

The nature and dynamics of taboos in Igbo land

Nsidibe Akpan Usoro & Innocent Chukwuwmwka Iwuji

Department of Sociology & Anthropology

University of Uyo

Akwa Ibom State

ussh0074@gmail.com & manofjuly1966@gmail.com

Abstract

Those who study continuity and change in language have much to discover by delving into the unmentionable. In a striking example of scholarly squeamishness, it has been relatively recently that the effects of taboo on language development have really made an appearance in the mainstream of linguistic literature. In the name of decency and decorum, discussion of taboo, even within historical linguistic textbooks, focused on remote examples involving the primitive word, magic, and taboos on dangerous animals. In Igbo land, some words cease to be used due to the development of a taboo. In this case, a taboo word is one that has come under prohibition, usually because of the sacred status and reference of the word in question because of fear inspired by the referent. Hence, among the Igbo people of South-East Nigeria, linguistic taboos are powerful forces, and they are extremely important in so far as ethical principles and rules of conduct have been preserved over the ages through the observances of taboos. This provided explanations of the reasons, motives, values, and purposes of behaviour among the Igbo people. This paper therefore presents a sociolinguistic analysis of taboo phenomena in Igbo land. Taboo words are examined and explained in their socio-cultural and communicational contexts in Igbo land. In other words, they are treated as a dynamic phenomenon. The Hymes Pragmatic Theory which emphasizes on knowing the vocabulary, grammar, and context of every word, is used in this work. The paper concludes with discussions that encourage further studies on taboo as a cultural and linguistic phenomenon.

Keywords: Nature, dynamics, taboos, Igbo language, Igbo land.

1. Introduction

Taboo in language is associated with words which are not said, and with words and expressions which are not used. Taboos are of enormously important force behind language nature and dynamism through word loss, as well as shift of terms already in the language, through metaphor, deliberate modification of existing terms, and external borrowing. Taboos even undermine one of the very cornerstones of linguistics, namely, the arbitrary nature of the word. Language is deeply rooted in the culture of its people since it reflects their norms and taboos. When taboos develop, some other words or phrases, usually, descriptive terms are generally used to replace the forbidden words. This implies that within a given speech community, there are rules on how certain symbols are used to create understanding in a particular cultural setting (Nsidibe and Usen, 2020) In ancient times, rules and beliefs were adopted to keep the sanity of the land and not to incur the wrath of the gods. Most of these beliefs were born out of the fear of the unknown. Even though they are thousand years old, they are still believed and practised by the Igbo people. Hence, ignoring these beliefs during interaction may lead to severe assault both to the speaker and the community. In this view, one should note that all languages have certain words, expression, sentences, and topics which are prohibited from uttered or discussed in public, called ‘taboos’.

Language can be seen as an integrated part of human social interaction since it strengthens their relationship. It is an essential means of communication through which we can express our views, emotions, and attitudes. Such expressions represent one’s culture. Unconsciously, we often tend to speak and act by using words and gestures that are forbidden in our religious and socio-cultural settings.

Igbo words which have religious connotations are considered profane if they are employed outside religious ceremonies. Other types of words related to death, diseases, poverty, sex, and bodily functions form important ingredients in taboo language. Consequently, people employ euphemism to protect human relations during social interaction.

Among the Igbo people, the use of language is related to their culture and indigenous religion. In that context the Igbo language is full of taboo expressions which make the Igbo society different from the other ethnic groups in Nigeria, such as the Hausas, Fulanis, the Yorubas, and the Efiks among others. The Igbo people have also developed expressions, through their daily communication, to avoid the use of taboo words. These expressions have a deeper relationship with their indigenous religious and cultural norms.

The study of speech is a part of human culture. Studies on taboo have attracted much scholarly attention from different disciplines including Sociology, Psychology, Anthropology and Sociolinguistics. As a result, each field tries to develop theories to explain

this phenomenon in separation. However, Sociolinguistics tends to study taboos through making a bridge between language and culture by applying different methods of different researchers in these disciplines.

