

Lexical Metaphor in Proverbs in Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, and *A Man of the People*: A Systemic Functional Linguistics Perspective

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ABSTRACT

This study was aimed at analyzing lexical metaphors identified in proverbs Achebe's two novels: *Things Fall Apart* and *A Man of the People*. Objectives of this study were to identify these lexical metaphors from Achebe's novels, discuss their meanings, functions, and ideological implications in the novels under study. To achieve these objectives, the study was anchored on Systemic Functional Grammar, a social semiotic theory to highlight the signifier - signified relationship of these lexical metaphors and their ideological implications of Igbo people. The lexical metaphors are identified and their meanings discussed as represented in the novels. The functions are exemplified and marked as positive and negative. Positive behaviours are upheld because they help in nation building while negative functions help to shape attitude and effect behaviours. Functions and Ideologies identified include indispensability of palm oil, struggle for survival through hard work, belief in 'chukwu' who determines success and destinies of individuals, belief in reincarnation, peaceful coexistence, strength for procreation, strive for success and shun arrogance, anti imperialism, any child whose mother died at childbirth is an evil child, political propaganda, ineffective leadership, do and die rivalry of politicians, materialistic attitude of rural prospective father-in-law that could lead to forced marriage, and given picture of how one looks like. The implication of the themes and ideologies realized from the two books shows that in *Things Fall Apart* lexical metaphors are used as ethical and ideological indicators while in *A Man of the People* they are used to gain social advantage, cover evil doings and justify perversities

Key words: Metaphor, Proverbs, Sfg, Semiotics, Lexical, Ideology, Functions, Things Fall Apart, A Man Of The People

INTRODUCTION

Achebe in his novels attempts to persuade his readers into ways of thinking and behaving that are consistent with the values of Igbo people. A variety of lexico-grammatical resources and rhetorical strategies have been deployed to support this objective. These include, for instance, the full range of resources and the lexical patterns he has used. Attention is given to certain lexical items used in these novels. The analyses are based on Achebe's selected novels: *Things Fall Apart* and *A Man of the People*. Achebe has used lexical metaphor profusely in his works. Through it, Achebe discusses concepts of peaceful co-existence, carefulness, brevity, manliness, and others and this may be connected to the fact that these issues raised above pointed to the bane of nationalism in a pre-colonial Nigeria.

From ages, mastery of metaphor has always been one of the major criteria of knowing a good poet or a writer. Thus, Aristotle observes in his "Poetics":

It's a great thing, indeed to make a proper use of the poetical forms. But the greatest thing by far is to be a master of metaphor. It is one thing that cannot be learnt from others; it is also a sign of genius, since a good metaphor implies an intuitive perception of the similarity in dissimilar" (Aristotle, Poetics, 1459 a 3-8, quoted in Ricoeur, 2000; 23 cited in Okodo and Emodi 2018)

Also there is an explanatory interest in Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) since it will generate a fruitful source of explorations of social power relations and ideological positioning. This is because Achebe's works under study have some elements of power relations. Studies from CDA perspective in general are eclectic in theory and methods. In some cases, it relies on a pragmatic process of interpretation, and in others it pays closer attention to the specific nature of linguistic choices and interpretations such as SFL.

In this study, therefore, the researcher wants to identify these lexical metaphors, state their literary meanings, and relate them to overall meanings in the texts. She also points

out Igbo people's ideologies as portrayed by the lexical metaphors identified, particular their powers in expressing values and changing attitude. The study is necessary as no researcher has ever carried a study on lexical metaphors on proverbs in texts.

Lexical Metaphor

Lexical metaphors mean metaphorical use of words. It means imaginatively describing somebody or something for the purpose of a direct comparison of X with Y in order to depict the mutual attributes of X and Y. For instance, in the sentence: Life is a game, *game* is a lexical metaphor compared with life. Lexical metaphors, therefore, serve to make expressions figurative. This indicates that lexical metaphors enhance description and express meaning beyond their denotations. Hence, being figurative, they thrive mainly on imagery. Imagery, according to Ezeigbo (1998), refers to mental pictures, usually applied collectively to denote images, i.e., pictures created out of words. Lexical metaphors can be conventional or creative. Conventional lexical metaphors are the commonly used ones, while creative lexical metaphors are those that arise from the writer's creative imagination. In this study, attempt is made to cover both conventional and creative lexical metaphors that express underlying meanings in the novels.

