

THE SOCIOLINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF THE IGBO IDEOLOGY: “Ị NA-ENYE M NRI?”

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Abstract

Sociolinguistics, in studying the relationship between language and society, enables the community members not only to learn to use the appropriate language for each occasion, but also to understand the social implications of any linguistic expression. It is against this backdrop that this research is centered on “**The Sociolinguistic Analysis of the Igbo Ideology: “Ị na-enye m nri?”**” The objectives of the study are: to explain the meaning of sociolinguistics, explain the relationship between an ideology and sociolinguistics, analyze the contexts of the use of the ideology, “Ị na-enye m nri?” and establish the implications of the analysis. The study adopts the descriptive research methodology, coupled with the use of the researchers’ intuition as native speakers of the Igbo language. The theory to guide the study is the Use Theory of Meaning by Ludwig Wittgenstein. The study finds out that sociolinguistics examines the way in which language interacts with the society and the manner in which the language’s structure changes in response to its different social functions. Concerning the relationship between ideology and sociolinguistics, the study reveals that ideology influences communication, while constituting a powerful tool for spreading views and ideas. In addition, the study discovers that the ideology, “Ị na-enye m nri”, is a rhetorical question used to refuse intimidation, own one’s right and announce a disrespectful treatment in inter-human dealings. The major implication of the analysis is the exposure of the nuances of the expression.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

According to Fishman (1972), at any time the subject of examination is about “who speaks what language to whom, when, and why”, it is all about sociolinguistics. As it studies the relationship between social context and language use, it helps us to decipher that the cultural background of any Igbo person should influence how they communicate and interpret meaning within a given situation.

This meaning interpretation could come into play when the use of some Igbo ideologies is involved. For instance, such ones as ‘Ị na-akuziri m amamihe’ (Do you teach me wisdom?), ‘A na-aso gi, i bu agwo?’ (Are you a snake that one should be scared of you?), ‘O di ka mu na gi aburula ogbo?’ (Does it mean that I’m now your age mate?), ‘Ị nakwa ata okwu eze?’ (Are you not attentive about what you say?), ‘Ina-achara m moto?’ (Do you guide me as I avoid vehicles on the road?), ‘E si be gi aga be onye?’ (Whose abode does your house lead to? /who do you think you are?), ‘Kedu nke i kacha eme?’ (What do you do best? / what are you known for?), ‘Onye juru gi?’ (Who asked you to talk?), ‘O gbasara gi?’ (Does it concern you?), ‘Onye ka i bu?’ (Who are you?), are all begging for interpretation. All these belong to a set of beliefs that influence how the Igbo behave (that is, their ideology). Virtually every native speaker of the Igbo language is expected to know the appropriate context under which such expressions could be used.

Yes, one thing is to expect everybody to know. Another thing is whether everybody truly knows the proper occasions that could warrant the use of such expressions. What this implies is that there are as many versions of ideologies as there are varying contexts under which they could apply. And being able to comprehend their various occasions of usage would help us to understand how language is shaped by social factors and how people take advantage of language to express their identities. Not only that, it would also assist us to comprehend how social factors like culture, class, ethnicity, gender, race, age, and occupation influence language use. Of course, sociolinguistic analysis of language use in context could also help us to understand real-life social situations and attitudes, as far as the Igbo language is concerned. It is in the bid to take advantage of such opportunities as pointed out above that this study is focused on “The Sociolinguistic Analysis of the Igbo Ideology: Ị na-enye m nri?”

In the aim to benefit from the promising advantages of the sociolinguistic analysis of language use in context, the specific objectives for this investigation are as follows: to explain what is meant by sociolinguistics, establish the relationship between ideology and sociolinguistics, analyze the contexts of use of “i na-enye m nri?” and find out the implications of the analysis.

The method of study adopted here is descriptive research. This research method has to be backed up with the researchers' intuition as native speakers of the Igbo language. The theory that spells out the steps of the study is the Use Theory of Meaning, propounded in 1953 by Ludwig Wittgenstein.

