

A Communicative and Stylistic Adaptability of New Idioms and Idiomatic Expressions in Yorùbá Literary Texts

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Abstract

New idioms and idiomatic expressions are quintessentially modern stock expressions which constitute communicative clogs in Yorùbá routine discourses because of their semantic complexity and deviant nature. Existing studies have established their scope of usage in Yorùbá music but have hardly addressed their communicative and stylistic adaptability in literary texts. This paper investigates the issues expressed with these idioms and strategies for using them in selected literary works in Yoruba. This is undertaken with a view to establishing their communicative and stylistic relevance in Yoruba discourses. The paper adopts Mukarousky's theory of Standard Language for its capability to explain 'differential specificity' between the language of everyday conversation and literary language. Five Yorùbá literary texts were purposively selected from the works of Olùyeòmìsì Adeboḽòwailei, Oyeḽbainjii Oòlajuyin, Leireḽ Adeiyeòmii, Abeièguindei Oòlajuyin and Dayoḽò Àlkaḽnmui. In all the texts, five issues were expressed: corruption, politics, entertainment, transportation and abuse. Corruption was prominent in virtually all the texts and contextualized in bribery and fraud. Politics occurred in one text and was contextualized in embezzlement. Entertainment was found in two texts and were contextualized in eroticism, pornography and vulgarity. Transportation appeared also in one text, revealing the context of bus conducting. Abuse occurred in one text within the context of social misalignment. Linguistic strategies involved in their formation were derived from nominalization, compounding and phonaesthetic coinages. All these were differentially contextualized in fraud, (Oòḽjeòḽlui), bribe (eòḽguinjeò), vulgarity (koste /osòòḽdiḽ oḽkeḽ) and social misalignment (oiloiyuin oḽ poònmòò). New idioms and idiomatic expressions, used to express socioeconomic, traditional and emotive issues in Yorùbá literary texts occurred in mediated and non-mediated contexts and were conveyed through metaphorisation. These idioms reflect dynamism and modernity-constrained stylistic choices in Yorùbá discourses.

Key words: New idioms, idiomatic expressions, Yorùbá literary texts, communication strategy

1. Introduction

This paper is motivated based on the fact that new idioms and idiomatic expressions are tools in the hand of poets, novelists and others in the academia who have the urgent desired to educate Nigerians about new development in education, social, economic, politics and other areas of human endeavours. People are incapacitated with certain linguistic constraints imposed on them by their language, especially difficulty in getting appropriate lexical items and terms for the expression of their ideas. To overcome these linguistic challenges, the solution, according to Babalòḽá (1972), Awòbùlúyì (1992: 26) and Olátéjú (2005) lies in the use of new idioms and idiomatic expressions which can be derived by coining new words or idioms and by attaching new meanings to the existing ones. The paper is also devoted to the task of unraveling the communicative challenges associated with comprehension of new idioms as a result of their complex and deviant nature. Naturally, and like the traditional idioms, they are complex and deviant both in meaning and structure, they constitute a new veritable means of literary communication in the Yorùbá language.

This paper is preoccupied with the task of analysing and interpreting idioms and idiomatic expressions found in the texts selected for this work. This analysis is to provide insight into communicative and stylistic relevance of the idioms. Because of the possibility of new idioms and idiomatic expressions possessing many interpretations and the fact that meaning cannot be determined by their individual lexical constituents, this phenomenon is better studied and analysed from stylistic perspective with a view to determining their communicative and stylistic effects in literary texts. New idioms and idiomatic expressions are fast becoming popular among the people to such an extent that they are creeping into literary texts in Yorùbá at a significant rate owing to the impact of globalization. Our effort in this paper, therefore, is to subject the selected texts to critical analysis so as to determine the stylistic and communicative potential of new idioms and idiomatic expressions.

2. Method of Data collection

Data were collected from five Yorùbá literary texts across the genres of prose, poetry and drama. These literary genres which exemplify sufficient use of new idioms and idiomatic expressions include Olùyemìsì Adéboḽwálé's play *O sèyi Tán!* (1995); Léré Adéyemí's novel *Àkùko gágàrà* (2001); Oyeḽbáñjii Olájuyin's novel *Òdòdò Èyè* (2010); Adeìdoyin Abeièguindei's drama text *Igbéyàwó Ku Òlá* (2004) and Dayò Àkànmú's anthology *Jongbo Òrò* (2002). In all the genres, five prominent issues were expressed. They include corruption, politics, entertainment, transportation and abuse. They were all contextualized in different aspects of human experiences. The new idioms and idiomatic expressions were analysed mainly at stylistic levels.