An interest in lexical metaphor, as a feature of discourse, ranges across a number of fields. And this generates multiple theories about lexical metaphor and its use. There is an agreed appreciation of the concept of lexical metaphor as dealing with "the phenomenon whereby we talk about something in terms of something else" (Semino 2008). Three primary functions of lexical metaphors have been identified: "linguistic (naming), conceptual (framing), and communicative (perspective changing)" (Bougher 2012). These functions have been the focuses in different fields. Its communicative functions in developing persuasive arguments and creating intimacy have been discussed across these fields, in particular cognitive linguistics and SFL.

In cognitive linguistics, their conceptual function has been comprehensively discussed in terms of how they mediate our understanding of the world around us. The work of Lakoff and Johnson (1980) not only defined what a metaphor is, but more importantly proposed that our conceptual structures of the world are metaphorical. The conventional and creative use of cognitive metaphors has been discussed in this work. Scholars from this area focus on their function in conceptualizing the world (Lakoff and Johnson 1980) and in creating new ideologies (Lakoff 1993). For example, Bounegru and Forceville (2011) examined the realization of lexical metaphors as visual and verbal modalities in editorial cartoons. Some scholars also explore the social functions of lexical metaphor. For instance, Mcneel (2011) considered the usage of maternal imagery in building community and constructing identity. The scholars from cognitive theory talk about the functions of lexical metaphors in shaping attitudes and affecting behaviours from the conceptual level. These functions are realized when lexical metaphors become "part of the conceptual system of an individual, community

or culture" (Mcneel 2011). Their exploration of the rhetorical functions appeals to the concepts rather than to the values invoked by the expressions of lexical metaphors.

In SFL much attention has been paid to grammatical metaphor (Chang 2004), but there has been comparatively less attention to lexical metaphor (Simon-Vandenberg 2003). For Halliday (1994), lexical metaphor constitutes a relationship between signifier and signified in which there is one signifier, different signified. Researchers in SFL primarily pay attention to the three metafunctions realized by lexical metaphor. For example, both Goatly (1997) and Simon-Vandenberg (2003) have taken a functional perspective in their study of metaphorical expressions collected from dictionary. While Goatly (1997) limited his study to an attempt to remedy the marginalized position of lexical metaphor in SFL, Simon-Vandenberg (2003) principally considered the make-up and interpersonal functions of lexical metaphor in a corpus of 3000 metaphorical expressions of verbal Process collected from the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*. Martin and White (2005) have made a significant contribution to understanding the interpersonal function of lexical metaphors from the perspective of appraisal framework. They treated lexical metaphor as one means to covertly express attitudinal values. These studies in the field of SFL focus on the functions of lexical metaphor in the discourse, in particular their powers in expressing values and changing attitude.

From an SFL perspective, the employment of lexical metaphors indicates that the writers intend to covertly convey some values to the readers by referring to some knowledge common to the readers. Attitudinal value is inherent in the expressions of lexical metaphors. The provoked values have been understood as one device to texture evaluations across a text (Martin 2004) and influence the way we view the world (Sahlane 2013). Their accumulation over a text proposes bonds for writers and readers to rally around. In this sense, lexical metaphor functions as a resource for community formation. The present study is inspired by these previous studies in SFL.

To identify the expressions of lexical metaphor, this paper adopts the principle of 'one signifier, different signified', that is, 'one wording, different meanings'. The steps are presented as follows:

- i. Reading the novels, pick out the proverbs and pick out lexical metaphors used
- ii Identify the lexical units in these proverbs which have more basic contemporary meaning in other contexts than the one in the novels.
- iii Recheck the different meanings of the identified lexical metaphors with the native speakers of English.
- iv Point out their functions in the novels under study.