In the bid to let this work flow smoothly, we have organized it into five sections: introduction, literature review, research methodology (subsumed into section two), data collection and analysis and summary of findings and conclusion. The names of the sections are explicative about the purpose of each section.

The study, when completed, is expected to lift the Igbo language to enviable standards, as its modes of use would be known to the world. The areas of application of the Igbo language such as language teaching, language policy development and legal contexts would attract some awareness. The study would attract admiration to the Igbo language, especially in the area of how societal norms and relationships impact language choice, variation and change within communities.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to provide the fitting context for this research, we are set, here, to analyze the published information related to our research questions.

2.1 Language and Culture

Language is a means to communicate and express culture, and culture is shaped by language. In line with this view point, Hudson (1980:74), describes culture as the knowledge which someone acquires socially by virtue of the person being a member of a specific society". As far as Goodenough (1957) and Hudson (1980) are concerned, the culture of a society consists of whatever a person knows or believes in order to behave in a manner approved by the members of such a society. To them, culture is what one learns about his community and not what the person inherits biologically.

In the view of quora.com, it is language that makes the formation of culture possible. And it is through the medium of language that culture is transmitted from one generation to the next. The Sapir-Whorf(1929) hypothesis makes the assertion that language determines other aspects of culture, for this reason language supplies the categories or bases through which social reality is defined. It is language that forces people to perceive the world in a certain terms. Based on this, speakers of different languages have different perceptions of reality.

On his part, Harrison (2008) maintains that when languages die, the extinction of the world's languages and the erosion of human knowledge follow.

From the above discussions, it could easily be deduced that culture is the property and identity, and evidence of one's membership of a society. Even at that, their stand is that language is the vehicle with which culture is carried about. One uses language to pass culture amongst different generations of people. It then means that language and culture are inseparable.

2.2 Linguistics

Echebima (2015:1) maintains that "linguistics is the study of the science of language, and it explains how language works". On his part, Crystal (1980/2003:272) describes linguistics as "the scientific study of language". These authors are obviously in agreement as to how linguistics does its works. It examines how human language is used and studies the nature and structure of it. The structural components it studies consist of phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics. As a science subject, it is concerned with every aspect of language. Its concern is about what people actually say, not with what they should say. It strives for objectivity, very critical, with inquiring attitude.

Based on the above explanations of linguistics, it is safe to say that, as a science, linguistics is empirically grounded, relying on actual data or findings, including observations of speakers' language use and their intuitions concerning their language. From the explanations, we can also infer that linguistics is descriptive rather than prescriptive.

2.3 Semantics

According to Finch (2000:145), "Semantics is concerned with meaning as a product of the linguistic system and, as such, is part of our grammatical competence. It focuses on decontextualised meaning, as opposed to pragmatics, which focuses on contextualized meaning" He (2000) goes on to opine that linguistic analysis directs its operation at two grammatical ranks: the rank of the word and rank of the sentence. The rank that has to do with word explores the relationships which words share with each other within the entire language. This concerns the meaning possessed by the word on account of the space (or place) it occupies within the linguistic system. What this implies is that every individual word or sign derives its meaning from its existence within a network or

semantic field. Meaning, at the level of a sentence, has to do with how we establish the real world correspondence; that is, about statements, questions, commands and their internal consistency as linguistic expressions.

Prasad (2012) is of the view that meaning should include reference to the syntactic structure, meaning of single words, show how the structure of the meaning of words and the syntactic relations interact in order to constitute the interpretation of sentences. And it has to relate how these interpretations are related to the things that are said. Added to these views about semantics, McGregor (2009), maintains that semantics is about the aspects of meanings that are encoded by words and grammar.

We can summarily say here that semantics is about the interpretation of meanings as engendered by words and sentences that make up a construction. It is not out of place to also say that the meaning of the words is dependent on the space it assumes in the entire construction, whereas sentence meanings are easily derivable from how what is said has some bearing with real world situations.

