

**CONCEPTUAL METAPHORS IN YORUBA: A CASE STUDY OF EMOTIONAL  
EXPRESSIONS**

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**A PROJECT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE  
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF  
ARTS, AT THE DEPARTMENT OF LINGUISTICS STUDIES, FACULTY OF  
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**UNIVERSITY OF BENIN**

**BENIN CITY.**

**MARCH, 2024**

### PLAGIARISM CERTIFICATION PAGE

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## **DEDICATION**

I humbly dedicate this project to God, the source of all wisdom, guidance, and inspiration. I am deeply grateful for the strength and resilience that God has bestowed upon me, enabling me to finish strong. His unwavering presence has provided me with comfort and solace throughout the process. I acknowledge that all the knowledge and understanding I have gained in this project are gifts from God.

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study investigates the phenomenon of conceptual metaphors in the Yoruba language, focusing on how emotions are expressed and conceptualized through linguistic discourse. These selected discourses will be subjected to qualitative content analysis and cognitive linguistic tools. The analysis will focus on identifying metaphorical expressions related to emotions and categorizing them based on the conceptual domains from which they originate. Drawing upon the Conceptual Metaphor Theory proposed by Lakoff and Johnson, the research aims to analyze selected Yoruba discourses to uncover the underlying conceptual metaphors used in expressions of emotions. The study adopts a qualitative approach, employing semantic analysis techniques to examine linguistic expressions and their metaphorical mappings onto emotional experiences in Yoruba culture. Through a careful examination of authentic spoken discourse, this project work identified recurrent metaphorical patterns and explored their cultural and cognitive implications. From the aspect of the rich linguistic and cultural context of the Yoruba language, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of how emotions are conceptualized and communicated within the Yoruba community. The findings of this research sheds light on the intricate interplay between language, culture, and emotion, providing valuable insights for cross-cultural communication studies and cognitive linguistics.

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 BACKGROUND OF STUDY

Language plays a crucial role in how we perceive, experience, and express emotions. The Yoruba language, spoken by over 20 million people in Nigeria and neighboring countries, offers a rich and fascinating context to explore the intricate relationship between language, culture, and emotions. This project aims to conduct a semantic analysis of expressions of emotions in selected Yoruba discourses, focusing on the prominent use of conceptual metaphors.

Conceptual metaphors are cognitive devices that enable individuals to understand abstract concepts and experiences through more concrete and tangible domains. They provide a framework for mapping one domain, known as the **SOURCE DOMAIN**, onto another domain, known as the **TARGET DOMAIN**. By exploring the conceptual metaphors used in Yoruba expressions of emotions, we can gain valuable insights into the cultural and cognitive basis of the Yoruba people's emotional experiences.

Conceptual metaphors also play a fundamental role in language and cognition, shaping the way we understand and communicate about abstract concepts. The Yoruba language, spoken primarily in southwestern Nigeria and parts of neighboring countries, has a rich metaphorical tradition.

This project focuses on exploring the use of conceptual metaphors in the Yoruba language, aiming to deepen our understanding of how metaphorical thinking operates within the Yoruba cultural and linguistic context.

Metaphors are not merely linguistic devices, they reflect our conceptualization of the world. Conceptual metaphors involve mapping elements of one domain (source domain)

onto another (target domain) to facilitate our understanding of the target domain. For example, in English, we often express emotions using metaphors such as "I'm feeling down" or "He's on cloud nine." Similarly, the Yoruba language employs a wide range of metaphorical expressions to convey emotions, reflecting the unique cultural and cognitive perspectives of the Yoruba people.

A semantic analysis of expressions of emotions in selected Yoruba discourses involves examining and understanding the meaning and representation of emotions in the Yoruba language. It explains how the linguistic expressions are used to communicate and convey emotional experiences, as found in various forms of Yoruba discourses such as folktales, proverbs, songs e.t.c. In Semantics, emotional concepts were considered as consisting of feelings, devoid of conceptual contents (Lakoff, 1987).

This project aims to conduct a comprehensive analysis of conceptual metaphors in the Yoruba language, with a particular focus on the domain of expressing emotions. By examining selected Yoruba discourses, including traditional folklore, proverbs, songs, and contemporary texts, we seek to identify and analyze the metaphors used to express various emotional states and experiences in the Yoruba language.

By delving into the realm of conceptual metaphors in the Yoruba language, this project aims to contribute to the broader fields of cognitive linguistics, cultural studies, and cross-cultural communication which strives to identify and analyze the conceptual metaphors employed in Yoruba language when discussing emotions by examining a collection of selected Yoruba discourses, including oral narratives, proverbs, songs, and contemporary texts.

. Understanding the metaphorical expressions of emotions in Yoruba can enhance our knowledge of Yoruba culture, language, and cognition, fostering better intercultural understanding and communication.