3. New Idioms and Idiomatic Expressions

New idioms and idiomatic expressions are another distinctive and vital aspect of language use. The term new idiom is a modern stock expression, formed in response to the needs of the moment arising as a result of the linguistic constraints of the users

which consequently necessitate creation of new words and expressions. New idioms are so called not only because of their complexity which necessitates the overlapping tendencies of their semantic realizations but also because of their distinctive differences from old, traditional idioms. As a matter of fact, they straddle metaphor and euphemism and also serve as replication of the established Yorùbá idioms both in form and meaning. They are in spoken and written forms, and mainly operate at the lexical and phrasal levels. The lexical ones (one word idioms) are called idiom while the phrasal or sentential ones (more than one word idioms) are called idiomatic expressions. New idioms and idiomatic expressions are created either through coining, or by investing old words and expressions with new meanings. New idioms are creative, new, strange and fresh by nature. They are not vague expressions and their origins are also known to the users who are always dazzled wherever they come across them in any context.

4. Existing Works on New Idioms and Idiomatic Expressions

Few scholars have turned their attention to the study of new idioms and idiomatic expressions in Yorùbá. These scholars include Àkànmú (2003) and Ọlátéjù (2005). As for the old or traditional idioms, a considerable amount of efforts seem to have been devoted to this even though in passing, as no direct or specific study of the Yoruba traditional idioms has been carried out in Yorùbá studies. Some scholars have described idioms as terms referring to words whose meanings cannot be predicted from the individual elements in them (Babalólá, 1972; Àkànmú, 2003 and Ọlátéjù, 2005).

While discussing idioms and coinages, ((Babalólá, 1972) states that neologism is used for expressing new items and ideas brought into Yorùbá culture by foreigners. His view bears direct relevance to this paper in that, neologism is one of the linguistic strategies employed in the formation of new idioms.

Àkànmú's (2003) work, is not specifically on new idiom and idiomatic expressions but it has semblance of new idioms in the discussion and the examples cited. He employed sociolinguistic analytical method for the interpretation of the work which he referred to as coded language used by certain groups or sub-culture of the Yorùbá society. In this work, many of the examples cited as slang are not slang in the real sense of it but are new idioms used by a considerable number of people. Also, without prior mention of the stylistic method for analysis, he explores aesthetic values of some of these new idioms that he calls slang, using stylistic apparatus.

Ọlátéjù's (2005) work is a remarkable contribution on new idioms, their formation and interpretation. He examines idioms and idiomatic expressions from both the linguistic and literary points of view. He adopted Chomskyan Transformational Generative Grammar (TGG) while stylistic and some sociolinguistic variables were used to bring out aesthetic and communicative potential of the new idioms and idiomatic expressions.

5. Theory of Standard Language

The theory of standard language formulated by Jan Mukarovsky (1970) is considered the most suitable for this paper. The suitability of this model lies in the fact that it can be used to explain the differential specifica between the language of ordinary

usage and literary expressions as well as using it to explain and interpret the deviant and inventive nature of the new idioms and idiomatic expressions.

6. Standard Language Vs Literary Language

According to Mukarovsky (1970), Standard Language (SL) is the language of everyday conversation. Its purpose is the understanding between the speaker and the audience with the aim of enhancing effective communication (Crystal, 1997: 68). Language of ordinary discourse is casual and devoid of ornamentation. It is unexamined and uncritical. It does not draw attention to itself or open up provocative questions to the nature of its coding. It is often used in schools, on radio, during political campaigns and preaching. Its priority is effective communication which calls for employment of words and phrases that can be fully comprehended. Therefore, to enhance undistorted communication in standard language, language must conform to the entire linguistic norms. Concepts crucial to the standard language are 'backgrounding', automatization illustrated by the example below:

Oṣòdi òkè!
Oṣòdi òkè ló ñ lọ!
Oṣòdi òkè rè é!