2.4 The Contextual Theory of Meaning

The contextual theory of meaning was formulated by Edward Bradford Titchener in the 1940s. The statement of the theory is that the meaning of a word or concept depends on the mental images and associated bodily sensations it triggers. It maintains that the core of a meaning is a raw experience while the context is mental associations that are created from prior experiences. According to him, contextual meaning takes into account the tone, non-verbal actions and setting to arrive at the meaning. The stand of the theory is that “words cannot refer to specific objects because words do not have fixed meanings” (Anozie, 2007:105). The meaning of a word is determined by the operation which the word is performing.

This type of meaning, as explained, makes use of experiences that one has garnered over time concerning such constructions. It also uses the yardsticks of tone, non-verbal cues and setting to determine what the construction implies. Also, one has to take into consideration the word’s operation within the context of the performances.

2.5 Stylistic or Social Meaning

Social meaning is the type that relates to society or the organization of such a society. It could be said to be the type of meaning which a word brings about owing to the fact that it is associated with a specific pattern of speech, language or a social setting. In this kind of meaning, words can reveal the social background, social distance or geographical dialect between the speaker and the hearer (Ndimele, 1999).

Deducible from this is the fact that there is a kind of meaning that is society-oriented. It occurs mainly in social situations, like ideology can do. And the type of meaning derivable from it could reveal how close, socially, educationally and amicably, the speaker is to the interlocutor.

2.6 Sociolinguistics

Anozie (2007:125) cites Rafford et al (1999:16) as defining sociolinguistics as “the study of the relationship between language use and the structure of the society”. Continuing, they maintain that it

Takes into account such factors as the social backgrounds of both the speaker and the addressee (i.e. their age, sex, social class, ethnic background, degree of integration into their neighbourhood, etc.), the relationship between speaker and addressee (good friends, employer, employee, teacher-pupil, grandmother, grand-child, etc.) and the context and manner of the interaction (in bed, in the supermarket, in a TV studio, in Church, loudly, whispering, over the phone, by fax, etc.).

The authors maintain that these are the vital variables that would comprehensively determine how the structure and function of the language used in a situation could be understood.

According to Anozie (2007), sociolinguistics would throw some light into the nature of both the language and the society that uses the language. Supporting this opinion, Ndukwe (1997) sees sociolinguistics as a branch of linguistics that studies the relationship between language and society. It makes a survey of how social factors determine the use of language in the society; that, it is the society that determines the choice of language use. It is the social requirements or social contexts that determine the varieties of language use, choice of vocabularies and conversation rules.

More than two modes of relationships stand out here about sociolinguistics’ nature of analysis: how language use and the structure of the society are related, how the speaker and those he is speaking to are related, and how the context and manner of interaction could be defined. The import of all these is that the structure of the language used and the context must relate so as to enable the expression to be comprehended.

2.7 Igbo Speech Community

As McGregor (2009:158) defines it, “a speech community is a coherent group of people who share the same language or languages and more or less the same norms of language use. The members of a speech community

form a network of interacting individuals who communicate linguistically with one another frequently and more intensively than they engage with outsiders”

In the words of Okwudishu (2008:44),

Igbo is a language spoken in the South Eastern part of Nigeria, in precisely Enugu, Anambra, Imo, Abia and Ebonyi States. Speakers of Igbo are also found in Delta State, in Rivers State and parts of Akwa Ibom State. About 18million people speak Igbo, making it one of the three largest languages in Nigeria, surpassed only by Yoruba and Hausa (Williamson and Blench, 2000).

Richard Nordquist, in his 2019 book, “Making New Words with Affixation-References”, published by Scientific Research Publishing, insists that speech community is a term in sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropology used to describe a group of people who share the same language, speech characteristics, and ways of interpreting communication.

The definitions and explanations are indications that ‘Igbo’ is a speech community. It makes it explicit that the Igbo community constitutes a group of people that has a common language. This means that the Igbo have the same ways of interpreting communication. They constitute a network of individuals that interact linguistically.