Based on this procedure, lexical metaphors are identified in these novels and their meanings, values and their functions are then analyzed in detail.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The analyses in this paper draw on the key concepts from Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG), a social semiotic theory

about language. The SFL tradition presents meaning as three metafunctions: ideational, interpersonal and textual (Halliday and Matthiessen 2004). Each metafunction is theorized as systems of choices across three strata of language – phonology/graphology, lexicogrammar and discourse semantics, and across two strata of context – register and genre (Martin and Rose 2007). The focus on the rhetorical function of lexical metaphors orients our attention to both the interpersonal discourse semantic system. In the view of SFG, language is a resource, a resource for making meanings; so grammar is a resource for creating meaning by means of wording. This perspective is that of rhetoric and ethnography, e.g. in the foregrounding of text (discourse) as the basic unit of language, organized according to the rhetorical context. Since text is the basic unit, the sentence is studied in its discourse environment. We use language to interact with one another, to construct and maintain our interpersonal relations and the social order that lies behind them. In doing so, we interpret and represent the world for one another and for ourselves. Language is a natural part of the process of living; it is also used to 'store' the experience built up in the course of that process, both personal and collective. It is (among other things) a tool for representing knowledge, or, to look at this in terms of language itself, for constructing meaning. In interacting with one another, we enter into a range of interpersonal relationships, choosing among semantic strategies such as cajoling, persuading, enticing, requesting, ordering, suggesting, asserting, insisting, doubting, and so on.

Saussure's model of the sign is in a dyadic tradition (Chandler 2007). In this model, two parts of a sign consist of a sign vehicle and its meaning. Focusing on linguistic signs such as words, Saussure defined a sign as being composed of a signifier and a signified. Signifier is described as the form that the sign takes and the signified as the concept it refers to. Saussure explains

A linguistic sign is a link between a thing and a name, but between a concept (signified) and a sound pattern (signifier). The sound pattern is not actually a sound; for a sound is something physical. A sound pattern is the hearer's psychological impression of a sound, as given to him by the evidence of his senses. This sound may be called a material element only in that it is the representation of our sensory impressions. The sound pattern may thus be distinguished from the other element associated with it in a linguistic sign. This other element is generally of a more abstract kind: the concept (Saussure 1983,66 cited in Chandler 14).

In view of the fact that sign as aspect of semiotic system means signifier and signified, attempt is made here to identify all these lexical metaphors and explain them in terms of their meanings.

DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSIONS

'Palm-oil/palm kernel' metaphorically highlight the importance of palm produce in Africa, especially in Igbo land. In other words, both palm kernels and palm oil are treasured in Achebe's homeland, since both are money minters and make regular appearance at the table of the average African. Hence, the Igbo use palm oil in proverb to foreground its indispensability.

'Palm kernel' is in a proverb that features the cautionary remark of the oldest man at a kindred meeting held to discuss the next ancestral feast. The remark cautions Okonkwo for proving arrogant, by calling Osugo a woman, for not being a title holder. Particularly, it reminds Okonkwo never to discard the virtue of humility, even though his palm-kernels have been cracked for him by a benevolent spirit. Palm kernels in the context of the remark connote success. Hence, appropriating the remark, Achebe hints that success is not strictly a function of personal effort, but largely an outcome of supernatural endowment. This hint echoes the Biblical assertion that no one succeeds by his own merit but by Divine grace. Thus, it impinges on the mind of the reader, the indispensable need for humility in life. The writer is aware of the work of the supreme deity as the determiner and sustainer of destinies. But from the inter-textual meaning which is used ideologically in the traditional Igbo socio-culture setting the palm-kernel has a great deal of applications. First, the palm-kernels are manually broken in large quantities to extract the useful nuts. The breakage of the kernels is a very tedious and tiring job that may take days or weeks. Anyone who gets a helping hand can consider one fortunate and should be grateful for that. The nuts extracted from the kernel are sold to make money for survival. Sometimes, the machine may crack the kernels but then the removal of the waste is not an easy one. Apart from being sold to make money, it can be used to prepare oil which serve as medicinal cream used to cure certain children's diseases in Igbo land. In the proverb, the breakage of the palm-kernels is associated with the grim struggle involved in survival. The image of a benevolent spirit helping to alleviate a person's suffering, the Igbo cosmological belief in the Supreme-Being, *Chukwu* and his emissaries are brought into the limelight. The Supreme-Being is seen in the traditional Igbo belief as the determiner and sustainer of the people's destiny in life (Iwuagwu, 1998). Therefore, in the grim struggle to survive in life, if one makes it, one should be grateful to the Supreme-Deity, for he is the one that sustains and helps to achieve breakthroughs in life. In the text, the speaker makes reference to the world of spirits. It is believed, that the spirits are appointed by *Chiukwu* (God) to help him in the onerous task of administering and supervising both the visible and the invisible worlds which he created. The Igbo derive their traditional religion, ritual, and sacrifices from this conceptualization of many gods. In this world view, the world of spirits is not only recognized but revered, too. For it is believed that if such reverence is not accorded the actors in the world of spirits, such actors would bring bad omen into the worlds of nature and man. That is why Okonkwo quickly says that he is sorry for what he does and the meeting continues.

