



THE DYNAMICS OF SEMANTIC INTERPLAY OF SENSE RELATIONS IN OLUKHAYO, WESTERN KENYA

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Abstract:

This research initiative sought to highlight the dynamics of semantic interplay as concerns the sense relations in Olukhayo language, within the matrix of Lexico-semantic. Lexico-semantics of sense relations in Olukhayo has seemingly not been accorded the much-deserved attention in light of the preceding linguistic studies. Consequently, this scenario has, over time, triggered the motivation and urgency to explore the phenomenon. In fact, there is scant printout (if any at all) of literary materials on this language. Furthermore, the use of Olukhayo has continued to decline, especially, among the youthful cadre of the overall populace, as they largely prefer the use of Kiswahili and English languages. This new trend has roused the need for an in-depth assessment of semantic interplay that defines sense relations. The description of sense relations was inspired and governed by Lexical Priming theory. A representative sample of 384 informants was arrived at by use of purposive judgmental and snowball techniques. Data extraction was achieved via the adoption of the questionnaire instrument. The data for analysis was taken from the open class category of words. Data presentation and analysis were made possible by the use of a descriptive design approach. This approach is critical in dealing with qualitative data. Ideally, it consists of generating systematic, descriptive and explanatory accounts of data, as is the case with categories or word classes of lexical units. The analysis was done thematically by drawing on tenets of Lexical Priming theory. Lexical items display or exhibit links or networks that are semantically driven. The intrinsic nature of such links lends insights into the semantic realities of collocations, semantic associations and colligations. A thorough examination via thematic analyses of semantic interrelationships among the lexical units revealed the mechanics and precise nature of the interface or interplay that obtains among lexemes in Olukhayo. They were identified, categorized and coded within the matrix of our study objective. The various lexical relations were identified, categorized and coded accordingly. The study findings mirrored manifestations of semantic interplay among sense relations in Olukhayo. The

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analysis of data sheds light on the kind of semantic interplay in Olukhayo lexis: Synonymy Polysemy [SP], and Homonymy Polysemy [HP] intermediaries. Thus, it is important to recommend that literature materials are available on Olukhayo and or other languages by those with a passion for writing and publications. Additionally, it is critical to appreciate the importance and the role of the semantic interplay of sense relations in effective language acquisition and teaching.

Keywords: sense relations, semantic interplay, polysemy, synonymy and homonymy

1. Introduction

This research study sought to establish the manifestations of semantic interplay among sense relations in Olukhayo. There are various branches that deal with the study of linguistic meaning, for example: Lexical Semantics, Grammatical Semantics, Formal Semantics and Linguistic Pragmatics (Cruse, 2011). There is a long-standing philosophical tradition of exploring the meanings of lexical items. During the 20th Century, Wittgenstein (1953) and Quine (1953) intensified their research efforts with a view to establishing the nature of meaning and typology of lexical relations among words and their physical references. Besides being a sub-branch of linguistics, Lexical Semantics may be presumed to be an improvement of this philosophical standpoint (Kent, 2008). Thus, this research initiative draws insights from the branch of Lexical Semantics. Lexical Semantics is concerned with the study of the meanings of lexical items; the study of the meanings of content words as opposed to the meanings of grammatical words (Pustejovsky, 1995).

Semantics is regarded as a discipline which seeks to establish the meanings of lexical items within the vocabulary of any given language. Lyons (1968) observes that the sense of a lexical item constitutes its position within a set or network of relations with other lexical items in a language. The kind of meaning that relates words to each other within the language is distinguished by Gottlob (1892) as sense, or cognitive content. He argues that sense is one of the meanings a word has in the absence of the object referred to by such a word. Olukhayo is a language spoken by the Bakhayo people found in Busia County of the Western region of Kenya (Angogo, 1980). Olukhayo is regarded as intelligible to Lubukusu, Lulogooli, Lusamia, Lunyala and Lumarachi (Muhindi, 1981). Nonetheless, our study considers Olukhayo as a language characterized by unique phonological, semantic and morphological features that make it quite distinct relative to the other languages in the Western region. Olukhayo has apparently little literature published on it, and this is probably due to the fact that much of the documented literature in use is drawn from languages such as Logooli, Wanga and Samia (Makokha, 2013; Wabwire, 2010; Makeni, 2006). Olukhayo language belongs to the Masaba-Luhya group (JE 30); class JE 341 (Maho, 2009).