2.7 Igbo Culture and Language

Goodenough (1957) says, in Hudson (1980:74), that “a society’s culture consists of whatever it is one has to know or believe in order to operate in a manner acceptable to its members...”. Hudson (1980:81) says that “culture may be defined as the kind of knowledge which we learn from other people, either by direct instruction or by watching their behaviour”. According to Hudson (1980:83), “The area of overlap between language and culture consists of all those parts of language which are learned from other people”.

The meaning of this is that language constitutes a major aspect of culture and how people communicate, construct relationship, and form a sense of community. As language reflects the beliefs, practices and world views of a society, it is tantamount to saying that the shared experiences and backgrounds in the Igbo language are also parts of the ideology of the people. It is these shared experiences and backgrounds that give rise to their specific culture.

2.8 Igbo Ideology and Sociolinguistics

As defined by <https://www.merriam.webster.com>, an ideology of life is a systematic body of concepts, especially about human life or culture. It is a way of life or the content of thinking characteristic of an individual group or culture. Explained in another way, it is a system of ideas that aspires both to explain the world and to change it. An ideological way of life has to do with a way of life that is based on a set of beliefs, values, and ideas that shape a person’s actions, interactions, and perception of the world. From <https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/social-sciences/sociolinguistics> it is revealed that, as far as sociolinguistics is concerned, ideology stands for any set of beliefs about languages as they are used in their social worlds. Ideologies can be used for the following purposes: justify social arrangements, recommend collective action and explain and change the world.

In the view of <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/sociolinguistics>, sociolinguistically speaking, ideologies are shared beliefs about what is acceptable or valued in a society, and these are present in various aspects of everyday life. These are language ideologies, conceptualizations about languages, speakers and discursive practices. They are shaped in a cultural setting. And once these ideologies are recognized or accepted in the society, they reveal how the speakers’ linguistic beliefs are related to the wider social and cultural systems to which they belong. Ideology, in relation to sociolinguistics or language use in the society, is conceived as a “social cement”, in that it integrates social groups by providing their members with a shared system of ideas or values.

As Ndukwe (1997:1) defines sociolinguistics as cited in Agbedo (2000:169), “ as the branch of linguistics that endeavours to study the significant aspects of the relationship between language and society”. Bringing this definition to bear on the Igbo ideology or set of beliefs underlining the Igbo mode of behaviour, the target of our discussion here should be heaped on having a better understanding of the Igbo language structures and how the function in communication in the Igbo society.

In his discussion in “Igbo Life and Thought”, Ilogu (1985:24) makes it clear that the Igbo traditional society everywhere exhibits unity in the expression of its political, economic and cultural life with religion and morality as the unifying force”.

From this, we can learn that ideology is a set of beliefs that influences the way people behave. Our duty here is to marshal out those socially used Igbo expressions that border on political, economic, moral and cultural life. This line of action would be in tandem with Okolo’s (2010:18 (ed.) view as he cites Onwuejeogwu (1975), thus: “the Igbo share a common religious belief and have common economic, political and ideological way of life”.

The Igbo ideologies can be categorized into proverbial, moral, political and social aspects of Igbo life. The following are some of the proverbial ideologies: ‘Onye kwe, Chi ya ekwe’ (If one agrees, his God will also agree),

‘Ekwughiekwu mere ọ̀nụ, anughianu mere nti’ (Not passing out instructions is the fault of the mouth, whereas not heeding instructions is the fault of the ear), ‘A na-agwa ochintị na agha esu?’ (Is the dumb person ever reminded that war has started?), ‘A na-ahụ ụzọ sị mụta ọkụ?’ (Does a person who sees his way about request for light?). The following Igbo ideologies are both moral and political: ‘Aga m eji aju bute ya?’ (Do I have to use a pad to carry him?) ‘Ihe onye kotere, o buru’ (Whatever trouble one attracts to himself, it is his task to handle it), ‘I na-akuziri m amamihe?’ (Do you teach me wisdom?)