## **1.2 THE YORUBA LANGUAGE AND IT'S SPEAKERS**

The word Yorúbá refers to the people as well as their language. What appears to be philosophic disposition of the Yoruba to life, generally is captured by Babalola (1966) who describes the Yoruba people with a zest for enjoying life while at the same time attaching great importance to hard work as the only guarantee of economic well-being about the Yoruba,

He also added this to his point of view of the Yoruba people: “Their tonal and metaphoric-saturated language in its ordinary prose form is never far from music in the aural impression it gives and which has introduced an extensive variety of spoken art characteristics of the people" Babalola (1966:369)

The Yoruba language is primarily spoken by the Yoruba people, who are an ethnic group native to the southwestern and north-central regions of Nigeria. Yoruba is one of the largest ethnic groups in Nigeria, and their language, Yoruba, is a major language in the country. Additionally, Yoruba speakers can also be found in neighboring countries and among diaspora communities around the world.

The Yoruba people are primarily concentrated in the southwestern part of Nigeria, including states such as Oyo, Ogun, Osun, Ondo, Ekiti, and Lagos. They also have a presence in the north-central region of Nigeria. Nigeria is the main country where Yoruba is spoken. Yoruba is one of the four major languages in Nigeria, alongside Hausa, Igbo, and English.

Yoruba is a major language in Nigeria and holds official status in some regions. It is spoken by millions of people as a first language and is also used as a second language by individuals from different ethnic backgrounds in Nigeria.

The Yoruba people have a rich cultural heritage, and their language plays a central role in preserving and expressing their cultural identity. Yoruba is used in various cultural expressions, including literature, music, religion, and traditional ceremonies.





**1.3 METHODOLOGY**

This Methodology ensures a wide exploration of this project topic-Conceptual Metaphors In Yoruba - A case study of emotional expressions, allowing for a combination of linguistic analysis alongside cultural insights to provide a great understanding of Conceptual Metaphors in Yoruba Expressions of Emotions.

The study employs a **QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHOD**, where an informal interview was conducted with the participants involved in the data collection process of which audio recordings(observation method) were used with the consent of these interviewees.

The Bio-data of each participants are as follows below:

Interviewee 1

Name: Mrs Somorin Grace

Age: 55 plus

Gender: Female

Occupation: A private School teacher

State: Osun State

Interviewee 2

Name: Mr Aberuagba Toba

Age : 59 years

Gender: Male

Occupation: A civil Servant

State: Ondo State

including discourse analysis and semantic analysis, to identify and categorize the metaphorical expressions of emotions in the Yoruba language. Additionally, the informal interviews and discussions conducted with these native Yoruba speakers gave insights into the cultural and experiential aspects of these metaphors. The findings of this study will contribute to our understanding of the role of language and culture in shaping emotional experiences.

### **1.3.1 DATA COLLECTION PROCESS**

- A. Brief introduction and insights on what the project Topic entails
- B. Questions were asked on whether each participants had instances of usage of Conceptual metaphors in expressing emotions in their various Languages.
- C. Enlightenment on what the informal interviews entails after much conviction if their understanding of the project.

D. Data collection process began (written, audio recordings), on participants consent.

E. Data's collected were verified.

#### **1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

✓ What are the specific conceptual metaphors used in Yoruba language to express emotions such as happiness, sadness, anger, and fear.

✓ Do these metaphors reflect specific cultural values or beliefs?

✓ Can these Conceptual Metaphors in Expressing emotions be used pragmatically?

#### **1.5 AIM AND OBJECTIVES**

**AIM:** This project aims to semantically analyse the various expressions of emotions in some Selected Yoruba discourses using conceptual metaphors.

##### **OBJECTIVE:**

1. To identify various conceptual metaphors used in specifically expressing emotions using Yoruba language as a case study .

2. To explore the semantic analysis pattern that will be employed.

3. To examine how these expressions of emotions contribute to the field of pragmatics. In other words, how they're used pragmatically.

#### **1.6 SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

This aspect of this project work will include what areas of research will be examined and also the patterns of principles it will be operating on.

A. **LANGUAGE:** This project focuses on the Yoruba language, which will be analysing how conceptual metaphors are used to express emotions in Yoruba discourses.

B. **CONCEPTUAL METAPHORS ANALYSIS:** This project extensively investigates the conceptual metaphors employed in Yoruba expressions of emotions which includes identifying and categorizing the metaphors used to convey emotional experiences in the Yoruba Culture.

C. **EXPRESSIONS OF EMOTIONS:** This project centralizes on investigating expressions of emotions in Selected Yoruba discourses. The emotions can cover a broad range, such as joy, sadness, anger, fear, love, and lots more

D. **SELECTED YORUBA DISCOURSES:** This project focuses on examining a specific set of Yoruba discourses, of which could include written texts, oral narratives, Interviews, or recorded conversations. This process involves employing a diverse range of sources and speakers to provide a comprehensive understanding of how emotions are expressed in different Yoruba contexts.

