

The aesthetic analysis of idiomatic expressions in Amauzari Igbo: A socio-cultural approach

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Abstract: Idiomatic expressions are useful tools for communicating a great deal of meaning in different languages. The purpose and the objective of this study are to examine the aesthetic nature of idiomatic expressions and to illustrate how Igbo people use idiomatic expressions in discourses. This study takes a socio-cultural approach to how words in the language are used in oral expressions for entertainment and peaceful discussions that bind the Amauzari people together. Amauzari is a town in Isiala Mbano local government area of Imo State, Nigeria. The study used a sample population of over hundred men and women for her data collection. The aesthetic characteristics of idiomatic expressions are exhibited and appreciated especially during cultural ceremonies that attract a lot of people to the villages in Amauzari. Data for this study were collected from the primary source. We collected data through participant observations of discourse contexts. The study used over hundred men and women as the sample population for data collection. The Theoretical framework we adopted in the study is Linguistic relativity which is known as the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis. The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis shows that the meaning of utterances is from cultural conventions for how the words are used and interpreted. The study discovered that the appropriate use of idiomatic expression is a mark of pragmatic competence. In conclusion, the study shows that the characteristics of idiomatic expressions contribute to the peaceful existence of people according to their cultural backgrounds.

Keywords: Aesthetics, Culture, Idiomatic expressions, Language, Social

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1. Introduction

This study, through a socio-cultural analysis, attempts to showcase the aesthetic nature of idiomatic expressions in Amauzari Isiala Mbano Imo State. We use idiomatic expressions in our day to day interactions. Idiomatic expressions are built in our culture. Our language is built in our culture. The cultural activities of our society help to determine the people's way of reasoning and carrying out their day to day activities. The appropriate use of idiomatic expressions is a mark of communicative and pragmatic competence in a language. Speakers with this ability are given respect in this regard. Iwuchukwu (2014: 136) highlights that a young person who grows up using figurative language is eulogized for possessing uncommon wisdom and intelligence. This also holds way for Senam and Ukut (2010: 66) who assert that to cultivate the habit of speaking charismatically, especially in Ibibio, one has to make use of linguistic, stylistic and figurative expressions to spice up one's communication. Such use bestows linguistic and stylistic impetus on speakers. Language reflects the society which uses it. Idiomatic expressions capture the peculiarities of the society within which it is utilized. To understand certain idioms, one needs to have knowledge of the belief system, norms, values, traditions and practices of a speech community. All languages make use of idiomatic expressions and these expressions function as a natural reflection of customs, cultural belief, social conventions and norms. From the traditional point of view, idiomatic expressions are seen as fixed expressions whose meanings are arbitrary and therefore, cannot be predicted from the meanings of their constituents.

Idiomatic expressions occur in speech and writing and journalists are some of the most common users in discourse contexts. A number of dictionaries have been written to enable language learners acquire and use idioms appropriately.

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Kleiser (2010) affirms that teachers, professors, lawyers, doctors, authors and students alike need such dictionaries to strengthen their writing. What this means is that idiomatic expressions are very important elements of one's language. Language as a means of communication plays an essential role in our personal daily lives. It is a vital aspect of social, political, religious and economic engagements (Ndimele 2007: 2). We can attest that most of the humanity's troubles can be traced to the problem of language use in the society. The aim of this study is to show how people are united in the villages through the use of Idiomatic expressions during their cultural activities such as New yam ceremonies, traditional weddings, age grade gathering, Umuada meetings, women and men's meeting that came up regularly in Amauzari Isi ala Mbano, Imo State.

2. Statement of the problem

The issue of peaceful existence of people is paramount and the traditional entertainment activities whereby people display their talents are vital issues. The socio-cultural activities carried out in the communities need to be encouraged through the use of idiomatic expressions. There are problems that occur among people in different communities ranging from boundary adjustment, marital disagreement, victimization of widows in respect to their inheritance and other numerous problems that need to be settled. The lack of aesthetics in combining words and sentences in an orderly manner brings about conflicts in different homes. The use of idiomatic expression contributes greatly to solving numerous problems in village meetings, festivals (New yam celebration, traditional weddings and burials).

2.1. Research objectives

The study sets out to achieve the following objectives.