The Igbo ideologies that are multi-faceted are these: ‘Ebe onye dara, ka Chi ya kwaturu ya’ (Where a person falls down is where his God has pushed him down), ‘Mkpomkpọ ndu ka mkpomkpọ onwu mma’ (Unhealthy life is better than death), ‘E mee ya nwa gi, o ga-adi gi mma?’ (If such a thing is done to your child, would you like it?). One basic thing that stands out about these ideologies is that each of them has peculiar contexts of speech they are used in the Igbo community and every intuitive speaker of Igbo is expected to apply them in their appropriate occasion of usage.

2.9 The Theoretical Framework

The theory to navigate this study is the Use Theory of Meaning (UTM) propounded by Ludwig Wittgenstein in 1953.

The objective of the theory is to show that the meaning of an expression is a matter of the way this expression is put to use by its competent users or the owners of the language. The theory explains how words and sentence come to have meaning, and how they can represent things and be true or false.

The theory, UTM, states that the meaning of a word is determined by the way it is used and the non-semantic features that explain its use. The way this theory is applied is to find out the meanings such expressions have before the owners of the language or its intuitive speakers. If the community or society does not put such a thing into use, it means it has no meaning. The theory is relied upon to explain how word meanings combine to create sentence meanings.

Its area of strength is that it can explain why the same word can have different meanings in different contexts and how meanings can be created by using words in new ways. By so doing, it explains linguistic phenomena. The theory can also be used to address the problem of skepticism and the normative features of thought and language. It can also be used to address the problem of paradoxical phenomenon of vagueness.

The theory is criticized for appealing to a limited set of rules and conventions, which can overlook the contingencies of work and communication. Anagbogu, Mbah and Eme (2010) criticize the theory for absurd, because if a society does not put a thing into use, it means that the thing in question has no meaning.

The theory is said to have reclaimed uses. For instance, the reclaimed use of the word, “queer” has reduced its derogatory uses. Another change is that UTM is said to have problem with abstract words, that it works well with concrete words, but not with abstract words.

The justification for choosing this theory is because the mode of its use appeals so much to the contextual use of expressions, which is of essence in this research work.

2.10 EMPIRICAL REVIEW

Our target is to identify trends, patterns and gaps in the existing empirical evidence of our topic of study. We are looking at some past studies related to our study so as to ascertain whether to move on or discontinue our research on this topic.

C. G.Madueke (2020): The topic of study is “The Sociolinguistic Analysis of Igbo Binomials in the Igbo language”, published in *Odezuruigbo Journal*, vol. 4, no.1, 2020. The study and ours do not share a similar topic, hence their different objectives of study and findings.

E.K. Ukaegbu (2021): This study has the topic, “Sociolinguistic Analysis of the Use of Proverbs in Mbaise”. The paper was published in the *International Journal of Linguistics* in November, 2021. Looking at her topic, it becomes obvious that we can proceed with our research, because our topics of study are as different as our objectives and theories.

A.U.Umeodinka and I.Nweze (2022): Published in *Awka Journal of Linguistics and Languages, Special Edition*, no. 1, in 2022, this study and ours are poles apart from the initial point of view of the topic of study. Ours is “The Sociolinguistic Analysis of the Igbo Ideology: I na-enye m nri”, whereas theirs is “A Sociolinguistic Analysis of Nwa and Umụ in Igbo”. It shows that they are two separate studies that have different objectives and are expected to produce different results or findings.

2.11 Summary of Literature Review

In the drive to gather and synthesize knowledge, identify gap, justify research, develop an argument and demonstrate research skills, we have looked into the relevant works that would be of help to us. The sub-topics reviewed have, obviously, enriched our facts and properly situated our research. The theoretical framework has been thoroughly looked into as the main steering that pilots our research. We have also embarked on the empirical

review of past works to ensure the covering of any existing gaps. All these have set our work ready for the analysis of findings after a brief survey of the research methodology.

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The concern of this section is to reveal the steps of this study, so as to justify the appropriateness and the degree to which the results of this study would be consistent with the methods used.