'Fire/flame' like 'palm kernel' depicts Okonkwo's arrogance. As a youth, Okonkwo was nicknamed 'The Roaring Flame', and indeed he considered himself 'a flaming fire'. Even as an old man, now, he considers himself 'a living fire': a fearless man of valour, evident in his statuses as an ex-war lord and a renowned wrestler. So, it baffles his imagination that he, counted among the lords of the clan, is the father of Nwoye, a degenerate and effeminate son. As he rumi-

S/N	Metaphor	Type	Intratextual meaning	text
1	Proverbs are the palm oil with which words are eating	Creative	A linguistic catalyst	TFA 6
2	When the moon is shining the cripple becomes hungry for a walk	Conventional	A curious lame person	TFA 8
3	Let the Kite perch and let egret perch too. If one says no to the other, let his wing break	Conventional	A fellow	TFA 15
4	The clan was like Lizard ; if it lost its tail it soon grew another	Creative	Resilience	TFA 21,137
5	Those whose Palm-kernels were cracked for them by a benevolent spirit should not forget to be humble	Conventional	Fortune/success	TFA 21
6	Okonkwo was flaming fire . A roaring flame	Creative	Man of valour	TFA 123
7	Chiolo, the priestess of Agbala called the converts the excrement of the clan, and the new faith was a mad dog that had come to eat it up	Creative	worthless	TFA 115
8	Chiolo, the priestess of Agbala called the converts the excrement of the clan, and the new faith was a mad dog that had come to eat it up	Creative	An indiscriminate gold digger	TFA 115
9	He has put a knife on the things that held us together and we have fallen apart.	Creative	Instrument of division	TFA 141
10	Who will drink the dregs? Whoever has a job in hand, said Idigo.	conventional	Marital responsibility	TFA 17
11	Looking at a kings mouth, said an old man, one would think he never sucked at his mother's breast	conventional	A great achiever	TFA 21
10	The prime Minister was called the tiger/ lion/sky/ocean	conventional	A man of courage/ strength	AMOP 5
11	It is better the water is spilled than pot broken.	creative	A woman bereaved of her child	AMOP 30
12	A man who has just come in from the rain and dried his body and put on dry clothes is more reluctant to go out again than another who has been indoors all the time.	creative	A hazardous situation	AMOP 40
13	Uneasy lays the head that wears the crown.	conventional	A position of responsibility	AMOP 65
14	It was like the man in the proverb who was carving the carcass of an elephant on his head and searching with his toes for a grasshopper .	conventional	An insignificant end/ a gigantic benefit	AMOP 77
15	Our people say: if you fail to take away a strong man's sword when he is on the ground, will you do it when he gets up...?	creative	Mr Nanga's material worth	AMOP 103
16	My in-law is like a bull he said and your challenge of a tick to a bull...	conventional	A strong/ small person	AMOP

nates over this unpleasant co-incidence, he introspectively convicts his wife of being unfaithful to him and resolves to punish her, accordingly. Put simply, he sees in Nwoye a huge paradoxical father – son connection since the fact of Nwoye being his son proves, incontrovertibly, the authorial axiomatic assertion that ‘living fire begets cold impotent ash’ In other words, ‘fire and flame’ signals Okonkwo’s worries over Nwoye, his son. These worries are born out of arrogance occasioned by ignorance because he lacks the insight to see and accept the genetic link between his father, Unoka and his son, Nwoye. This represents the ideological stance of Igbo people on reincarnation which means rebirth or transmigration, is the philosophical or religious concept that the non-physical essence of a living being begins a new life in a different physical form or body after biological death. The term transmigration means passing of soul from one body to another after-death. Nwoye could be a reincarnate of his grandfather.