- a. To examine the aesthetic nature of idiomatic expressions.
- b. To illustrate how Igbo people use idiomatic expressions in discourses.
- c. To provide a formal account of idiomatic expressions.
- d. To examine the socio-cultural and behavioral pattern of the Amauzari Igbo people.

2.2. Research questions

- a. Why do people use idiomatic expressions?
- b. Are there any communicative relevance in using idiomatic expressions?
- c. How can idiomatic expressions affect the peaceful existence of the people of Amauzari Igbo?
- d. To what extent can idiomatic expressions be associated with the socio-cultural descriptions?

2.3. Contributions of the study

This study will contribute immensely to the growth of the Igbo language as one of the major Nigerian languages. It has demonstrated that the appropriate use of figurative language such as idiomatic expression is a mark of pragmatic competence. Idiomatic expressions give words an elevated status and a cultural coloration in turn taking the speaker who employs them is always regarded as a good orator. The study exemplified many idiomatic expressions that can be used in our day to day discourses. This will help to enhance and enrich the Igbo cultural and traditional background.

3. The implications of the study

This research implies that idiomatic expressions are useful tools of communication in different socio-cultural background of people. Language is built in the culture of a people and helps in promoting peace and unity in different communities such as Amauzari Igbo. Communication will be paralyzed if words and sentences are not organized in an organized way. The native speaker has underlying competence in the generation and comprehension of utterances in his language. If the native speaker does not arrange and organize the words and sentences in a positive manner, this brings quarrels, fight and conflicts among people of the same cultural background. Idiomatic expressions help to embellish thoughts and ideas. This study calls for further studies to our scholars of language studies.

4. Literature review

Idiomatic expressions are figurative language. The relationship between language and translation of figurative utterances and idioms are somehow difficult especially in literary texts where the use of the language is figurative in nature and the essential part of the text as a literary piece (Teilanyo, 2022). Since modern thinking on translation favors fidelity to the source text, the translator is required to maintain- rather than improve the figurative text of the Source Text in the Target text. In J. P. Clark's handling of figurative usage in 'The Osidi Saga' (Teilanyo, 2007b). They identified four different ways in which Clark handles figurative language. There are cases of enrichment and alteration as well as full work in translation. In Clark (2006), the majority of cases he translates expressions that are in plain Izon in figurative terms in the English version, thereby making the English Target Text linguistically richer than the Source Text:

- (a)amene mu Odogu **yo la de**. [...they reached Odogu's **place**]
... they had arrived Odogu's **den**. (232)- Hyperbole
- (b) 'E, yeiama wo nana de, o gbobo se **korein**'
[Yes, the husbands we have, with shines **hard/ prominent**]
'Yes, the husbands we have, with shines **like buttress roots**.' (233)- simile.

Figurative language sometimes translates 'The man is foolish' in one language as 'The man is a goat' in another language. In Teilanyo's (2022) 8th Inaugural lecture, titled 'Permission me, Biko, To make Dis Spokage: 'The

Beatification of a Beautiful Beast?’ explains how the English we use today as a beautiful language was termed to be a beast when the white people came to West Africa and people were running away from them. But how was this beast beautiful? The reason was that its users had manufactured goods that amazed and awed us- the glassware, the clothing, alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages that delighted our taste buds, mirrors that enabled us to see our own faces for the first time ever!

The language itself was beautiful- in a functional sense- because proficiency in it opened doors of social and economic opportunities to the user. With it one could work for the white man and earn a monthly income that was more than the annual income of the most prosperous farmer or fisherman [in the village]. Even without paid employment, one could earn enough by just writing and reading letters for the majority that were completely ignorant of the language, since English was the main language of literacy (Teilanyo, 2011a). Some alteration of the native-speaker standard of English is not unusual in non-native settings, either for the expression of culture-bound concepts or due to linguistic experimentation or for comic effect.

Figurative language such as idiomatic expressions has figurative meaning. McGregor (2009) is of the position that compared to literal meaning of words or strings of words, non- literal or figurative meaning can be considered to be an extension of the literal meaning. The meaning of idioms is an extension of what they would literally mean. In his study on idioms in Ibibio, Udosen (2017) gave an instance of Ibibio idiom, ‘To spill the beans’ literally means pouring out beans seeds. However, liquid substances are spilled not solids, or grains. This meaning is extended to mean “letting out a secret”. The extension is achieved using metaphor, where the first action is compared to the second in an indirect way. Leah (2012: 1) says that the figurative sense of a group of words is used to give an imaginative description or a special effect. She categorizes idioms, metaphors, proverbs, similes and fixed expressions generally under non-literal or figurative language. Such imaginative descriptions or special effects can be visualized in the following Ibibio examples (Udosen, 2017).