3.1 A Compendium of the Methods

The general approach for this study is our adoption of the descriptive research method. The aim is to observe, document, and build up a thorough profile of our topic of study.

The geographical area of this study is the Igbo speech community generally. This includes Imo, Abia, Anambra, Enugu, Ebonyi States and some parts of Rivers, Cross River and Akwa Ibom states that speak the Igbo language. The sampling technique which this study adopts is purposive; and the use of intuition. The researchers have resorted to themselves as a part of the sources of data collection, being adults of Igbo origin, and intuitive speakers of the Igbo language. Their experiences are to be co-opted in both the data collection and analysis. The use of intuition gives a direct access to unconscious knowledge; unconscious cognition; gut feelings; inner sensing; and the ability to understand something instinctively, without any need for conscious reasoning (Aurobindo, 1992). Literature review is also a major player in our data collection and analysis.

4.0 DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

In this section, we are set to embark on a detailed examination of the findings of our study as they relate to ideology and the Igbo expression, “I na-enye m nri?” For the examination to be detailed, we have chosen to present it in a tabulated format.

4.1 Findings and Analysis in a Tabulated Form:

The essence of this table is that it constitutes the analyses of some of the objectives of the study. It is from here that some of the answers to some of the research questions should be obtained.

S/N	IGBO IDEOLOGY (Column A)	CONTEXT OF USE (Column B)	MEANING IN USAGE (Column C)	USAGE IMPLICATION (Column D)	IDEOLOGY FUNCTIONS (Column E)	LESSONS FROM THE USAGE (Column F)
1	I na-enye m nri?	Summoning the confidence to tell somebody his faults.	For him to know his personal fault and stop annoying people with it.	1) Some persons can show boldness to tell others their faults, not minding the consequences. 2) One can have faults without being aware of it until he is told. 3) Boldness is a good quality, especially when used appropriately, correctively and positively.	1) Identification of what is good or bad in a society. 2) Provision of guidelines for action to improve social conditions. 3) Brings about social change in the society.	1) It can be a way to bond and integrate. 2) One can learn by imitation, persuasion and encouragement. 3) Learn to control and manipulate people.
2	I na-enye m nri?	An occasion where one tries to assert his right in order to re-own his integrity; that is, somebody wants to stop	Somebody wants to own up his right from an elder who intimidatingly and disrespectfully orders him around.	If one does not rise up to his right, people would continue to deny him his right or respect.	1) It offers one the chance to get his freedom from intimidation and enslavement. 2) Provides rooms for attitudinal	1) Intimidating attitude is detestable and should not be encouraged. 2) It pays to accord regard and respect to all persons.

		a long-standing intimidation by another person.			adjustment that generates social change.	
3	I na-enye m nri?	When somebody wants to make it known that he is independent, that nobody controls him.	Clarifying that he is under nobody's control, that nobody can tell him what to do; that he freely takes his own decisions.	1) It is often not out of place to declare one's status in the society, otherwise one could continue to attract disrespect and mistreatment. 2) Announcing that he is his own authority, a sole decision maker for himself.	1) As a means of announcing one's status or social standing. 2) Helps to indicate how somebody should be regarded in the society.	One should always declare his status in the society to avoid disrespect and mistreatment.
4	I na-enye m nri?	In business, where the boss feels so contented that nobody can change his way of doing business, telling himself nobody feeds him.	Should be interpreted as a show of arrogance, ignoring customers' suggestions.	1) Some business men fail to realize that their customers contributed to the contentment and wealth they have. 2) Some business men do not realize the indispensability of their customers and their advice and suggestions.	1) It makes one to assume a self-worth and behave it out. 2) It serves as an avenue to learn much about social life.	Even the Pastor of the business man said that "I na-enye m nri?" is a language of fools who do not understand the true place of God and other people in the success of life. 2) Some business men should understand that we need each other: "Aka weta, aka weta, onueju"

4.2 Explanation of the Meaning of Sociolinguistics

Through Hudson (1980), it becomes clear that linguistics is different from sociolinguistics, because it concentrates mainly on the structure of language, while sociolinguistics, particularly, takes account of the social context in which language is learned and used. The assemblage of the views of Anozie (2007), Ndukwe (1997) and that of Hudson (1980) makes us to understand that it is a branch of linguistics that examines the way language is shaped by society and how it can convey social meaning. As a discipline, it looks into the way different social factors like ethnicity, occupation, geographical location, age, education, class and gender can affect language use and maintain social roles within a community.