E. **SEMANTIC ANALYSIS:** This project employes a semantic analysis approach to examine how conceptual metaphors contribute to the meaning and expression of emotions in Yoruba language. This are or aspect involves identifying, categorizing, and interpreting the metaphors found in the selected Yoruba discourses.

### 1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

A. Linguistic research: This project will help expand the scope of Linguistic research by focusing on a specific language and cultural context that has long received relatively less attention in academic studies.

B. Cognitive Linguistics: Diving into the investigation of Conceptual Metaphors in Yoruba language, this project will provide an insight into the cognitive and Linguistic processes embedded in the expression of emotions in Yoruba discourses.

C. Expressions and communication of emotions: In analysing expressions of emotions in Yoruba discourses, this project will help shed light on the unique ways in which Yoruba speakers use and communicate their emotional experiences. In other words providing a deep understanding of Yoruba emotional expressions.

D. Cultural Heritage Preservation: In the light of exploring conceptual metaphors in Yoruba language, this project will in no wise contribute to the preservation and understanding of the Yoruba Culture and Linguistic traditions.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.0 INTRODUCTION**

A literature Review is a "written document that presents a logically argued case founded on a comprehensive understanding of the current state of knowledge about a topic of study" (Machi & McEvoy, 2012, p.4). As a foundation for knowledge advancement in every discipline, it is an important element of any research project, it is by this means, that a researcher demonstrates familiarity with a body of knowledge and thereby establishes credibility with a reader. In this chapter, articles and studies will be reviewed and keywords will be extensively discussed on.

#### **2.1 CONCEPTUAL LITERATURE REVIEW**

The various terminologies as used in this chapter shall be discussed and reviewed, which are relevant to the understanding of this project work:

##### **2.1.1 Metaphor**

Metaphor is a figure of speech that involves the use of one concept or domain to understand or describe another concept or domain. It is a rhetorical device that allows us to make connections, create vivid imagery, and convey complex ideas in a more accessible and engaging manner. Metaphors are commonly used in literature, poetry, everyday language, and various forms of communication.

Mark Turner (1996), argues that metaphor is not only a linguistic phenomenon but also a fundamental cognitive mechanism that underlies human thought and shapes our understanding of the world.

A metaphor draws a comparison between two seemingly unrelated things or ideas by highlighting their shared characteristics or qualities. Unlike similes, which use words

such as "like" or "as" to make a comparison explicit (e.g., "He runs like a cheetah"), metaphors make the comparison implicitly example: "He is a cheetah on the track"). By using metaphors, we can evoke emotions, stimulate imagination, and provide new perspectives on familiar concepts. Lakoff and Johnson's work on conceptual metaphors, as mentioned earlier, highlights the cognitive basis of metaphors and their pervasive presence in our everyday thinking and language.

Penny Tompkins and James Lawley (2000) explored the therapeutic applications of metaphor. They propose that metaphors can be used as a powerful tool to facilitate personal growth, change, and understanding in various therapeutic contexts.

One can clearly see that metaphors can vary across cultures and languages. Different cultures may have unique metaphorical systems that reflect their particular beliefs, values, and experiences. For example, in English, the metaphor "time is money" is commonly used to express the value and scarcity of time. However, in other cultures, different metaphors may be employed to convey similar ideas.

Richards I.A (1936), discusses the role of metaphor in language and communication. He suggests that metaphors are not merely decorative elements but fundamental to our ability to convey meaning and create new associations.

Metaphor is also a rhetorical device that enables us to understand, describe, and communicate complex ideas by drawing connections between different concepts or domains. It adds depth, creativity, and richness to language and thought. Metaphors have been explored by scholars in various fields and have been found to have a profound influence on cognition, communication, and human experience.

### **2.1.2 Conceptual Metaphor**

The basic idea behind conceptual metaphor is that we understand and conceptualize abstract concepts in terms of more concrete and embodied experiences. Lakoff and Johnson argue that these metaphorical mappings are not arbitrary, but are deeply rooted in our bodily experiences, cultural practices, and the environment we live in. They propose that conceptual metaphors are pervasive in our everyday thinking, language, and reasoning, and that they have a profound influence on how we perceive and make sense of the world.

One of the most famous conceptual metaphors used is "Time is Money." In this metaphor, the abstract concept of time is understood and conceptualized in terms of the more concrete concept of money. We use language and expressions like "spend time," "waste time," or "save time" that are derived from our understanding of money and economic transactions. This conceptual metaphor allows us to understand and talk about time in a more concrete and manageable way.