<i>‘Adiinyanna nnaa’</i>		
To stretch-out lie	-	gloss
‘To die	-	Idiomatic meaning
<i>(d) ‘Adiida ke ud n</i>		
To stand on a mortar	-	gloss
To be inexperienced/immature	-	idiomatic meaning
<i>(e) ‘Adiikooro nsippe</i>		
To wipe (one’s fore head) and		
Shake (the swear off)	-	gloss
Shake (the sweat off)		
To experience hardship	-	idiomatic meaning

In the Ibibio examples above, the figurative meanings are arrived at by drawing imageries from the earlier. For instance, the act of dying is likened to lying in a stretched-out position (which every dead person takes). Dying is therefore presented using a euphemistic idiom to convey the message. In the second example, a child who needs to get something from the dryer over the fireplace in a traditional Ibibio kitchen, needs to increase his or her height by standing on a mortar.. In the idiomatic sense, this represents inexperience or immaturity. The third idiom from Ibibio shows a scenario where hardship is equated with wiping one’s forehead and shaking the sweat gathered in the process, off. One who is engaged in manual labour usually does this to show exertion of energy. This represents the experience of intense hardship. Akanmu (2016) in his new Yoruba idioms and idiomatic expressions said that new idioms and idiomatic expressions are quintessentially modern stock expressions. The author gave example of Yoruba idiom as presented below.

Idioms	Literal meaning	Idiomatic meaning
E e t i i ri nnken ken (you have not seen anything)	You have only seen little.	Greater show awaits you/that is just a tip of the iceberg.

Okodo (2012) in his Igbo studies posits that idioms are expressions that have agreed meanings from culture to culture. The author claims that idiomatic meanings are analytically realized from the meanings of the individual words in the expressions. Also Okoye (2016) examines a number of Igbo idioms pertaining to body-parts to ascertain the cognitive operations that apply in their meaning interpretations,

5. Methods and participants

The areas of study for this research were the ten villages in Amauzari. The data used for this study were recorded at different locations and at different times. The recordings were in form of paper jottings. The data were collected over a period of five months at different places like meetings, during festivals and other informal occasions in the villages. Data for this study were collected from the primary source. We collected the idiomatic expressions through participant observations of various discourse contexts such as village meetings, umuada’s meetings, age grade rally and council of elders in the study areas. The study interviewed over hundred men and women. We used sample population for the representation of the entire populace. The researcher is a native speaker of the area under investigation. We

investigated round the ten villages in Amauzari during different traditional ceremonies that attract so many people in the villages.

6. Theoretical framework

This work presents linguistic relativity, popularly known as the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis (Whorf, 1956) as its theoretical model. Language and culture are closely inter-wined in complex ways (Fasold & Connor-Linton 2011). The Sapir- Whorf hypothesis shows that the meanings of utterances come from cultural conventions on how those words are used. Lyons (2009: 306) says that there is a correlation between language and as those who speak the same language must necessarily share the same culture. Lyons (2009: 304) summarizes the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis as follows:

We are, in all our thinking and forever, at the mercy of the particular language which has become the medium of expression for (our) society, because we cannot but see and hear and otherwise experience, in terms of the categories and distinctions encoded in language. The categories and distinctions encoded in one language system are unique to that system and incommensurable with those of other systems.

From the above explication by Lyons on the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, we can conclude that regular encounters with a word or phrase or sentence can have an impact on our habitual thought. The great American linguist and anthropologist Edward Sapir (1884-1939) and his pupil Benjamin Lee Whorf (1897-1941) were heirs to a tradition in European anthropology thoughts (Lyons, 2009: 307). Language and culture exist together. From the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, one envisages a gap in the culture and tradition of a people who are bound by a language (Igbo, for instance). This is why I adopted this hypothesis as the theoretical framework in this study. The similarities between language and culture are closely related to the notion of speech community. Olaoye (2007: 103) describes a speech community as a group of people sharing the same values, attitudes and beliefs on language use and form. This group shares similar views on rules of speaking and the interpretation of speech. Speech communities may share both particular sets of vocabulary and grammatical conventions as well as speech styles and genres, and also norms on how and when to speak in a particular way.