For this paper, Hymes' Pragmatic theory of 'Speech Acts' is most considered useful and applicable in defining what linguistic taboo really is. Hymes is among the first ethnographers or anthropologists who has pointed out that there is an intimate relationship between speech and human behaviour (Hymes, 1964). He is influenced by several linguistics including Boas, Sapir, Rodman and Jacobson and other members of the Prague School. Most of his works open a project for ethnographic research. In his ethnography of speaking, he introduces the acronym of 'speaking' which is employed to analyze the language in use. This he termed 'Speech Events'. According to Hymes, to speak a language correctly, one needs not only to learn it's vocabulary and grammar, but also the context in which words are used. He spells out some factors which the speakers must follow to achieve an acceptable conversation. Hymes speech formulars show that speech is influenced by the cultural and religious norms of the society. In other words, society has put rules on language use and these rules must be followed by its members to handle successful communication and social relations.

Speech Act theory is chosen for this paper because it shows the relationship between language and the context of use through providing a systematic classification of communicative intentions. Through this theory, we aim to investigate when speakers use certain undesirable acts, words, and expressions to hurt others.

2. The concept of taboo

Taboos have always been in existence in language and culture, but the term 'taboo' was not defined until in 1777 when it was borrowed and introduced into English by Captain James Cook, who reported the taboo from Tongan '*Tapu*' or '*Tabu*' meaning forbidness (Nadia, 2013). Captain James Cook explored the pacific islands and observed the Polynesian people's behaviour. Captain Cook, along with fellow shipmen, recorded the word 'taboo' in the Polynesian people's journals as a significant local word standing for forbidden, such as when a thing is not allowed to be eaten, touched, or entered. It is a Polynesian word. It is the name given by the Polynesian people to a system of religious prohibitions. Those prohibitions, however, do occur in all societies under different names. Radcliffe Brown (1939, p. 5) has it that:

In the Language of Polynesia the word means simply 'to forbid', 'forbidden', and can be applied to any sort of prohibition. A rule of etiquette, an order issued by a chief,

an injunction to children not to meddle with the professions of their elders, may all be expressed by the use of the word *tapu*.

However, it is also important to note that, whereas ancient taboos stemmed mainly from an ordinary sense of sacredness-implying no moral quality at all, modern taboos in their most essential meaning refer to the behaviour which according to Trudgill (1974, p. 29) is 'believed to be supernaturally forbidden or regarded as immoral or improper.' Taboo is perhaps because of its origin, easily associated with primitive cultures, but this is a mistaken belief because taboo also exists in Western societies.

Hughes' (1998) use of the term 'curse' and goes back to old English where curse meant 'to damn'. The word itself is found in many Anglo-Saxon manuscripts where magic, charms, and exorcism were first used. To curse someone referred mainly to magic but continued gradually to mean putting a spell or cursing someone. Curse has after that developed to cursing or swearing which today is seen, by some researchers as the same taboo.

Allan and Burrige (2009, pp. 15-17) present some aspects of taboo such as: linguistic, non-linguistic, profanity, euphemism, and religious taboos.

- i. **Linguistic taboo:** A linguistic taboo is any element of a language bearing a quality that renders it intrinsically impolite or forbidden. It is associated with things which are not said, and with words and expressions which are not used.
- ii. **Non-linguistic taboo:** These are terms or topics that are believed to be impolite or unacceptable for use due to social context. In contrast to profanity, they are intrinsically impolite. In fact, they are perceived to be specific in circumstances, as determined by the culturally contingent belief or concepts of politeness held by a speaker or the listener.
- iii. **Profanity:** This refers to language that is generally considered to be strongly impolite, or offensive. Profanity may often serve an exclamation function although typically, it is used to insult another person. As a form of verbal violence, it is often considered taboo in polite company, and subject to sensing (either by speakers themselves, or by some authority). While profane terms and insults tend to be derived from tabooed objects, such as bodily organs and excrement, not all references to tabooed objects are necessarily considered to be profanity.

- iv. **Euphemism:** Euphemisms are typically used to avoid the explicit mention of forbidden subjects, as opposed to avoiding the use of forbidden elements of the language. In social interactions, euphemisms are used to avoid directly addressing subjects that might be deemed negative, embarrassing, or otherwise discomforting to the speaker or their listeners. Mocanus (2017, p. 33), cites ‘disease’ as an example of a taboo topic among many cultures that is commonly avoided in language. “Topic such as menstruation have historically been considered taboo, thereby garnering euphemism such as ‘have an issue’ and ‘flowers’ (Lev. 15, vs. 19-24).” In either case, both ‘afflictions’ and ‘diseases’ were taboo as they were considered dangerous; menstrual blood was thought to carry contagious diseases such as syphilis.
- v. **Religious taboos:** Religion plays a significant role in the concept of taboo, as demonstrated by the etymology of the word taboo, which is borrowed from Tongan ‘*tapu*’ (prohibited, sacred). The religious perspective tends to consider language as vested with supernatural powers. Consequently, religion tends to be a source of language taboo (Esquibel, 2012).