In the Metaphor "Argument is War", the abstract concept of argument is understood and conceptualized in terms of the more concrete concept of war. We use language and expressions like "attack his arguments," "defend a position," or "shoot down an idea," which draw on our understanding of war and conflict. This metaphorical mapping shapes our understanding of argumentation as a competitive and adversarial activity.

Conceptual metaphors are not limited to individual words or expressions, but can also be found in entire conceptual systems. For instance, the conceptual metaphor "Love is a Journey" structures our understanding of romantic relationships. We talk about being "on the path to love," "taking different routes," or "reaching a dead-end," which are all derived from our understanding of The idea of Conceptual metaphor as being the base

of logical reasoning and a thorough examination of fundamental processes, was first widely explored by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson in their work: METAPHORS WE LIVE BY in the year 1980. Conceptual metaphors are seen to be very useful for comprehending complex ideas in simple terms. In other words they are used to occasionally give deep intuition to abstract theories.

The Language of Conceptual metaphors don't only shape our everyday communication pattern but they further help us to a very large extent to understanding some theories.

Conceptual metaphors are also known to be widely used in human communication not only in the aspect of expressing ourselves (Language) but we funny enough actually perceive and act to the dictates of these metaphors.

Soriano (2015:207) in his work started off by introducing the approaches to understanding conceptual metaphors frequently used in cognitive linguistics to study conceptual representation including the aspect of representation of emotions.

He further gave an indepth analysis on ways that can be employed in identifying conceptual metaphors: How do linguists identify the conceptual metaphors underlying the representation of a given emotion concept? He provided some answers to this question, where he mentioned that one can solely focus on a particular emotion domain which to some extent can make researches less stressful.

Soriano also made emphasis on the area of where the linguist or researcher now settles to start sorting these newly found or discovered metaphors into and classification comes in where they're classified into their various classes of meaning.

### **DOMAINS:**

There are two main domain of which Conceptual metaphors is bedded on:

1. Source Domain: This refers to the conceptual domain from which metaphorical expressions are drawn from.

2. Target Domain: This here is seen as the conceptual domain we try to understand.

### **2.1.3 Expressions of Emotions Using Language**

Emotion expression in language refers to the ways in which we communicate and convey our emotions through verbal and written communication. Language plays a crucial role in expressing and sharing our emotions, allowing us to convey our feelings, experiences, and subjective states to others.

Emotions are complex and multifaceted, encompassing a wide range of subjective experiences such as happiness, sadness, anger, fear, love, and many more. Language provides us with a rich repertoire of words, phrases, and linguistic devices to express and articulate these emotions. One of the primary ways we express emotions in language is through the use of emotional words. Words such as happy, sad, angry, and excited directly label and describe specific emotional states. These words allow us to communicate our emotions explicitly and directly.

Language also utilizes various linguistic devices and strategies to convey emotions indirectly. For example, we use metaphorical expressions to describe emotions. Phrases like "bubbling with joy," "heartbroken," or "boiling with anger" evoke vivid imagery and convey emotional states in a more figurative and evocative manner.

Emotions can also be expressed in language through the use of intonation, pitch, and prosody. These vocal cues can convey emotional nuances and help convey the intensity, sincerity, or specific emotional quality of a message. For instance, a higher pitch and faster tempo may convey excitement, while a lower pitch and slower tempo may convey sadness.

Cultural and social factors play a significant role in shaping how emotions are expressed in language. Different cultures may have distinct norms, and linguistic practices for expressing and discussing emotions. For example, some cultures may encourage more direct and explicit emotional expression, while others may value restraint and indirect communication of emotions.

Barret (2017:10) a renowned psychologist, extensively researched the role of language in emotion perception and expression. Her work highlights the dynamic and interactive nature of language and emotion, showing how language can shape and influence our emotional experiences.

Emotion expression in language encompasses a wide range of verbal and nonverbal strategies for communicating and conveying emotions. From explicit emotional words to metaphorical expressions, intonation, and nonverbal cues, language provides a rich and nuanced means to express our complex emotional states.

#### **2.1.4 CONCEPTUAL METAPHORS IN YORUBA LANGUAGE**

The Study of emotional expressions across cultures could be traced back to the work of Darwin (1872/1998) that discovers that facial expressions are the residual actions of behavioral response.

According to Darwin, humans generally regardless of race, culture or gender possesses the ability to express some Emotions in virtually similar ways, primarily through their faces. Darwin's work, the Expression of Emotion in man and animals, is a refutation of an earlier work by Sir Charles Bell. Sir Charles Bell claims that God designs humans in the same way in that they all have unique social muscles to express unique emotions.

Yoruba language, spoken primarily in Nigeria and some other West African countries, has a rich tradition of conceptual metaphors that reflect the cultural and experiential background of the Yoruba people. Conceptual metaphors in Yoruba language serve as powerful tools for understanding and expressing abstract concepts through concrete and familiar domains.