‘Cripple’ is contained in an authorial proverbial assertion: ‘When the moon is shining, the cripple becomes hungry for a walk’. This popular Igbo proverb is appropriated by Achebe to assert the desire of the old in every generation

for endless period of youthfulness, which makes them to always long for whatever is considered an exclusive preserve of youths, moonlight play, for instance. Hence, it is a metaphor for the old inherent desire never to grow old or even die. In other words, it gives the implicit message that man desires eternal earthly life. Man’s desire for eternal life on earth may not be unconnected with the Biblical revelation that the original divine will for man was endless earthly life.

‘Kite/eagle’ appears together in Nwakibie’s ritual (kola prayer: Let the Kite perch and let the eagle perch too). The prayer voices a fundamental philosophy of the virtuous peaceful co-existence within Achebe’s clan. Nwakibie’s audience comprises two elderly neighbours, his two sons and Okonkwo who visits him to ask him a favour which he generously granted. In this way, Achebe invites the reader to imbibe this most essential philosophy of life: generosity. The writer by using the two identical preys but different in actions and position, he is actually concurring to peaceful relationship of two unequal beings. In the case of the context, he is referring to the rich and the poor. The negative is always necessary and present to balance out the positive. Therefore, if the rich exists, the poor should also exist.

Lizard/tail, here, means that the clan is very much like a lizard that re-grows its tail as soon as it loses it. Achebe is saying that no indigene of Umuofia is indispensable justifying Okonkwo's loss of his leading position in the Egwugwu Masquerade Cult and other prestigious status as a result of his exile to Mbanta, his maternal homeland for committing manslaughter. The assertion extra textually cautions the indigenes of various communities or the citizens to be careful what they do and avoid becoming discarded tails.

'Job' makes a euphemistic reference to the indispensable marital responsibility of the newly married as it relates to procreative sexual interaction. Whoever is saddled with such a responsibility is the right person, according to Idigo, to drink the dreg of the palm-wine presented to Nwakibie by Okonkwo in anticipation of Nwakibie's favour to him. This underscores a prevalent socio-cultural belief in Achebe's belief that palm-wine dreg boosts sperm production, and so, is good for married men, especially the newly married. The newly married in this context is Nwakibie's elder son, Igwilo, whose presence prompted the statement that features: 'Whoever has a job in hand'. This statement is made in response to the wine sharer's inquiry as to who drinks the dreg. So it is a joke necessitated by the presence of a newly married man at the social gathering in question without which the dreg would simply have been offered to the eldest man. Thus, the reader's intellect is tasked to verify this native physiological notion to accept or jettison it.

'King' metaphorically refers to Okonkwo. Hence, he is the proverbial king whose mouth never appears to have ever sucked any breast, according to an old man. The old man makes the proverbial declaration to capture the stupendous wonder that surrounds Okonkwo's rise to fame and affluence. Okonkwo's rise to fame and affluence is amazing indeed, since it is sudden and tremendous, as authorially stated. His fame and affluence is such that, pondering it, one is tempted to conclude that he was never poor and inconsequential in life. It is, therefore, no wonder that the old man respects Okonkwo's industry and success, even as he chides him for being arrogant. 'King' is doubtlessly deployed to underscore the notion that arrogance, though a personality flaw, takes nothing away from the reputation that is inherent in being successful. In this way, Achebe enjoins the reader to strive for success, but avoid arrogance.