Oṣòdi òkè!
It is going to Oṣòdi on the bridge
Here is Oṣòdi òkè bus

Looking at the content of the example, which is a shout out of a particular popular bus stop/location in Lagos – 'Oṣòdi òkè', it is clear that no single element needs further explanation as regards meaning, because the expression is in standard Yorùbá. Whereas, Literary Language (LL) is the language of literature. It is also referred to as poetic language because of its special nature; it is remarkably different from Standard Language (SL). It cannot be called a brand of the standard because it has at its disposal, from the stand point of lexicon, syntax and so on, all the forms of the given language; it is rather 'a stylistic variation of standard language as confirmed by (Ọlátéjù, 1998). In literary language, the intentional violation of the norms of the standard language is what makes possible the poetic utilization of language. Concepts crucial to the literary language are foregrounding, de-automatization also illustrated in the example below:

...Oṣòdi òkè tí ñ m̀ jólójóló
...Oṣòdi òkè that dangles admiringly

Unlike the previous example cited under SL., here, 'Oṣòdi òkè' has been de-automatized or foregrounded to have a new meaning (a busty lady), different from its original meaning in the earlier example, which is a popular location or bus stop in Lagos. Without the first example there can never be the second one, because 'Oṣòdi òkè' in the first example serves as the background to the second. Although, foregrounding is logically prohibited in standard language, but this is not to say that it is not visible in

SL, as Mukarousky indicates its possibility in journalistic language where it can be used as subordinate to communication in order to draw the readers' attention more closely to the issue at hand or the item of information articulated. This must have justified the use of new idioms that are foregrounded in the texts used in this paper.

7. Linguistic Strategies for the Formation of New Idioms and Idiomatic Expressions

According to Bámgbósé (1975), word formation is a universal linguistic concept that is concerned with the study of the patterns on which a language forms new lexical item. As far as formation of new idioms and idiomatic expressions are concerned in this paper, the linguistic strategies involved in their formation include the following:

7.1. Nominalisation

Nominalisation is universally known as one of the veritable tools for generating new words in virtually every language. Ruvet (1973: 172) views it as the derivation of a noun phrase from an underlying clause or sentence; or the process of forming a noun from other word classes. Below are some examples of new idioms and idiomatic expressions created from the linguistic process of nominalization.

Idioms	Formation	Literal meaning	Idiomatic meaning
<i>Alaṣàkàṣà</i>	<i>On+àṣà+k+àṣà</i> pre + n + neg.mrk + n (Owner-of-bad-culture)	<i>Alaṣàkàṣà</i> Owner of bad culture	<i>Onisòkùṣò</i> vulgar person/user of nonsensical language
<i>Ọṣẹkọṣẹ</i>	<i>Oni+Ọṣẹ+ki+ọṣẹ</i> pre + n + neg.mrk + n (Owner-of-bad-soap)	<i>Ọṣẹkọṣẹ</i> Possessor of bad soap	<i>Oloriburiku</i> (a misfortune person)
<i>Elebòlò</i>	<i>Oni+ebòlò</i> pre + n (Owner-of-ebòlò)	<i>Elebòlò</i> Seller of ebòlò vegetable	A prostitute
<i>Ajẹbọtà</i>	<i>A+jẹ+bọtà</i> pre + v + n (One-that-eats-butter)	<i>Ajẹbọ? tà</i> Butter eater	<i>Ọmọ ti kò jìyà ri</i> (children of the upper or middle class who have not been exposed to hard life or a child born with silver spoon)
<i>Ọṣòmọgbòmọgbìn</i>	<i>Ọ+ṣẹ+ọmọ+gbe+ọmọ+gbìn</i> pre + v + n + v + n + v (One-that-produce-chBámgbóséild-for-planting)	<i>Ọṣòmọgbòmọgbìn</i> One that is in relationship with many ladies	A flirt, humaniser or philanderer.
<i>Ẹgunje</i>	<i>Ẹ+gún+jẹ</i> pre + splitting verb (That-which-is-pounded-and-eaten)	<i>Ẹgunje</i> Medicated powder	<i>Riba/owo àito</i> (bribe/settlement)
<i>Ọjabokọfọ</i>	<i>Ọ+ja+bo+kò+fo</i> pre + comp. v + neg. mrk + v (He-that-fell-but-did-not-break)	<i>Ọ? ja? bọ? kọfọ?</i> Unbreakable	Overcomer/ invisible entity