4.3 Explanation of the Relationship between Ideology and Sociolinguistics

As deduced from our overview of major writings on this topic, ideology is closely integrated with language and society. They cannot be separated, because ideology is a set of ideas that shapes how people think about society, and language is central to social integration. Through ideology, people are enabled to understand social facts and problems, which can help them, orient themselves in the society. As far as ideology and sociolinguistics are concerned, it is easy to understand that language and social interaction have a reciprocal relationship, where language shapes social interactions and vice versa. It is, therefore, conclusive to say that ideology and sociolinguistics have a subject-teacher relationship, where ideology is shared set of beliefs and sociolinguistics give enlightenment on the context of use in a given society.

4.4 Establishing the Context of Use of the Ideology: *Ị na-enye m nri?*

This study has analyzed the views of experts on the sub-topics of semantics, linguistics, Igbo ideology and sociolinguistics, culture and language, social meaning, contextual meaning and Igbo speech community. The fruitful consequence of the analyses is that they have fine-tuned our drive towards locating where the expression or ideology, “*ị na-enye m nri*”, actually exists in the use of language in the Igbo socio-linguistic cum cultural settings.

To complement this drive, we have transformed our analytical style into a tabular format, using the yardsticks of ‘the Igbo Ideology(*ị na-enye m nri*)’ in column 1, ‘Context of Use’; in column 2, ‘Meaning of Usage; in column 3, ‘Usage Implications’; in column 4, ‘Functions of the Ideology’; and in column 5, ‘Lessons from the Usage’.

In the tabular format, our findings about the context of use of the ideology, *ị na-enye m nri?*, abound in column 1, where the analyses are executed in four instances.

The instance in ‘Igbo Ideology 1, column B’ shows that ‘*ị na-enye m nri?*’ can be used in a situation where somebody summons the confidence to tell another person(his interlocutor) about the fault he has. Perhaps, the one who has summoned this courage to confront his counterpart has ignored and tolerated this fault for a long time. In this instance, he “up the courage to boldly tell him his fault; after all, he cannot do anything to me, as he does not feed me. “I can tell you about the fault you have, after all, “do you feed me?(*ina-enye m nri?*).

In ‘Igbo Ideology 2, column B, the context in which the ideology is used is when an aggrieved person decides to own up his right from someone who has been intimidatingly ordering him around for a long time. Peradventure he/she has been managing this unpleasant situation or experience for a long time. But, this time around, he wants to own up his right and re-gain his respect. And he tells his intimidator, who is not responsible for his feeding, that he cannot tolerate the intimidation any further. In a case where his intimidator demands to know where he got the courage to talk this way, he can tell him that, “after all, do you feed me?” (*ị na-enye m nri?*).

The third instance (see number 3, in column B) of where, ‘*ị na-enye m nri?*,’ could be used is in a social discussion where somebody openly wants to let his friend know that he is now his own master or a sole decision maker for himself, that nobody should, again, try to subordinate him in any matter, as he is now a boss, under nobody’s control. It could be put in a playful manner. All he intends to do is to announce that nobody should take decisions for him or control him. After all, you who want to control me, do you feed me? (*ị na-enye m nri?*).

The fourth context of use of the ideology(see number 4, column B), ‘*ị na-enye m nri?*,’ we want to exemplify is in a business situation, where the managing director or overall boss feels contented that nobody, especially his customers, can change his way of doing business, not minding if his methods have been driving away some of his customers. In a possible discussion with a customer who wants to counsel him to change his business attitude, he may reply to such an interlocutor, “after all, do you feed me?” (*ị na-enye m nri?*). In such a situation, the boss feels that, after all, his business has grown, and, as such becomes intolerant to customers’ suggestions.