'Excrement' is Chielo, the priestess's metaphor for Umuofia Christian converts just as 'dog' is her nickname for the new faith. Both metaphors express the priestess's rejection of Christianity as a reality in Umuofia an attribute she finds support in Okonkwo, Oberika and numerous others all of whom consider the Christian converts to be efulefus: worthless fellows. Hence, Chielo's metaphors serve to capture Umuofia public opinion regarding the new faith and her native new converts. This portrays the ideology of anti imperialism.

'Knife' forms part of Oberika's highly analytical situation report about Umuofia to Okonkwo in Mbanta. The report anchors the central theme of TFA and explains the passionate rejection of Christianity in Umuofia. For this reason, Oberika makes the report as quoted below:

The white man is very clever. He came quietly and peaceably with his religion. We were amused at his foolishness and allowed him to stay. Now he has won our bothers, and our clan can no longer act like one. He has put a knife on the things that held us together and we have fallen apart (141).

Contextually, the report obviously depicts knife to be an instrument of division. That is, to the core Umuofians, the new faith is synonymous with division and taking the speech altogether, the division goes with subjugation. In other words Umuofians like Okonkwo, Obierika and Chielo perceives Christianity as coming to divide and enslave the generality of Umuofia.

'Tiger/lion' is part of the praise-names given to the Prime Minister in the parliament. He earns the names after addressing the parliament in defence of his sack action against Dr. Makinde, the Ex-Minister of Finance, and a host of other ministers. In defence of the sack action, he levels the treasonable charge of terrorism against his victims. According to him, the terrorism is contrived in collaboration with foreign enemies with the ultimate aim of dethroning the government in power. Consequently, he wins the heart of his audience who is yet to grasp the truth of the case. Thus, Achebe brings to the fore, the damaging consequence of political propaganda, tacitly enjoining the reader to condemn the obnoxious practice in all its ramifications.

'Pot' refers to a mother bereaved of a baby at its birth. It features in Odili's account of his family background. He comes from a large polygamous family in which he loses his mother as soon as he is born. This circumstance of his birth carries a social stigma in Urua, his homeland. Hence, a child like him is virtually considered an evil child. This explains why one of his childhood playmates once called him a bad child that crunched his mother's skull. According them, it is better the water is spilt than (have) the pot broken because a sound pot can always return to the stream. Odili's birth circumstance, as recounted above, certainly serves to highlight a fundamental social philosophy in Achebe's homeland and beyond that a man who has to choose between the life of his wife and that of his potential new-born automatically goes for the former.

'Rain' is used in a proverbial expression exploited by the narrator to explain the irresistibility of political power. The expression is as follows: A man who has just come in from the rain, dried his body and puts on dry clothes is more reluctant to go out again than another who has been indoors all the time. The narrator utters the proverb after witnessing Mr. Nanga's opulent official residence, which immediately prompts him to theorize on man's basic nature. Consequently, he postulates that it is unrealistic to expect a man who enjoys such opulence to voluntarily give up his political appointment, human nature being too weak to resist such attraction. It refers to the hazardous nature of political power in terms of man's inability to resist it, even when he has glaringly overstayed his welcome or to shun the corruption that trails it. It, therefore, follows that the only way to resist political power for its corrupting influence is not to taste it in the first place.

'Crown' appears in a popular utterance: uneasy lies the head that wears the crown. It is made by Elsie, Odili's sup-

posed girlfriend in an ironic support of Mr. Nanga's claim that the office of a minister is a tedious one. The ironic nature of this utterance serves to lampoon the pretension that ideologically characterizes the life of politicians. The full import of this assertion is underlined by Mr. Nanga's subsequent do or die rivalry with Odili for a parliamentary seat.

'Grasshopper/elephant' metaphorically refers to an insignificant end or aim. The narrator employs it in a conventional proverb by which he wonders why he has time to notice inconsequential incidents around him even as he shoulders an overwhelming emotional burden. As a result of this betrayal, he zooms out of the minister's residence, carrying his bags and luggage. However, as he walks away in annoyance with no destination in mind, bent on taking an action yet to be decided, he is unable to hold himself from observing such insignificant scenes as shit carriers in active service, sleeping homeless beggars and a scrambling lunatic. Coming back to his senses, later, he considers strange, the fact that he has time to spare on such scenes instead of working out his action plan against his assailant. Hence, thinking aloud, he equates himself with the proverbial greedy fellow who carries the carcass of an elephant on his head, but still searches for a grasshopper with his toes. Unknown to him, he chastises not himself but his country's political leaders. He denigrates not himself, because the insignificant scenes he has taken time to observe speak volumes about the ineffective leadership being offered by the ruling POP.