Idiomatic expressions are important language features that the Igbo speakers use to convey meaning in conversations and deliberations especially by the elders. During cultural festivals such as New yam, traditional weddings, age grade meetings, umuada meetings and other traditional activities that the people are known for, idiomatic expressions are used for entertainment. The beauty and aesthetic nature of idiomatic expressions are woven in different cognitive and semantic analysis. This study recognizes background knowledge as being essential in meaning interpretation in the minds of language speakers.

7. Data analysis and discussion

Why do people use idiomatic expressions?

Idiomatic expressions are important expressions used in a different way when viewed from communicative and aesthetic perspective. People use idiomatic expressions in their activities because it is part of our socio- cultural activities that bind them together. Social activities cannot be completed without the use if idiomatic expressions in different discourses. Data were collected from the native speakers during different routine communicative discourses and socio-cultural activities. Some of the activities where we collected data are during New Yam festivals, Umuada's meetings, age grade meetings, women and men's general meetings. For the data presentation, the citation forms of the idiomatic expressions are shown, followed by their literal and figurative meanings. Some of the idiomatic expressions we collected are illustrated below.

Idiomatic expression	Literal meaning	Idiomatic meaning
1. Aka abuo (hand two)		'Onye ohi – a thief'
2. Obi ita mmiri (heart dry water)		'Emereghị mmadu ebere-not having mercy.'
3. Nwanyị idi ahụ abuo (woman has body two)		'Nwanyị idi ime – a pregnant woman'
4. Ita Qji aka (chew kola hand)		'Ikwe n'aka – hand shake'
5. Ibitu mma aka (touch beauty hand)		'ima ezigbo mma – to be very beautiful'
6. Aka idi ocha (hand be white)		'Emeghi ihe ojoo obula- having good record'
7. Isi imi n'ala (smell nose ground)		'Igba mbọ chọpụta ihe-to search for'
8. Ichiba ukwu n'ulo (to pack leg in house)		'Iluata nwananyi-to get married'
9. Inwe isi mmebi (have head spoiled)		'Igba ara- to be mad'
10. Inwe ume apia (have breath insect)		'ita ahụ -being too lean/slim'
11. Igba oku n'ahia (burn fire in market)		'E rere ya osijiso- fast selling in market'
12. Ita isi mbe (chew head tortoise)		'Isi ezigbo ike-very difficult task'

13. Mmiri sūrū nkwū (rain pound palm fruit) ‘Mmiri zoro nke ukwu-it rained heavily’
14. Iwūsa mmiri na nkume (pour water on rock) ‘Mbō na-enweghī isi- putting effort without yeilding success’
15. Inwe agba n’obodo (have influence in town) ‘Nnukwu mmadū- big person in town’
16. Inwe afō ojōo (have stomach bad) ‘Ajōo mmadū -being a bad person’
17. Inwe obi n’azū (have heart back) ‘Enweghī obi ebere-not having mercy’
18. ilaba ūra (to go sleep) ‘īnwū ɔnwū- to die’
19. Iro obi (enemity heart) ‘Obi ojōo - having hatred/ to be unfriendly’
20. Ikpa oke (making boundary) ‘Enweghī obi sara sara- to descriminate’
21. Ipiachi ūbōchī (close day) ‘Ikwusi ihe omume nke ūbōchī-to close’
22. Aka ike (hand power) ‘Enyeghī mmadū ihe-being stingy’
23. Igba n’ezi (going out) ‘igba akwūnakwūna- prostitution’
24. Ire abūo (tongue two) ‘Onye asī- a liar’
25. Ime mkpōchi nti (have close ear) ‘Anūghī nti-ignoring somebody’s advice’
26. Ichi obi n’aka (carry heart hand) ‘ūjō ma o bū obi mmapū- having fear’
27. Ihu na Ihu (face and face) ‘Nkwekōrīta mmadū na ibe ya-agreement’
28. Ikpō okwu aha (call speech) ‘Ikwupūta okwu nke ɔma-make clear speech
29. Ike kete orie (power tie eat) ‘īta ahūhū tupu enweta ihe- having difficulty before getting something’
30. Nti īnō n’ala (ear stay on ground) ‘Ichere inweta ozi- ready to get information’
31. Aka gba n’azū (hand run back) ‘Inye onyinye aghughō-to give bribe’

With regard to the example in (1) ‘aka abūo’ means two hands literally, but idiomatically it means a thief. We can observe that there is no relationship between the words that are combined as a phrase with the idiomatic meaning. The idiomatic meaning does not have any resemblance or relationship with the literal meaning. In example (3) ‘nwanyī idi ahū abūo’ ‘a pregnant woman’, women are human beings with individual characteristics and it is abnormal for a woman to have two bodies. A pregnant woman as an individual carries her baby right inside her womb for nine months.