Below are some specific ways Conceptual metaphors in Yoruba language are expressed:

1. "Time is a Path": This conceptual metaphor in Yoruba language links the abstract concept of time with the concrete concept of a path or road. Yoruba expressions such as "Ojú kan l'ó ní" (Time has only one eye) or "Ojú kan l'ó dára" (Time has only one face) metaphorically convey the idea that time is linear and moves forward like a path. This metaphor emphasizes the cultural value placed on time and the notion that it progresses in a single direction.
2. "Family is a Tree": Yoruba conceptual metaphor often represents the idea of family through the metaphor of a tree. The expression "Ọmọ inú ilé ni òmọ ẹni" (A child in the house is everyone's child) reflects the notion that family members are interconnected and share a common heritage, just as the branches of a tree are connected to the same trunk.
3. "Life is a Journey": Yoruba language employs the metaphor of life being a journey. Expressions like "Inú rẹ l'ó mọ ọpọlọpọ ibi" (Your heart knows many places) or "Kò sí itàn bí iwọ l'òògùn" (There is no story like your own journey) metaphorically convey the idea that life is a series of experiences and encounters, akin to traveling along a path.

## **2.5 YORUBA CONCEPT OF EMOTIONS**

The Yoruba people, an ethnic group predominantly located in Nigeria and some neighboring countries, have a rich and nuanced concept of emotions. In Yoruba culture,

emotions are considered an integral part of human experience and are closely tied to one's personal and social well-being. The Yoruba language has a diverse vocabulary to express and describe various emotional states, reflecting the importance placed on emotional awareness and expression within the culture.

In Yoruba culture, emotions are often understood within the framework of the Ori, which can be translated as "inner self" or "spiritual essence." The Ori is believed to be the seat of consciousness and a source of personal identity, thoughts, emotions, and destiny. Emotions are seen as manifestations of the Ori, reflecting one's inner state and serving as indicators of personal well-being and spiritual alignment.

Yoruba language has a wide range of words and expressions to describe different emotional states. Some examples include:

1. "Ibe rù" (Fear): This emotion refers to a feeling of apprehension, unease, or anxiety triggered by a perceived threat or danger. It can encompass both rational and irrational fears and is often associated with a sense of vulnerability.

2. "Ayo" (Joy): Joy is a positive and uplifting emotion associated with happiness, contentment, and delight. It is often expressed through laughter, celebration, and expressions of gratitude.

3 "ibanuje" (Sadness): Sadness refers to a feeling of sorrow, grief, or melancholy. It is often associated with loss, disappointment, or longing. Sadness is expressed through expressions of mourning, tears, and introspection.

4 "owo" (Respect): Respect is an important emotion in Yoruba culture, encompassing feelings of admiration, reverence, and deference towards others, particularly elders and individuals of higher social status. It is expressed through gestures, words, and actions that convey honor and recognition.

5. "Ibinu" (Anger): Anger refers to a strong feeling of displeasure, indignation, or frustration. It can arise from a perceived injustice, violation of social norms, or personal offense. Anger is expressed through verbal confrontation, assertiveness, or physical gestures.

Emotions in Yoruba culture are not seen in isolation but are deeply interconnected with social relationships, spirituality, and personal growth. Emotional expression is often influenced by cultural norms, rituals, and the concept of "Omolúwàbí," which represents the ideals of good character, integrity, and moral conduct.

Yoruba culture recognizes the importance of emotional intelligence and self-regulation. Emotional expression is encouraged and valued, but it is also expected to be balanced and controlled. Emotional well-being is seen as essential for maintaining harmony within oneself and in interpersonal relationships

## **2.2. PREVIOUS STUDIES**

Lakoff and Johnson, in their book "**Metaphor and Emotion**" (2000) gave insights on how the major finding that emerges from the study of metaphors characterizing the emotion domain is that, there are no emotion-specific metaphors. He further explains that if this finding is correct and if it can be generalized by other domains, it will turn out that our metaphorical system is organized by a hierarchy of Metaphors at different levels of specialty.

He also explains in his book, that the important connection between metaphors and metonymy where metonymy can be said to motivate metaphors. This motivation is further explained as not only linguistic, or conceptual but also physical.

Glady (2016) mentioned in her book how it is important to note that in other languages where language is conventionally used to talk about anger suggests that

Conceptual metonymy of anger are motivated by the physiological effects of change in skin color (redness) around the neck and face area.

Kövecses in his book "Metaphor in culture\* defined culture as a set of shared understanding that characterize smaller or larger groups of people. He further explains that when we think culture in this way as stated above, the connection between metaphors and culture emerges in a straightforward manner within the cognitive linguistic framework.