'Sword' forms part of Edna's father's proverbial rhetorical question: If you fail to take away a strong man's sword when he is on the ground, will you do it when he gets up?

Given the above context, sword refers generally to material (financial) worth, but specifically to Mr. Nanga's money. It brings to the fore the materialistic attitude of rural prospective fathers-in-law. Highlighting the attitude, Achebe informs the reader that it could lead to forced marriage which victimizes the womenfolk just as it could mar wilful marriage should the prospective groom not be Mr. Nanga's match in financial terms.

'Bull/tick' is an anecdote by Edna's father in proverbial anecdote in 'My in-law is like a bull he said and your challenge of a tick to a bull. The tick fills its belly with blood from the back of the bull and the bull doesn't even know it is there. He carried it wherever he goes – to eat, drink or pass ordure. Then one day the cattle egret comes, perches on the bull's back and picks out the tick.' In this proverb, the writer has used the metaphor of 'bull' and 'tick...' to explain his major character, Mr Nanga. Nanga is compared to a 'bull' while Odili is a 'tick'. By comparing the two, the audience is led into understanding the person of Nanga. Here, metaphor is used to give readers a picture in their minds of what is being discussed.

CONCLUSION

The analyses in this study discuss functions and ideological implications of lexical metaphors from different aspects. In these novels, the lexical metaphors are used to foreground the indispensability of Igbo products like palm oil and palm

kernel, admonish certain individuals especially Okonkwo for his lack of humility, and lack of generic link in the person of Nwoye and Unoka, desire for man to live endless earthly life, admonish man to be generous, cajole the new converts and the new religion, condemn corrupt political parties in AMOP, exposing greed of politicians, etc. From the analysis, the lexical metaphors present both positive and negative attributes of products and individuals and groups of individuals. Opinions expressed in lexical metaphors in these proverbs in the novels of Achebe are closely related to the stances of the Achebe which represents the will of African people in general and Igbo people in particular. These lexical metaphors construct these novels as African novels and the writers take the African co-operation and interest into consideration and encode this spirit as positive. The readers are persuaded to rally around promoting African products, imbibe humility, be generous, chides arrogance, condemn corrupt political parties, greed, suggesting, asserting, requesting, and doubting, advising etc. On the other hand, it indicates that some individuals and the writer of these novels take these anti behaviours embedded in these lexical metaphors as negative. This negative ways contrast with African interest of nation building example Okonkwo's pride and greed of some politicians. The contrast rhetorically distances all the Igbo people from the negative life thereby shaping attitudes and affecting behaviours. This is in support of Meneel (2011) that considered the usage of maternal imagery in building community and constructing identity. The lexical metaphors abound in Achebe's novels. They help in the development of the novel as well as help in appreciating the meanings of the text.

In *Things Fall Apart*, the following Igbo ideologies are identified by critical examination of the lexical metaphors in the novels under study. Igbo ideologies identified include indispensability of palm oil, struggle for survival through hard work, belief in 'chukwu' who determines success and destinies of individuals, belief in reincarnation, peaceful coexistence, strength for procreation, strive for success and shun arrogance, and anti imperialism. *A Man of the People* has only one ideology - any child whose mother died at childbirth is an evil child but it presents such themes as political propaganda, ineffective leadership, do and die rivalry of politicians, materialistic attitude of rural prospective father-in-law that could lead to forced marriage, and give picture of how one looks like. We are aware that *Things Fall Apart* is set in the traditional African society while *A Man of the People* in the contemporary African society. The implication of the themes and ideologies realized from the two books shows that in *Things Fall Apart* lexical metaphors are used as ethical and ideological indicators while in *A Man of the People* they are used to gain social advantage, cover evil doings and justify perversities. It is clear that lexical metaphors help to portray text meanings and most of them are used as ideological indicators.

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