Do we have communicative relevance in using idiomatic expressions?

People are endowed by the natural gift from God in using words to entertain people. The entertainment industry originated from the early time and people derive financial benefits from the use of idiomatic expressions. They are regarded as orators who can combine words and sentences in a well ordered utterances that can remove sicknesses such as high blood pressure, stress and anxiety. Idiomatic expressions help longevity in people’s lives. We can observe that for one to understand idiomatic expressions from the literal meaning the speaker has to be a good native speaker of her language who knows the sounds, words, phrases and sentences of her language very well.

In example (4) ‘īta oji aka’ literally means ‘to eat kola with the hand’, visitors are given kola-nut during ceremonies to welcome a visitor in one’s house but there is no relationship with ‘shaking of hands’ which means greeting in Igbo land. Example (6) ‘aka idi ɔcha’ meaning ‘white hand’ Igbos are blacks in their complexion, they are not whites literally there is no relationship between the idiomatic expression which ‘somebody having good record.’ This expression is culture bound because the people understand themselves within the communities.

In example (7) ‘isi imi n’ala’ meaning ‘to search for something’ can be understood only by the native speakers from the same socio- cultural background who understands the expression very well. Also there is no relationship between the idiomatic expressions and their literal meaning. Also the word order has no specific arrangement between the words and its phrasal constituents. In example (8) ‘īchība ūkwū n’ūlō’ which means ‘one getting married to a partner’ which means that when one gets married, it is mandatory that the couple should stay together, and not going about with other men and women in the society. This expression shows that marriage is a sacred institution in Igboland whether one is a Christian or a pagan.

In example (10) ‘inwe ume apia’ which means being ‘so lean/slim’ the word ‘apia’ stands for an insect with a tiny body that looks as if it does not eat food. The word ‘ume’ means ‘breath’ the chest area of an animal. In our culture, any person with that kind of stature is assumed that he/she does not feed very well and sometimes it is as a result of sickness, and such is regarded as being anemic in nature. In example (11) ‘igba ɔkū n’ahīa’ (burn fire in market) ‘e rere ya ɔsīso’ (fast selling in market), the literary meaning of this expression does not relate with the idiomatic meaning.

How can idiomatic expressions affect the peaceful existence of the people of Amauzari Igbo?

During the cultural festivals in Amauzari, people from different locations (home and abroad) travel to Amauzari to experience and enjoy festivals like the new yam festival, the 'Owu' dance that bring joy to the community. During this period there is so much joy everywhere because gifts were shared to people of different ages. When people are happy with each other in the community, there is abundant and relative peace everywhere. During this period, the use of idiomatic expressions and the use of proverbs are used by the elders in teaching and admonition of the young generation. The native speakers of Amauzari Igbo understand themselves because of the cultural affinity which is integrated in the language.

Another example is number (12) 'ita isi mbe' (to chew tortoise head) which means having a very difficult task. How can one eat the head of a tortoise? Literally, this question is abnormal in its syntactic structure and its meaning. To eat the head of a tortoise means that one should eat the tortoise as we eat other animals as meat. But the tortoise is not a common animal that one should get it so easily in the market. Also the tortoise is not a domestic animal like goat and dog that are kept in people's houses. The native speakers understand themselves easily through the use of idiomatic expressions.

In example (13) 'mmiri suru nkwu n'ahja taa' (rain pound palm fruit in the market today), this is a literal meaning of that expression. Idiomatically, it means that the rain was very heavy in the market today. It did not allow people to transact and communicate effectively in the market. There was no buying and selling in the market as a result of the rain that disturb the business of the day. Let us look at example (16) 'inwe afọ ojọ' (having bad stomach) means 'a bad person', the literary meaning 'having bad stomach' does not even have any semantic relationship with the idiomatic meaning 'ajọ mmadu' (being a bad person). Literally it means having stomach upset which can come in different forms either one is having running stomach as a result of food poisoning or vomiting indiscriminately.