The Bakhayo community of Bantu prototype traces their ancestry in Eastern Uganda. The Bakhayo are said to have migrated from Ibanda in Busoga-Uganda to Bukhayo, their present homeland in Busia County, Kenya (Angogo, 1980). Busia is

located at the extreme Western border of the Country. The county borders Bungoma to the North, Kakamega to the East, and Siaya to the South East, Lake Victoria to the South West and the Republic of Uganda to the West. It lies between latitude 0° and 0° 45 North and longitude 34° 25 East and covers an area of 1694.5km² (KNBS, 2019). Bukhaya is divided into East, West, and Central locations. Geographically, Mungatsi and Mabunge form the Central region, Nambale forms the Eastern region, Matayos and Busibwabo form the Western region. Olukhaya is classified together with Nyala, Marachi and Samia as the sub-groups of the Western region (Williams, 1973).

On the contrary, one school of thought asserts that Luhya as an ethnolinguistic community is a conglomeration of quite unique and remotely related sub-groups that were classified together for political expediency. Historians of this view further maintain that the phrase 'Luhya' was a coinage of the British administration in Kenya (Makila, 2004; Osogo, 1966; Wagner, 1970). The disparities among some 'dialects' are so extensive that mutual intelligibility is rendered very minimal among them. In other scenarios, however, the differences are very scanty, thereby paving room for a high mutual intelligibility among the 'dialects' in question (Chambers & Trudgill, 1980). Lubukusu, for instance, displays sharp phonological and lexical variations from Lulogooli such that there is very little intelligibility between them.

According to Lyons (1977) and Palmer (1981), the discussion of meaning often entails drawing a distinction between the 'reference' of a word and the 'sense' of a word. Reference is, in fact, viewed as an external meaning relation; it is the relationship between a word and the entity that it refers to in the physical world, in our mental world or in the world of our experiences. A 'tree' would, for example, be treated as a plant with a trunk, branches, twigs, leaves and roots. However, this study will explore the meaning from the dimension of sense. Sense is regarded as an internal meaning relation that holds between words within the vocabulary of a language, encompassing the speakers' knowledge of their language, and factors that one needs to consider while developing an adequate semantic model. Furthermore, Lyons (1968) observes that the sense of a lexical item constitutes its position within a set or network of relations with other lexical items in a language. Additionally, Palmer (2000) opines that the sense of a word is revealed via the relationships of meaning the word manifests with other lexemes in the vocabulary of a language. Lexical items are not only regarded as 'containers' (container theory of meaning) or as participating in semantic roles; they display certain relations. By way of illustration, in the sentence, '**Menya** wrote a **letter** to **Nafula**,' we can have semantic roles: **agent**, **theme** and **goal** as per the boldfaced parts of the sentence, respectively (Onwukwe, 2015).

In summary, **sense relation** is a phrase which addresses the nature of semantic relations involving words or lexical items of a language in a given domain or field of meaning. There are two levels of meaning relations, namely, the word and sentence levels. The former entails meaning relations of individual words or lexemes. This study assessed and treated both levels of meaning relations as **lexical units** or **items**. In precision, the agglutinative phenomenon of Bantu languages renders Olukhaya analyzable from this linguistic perspective. The linguistic feature of agglutination is

extensively evident in Olukhayo lexical items (lexemes). Consider the following examples for more insights into this matter;

- a) Natabona **yatsiaingo**.
Natabona **went home**
- b) Abakofu **balakulirwa** tsingubo.
The elderly **will be bought** dresses.

The expressions 'yatsiaingo' [she went home] and 'balakulirwa' [they will be bought] are apparently single words at face value. A closer study or examination, however, clearly reveals both as sentences. As a result, our resolve to treat words, phrases, clauses and or sentences in Olukhayo corpus as lexical items (lexemes) for analysis, stems from this rationale as defined by the morphosyntactic properties of Olukhayo.