Fifthly, in a settlement of a dispute, Miss A could tell Miss B “I will not talk to you again”. What Miss A implies is that, no matter what, she would no longer be in talking terms with Miss B. Then, Miss B could possibly respond by telling her, “if you like, don’t talk to me again, “do you feed me?” (*ị na-enye m nri?*). What this results to is that the dispute settlement has failed.

4.5 Establishing the Implications of the Analysis

As could be seen in the tabulated analysis format, each context of the use of the ideology, ‘*ị na-enye m nri?*,’ has its own peculiar usage implications. The implications of the use of the ideology in the first instance, (no. 1, column C), is that some persons can show boldness to tell others their errors or faults, without minding the consequences. It also implies that boldness is a good quality, especially when used correctively or appropriately.

The observed implication in the second instance (no.2, column C) is that it is proper for one to rise up to his right, because, if not so, people would continue to deny him his right and keep on intimidating him. As the meaning of an implication is something which may fairly be understood, though not expressed in words, this applies as one, because somebody who has been denied his right over time can pick up confidence, regain his right by confronting the person with the expression, “*Ị na-enye m nri?*”

In number 3, column C, the implication of the context of use is that it is often not out of place to declare one’s status in the society, otherwise the person could continue to attract disrespect and mistreatment.

In the fourth instance of the context of use (no. 4, column C), the derivable implication of the use of the ideology is that some business men run the risk of not realizing the indispensability in advice and suggestions made by their customers.

5.0 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

The preoccupation here is to generate an abridged version of our findings and subsequently set out a conclusion section where we would draw this research work to a close.

5.1 Summary of Findings

The major promptings for this investigation have been to research for the meaning of sociolinguistics, explain how ideology and sociolinguistics are related; analyze the occasions of use of the ideology, 'ì na-enye m nri?' and draw out the implications of the sociolinguistic analysis of the use of the ideology.

One of the circumstances of the use of the ideology is when somebody musters up courage to tell his conversational partner about the fault the partner has. Another instance of the occasion of use is when an intimidated person declares to his conversationalist that he would not tolerate the domineering any longer. Added to these is the context where a person chooses to openly make it known that he is now his own master or an authority of his own. Again, 'ì na-enye m nri?' ideology can be used in a business situation where the boss refuses to accept his customers' business ideas. It can also occur in a conflict resolution situation, where one of the quarrelling parties decides that he would no longer talk to the other party in the dispute, thereby not allowing the resolution of the case.

From the contexts of use of the ideology, we have been able to discover that one of the implications of the use of the ideology is that it enables us to understand that, in real life situations, it is possible for a person to pick up the courage to tell somebody about his/her faults irrespective of the consequences. One other implication noticed in the use of the ideology is to realize that, through the ideology; one can rise up to his right and stop any further intimidation of his person. Another implication discovered is that the ideology enables one to understand that some business owners can, in a show of personal contentment, shoot themselves on the foot by refusing to take the advice or suggestion of his customers.

5.2 CONCLUSION

Motivated by the drive to show how language and society are related, this study sets out to experiment it with the Igbo ideological expression, 'ì na-enye m nri?' This expression has been a common Igbo parlance, whose contextual value has been taken for granted. As a rhetorical question which assumes multiple meanings, it became necessary that these meanings be laid bare, taken up in specifics, so as to, through it, take the improvement of the Igbo language to another level. Having come thus far in this investigation, the significance of the ideology in the Igbo language is no longer a mystery. Those who use the expression are expected, henceforth, to appreciate its social value and relevance. The wealth of the Igbo language in the sociolinguistic perspectives of Igbo linguistics would now be easily appreciated. Researchers in the field of sociolinguistics, expectedly, should now take a cue from this study. What is more! It is all gains for the Igbo language in status and otherwise.

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