

A note on Ọchìchì

Roger Blench

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A recent publication (Ndimele & Williamson 2002:157) is the first published reference to the Ọchìchì, a previously unknown language of Rivers State, Nigeria. It is spoken only a few old people in the town of Ikwerengwo and Umuebulu in Etche Local government. Its existence was first noted in a student project and a small team went out from the University of Port Harcourt to try and collect further data on the language. The speakers refused to give any further information on the language as they almost entirely switched culturally to Echie (an Igboid language) and no longer wish to remember their old language. From the few words collected, Ọchìchì appears to be related to Ọbulom, a Central Delta language in turn related to Abuan. Ọbulom is itself little-known so Ọchìchì is only tentatively classified. A further approach is to be made to speakers, using only a single investigator to try and get them to change their attitude and make some record of Ọchìchì before it is lost forever.

Ndimele, O. & K. Williamson 2002. Languages. In: *The land and people of Rivers State: Eastern Niger Delta*. eds. E.J. Alagoa & A.A. Derefaka 149-172. Port Harcourt: Onyoma Research Publications.