2. Literature Review

Semantics is regarded as a discipline which addresses the meanings of lexical items within the vocabulary of any given language. Indeed, Lyons (1968) observes that the sense of a lexical item constitutes its position within a set or network of relations with other lexical items. Palmer (2000) posits that the sense of a word is revealed via the relationships of meaning the word manifests with other lexemes in the vocabulary of a language. These theoretical assertions offer impactful insights into the objective of semantic interplay among the lexical items in Olukhayo. An understanding of words implies that one has a clear appreciation of the sense relations across and within individual lexical items. The notion of semantic interplay is evident in the perception of synonymy and polysemy. There is a tendency for some words in many languages to exhibit both the features of polysemy and synonymy. Spanish verbs like 'arrojar' and 'echar', for example, are considered synonymous, yet they express quite different meanings (polysemous). Synonymy focuses on relations and connections that exist between separate lexical items, while polysemy concerns the information associated with a single lexical item (Skallman, 2012). This reviewed study informs the current one in its focus on semantic interplay. However, it was limited to the word class of verbs, while our target was the entire open class category.

As noted by Murphy (2003), synonymy can vary depending on context. This is especially true since words are often polysemous or at least have slightly different senses depending on the linguistic context. Polysemy is captured by connecting the various senses of a lexical item. These connections signal the variations that a single form can adopt (Lakoff, 1987; Goldberg, 1995). Langacker (2008) claims that the same theoretical tools used for polysemy can also capture synonymic relations. The debate on categorization of lexemes as synonymous and or polysemous has given rise to the notion of semantic interplay. In a nutshell, the reviewed literature offers useful theoretical

insights to our research endeavour that presents a description of the nature of semantic interplay in Olukhayo. Skallman (2012) investigated the interplay of synonymy and polysemy in the Spanish language. Lexical items exhibiting sameness of meaning are considered synonymous, and those that reflect multiple senses are treated as being polysemous. Words that share a similarity of meaning are said to be synonymous, and a word that has multiple meanings is termed polysemous. The study examines a set of Spanish verbs that manifest both polysemy and synonymy: **arrojar, echar, lanzar and tirar (all can be glossed as “to throw”)**. This research informed our study in that it tackles the notion of semantic interplay involving synonymy and polysemy sense relations.

Abdul-Ghafour, Awal, Zainudin, and Aladdin (2019) assessed the interplay of Qur’anic synonymy and polysemy with special reference to **al-asfar** and **al-kutub** (the books) and their English translations. The study investigates the meanings of the near-synonyms **al-asfar** and **al-kutub** and shows how the semantic differences in the pair are represented in English. Additionally, this research highlights the meanings of the polysemous lexical item **al-kutub** in different Qur’anic contexts and reveals how the various senses of this lexical item are transferred to English. The findings portray semantic variations between the identified Qur’anic near synonyms, which are not reflected in the English translations. The findings also reveal that the polysemous lexical item **al-kutub** (the books) and its singular **kitab** (the book) are literally translated in some Qur’anic contexts. The study adopted the Relation by Contrast approach to synonyms. The reviewed literature impacted ours as it deals with the semantic interplay involving synonymy and polysemy. It differs in its adoption of the theoretical framework. A study conducted by Mulwa (2012) examined the interplay between homonymy and polysemy in the Kimasaku dialect of the Kamba language (Kenya). The researcher employed the Sense Relations theory in the analysis of data. The study differs from ours in terms of its scope and limitations as well as the theoretical framework adopted. It is, however, informative to our study drawing on the insights rendered, particularly on the interplay of homonymy and polysemy, and its exploration of the subject of sense relations.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

2.1.1 Lexical Priming Theory

The theory of Lexical Priming was proposed by Hoey (2005), who claimed that every lexical item is primed to be functional in both spoken and written language owing to the cumulative effects of a language user’s prior encounter with or exposure to the lexical item. When one hears or reads a word, one normally tends to subconsciously keep a record of its collocations, colligations, semantic associations, pragmatic associations, textual collocations, the genre and or the style it is used in. A language user would recognize a lexical item much faster when presented with a familiar lexical item. The aim of Lexical Priming theory is to draw a link between Corpus Linguistics (lexis) and Psycholinguistics (priming). Khamkhien (2015) argues that speakers of a language subconsciously take note of the lexical items they come across along with their linguistic contexts, whether in written or spoken discourse. In addition to classroom or formal

learning situations, vocabulary can also be acquired through social arenas enhanced by recurrent experiences of exposure.