Example (17) 'inwe obi n'azu (having heart back) meaning 'enweghi obi ebere' (not having mercy), the literal meaning shows that the heart of a human being is at the back and not inside the body that means having the heart externally. This is an abnormal situation in a human body. All the body organs such as the kidney, liver, lungs and heart are located right inside the body of a human being. Idiomatically, one cannot alter or extend the expression in order to accommodate a second language learner of Igbo. It means that the idiomatic expressions are mainly used for cultural interactions of the native speakers.

Let us look at example (22) 'aka ike' (hand power) means (being very stingy), the literary meaning shows that one can use his hand to show his power effectively. This can be equated with the sports people as in wrestling, boxing, throwing javelin and hand ball. These sports activities are used with the hands in conjunction with the person's energy at work. But idiomatically the meaning is different if one compares it with the literary meaning because there is no one to one relationship in the words used for the expression. This is the nature of idiomatic expressions that help to strengthen the society.

Example (23) 'igba n'ezi' (going out) which means 'akwunakwuna' (prostitution) in men and women. This idiomatic expression does not prohibit people going out for their normal business where they derive money for their upkeep. Some women feel that they can use their body to acquire money from the society. Prostitution is an ill that is eating the society's fabric which had misled most girls into being useless in the society. Some of the girls dropped from going to school right from secondary and higher institutions and in the end they lost their lives.

Let us look at example (29) 'ike kete orie' (having difficulty before getting anything), We know that traditionally in Igbo land people are hard working in nature and everybody tries to work hard to build up the family and the society in general. There are other cases whereby we have people who work so hard but cannot feed themselves and cannot maintain their family as a result of the economic hardship in the society or a family curse. Example (30) 'nti ino n'ala' (getting ready to get information) is another expression that literally means 'ear stay ground' which means that the ear is on the ground. Naturally the ear is part of the body that functions as a sense organ. We have five sense organs in the body which include eye, tongue, nose, skin and the ear. The ear can never be on the ground rather the idiomatic meaning here refers to the function performed by the ear.

The last but not the least is example (31) 'aka gba n'azu' (hand run back) which means 'to give bribe', this indicates giving or doing something that is not ethical. Anything that is not done secretly is considered to be a bad activity which means that giving bribe is not in our tradition considering the cultural background of the people. Anybody that gives bribe in order to get something is regarded as a bad person and does not qualify to get whatever he/she is looking for.

To what extent can idiomatic expressions be associated with the socio-cultural descriptions?

Culture plays an important role in the lives of people living in the communities. The people of various communities understand the culture and traditions of their society. The values and morals are compulsorily adhered to in the communities. The elderly people play very important roles in telling stories of how the people came to stay in the communities where they are today. Idiomatic expressions are used without any reservation in all the activities performed in the village.

Idiomatic expressions are built in our tradition to regulate and control the people's way of life. Whenever anybody wants to misbehave abnormally and the person remembers that the age grade system would call for cultural gathering and different cases will be called up during such occasion. The person would stop whatever evil he/she wants to commit in the village and outside his immediate environment. Idiomatic expressions help in bringing discipline and sanity in the villages under review.

8. Conclusion

Idiomatic expressions have aesthetic characteristics that are capable of offering entertainment and uniting the people of a speech community together. Idiomatic expressions have aesthetic nature because they convey meanings that have peaceful and harmonious characteristics in different cultures. This work has demonstrated that a collection of Idiomatic expressions is actually a reflection of the ethnography of the Amauzari and the Igbo people in general because it gives a penetrating picture of the people's way of life. From our findings, the study observed that one of the characteristics of idioms is that they are fixed in form such that their words and syntax are fixed: one cannot substitute some other word in an idiom or change the arrangement of the words without losing the meaning.

This study shows that idiomatic expression is devised to entertain and help to improve the people's way of life. The listeners not only smile or laugh and appreciation they are compelled to think about the environment they live in. We investigated idiomatic expressions in other languages such as Ibibio, Izon and Yoruba. The work of Udosen gave an insight into the structure of idioms in Ibibio, they are constituents beyond the words. Also we investigated the work of Teilanyo (2007b) in J. P. Clark's handling of figurative usage on Izon language. Idiomatic expressions have the same functional approach in the different languages we studied in this work.

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