3. Ethnographic sketch of the Igbo people

According to Afigbo (1981, p. 8), ‘the term Igbo has shown itself to be rather chameleonic, changing its meaning according to time and political climates’. Presently, the word ‘Igbo’ is used in three main senses; to refer to the territory, to refer to the speakers of the language and finally, to refer to the language itself. These three senses are only differentiated by prefixes attached to the words and this explains the sense in which it is being used thus: ‘*Ala Igbo*’ for the territory; ‘*ndi Igbo*’ for the people and ‘*Okwu Igbo*’ for the language.

With a population of about 45million (2020 est.) throughout Nigeria, they are one of the biggest and most influential ethnic groups in Nigeria, and possibly in all African Igbos are wellknown for their entrepreneurial endeavors, both within Nigeria and around the world (Afigbo,1981).

The notion of communalism is anchored on the saying in the Igbo traditional society that “*umunnawuike*”, that means that ‘community is strength’. The strength and respect which one has in the society is derived from the community. Culture is a community property and must therefore be community-protected. Therefore, the individual is therein protected. His individual identity is not emphasized at the expense of his community identity. Individualism, as an ideology and principle of life is not encouraged in Igbo land, not even in Africa, even though it is not destroyed. In the words of Belonwu (1967, p. 42):

We regard our living together not as an unfortunate mishap warranting endless competition among us but as a deliberate act of God to make us a community of brothers and sisters jointly involved in the quest for a composition answer to the varied problems of life. Hence, in all we do, we always place man first and hence all our action is usually joint community oriented action rather than the individualism.

Solidarity is such a vital value that individuals cannot but work and identify themselves with it. The rights and duties of individuals appear as elements of corporate rights and duties so that the solidarity of the unit is stressed but not at the expense of the individual's private interests or loyalties that ultimately do not disrupt the community. The philosophy or principle of behaviour and conduct becomes whatever makes for the community welfare.

The sanctity, peace, order, and harmony of the community was of primary importance to the traditional society. To maintain this equilibrium therefore, there existed, according to Mbiti, 'many laws, customs, set forms of behaviour, regulations, rules, observances and taboos constituting the moral code and ethics of a given community or society.' (Mbiti, 1975, p. 205). Some of these laws are held sacred and are believed to have been instituted by the gods or God. Any breach of these codes of behaviour is considered evil, wrong, or bad, for it is an injury or destruction of the accepted social order or peace.

The peace, harmony and solidarity of the traditional Igbo society were maintained through the observation of taboos, which formed part of the tradition (*omenala*) of the Igbo society. Nduka (1965, p. 92), observes that, 'taboos and other abominations which formed part and parcel of tribal morality derived their strength and point from the fact that to act contrary to them was to jeopardize the lives of the members of the tribe, clan, or group.' Breaking of taboos attracted serious repercussions and punishment from the divinities and ancestors. Breaches did not only affect the offender but also affected the whole community. Taboos are connected to the behaviour and conduct of individual lives in the entire Igbo land.

Language is the mirror of society's culture since it reflects the beliefs, norms, emotions, and feelings of its members. It is in this line that Wardhaugh (2010, p. 229) notes that the relationship between 'language' and 'culture' has attracted people from different backgrounds:

The exact nature of the relationship between language and culture has fascinated and continued to fascinate people from a wide variety of backgrounds. That there should be some kind of relationship between the sounds, words and syntax of a language and the ways in which speakers of that language experience the world and behave in it.

Language and culture are closely related to each other. The relationship between them expresses firstly, a cultural reality since it reflects the individual's attitude and beliefs. Secondly, language embodies cultural reality. That is, the way in which the spoken, written, or visual mediums create meanings that can be expressed through the speaker's accent, style, and gestures. This is because language, according to Kramsch (1998, p. 3) symbolizes social identity.

In connection with the above, Hudson (1996, p. 71) sees culture as the 'know how' and the 'know what' that an individual must have and use in his life. In other words, culture is the knowledge that society has, including music, literature, and arts.