Hoey (2005) advances a number of claims that are the backbone of his Lexical Priming Theory:

- 1) Each lexical item is primed for collocations.
- 2) Each lexical item is primed to occur in a specific set or network of semantic associations.
- 3) Each lexical item is primed to co-occur with, and participate in particular pragmatic functions (pragmatic associations).
- 4) Each lexical item is primed to avoid or occur in specific grammatical positions as well as grammatical functions (colligations).
- 5) Co-hyponyms and synonyms differ in terms of their collocations, semantic associations and colligations.
- 6) The senses of a polysemous word differ with regard to their collocations, semantic associations and colligations.
- 7) Each word is primed to attract or avoid certain kinds of cohesive relations in a discourse (textual collocations).
- 8) Each word is primed to bear specific semantic relations with other lexical items at discourse level (textual semantic associations).
- 9) Each word is primed to occur in or avoid particular positions in the discourse (textual colligations).
- 10) Each word is primed to function or participate in at least one of the grammatical roles.

3. The Area of Study

This research was conducted in Matayos Division of Busia County. The predominant language here is Olukhayo. The study focused on the native speakers of Olukhayo language. The choice of this region was motivated by the fact that it comprises the majority of Olukhayo speakers as opposed to other places where the speakers are mixed up with Bukusu, Wanga and Teso (Were, 1967; KNBS, 2019). It was thus highly likely to yield both authentic and intelligible data.

3.1 Methodology

Data presentation and analysis were conducted by use of the descriptive research design. The study adopted the descriptive research design. This approach is critical in dealing with qualitative data. Ideally, it consists of providing systematic, descriptive and explanatory accounts of data, as is the case with categories or classes of lexical items. As a matter of fact, people's behavior is best accounted for through the qualitative approach (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999). The study adopted two sampling techniques: purposive and snowball sampling. The questionnaire tool was used for data elicitation. A well-designed questionnaire is economical in the use of time and safeguards the privacy and confidentiality of data provided by the respondents. Researchers can gain access to

detailed information on a study subject (Kombo and Tromp, 2006). The sample for this research undertaking is of two kinds, namely: lexical items and informants. The study targeted 650 lexical items. The target population of the informants drawn from Matayos South, Bukhayo West and Busibwabo wards of Matayos Division was approximated at 142,408 persons (KNBS, 2019). The study placed the confidence level at 95% and the confidence interval at ± 5 , which translated to a sample size of 384 respondents.

The study further narrowed down the sample population to a much smaller representative sample size of 35 respondents. Additionally, the researcher employed the use of a questionnaire instrument to extract data from respondents in the age bracket: (18 – 54) across the gender divide. This way, it enabled the researcher to address the objective of semantic interplay in Olukhayo. The sample population constituted a mixed group across the gender divide: women and men (both young and old). Special attention was nonetheless accorded to those possessing a high facility both in oracy and literacy skills in Olukhayo. Olukhayo language equally displays the agglutinative feature characteristic of Bantu languages. Consequently, the data for this research undertaking were in the form of words, phrases, clauses and or sentences (i.e. lexical items), drawn from the open class category of words. This is due to the fact that they are numerous, extendable, prone to semantic changes and strongly impact meaning relations.

4. Findings and Discussion

The data on Olukhayo revealed clear instances of semantic interplay that were identified and categorized as: synonymy polysemy (SP), homonymy polysemy (HP), and intermediaries. The tenets of LP theory were employed in the analysis of data collected on these semantic features.

4.1 Synonymy Polysemy Interplay in Olukhayo (SP)

A good number of synonymous words in Olukhayo portrayed polysemous properties. Words that exhibited this feature were identified, coded and analyzed. Consider the table below.

Table 1: Synonymy Polysemy Interplay in Olukhayo (SP)

S/No.	Word	Class	Synonymous Sense (s)	Polysemous Sense (s)
01.	imboo	N	coldness	sickness
	omunyiri	N	coldness	moisture
02.	obuloli	N	testimony	eulogy
	obushuuda	N	testimony	church testimony
03.	milembe	N	greetings	peace
	makhesio	N	greetings	-
04.	ikio	N	mirror	a broken piece of glass
	irang'i	N	mirror	-
05.	amalesi	N	medicine/drugs	clouds
	emisala	N	medicine/drugs	trees, charms
06.	omukhung'ano	N	a meeting	a gathering, a crowd
	elibukana	N	a meeting	a church meeting