Akinola (2007) sheds light on how indigenous Languages/mother tongue without many words is the surest way of imparting knowledge and disseminating knowledge and skills that will be impactful. He further explains that through mother-tongue, sound cultural values that will be impacted positively on socio-economic life of the people, it will be enacted.

### **2.3 Concern Of the Present Study**

Conceptual metaphors in Yoruba : A case study of Emotional expressions in Yoruba language entails a comprehensive exploration of how abstract emotional experiences are linguistically framed and conveyed within the cultural and linguistic framework of the Yoruba language. This analysis would delve into identifying and understanding the conceptual metaphors embedded in the language's expression of emotions, emphasizing the cultural nuances that shape these metaphors.

This project work will involve a careful examination of Yoruba linguistic structures, idiomatic expressions, and cultural connotations associated with various emotions. By uncovering the conceptual metaphors used to articulate feelings, the study aims to elucidate the unique ways in which Yoruba speakers construct and communicate their emotional experiences. This could contribute to a deeper cross-cultural understanding of

emotions, language, and the interplay between them, while also highlighting the importance of cultural context in shaping linguistic expressions of emotions.

It also involves a focused investigation into the semantic aspect of how emotions are conveyed through conceptual metaphors in the Yoruba language. This project aims to analyze specific discourses within the language, emphasizing the various ways in which abstract emotional experiences are framed and communicated.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **3.0 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter will be giving an indepth insight on the theoretical framework for this project which is the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT),which views metaphors as not just a matter of language, but rather they are a fundamental part of human thought and experience. Metaphors allow us to understand and experience one domain of experience in terms of another .For example, we can understand the abstract domain of "life" in terms of the more concrete domain of "journey. This project will apply this theoretical framework to the analysis of Yoruba metaphors and how they are used to express emotions.

#### **3.1 CONCEPTUAL METAPHOR THEORY (CMT)**

Conceptual metaphor is a cognitive linguistic theory proposed by Lakoff and Johnson in their influential book "Metaphors We Live By" (1980).It suggests that metaphor is not merely a rhetorical device used in language, but rather a fundamental mechanism that shapes our understanding of the world. According to this theory, we use metaphorical concepts and language to make sense of abstract or complex ideas by mapping them onto more concrete and familiar domains.

The CMT Theory further explains how we use metaphorical concepts and language to make sense of abstract or complex ideas by mapping them onto more concrete and familiar domains.

In CMT, a conceptual metaphor is generally defined as the systematic structuring or restructuring of one conceptual target Domain, a coherent organization of experience, in

terms of a source domain through the projection of semantic features of one domain onto the other

Conceptual Metaphor is defined in other words as understanding a more abstract domain in terms of a less abstract and more concrete domain, typically using knowledge structure of a less abstract aspect of experience to reason about a more abstract of experience (Kövecses,2002).

CMT claims that "the generalizations governing metaphorical language are not in language, but in thought. They are general mappings across conceptual domains.

Therefore, they propose that linguistic metaphors are good evidence of what our Conceptual system looks like because they are instantiations to our conceptual structuring and organisations.

This theory further suggests that abstract or complex concepts are often understood and expressed through metaphorical mappings onto more concrete or familiar domains. In the context of this research on Yoruba language and emotions, this theory can be used to analyze how metaphors play a crucial role in shaping the conceptualization and expression of emotions within the linguistic and cultural framework of the Yoruba community.

In other words, this theory is concerned with how that metaphor is not just a linguistic phenomenon but a fundamental part of human thought. This theory suggests that abstract or complex concepts are often understood and expressed through metaphorical mappings onto more concrete or familiar domains. It emphasizes the idea that our understanding of abstract concepts is grounded in our bodily experiences and interactions with the physical world.

According to this theory, metaphors shape our everyday language, thought processes, and cultural understanding. Expressions like "time is money" or "love is a journey" are seen as metaphorical mappings that influence the way we conceptualize and talk about these abstract ideas.

Thus, conceptual metaphor theorists analyse the linguistic metaphors or metaphorical expressions that are used to talk about one conceptual domain in terms of another to infer underlying conceptual structure and organisation.

In my research work on Yoruba language and emotions, applying the Conceptual Metaphor Theory will involve exploring how metaphors are used to conceptualize and express emotions in Yoruba discourse.

### **3.1.5 CMT APPLICATION IN YORUBA LANGUAGE**

This framework that proposes that Metaphors are not just figures of speech but rather cognitive processes that shape the way we think and understand the world.

According to this theory, Conceptual Metaphors are structures that allows us to map one concept unto another, creating new meaning and understanding. This theory when applied to this project helps understand how metaphors are used in Yoruba language to express emotions.

For example, the Conceptual Metaphor:

"Anger is heat"

Ìbínú ni òru

Can be used to explain how Metaphors are used to describe anger in Yoruba language.