Culture is a social heritage since it is taught by the old to the young and learned by the young from the old. Wardhaugh (2010, p. 211), points out 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 and to do so in any role that they accept for any one of themselves.'

The Igbo people's language is the principal means by whereby they conduct their socio-cultural lives. When it is used in contexts or communication, it is bound up with their culture in multiple complex ways.

Every Igbo man has a natural feeling of being a member of the society in which he lives. He depends on it for his personal development, and this is always in relation to other members of the same society in which he finds happiness.

The Igbo people are culture-oriented, and this is seen in their religious and economic life. Every aspect of the Igbo man's life, including his language, his dress outfit, his marriage, and his social and political life is rooted in his culture.

The term culture was defined by an English social anthropologist, Edward B. Tylor as 'the complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, arts, morals, law, customs or any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society' (Tylor 1871, p. 28).

Apart from Taylor's definition, which was the earliest, many sociologists have defined culture from different perspectives. Alfred Kroeber (1968) defines it as 'the mass of learned and transmitted motor reactions, habits, techniques, ideas and values and the behaviour they induce'.

Culture as a social phenomenon is the sum of man's experience in social life. It reflects the character of the total society, which covers interdependent variables such as language, knowledge, laws, religions, food customs, music, art, technology, work patterns, products, and artifacts. For Morden, (1991, p. 122) culture is:

A distinctive pattern of behaviour which results from basic beliefs and traditions; it stems from a society or community's experience, traditions, basic beliefs, aspirations,

and ambitions. Anyone individual is socialized into the prevailing culture, whose values all the standards are integrated into that person's motivation, personality, and lifestyle.

Simply put, therefore, culture is the patterned way of life shared by a group of people. That is, it is the total way of life of a particular group of people 'Culture is a wide and multi-dimensional concept that one cannot hope to deal with completely in a single study' (Nsidibe & Imaobong 2016, p. 166). Scholars in different fields have different impressions of the concept of culture. However, the definition offered by Tylor (1871) many centuries ago is the most scientific and generally accepted definition.

To the Igbo man, culture is community property and must therefore be community protected. Therefore, the individual is therein protected. His individual identity is not emphasized at the expense of his community identity. This is why individualism, as an ideology and principle of life, is not encouraged in Igbo land, not even in Africa, even though it is not destroyed.

The right and duties of individuals are elements of corporate rights and duties so that the solidarity of the unit is stressed but not at the expense of the individual's private interests or loyalties that ultimately do not disrupt the community.

Traditional ways of life permeate the Igbo culture as shown in their attitudes towards nature and among different people at different times and locations. Beliefs and taboos are direct products of such attitudinal stands. In Igbo traditional society, taboo implies both moral and religious aspects. The two terms 'sacred' and 'shameful' designate the significance of taboo prohibitions in Igbo land. In other words, for the Igbo people, if a word or act is seen as taboo, a series of adjectives like unclean, impure, shameful, forbidden, and sacred, emerge to say that it must not be mentioned or talked about. Consequently, taboo as a socio-cultural phenomenon becomes a linguistic phenomenon as well.

4. Categories of taboo in Igbo land

From the ancient times, rules and beliefs were adapted within the Igbo cosmology to keep the sanity of the land and not incur the wrath of the gods. Most of these beliefs were born out of fear of the unknown. Even though they are thousands of years old, they are still believed and practised. Some of these rules and beliefs are laws which are carried for maintenance of social order, cultural solidarity, progress, unity, among others. It is a taboo to break any of these rules, of which the side effect is not only upon the offender, but also on the entire community. Ekeopara (2011, pp. 107-109) points out some of these taboos:

- i. **Killing of a python (*Eke*):** Animals in various habitats in Igbo land have some influence on the religion of the people. Many people have sacred attitude towards some animals according to their environment. In areas where there are many snakes, snake cult is usually observed. In *Ogidi, Okija, Idemili, Awo-Omama, Obile* and other communities within the Igbo land, Python is accorded all the rites and privileges of a divinity and is usually worshipped. Pythons are generally sacred in most parts of Igbo land. They are also believed to be the *Ala*, the guardian of the land and the underworld. Killing a python is like killing one's own father, and apart from drawing the wrath of the whole community, it could also draw the ire of the gods. Mistakenly, killing or catching a python in one's trap requires that the animal be buried with all the lamentations of a deceased human being. However, in some other parts of Igbo land like *Ikeduru, Mbieri, Ngwa, Abakaliki* among others, the Python could be killed at any time since there is no religious significance attached to it. In every part of Igbo land there is a particular animal which is regarded as sacred by the people and treated as such.
- ii. **Committing adultery and fornication:** Fornication is nothing in Igbo land – meaning that it does not draw the cultural wrath of the gods, even though elders forbid that youths engage in premarital sex. But it is much worse if a married woman or a married man engages in adultery; both the elders of the land and the gods forbid this. It is believed that a woman can become mad or lunatic for committing adultery, and a man must never eat the food prepared by his wife if he has reasons to believe she engaged in adultery, or he might be a partaker of her punishment from the gods.
- iii. **Suicide or killing of oneself:** Killing oneself or committing suicide is a taboo in Igbo land. It is so much frowned upon by both man and the gods that the victim of suicide must never be buried within the community. His body is cursed and must never be buried in the land, but in the forbidden forest or outside the town to prevent such evils from befalling others in the community.
- iv. **A woman blessing the kolanut:** Kolanut is considered a sacred nut in Igbo land and must never be blessed, broken, or shared by a woman. A kolanut must only be broken, blessed, and shared by a man but never by a woman because it is traditional life-giving nut of the gods.

- v. **Committing incest:** It is a taboo to have sexual relations with one's blood relations or with sisters from the same parents. This is frowned at by everyone in the community and must never be attempted by anyone; otherwise, blindness, deafness, poverty, or sudden death might result as consequences according to the elders of the land. Almost all societies forbid incest, but nevertheless it still happens, and is increasing in prevalence. Kunhiyop (2008, p. 279) reveals that 'one reason for the increase is social change.' In traditional African societies, related members of the opposite sex were not allowed to discuss intimate sexual matters or even to be alone together, especially after dark.
- vi. **Unblessed marriage union:** It is forbidden for a woman to live with a man without the proper marriage rites or without the due approval of their parents. A respectable man is expected to pay the dowry or bride-price of his wife before or shortly after starting to live together or the woman will lose respect in the community and may face problems of poverty, retrogression, sickness denial of certain rites, segregation, among others.
- vii. **Marrying an Osu:** An *Osu* is an outcast within the caste system, and marrying one is considered a taboo. An *Osu* or outcast is considered the property of the gods or a slave and descendant of slaves and must never be offered or taken for marriage. Free-born men and women (*nwadiala*) are expected to investigate the origins and social class of an individual to be certain he/she is not an *Osu* before contracting marriage.
- viii. **Causing the fall of an elder:** Causing an elder to fall from his seat or drop from his feet is considered a taboo, and the offender must kill a goat for ritual, or he may never grow to the present age of the aged or elder. A goat or any other prescribed item must be provided to cleanse the land and atone for the offender. Regardless of the penalty, a child or younger individual must never cause the fall of an elder. That, which was of primary importance to the traditional society, respect for elders, constituted authority and to parents. According to Emananjo (2001, p. 73), 'In the age of innocence (traditional pristine society) the Igbo people respected age and the elders almost to the point of reverence'. This was because the elders were regarded as the repository of all knowledge and the hand maids of the divinities and ancestral spirits.
- ix. **Whistling in the night:** It is considered a taboo to whistle in the night because this act is considered to lure snakes into the home and attract evil spirits that roam the

night. Whistling in the night is highly discouraged and forbidden and must never be tried in Igbo land, or the individual will receive the sharp rebuke from the elders of the land.

- x. **Using the left hand:** Using “*aka ekpe*” or left hand to do anything is forbidden in Igbo land and strictly prohibited – although the individual may be left-handed. A left-handed individual is trained or oriented to learn the use of the right hand in eating, writing, giving, and accepting things. Elders deeply frown at giving or taking things with the left hand because it is considered most disrespectful and unfortunate. This belief is common throughout the Igbo land, and it is one that every Nigerian understands.

5. Conclusion

The concern of this study is to assess the nature and dynamics of linguistic taboo in Igbo land, which is a sociolinguistic analysis of the taboo phenomenon. Accordingly, the study has attempted to analyze the situational factors that influence taboo words in general.

The first section of the paper traced the meaning and etymology of taboo. It x-rayed what the Igbo people considered abominable in their world and their resultant implications both on the offender and the entire community.