7.2. Compounding

Scholars like Ogunbowale (1967), Rowland (1969) and Owolabi (1976), have revealed that compounding is a very productive word-formation strategy which entails the combination of two or more independent words to form another word with an entirely different meaning. In other words, two separate words are joined together to produce a single word. New idioms and idiomatic expressions formed through compounding are mostly in form of verb and noun structure – (Vb + N) or (N₁ + N₂) structure. For example: Vb + N

Idioms	Formation V + N	Literal meaning	Idiomatic meaning
Gbémú	<i>Gbé + imú</i> Carry + nose	<i>Gbémú</i> carry nose	<i>wijó/yari</i> (complain/grumble)
Gbéborùn	<i>Gbé + iborùn</i> Carry + neck band	<i>gbeborùn</i> carry neck band	<i>(ṣófófó/tojubólé)</i> (be an interloper)
Gbéfilà	<i>Gbé + filà</i>	<i>gbéfilà</i> carry cap	<i>(ṣófófó/tojubólé)</i> (an interloper)
<i>Gbésé</i>	<i>Gbe + iṣẹ</i> Carry + work	<i>gbeṣẹ</i> carry work	<i>ṣòwò nàbí/ṣe aṣẹwo</i> (engage in prostitution)
<i>Yabébà</i>	<i>Ya + bebà</i> Destroy + paper	<i>yabébà</i> destroy paper	<i>ná owó bí eḷèdà</i> (spend extravagantly)
<i>Gbọjà</i>	<i>Gbé+ ọjà</i> Carry + market	<i>gbọjà</i> carry market	<i>ṣòwò to lòdì si òfin</i> (deal in contrabands)
Gbẹwà	<i>Gba + ẹwà</i> Collect + beans	<i>Gbẹwà</i> collect beans	<i>Ṣẹwọn</i> (serve jail term)
Gbéégún	<i>Gbé + eégún</i> Carry+ masquerade	<i>gbeegun</i> carry masquerade	<i>jí iwe wò nínú idánwo</i> (to cheat in the exam)
Jọta	<i>Je + ọta</i> (Eat + bullet)	<i>Jọta</i> eat bullet	<i>Lówó</i> (be reach)

Idioms	Formation N ₁ + N ₂	Literal meaning	Idiomatic meaning
<i>àtikè ọlà</i>	<i>Atikè+ọlà</i> Powder+ wealth	<i>àtikè ọlà</i> powder of wealth	(a powdery substance) for: An illicit drug like cocaine
<i>Ọṣòdì òkè</i>	<i>Ọṣòdì + òkè</i> Ọṣòdì + hill	<i>Ọṣòdì òkè</i> Ọṣòdì on the hill (a bus stop in Lagos)	big boobs
Unjẹ ọmọ	<i>Unjẹ + ọmọ</i> child+food	Child/infant food formular)	big boobs

7.3. Phonoaesthetic Coinages

Idioms in this category are called phonoaesthetic idioms because they evolve from phonoaesthetic coinages. Idioms of this nature, according to Olátéjú, (1989 132), refer to words or expressions which by the virtue of their sound composition imitate or

suggest their meaning. By nature, they are idiophonic or onomatopoeic and they exhibit close relationship between the sound component of the word and its meaning and they are mostly one word. The following are examples of such coinages:

Idioms	Literal meaning	Idiomatic meaning
Gòòbe Pálasà	A Hausa expression for tomorrow coined phoneaesthetically to denote a very light and made-in China products e.g. mobile phones.	confusion/chaos fake/inferior/substantial

8. Analysis of Idioms and Idiomatic Expressions in Selected Literary Texts

As discussed under method of data collection, the five selected texts are: *Àkùkò Gàgàrà* by Lerè Adeyemi, *Ìgbeyàwo Ku Òla* Abeegunde Adedoyin, *O Še Yi Tan!* by Oluyemisi Adebòwale, *Jongbo Òrò* by Dayò Àkànmu and *Òdòdo Èyè* by Oyèbanji Olajuyin. In Lerè Adeyemi's *Àkùkò Gàgàrà*, a new idiom, 'gbaju è' is used to describe the fraudulent tendency of a town called 'Ètànlokù'. In the text, Àlào bluntly refuses efforts and attempts of suitors from Ètànlokù who propose to Fadekemi, her daughter, on the ground that many of the young men from the town are irresponsible and fraudulent. He breaks his silence on the issues when Fadekemi's mother, who is also from Ètànlokù, keeps tormenting him and wants to know why he does not want to allow Fadekemi to get married to men from Ètànlokù:

...*igbó mí mú àti 'gbájú è tí wòn n pè ní 419 ti jàràbà àwòn ará ilú Ètànlokù'.*

...marijuana and fraud, also called 419 have become a way of life of the people of Ètànlokù

(*Àkùkò Gàgàrà*)

The underlined item is a verbal expression which literally means slap him/slap his face. It has however been nominalized as 'gbaju è' to convey the idea of a fraudster. The new idiom 'gbaju è' could have been connected with an old expression 'gbaju ìgan' used between 1960 and 1970 to describe magicians who deceptively rob people of their belongings at motor parks and some other locations and also, the observation of the shocking effects and of excruciating pains suffered by the one whose face is slapped. The feeling or experience is the same when someone is defrauded. Definitely, 'gbaju è' (fraudster) is someone who inflicts pains on another person as a result of his act of defrauding. Today, apart from its usage in the text as shown in the excerpt above, 'gbaju è' has almost become a household expression in Nigeria and among the Yorùbá because of the prevalence of corruption in our country. It is the word or expression for people who are involved in a criminal act known in the law courts as 419 and other offences having to do with fraud, embezzlement and misappropriation of public funds.

In *Ìgbeyàwo Ku Òla*, a play written by Abeegunde Adedoyin, there is also the use of a new idiom – *ègunjẹ* – where a character called Owoniyi enters a particular

office to see Gbadebò's boss and is told to offer bribe (*ègunjẹ*) before he could see the person:

Owóniyi: *È má bínú àwòn ògá ni mo fẹ́ rí*

Gbádébò: *Mo ti gbó, šé èyin náà mọ́ ilú tí a wà yìi, ẹnu òfífo kii dún nàmùnàmù, ègúnjẹ ló layé²*

Owóniyi: Don't be angry, I came to see your boss.

Gbádébò: I have heard. I am sure you are aware that in this country, nothing goes for nothing, ègunjẹ is the order of the day.

Ègunjẹ, in its literal sense means a traditional herbal powder and can be interpreted idiomatically or connotatively to mean a bribe/bribery. Originally, it is used to exhibit the corrupt tendency of some Nigerians who smartly used the expression in their various offices or businesses in order to get additional money from customers besides their salaries or profits in an unlawful manner. The thoughts of living beyond one's income brought about the expression *ègunjẹ* in the above excerpt.

In *'O Še Yi Tan!'*, a play written by Oluyemisi Adébòwálé, the word *Ègunjẹ* is also used as allusion to the corrupt nature of the Nigerian system and her people. For instance, in *Àjàyí's* office, Fálàrà sarcastically accused *Àjàyí* of supplying furniture of an inferior quality by refusing to sit down even when *Ajàyí* politely offers him a sit. Eventually, *Àjàyí* remarks thus:

Àjàyí: *Šé nitorí pé mo ní mo gba contract furniture yèn lẹ́ fí wá ní complain? Quality ti owó tó kù gbé ni mo bẹ́ àwòn carpenters láti bá mi še ẹ, kii i še favourite mi rárá. 'Ègúnjẹ' tó ba country jẹ ló jẹ kii quality ẹ low.*

Àjàyí: Are you complaining because I got the contract for that furniture? I appealed to the carpenters to produce the furniture of that quality based on the amount that was left; it is not my favourite at all. *ègunjẹ* (bribery) which is endemic in the country is the cause.

In the above, the use of *ègunjẹ*, a phonoaesthetic coinage from an existing word '*àgunmu*' (a traditional herbal powder) which is a new idiom for bribery/settlement, is to make readers know the source of substandard goods in the country. Going by *Àjàyí's* defence, he could not supply furniture of a high quality because he had to bribe those who facilitated the contract. If he had failed to give *eÌdògunjẹò*, he would not have got another contract from them. '*Ègunjẹ*' just like *gbaju è*, is another new idiom in Yorùbá that has become a household expression and has, thus, entered the lexicon of the language.