07.	seri	N	a friend	a lover
	omwitsa	N	a friend	-
08.	amapesa	N	money	buttons
	amatongolo	N	money	ten cent coins
09.	amaanda	N	charcoal/dry cells	reflectors e.g. on a car
	amakaa	N	charcoal/dry cells	-
10.	amayalo	N	gospel	disputes, conflicts
	injili	N	gospel	-
11.	siba	V	fill up	clog, block, close
	funikha	V	fill up	cover with, keep secret
12.	khenga	V	cut or reduce the size of	shorten, lower the price
	deda	V	cut or reduce the size of	damage, destroy
13.	lama	V	pray/ worship	curse/ cast a spell
	saya	V	pray/worship	request, plead with, chase away/dismiss
14.	nyira	Adj.	dead	cold, silent, inactive, quiet, healthy
	fwa	Adj.	dead	unlucky, backward
15.	doro	Adj.	young	soft, easy
	didi	Adj.	young	small, little

Let us look at No. 09 Lexical item for the analysis.

a) Simon yakula **amaanda** (amakaa) kairedio.

Simon bought **dry cells** for the radio.

[S + V + amaanda/amakaa + PP]

CCs: bought dry cells, dry cells radio

SAs: energy, power, electricity, lead, ever ready, tiger, bell, battery

b) Simon yadekhera **amaanda** (amakaa)

Simon cooked with **charcoal**

[S + V + P + amaanda/amakaa]

CCs: cook charcoal

SAs: energy, trees, burn, coals, jikos, stoves, cookers, paraffin, gas, electricity

c) Yara **amaanda** kaimotoka.

S/he broke the car **reflectors**.

[S + V + amaanda + PP]

CCs: broke reflectors, car reflectors

SAs: highways, light, jackets, indicators, motor cycles, safety, traffic

Based on the analysis of synonymy and polysemy **interplay** in Olukhayo, the study made some observations informed by the LP theory. It is clear that each of the boldfaced lexical items in the sentences has certain collocations, colligations and semantic associations. The identified lexemes are primed to bear a specific sense (s) as governed by the frequency of associations by the speakers of Olukhayo. Thus, lexemes are stored in accordance with their context of application and belong to specific semantic domains

or sets, as may be ascertained from our data. The next sub-title concerns HP interplay in Olukhayo data as follows.

4.2 Homonymy and Polysemy Interplay in Olukhayo (HP)

A substantial number of lexical items in Olukhayo, which displayed both the characteristics of homonymy and polysemy simultaneously, were identified. The data was coded and recorded for further analysis as informed by the claims of LP theory. Linguists treat homonymy as a semantic feature or property of any lexical item, with two or more meanings (senses) which, however, are unrelated. Polysemy, on the one hand, is a semantic feature of any lexical item with senses that bear a similarity or relatedness (Kempson, 1977). The analysis of data herein sought to clarify the element of sense-relatedness or otherwise of the lexemes in order to bring out the idea of **HP** interplay. Consider the examples of lexemes in the table below.

Table 2: Homonymy and Polysemy Interplay in Olukhayo (HP)

S/No	Lexeme	Lexeme Senses	Related	Nature of Relatedness	Unrelated
01.	eliyoni (N)	bird [i], airplane [ii], girl [iii]	[i] , [ii]	imply the idea of flight or movement in the air	[iii]
02.	mahanga (N)	people [i], nations [ii], guinea fowls [iii]	[i], [ii]	nations entail people	[iii]
03.	omuliango (N)	door, [i] entrance (exit) [ii], sub- tribe (clan) [iii], chapter [iv],	[i], [ii]	indicates the point of entry or exit in a place	[ii], [iv]
04.	olububi (N)	eye cataract [i], creamy layer of milk [ii], spider [iii], spider web [iv]	[ii], [iii] [iv]	suggests a thin material that covers the surface of, like a spider web or creamy milk layer	[i]
05.	elikina (N)	a stone [i], a beautiful girl [ii], a permanent house [iii]	[i], [iii]	imply idea of building and construction as well as durability	[ii]
06.	omusala (N)	charms [i], medicine [ii], a tree [iii], a remedy [iv], herbs [v]	[i], [ii], [iv], [v]	suggest the idea of treatment or solution to a problem	[iii]
07.	amafura (N)	fats [i], oil [ii], pleasure [iii], paraffin [iv] petrol [v], diesel [vi]	[i], [ii]; [iv], [v],[vi]	[i] & [ii] imply cooking idea, the rest are petroleum products	[iii]
08.	makasi (N)	bar soap [i], a pair of scissors [ii], an x (cross) sign for wrong [iii]	[ii], [iii]	relate to the idea of shape; a pair of scissors resembles an x sign.	[i]
09.	dosia (V)	wet [i], defeat [ii], persuade [iii]	[ii], [iii]	bring pressure to bear on e.g. someone or make them yield.	[i]
10.	saba (V)	borrow [i], pray [ii], plead [iii], wash hands [iv]	[i], [ii], [iii]	make a request or seek intervention of someone	[iv]
11.	mira (V)	swallow [i], squander [ii], embezzle [iii]	[ii], [iii]	relate to the notion of morality and corruption	[i]
12.	funikha (V)	break [i], accept [ii], become flexible [iii]	[ii], [iii]	accommodate divergent views or yield to an idea	[i]