The paper discovers that the culture and linguistics or language of any given people are inseparable. Therefore, our attitudes and perceptions about taboo language should not be static but dynamic. They may change in response to other new socio-cultural and communicational contexts or new environmental stimuli. In other words, when a society develops a negative attitude towards a topic, it becomes a part of its forbidden acts and thus, unspeakable in certain contexts. The study illustrates the speakers’ interest in taboos and euphemism and their willingness in discussing taboo topics and the positive attitudes they display afterward. The goal of this study, therefore, was to provide a preliminary account or analysis of the taboo phenomenon in Igbo land that may stimulate additional inquiry and investigation.

In summary, it is worth mentioning that no matter what has been said about taboos in general, it remains a subject that promises new horizons to be explored. Finally, it is hoped that this modest study will contribute to the understanding of taboo as a socio-cultural and sociolinguistic phenomenon. It is a gate towards exploring the human psyche and cultural values in relation to language use.

References

- Afigbo, A. E. (1981). *The age of innocence: The Igbo and their neighbours in pre-colonial time*. Owerri: Ministry of Information.
- Allan, K. & Burridge, K. (2009). *Forbidden words: Taboo and censoring language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Anderson, L. G. & Trudgill, P. J. (1990). *Bad language*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Belonwu, I. (1967). *An Igbo Course*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ekeopara, C. A. (2011). *Ethical order and stability in traditional Igbo society*. Calabar: Excel Publishers.
- Emenanjo, E. (2001). *Igbo or Igboid: Asusu n'agburu ndi Igbo. Language in Igbo Civilization*. Ahajioku Lecture. Owerri: Ministry of Information and Culture.
- Esquibel, J. (2012). Devil aka satan: An Enemy or Friend. On the rival between the familiar and the foreign in early English. *A journal of English linguistics*. 1:96-113. Retrieved 9 April 2019.
- Fairman, C.M. (2009). *Word taboo and protecting our first amendment Liberties*. Illinois: Sphnix Publishing Inc.
- Hudson, R. A. (1996). *Sociolinguistics*. 2nd Ed. England: Cambridge University Press.
- Hughes, G. (1998). *Swearing: A Social History of Foul Language, Oaths and Profanity in English*. London: Clays Ltd. Ives PLC.
- Hymes, D. (1964). *Languages in culture and society: A reader in linguistics and anthropology*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Kramsch, C. (1998). *Language, culture and context*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kroeber, A. (1968). The subject matter of anthropology. *Readings in Anthropology* (Vol.1). M. H. Fried (Ed.). New York: Crowell Company.
- Kunhiyop, S.W. (2008). *African Christian ethics in Nairobi*. Kenya: Word Alive Publishers.
- Mbiti, J. S. (1975). *Religion and Morality in Traditional African Beliefs*. London: Heinemann.
- Mocanus, M. (2017). Taboo and Euphemism in the Religious Language. *International journal of social and humanistic sciences*. 75:1-9 Retrieved 9 April 2019.
- Morden, N. R. (1991). *Elements of marketing*. London: DP & ELBS Publishing company.
- Nadia, G. 2013. *A sociological view of taboo language and Euphemism in the Agerian Society* (Unpublished Dissertation). Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, Tlemcen University, Algeria.
- Nduka, O. (1965). *Western education and Nigeria cultural background*. Ibadan: University Press.

- Radcliffe-Brown, A. R. (2010). *Rituals. Taboo I*. Steward & Andrew (Eds). London: Routledge.
- Trudgill, P. (2000). *Socio-Linguistics: An introduction to language and society*. 4th Edition
London: Oxford University Press
- Tylor, E. B. (1871). *Primitive culture*. New York: Harper Torchbooks.
- Usoro, N. A. & Ekong, I. C. (2016). The place of cultural realities and symbolic forms among Annang people of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. *South-South Journal of Culture and Development*, Vol.18.1: 122-140.
- Usoro, N. A. & Iniunam, Usen, B. I. (2020). *Language, identity and the challenge of national integration in Nigeria*. Ememobong, U. and Ekpo, G. (Eds.). Language documentation and description in Nigeria. A festschrift in honour of Prof. Imelda Icheji Lawrence Udoh. Department of Linguistics and Nigerian Languages. University of Uyo. Nigeria
- Wardhaugh, R. (2010). *An introduction to socio-linguistics*. 6th Ed. USA: Wiley Blackwell.