Apart from the new idioms which express corruption in the selected texts, there are also others that are used to communicate political ideas and create entertainment.

For instance, the use of *òjèlu*, is found in Akanmu's *Jongbo Òrò* as shown in the extract below:

*...Òṣèlu niwón ni àb'òjèlu?
Nitori olè ti wón o jálu
Wón fí Bibeli bura éke lasan
Kaye le rò pe wón dàtumbi
Won lo Alùkùraani nigbàagba
Iro funfun balau ni wón n pa kiri*

*...Are they politicians or embezzlers
Because of their plan to loot the country's treasury
They falsely swore with the Bible
For people to think they are born-again
They used the Quran on several occasions
It is a white lie that they are peddle around.*

In the above excerpt, the new idiom used is *Òjèlu* which has two interpretations - literal and idiomatic meanings:

Òjèlu

- (i) Literal meaning - politician
- (ii) Idiomatic meaning - eater of town. i.e. corrupt politician, embezzlers

The idiom *òjèlu*, is a popular expression used in the political arena to describe the Nigerian politicians who always make promises before getting to the seat of power but, on getting there, they become something else. In other words, *Òjèlu* (ò-je-ìlu), one who eats the town, as an idiom shares the same derivational strategy with *Òṣèlu* (one- who-rules or administers the town – politician). The two words, shared derivational similarities and at the same time, they are semantically different and opposite; one is complimentary (*òṣèlu*) while the other (*òjèlu*) is not. Before now, in the socio-political history of Nigeria, '*òṣèlu*' was the accurate expression used for the political leaders or politicians who are selfless and abide with the normal democratic tenet that brings meaningful development and dividends of democracy to the country and the citizens rather than looting the country's treasury for their selfish agenda. Today, as can be seen in the above text, '*òjèlu*' which can be interpreted as corrupt or fraudulent politician, is coined and used to describe fraudulent leaders who have derailed from the political principle of services to the people.

Another idiom and idiomatic expression commonly found in literary texts is *Oṣòdì-Òkè*. In *Òdòdò Èyè*, a prose written by Oyèbanji Olajuyin, Deroju unzips Morenikeji's blouse while trying to help her remove an ant on her back, Deroju could not believe what he sees, Morenikeji's dazzling beauty. He remarks thus

*...Èwù òhun fí àyà rè silè diè, kò sì bo osòdì òkè tan, mejeèjì fí ègbẹ
kan ara wón , wón pupa reşuresu ., ègbà orùn to wò rora f 'ori sọ
àláfọ to wà laàrin osòdì-òkè naà, o n dan gbinriin.³ (p.11)*

... That very blouse exposed her chest a bit and did not cover the *osòdì-òkè* completely, the two touched each other sideways, they were succulently fair, the neck-chain she put on slightly positioned itself in a space between the oshodi-oke, it was glittering admirably.

The above underlined expression *osòdì-òkè*, an existing word in the Yorùbá language was used here to convey a new meaning that is contrary to its original meaning (bus stop) to connote *oyàn* (breasts) for aesthetic/entertainment effect. *Oṣòdì-òkè* is the name of a particular bus stop in Lagos. It is called *Oṣòdì Oke* because it is on the bridge just like a woman's breast is also at the uppermost part of the body. This is a case of semantic transfer.

Also found in Oyèbanji Olajuyin's *Òdòdò Èyè* is another idiom — *koste*, which is a corrupt coinage from the English word 'corset' (bra). Having unzipped Morenikeji's blouse and observed her beauty, he continues to describe her underwear, especially the bra:

*...Ko-s-te àyà rè funfun gbòò. Yàtò si irin tintin ti
wón fí so ko-s-te naà leyìn, kò ni àbàwón kankan (p.11)*

...The bra on her chest is extremely white. Apart from the tiny hook used to fasten the bra at the back, it has no single stain.