13.	fwa (V)	shine e.g. of the sun [i], die [ii], lose hope [iii]	[ii, [iii]	signals the sense of loss or coming to an end of an idea	[i]
14.	lira (V)	blame [i], cry [ii], complain [iii], condole the bereft [iv]	[i]; [iii],	relate to a conflict or dissatisfaction of some sort	[ii], [iv]
15.	fura (V)	fun or blow air into [i], inflate [ii], show fierceness [iii], show rudeness or arrogance [iv], swell [v]	[i]; [ii]	relate to blowing of or flow of air.	[iii], [iv], [v]

Consider the analysis of the lexeme ‘eliyoni’ (No. 01) as per the assertions of LP theory.

a) Jack yasamula **eliyoni**.

Jack travelled by **airplane**.

[S + V + P + eliyoni]

CCs: travelled by airplane

SAs: aircraft, pilot, flight, crew, airstrip, airhostess, cabin, aviation

b) Alexander yadekha **eliyoni** ero.

Alexander cooked that **bird**.

[S + V + eliyoni + Det]

CCs: cook bird

SAs: chicken, turkey, sparrow, poultry, culling, Newcastle, feeds

c) Japheth yaberesia **eliyoni** esianwa.

Japheth gave the **girl** a gift.

[S + V + eliyoni + IO]

CCs: girl gift, give girl

SAs: lady, beauty, lover, female, bride

Thus, from this information, it may be crucial to point out that the relatedness of the senses of a lexeme indicates a case of polysemy and, conversely, lack of relatedness indicates homonymy. It is worth appreciating the fact that each of the lexemes in our table above displays both of these characteristics, which, in fact, indicates the notion of **HP** interplay in Olukhayo corpus. This means, for instance, that the senses of the lexeme **eliyoni** in No.01: [i] and [ii] are semantically related. They both signal the sense of flight or motion in the air, and this, as a matter of fact, applies to both aircraft and birds (i.e. from our encyclopedic knowledge). On the contrary, [iii] is unrelated to the other senses as it particularly signals the female gender (a girl).

Consequently, the third sense renders the lexeme **eliyoni**, homonymous in its properties, hence a case of clarity on **H/P** interplay in Olukhayo. Let us take a further example with the verb **fura** in No.15 that bears the senses: to blow air into, to inflate, to show fierceness, to show rudeness or arrogance and finally to swell. The example above clearly shows how the lexeme **fura** is both polysemous and homonymous through