### **3.2 JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY**

Applying this theory to my research work, involves identifying and analyzing the metaphors used to express emotions. Yoruba speakers might have specific metaphorical mappings that shape their understanding and communication of emotions. For instance, emotions could be metaphorically linked to natural elements, cultural practices, or interpersonal relationships, providing insight into the Yoruba worldview and the embodied nature of emotional experiences within their cultural context. Examining how Yoruba speakers employ metaphors to convey emotions could reveal not only linguistic patterns but also shed light on the cultural nuances and cognitive foundations of emotional expression in the Yoruba language. This approach enriches the analysis by considering the interconnectedness of language, thought, and culture within the framework of Conceptual Metaphor Theory.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA PRESENTATION

#### 4.1 Emotional expressions using Conceptual Metaphors in Yoruba language

This chapter presents and discusses the different metaphoric expressions of emotions in the Yoruba language. In the process of indepthly dealing on the representation of data obtained for this study, this chapter entails proffering the necessary answers to the research questions mentioned in the first chapter.

During the collection of this data of which was done through the informal interview process, I was able to get a number of emotions expressed by this Yoruba speaker ranging from being Sad, Happy, Angry e.t.c. Here, there will be a thorough Semantic analysis of each of these expressed emotions:

#### 7 Emotions Of LOVE

A. Ìrìnàjò kan ni Ifẹ

Journey one is love

Love is a journey

Semantic Analysis: The expression above uses the Conceptual Metaphor irinajo(journey) to describe the experience of love.

The Conceptual Metaphor translates to how that Ife(love) is like a journey with lots of highs and lows, twists and turns alongside unexpected challenges of which many at times requires commitment and effort to be a success story.

B Ibasepo wa ti de ikoritameta

relationship our has hit crossroad

Our relationship has hit a crossroad

Semantic Analysis: This expression of love uses the Conceptual Metaphor "ikoritameta" as how spouses or partners in a relationship arrive in a stage of their lives of being together where a decision is made whether to continue such a relationship or not. It could also be seen from the perspective of them making a decision that could either make or mar their relationship. Or perhaps, where these individuals arrive at a point in such a relationship, where they decide what to do with themselves.

C. Opolo igboke igbodo ni ati la koja

many ups down is we together

We've been through ups and downs together

Semantic Analysis :The Conceptual Metaphor used here in expressing the emotion of love,"oririsii" ("ups and downs") This metaphor suggests that the couple has faced both

good times and bad times, and that they have experienced a range of emotions together. In other words, they've been through a lot, and that their relationship has been tested.

## **8. Emotions Of Happiness**

A. Imolè nì ayo je

light is joy what

Happiness is light

Semantic Analysis: Here, the Conceptual Metaphor "Imole" (light) is used, this metaphor suggests that joy is a powerful and abundant emotion, like a cup that is filled to the brim. It implies that the person is experiencing such intense joy that it is spilling out of them, that and that they cannot contain. This Metaphor suggests that happiness is bright, and illuminating, it also implies that happiness can displace darkness. The expression suggests that happiness is a positive force that can light up our lives and help us to see things more clearly.

B. O kun fun ayo

Pro light my life

He/she's overflowing with joy

Semantic Analysis: The Conceptual Metaphor used here is tan (overflowing), this metaphor suggests that joy is a powerful and abundant emotion, like a cup that is filled to

the brim. It implies that the person is experiencing such intense joy that it is spilling out of them, that and that they cannot contain".

C. Ara mi ya gaga lóni

My body feels free today

I am feeling light-hearted today

Semantic Analysis: The Conceptual Metaphor, Ya gaga( light-hearted ) signifies how that such an individual starts his/her day free from worries, fear, doubts or anxiety. It further implies that such a day promises to be fulfilling and fruitful.

9. Emotions Of Anger

A. Ina ni Ibinu jẹ

Fire is anger what

Anger is fire

Semantic Analysis: The usage of the Conceptual Metaphor Ina (fire) to describe anger suggests that anger is intense, volatile and destructive. This metaphor suggests that anger is something that burns within us, and that it can be difficult to control. It also suggests that anger can be destructive if it's not managed properly. Researches has shown that anger has destroyed lots of relationships between friends, families, lovers.

B. O n jo pelu ibínú

Pro burn with anger

He/she is burning with rage

Semantic Analysis: This Conceptual metaphor "jo" (burning) used to describe anger suggests that the person's anger was intense and passionate, like a fire burning out of control. It implies that the person's anger was consuming them, and that they were completely overwhelmed by it. This metaphor suggests that the person's anger was destructive and volatile, and that it was dangerous to be near them.

C. Ìbínú rẹ rú soke

Anger Pro rise up

He/she temper flared up

Semantic Analysis: This Conceptual metaphor "ru soke" (flared up) implies that the person's anger was sudden and explosive, like a spark igniting a fire. on the other hand, it means that the person's anger was difficult to contain.