In the above, the expression '*koste*', a phonoaesthetic coinage from the English word 'corset' which has the literal meaning of 'bra' (a piece of tight fitting underwear that women use to make their breasts stand firm) is comically used as idiom to mean a type of bra used by both common, local and educated ladies/woman. It is used here to entertain readers who may not have been expecting its use in the context. There are other common expressions in routine communication, such as *koste onirin*, *koste onigi* and *koste alasòò* to specify different types of *bra*. Though *koste* in normal routine communication is often used derogatorily for comic effect, in this text, does not seem to have derogatory effect. It is rather used admirably to imply elegance. .

Examples of new idioms and idiomatic expressions are also found in *Jongbo Òrò*, a poem written by Dayò Àkànmu (2002) in the first segment of the excerpt below, line two of the excerpt for stylistic and communicative functions:

*Bo o ba wi
Wón a leego làwón n ta si
Bo o sì tun sòrò jù
Wón a ni owo lọwọ n lèyunlẹ*

*Işu ni wón n pè leego
Eego làwón n pè ni nairà (Àkànmu 2002:30)*

If you talk

They will say money is their priority
And if you talk too much
They will say money at hand is the ultimate

Yam is what is called Eego
Eego is referred to as naira.

In the above example, the three words used as new idioms are *ta si*, *iñu* and *eeAgo* and are of stylistic and communicative significance to the ideas being expressed in the poem by the poet. For instance, they can be analysed thus:

(i) *ta si* (line 3) Literal : has interest in
Idiom : has passion for

(ii) *iñu* (line 5) Literal : yam
Idiom : money (owoA)

(iii) *ee go* (line 2, 6) Literal : money (an Igbo name for money)
Idiom : naira money

In the above examples, the preponderance of new idioms relating to money contributes, not only to the stylistic elegance of the poem, but also to the main idea, subject matter or the focus of the poem, which is the fact that money is the soul of business. This interpretation is corroborated by a Yorùbá Fujimusician, Alhaji Àyinla Kollington, who, in one of his waxed records, sings thus:

Ki làwa n ta si o o
Eeigo làwa n ta si o
Eego làwa n ta si
Eego làwa n ta si o o

Eeigo làwa n ta si,
What is our focus
Eeigo is our focus
Eeigo is what we are after
Eeigo is our objective
Eeigo is our preoccupation

Just like the previous example, the stylistic and semantic importance of the use of the Igbo loan-word idiom is the importance of money in life. It should be stressed here that *iñu*, (*yam*), *ota* (bullet) and *kùdi* (Hausa language for money) are also used as new idioms and idiomatic expressions in different contexts of the Yorùbá routine and literary discourses. However, the expression '*ta si*' is used with a different semantic realization in *Òdòdo Èyẹ*, when Deroju was about to go and see his girlfriend, Moreònikèò, one late evening. Ladi is not favourably disposed to such a visit in such an ungodly our:

Ladi : *Ki lo fẹ lo ẹ n' dáyii?*
(What do you want to do by this time of the day?)

Deroju : *Òpekè kan lo ni ki n wa ri òun jò?*
(One beautiful lady insisted I should see her)

Ladi : *Òpekè wo nìyẹn?*
(Who is that beautiful lady?)

Deroju : *Ojọ kan bayì ni mo ta si i.4*
(I wooed her on a particular day that i traveled)
(Oyèbánjì, 2010 : 13)

Here, the expression '*ta si*' (line 4) is a new idioms used to express the idea of wooing a lady. This type of idiom is common among students of higher institutions in the Yoruba-speaking part of Nigeria. In other words, from the perspective of the context in which it is used in the text, *ta si i* can be interpreted as an idiom meaning: to woo.

New idioms used as abusive expressions are also found in *Jongbo Òrò*, by Akanmu, when he condemns certain bus conductors who are in the habit of pouring invective on their passengers. He remarks:

Bi o ba fowo leran

Ti ò n ronu baye re o ẹ dara
Wọn a lo o gbe ẹlulà dani
Bi o si tun sọrò jù
Wọn a sọ pe ò n jabo

Àgàgà to o ba tun wò won
Wọn a sọ pe oju- n- faşo- ya
To o ba si tun gbimòràn
Wi pe ko o bu ti ẹ padà
Wọn a ni ẹ bu wa ki e gba'ke
(Akanmu 2002:26)