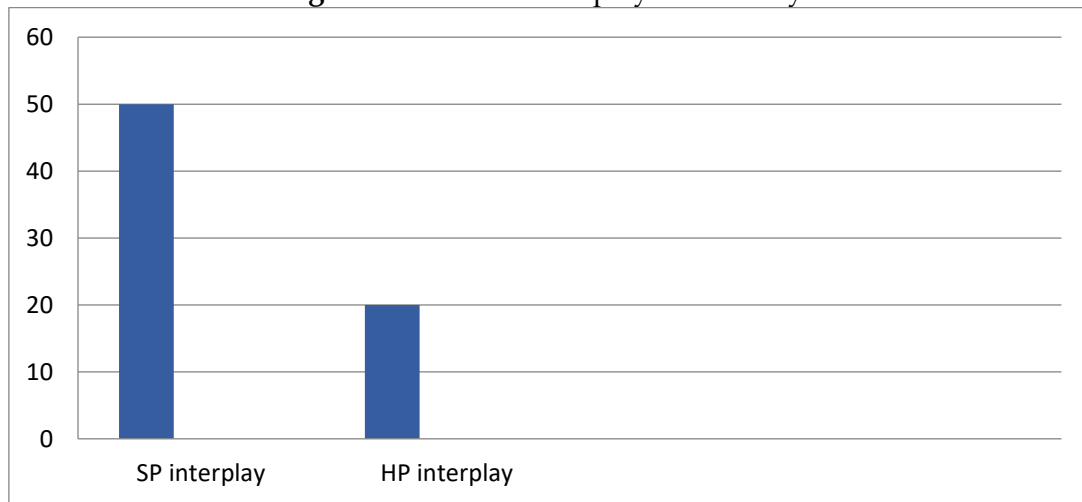
relatedness or otherwise of its senses. Thus, it is able to contract the semantic feature of H/P interplay in Olukhayo. The table herein presents a summary of the discussion and findings on semantic interplay in Olukhayo.

Table 3: Semantic Interplay in Olukhayo

S/No.	Semantic Interplay	Frequency Counts/ Category				Total
		N	V	Adj.	Adv.	
01.	SP	27	19	04	–	50
02.	HP	08	07	05	–	20
Total		35	26	09	-	70

NB: The table highlights frequency distributions across word classes in regard to SP and HP interplay, respectively.

Figure 1: Semantic Interplay in Olukhayo



NB: The graph draws a comparison of the frequency of counts or distribution of SP and HP interplay in Olukhayo lexis.

In brief, the study made a few observations in view of the data readings of the table and graph, respectively. There are clear manifestations of semantic interplay in Olukhayo; this is evident in the SP and HP interplays among lexemes. SP interplay has the highest frequency, hence it is the most dominant among Olukhayo lexemes compared to the HP interplay. Moreover, SP interplay is mostly conspicuous in the noun category, followed by the Verb. It is nonetheless least noticeable in the Adjective category. HP interplay assumes almost average frequencies of occurrence both in the Noun and Verb classes. However, our data on Olukhayo corpus did not yield any instances of semantic interplay whatsoever, in the category of Adverbs.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

This research set out to explore the nature of semantic interplay that characterizes lexemes in Olukhayo language. The analysis of corpus data brought to light semantic features of collocations, colligations and semantic associations regarding each and every

lexical item under scrutiny. Precisely, lexemes exhibited secondary senses alongside their primary ones. In a nutshell, the research conducted successfully managed to realize the objective of our study. Furthermore, two instances of semantic interplay were evident in Olukhayo data, namely: Synonymy Polysemy (SP) and Homonymy Polysemy (HP). SP interplay was notably found to bear a higher frequency of distribution in our data (across word classes) as opposed to the HP interplay scenario. Besides, it was established that lexical items in Olukhayo manifest the feature of sense extrapolation, as can be confirmed with the SAs in our illustrations. This discussion has dealt with the nature of semantic interplay in Olukhayo language. Lexical relations, undoubtedly, inform the teaching, learning and acquisition of vocabulary in any language per se. Therefore, there arises the need to curb the challenge of a lack of literary printouts and or publications in Olukhayo.

5.2 Recommendations

Thus, in the first place, we recommend that literature materials (print media) on Olukhayo and or other dialects are made available and accessible by those with a passion for writing and publications. Secondly, instructors at the lower primary level should take cognizance of the fact that semantic interplay among sense relations assumes a pivotal role in the acquisition, teaching and learning of vocabulary. Thus, this realization will undoubtedly impact their pedagogical practices in language teaching and learning. Indeed, this opinion aligns with one of the recommendations of the Competency-Based Education system that recognizes the place of indigenous languages and strongly emphasizes the need to teach vernacular languages, particularly in the lower primary schools in our upcountry regions.

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Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors hereby wish to declare that there is totally no conflict of interest regarding this study. The primary author carried out this research solely with a view to fulfilling academic requirements. Similarly, the co-authors (supervisors) have no personal or financial relationships whatsoever, which could inappropriately impact this research undertaking.

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