igbo society had an earthen pot for keeping water cool know as ūdù
miri ‘water pot’. People no longer use the water pot, but it could be used to
name the modern day fridge. For example, something like ūdù oyị which
literally translates as ‘cold pot’ sounds fine for fridge in the Igbo language.
References