If you hang the jaw on your palm

Thinking about how to get on well in life
They will say you are holding a cellular phone
And if you dare talk
They will say you are unguarded
And when you gaze at them
They will say eyes-can-tear-the-cloth
If you make attempt to respond
They will say you can insult us and get a plastic container

The new idioms in the above expressions are *jabo* (line5), *oju n faşo ya* (line7) and *ẹ bu wa ki ẹ gbake* (line10). The underlined expressions (new idioms) are used by bus conductors to abuse their passengers whenever there is any altercation between them in the bus. The word 'jabo' is abusive and derogatory:

Jabo

(drop-and-fall)
Literal : drop off

Idiom : (derogatory) keep shut, shut up, get away

This idiom therefore, is peculiar not only to the bus conductor's unguarded language (rudeness) to the passengers but also to the other members of the speech community who talks too much.

The use of the expression 'oju-n-faṣo-ya' in the excerpt is to caution a passenger who may have been looking at the conductor with contempt to stop doing so. It is a typical example of a sentential idiom, that is analysed and interpreted thus:

Oju n faṣo ya

(the-eyes-that-tear-dresses-into-shreds)

Literal : uncomplimentary/bad look

Idiom : a rude/warning/stop looking at me

Therefore, based on the context of usage, *Oju n faṣo ya* can be interpreted to mean 'don't look at me,' which is rude and uncomplimentary. *E buwa ki e gbake'*, is used not only to caution the passenger to stop abusing the conductor but also to ridicule the passenger that his/her response is worthless and does not have much impact on him just as the plastic container given out as gift is of lesser value. It can be interpreted to mean a worthless insult.

Transportation is another area where idioms and idiomatic expressions are used to convey certain ideas that are peculiar to the bus conducting business. For instance, in Àkànmu's *Jongbo Òrò*, idiomatic expression, *O loyun o pònmò* is used:

...Bi abo to ri rùnmu rùnmu ba fe wọle

Tàbi obìnrin rògbòdò

Wọn a ni 'o loyun o pònmò'

(Àkànmu 2002:26)

...When a chubby female passenger is

About to enter the bus Or an overweight woman

They will say 'she is pregnant and backs a child'...

Literarily, the expression *o loyun o pònmò* means she is pregnant and also has a child on her back. It is used by the bus conductor to alert the driver that a particular passenger, mostly pregnant, woman requires more patience either in coming aboard or in disembarking. Sometimes, the same expression is used for a passenger with two or more pieces of luggage who cannot catch the bus while on motion as the usual practice in Lagos. It is used to sensitize the driver about the peculiar nature of the passenger. On getting the signal, *o loyun o pònmò*, the driver knows he has to apply the break and stop for the passenger to enter or alight. Because of impatience of the bus conductors and drivers in cities like Lagos, Ìbàdàn, Òşogbo, Ìlorin, Àkùrẹ and others, the expression is used to indicate the exception to the rule. In other words, the usual hasty approach is suspended to allow the commuter (who is considered delicate) to enter or alight from the bus. It can be interpreted to mean 'slow down', 'be patient' or 'stop'.

9. Inferences

It can be seen from our discussion so far that idioms and idiomatic expressions have been used to express so many ideas, views and opinions as exhibited in the analysed texts. It is obvious that corruption was addressed in virtually all the texts and contextualized in bribery, fraud, looting and contract splitting. Politics which is peculiar to a text (poem) was contextualized in a corrupt leadership. This, indicates the pervasiveness and endemic nature of corruption in the country. Issues on transportation business were also expressed with the new idioms in some of the texts revealing the context of bus conducting, while the issues of abuse and entertainment occurred in the context of social misalignment and erotic feeling.

10. Conclusion

In this paper, attention was focused on new Yoruba idioms and idiomatic expressions with a view to establishing and highlighting their communicative and stylistic potential in literary texts. The issues expressed with them, structure, formation and their interpretation were critically carried out. For this study, Standard Language (SL) model noted for its ability to explain the deviant nature of the new idioms and idiomatic expressions, and the 'differential specifica' between the language of ordinary discourse and language of literature was adopted. Few scholarly works were reviewed and found to be a springboard on which this paper took off. Data for this paper were obtained from six Yorùbá literary texts and the new idioms and idiomatic expressions found were thereafter subjected to critical analysis and interpretation.

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