D. Mo le ri ina tó yo ní ojú rẹ

Pro can see fire remove from Pro eyes

I could see the fire in his eyes

Semantic Analysis: The Conceptual Metaphor "Ina" (fire), used in describing the expression of the anger emotion translate to the intensity of how the individual is anger, at that point the individual is prone to doing anything while in this state of emotion.

#### 10. Emotions Of Sadness

##### A. Òkùnkùn biribiri ní ìbànújẹ jẹ

Thick darkness is sadness what

Sadness is darkness

Semantic analysis: This Conceptual metaphor "Òkùnkùn biribiri" (thick darkness) used in expressing the emotion of sadness suggests that sadness is something that shrouds us and makes us feel isolated and alone. It implies that sadness can be overwhelming and difficult to escape from.

##### B. N la akoko ìgbà tó lágbára lówó lówó

Pro go through time big pass right now

He/she is going through a dark time right now

Semantic Analysis: This Conceptual metaphor "ìgbà tó lágbára" (dark time) suggests that the speaker is feeling overwhelmed by sadness, as if they are trapped in the dark. This metaphor suggests that the speaker's sadness is difficult to escape from, and that it may seem like there is no light at the end of the tunnel.

C. O dabi pe ikurukuru ibanuje n ra dede ni ori mi

It look like atmosphere sadness over my head

It feels like a cloud of sadness is hanging over me

Semantic analysis: Here, Sadness described as a cloud (ikurukuru) talks about how that sadness can be a weighty and heavy presence

D. O jin si inú òfin ibanuje

Pro throw into pit sadness

He/she descended into a pit of despair

Semantic analysis: Òfin (Pit) used to describe sadness as an emotion, tells how that the person's sadness was so deep and intense that it felt like a pit or hole that they were trapped in. It implies that the person felt like they were sinking deeper and deeper into sadness, with no way out.

## 11.Emotions Of Fear

A.Aiyoonu ibèrù ni eru je

Monster is fear what

Fear is a monster

Semantic analysis: The Conceptual Metaphor Aiyooinu iberù (monster) to describe the emotion of fear, talks about that fear can take over our minds and make us feel powerless. It suggests that fear can be all-consuming, and that it can distort our perceptions and prevent us from moving forward.

B. Auson nnkan ti mo berù lo n daya

haunted me my fear

I'm haunted by my fears

Semantic analysis: Auson (haunted) this metaphor suggests that fear is a persistent presence, like a ghost or spirit that follows you around. It shows that the fear is always there, lingering in the background, and that it cannot be easily shaken off.

C .O dabi pe emi buruku inu mi da eru ba mi

It look like demon inside mi is make me afraid

I feel like I'm being chased by my demon

Semantic analysis: Emi burúkú (Demon) describes fear as a powerful and destructive force that feels like it's always after you. In other words, the speaker feels like they are being pursued by their own inner fears and anxieties, and that they cannot escape from them.

## 12. Emotions Of Joy

A. Odo ahoyaya ni idùnnú jẹ

Stream bubble it happiness is

Joy is a bubbling spring

Conceptual Metaphor: odo ahoyaya-bubbling spring

Semantic analysis: This Conceptual metaphor " Odo ahoyaya"(bubbling spring) suggests that joy is something that springs up from within us, and that it can make us feel refreshed and renewed.

B. O kun fun ayo

Pro full of joy

He's overflowing with joy

Conceptual Metaphor: kun- overflowing

Semantic analysis: This Conceptual metaphor suggests that joy is a powerful and abundant emotion, like a cup that is filled to the brim. It implies that the person is experiencing such intense joy that it is spilling out of them, and that they cannot contain it. T

D. O dabi emi atẹgun tutu

Pro look life breeze cold

He/she is like a breath of fresh air

Conceptual Metaphor: emi atẹgun tutu- breath of fresh air

Semantic analysis: This metaphor suggests that the person's presence is refreshing and revitalizing, like a breath of cool, clean air. It implies that the person brings a sense of renewal and rejuvenation, and that they leave a positive and lasting impression.

### 13. Expressing Emotions Of Grief

A. Àgàgà to wuwo ẹdun okan

Burden heavy is grief

Grief is a heavy burden

Semantic analysis: This metaphor àgàgà (burden) posits that grief is a difficult and weighty experience. It further implies that grief is a feeling that we must carry with us, and that it can feel like a physical weight on our shoulders.

B. Ẹru ibanuje lù m\_ ni alubole

Load grief hit me down

The weight of grief is crushing me

Conceptual metaphor: ẹru (weight)

Semantic analysis: This conceptual metaphor above suggests that grief is a heavy and burdensome force, like a weight that is pressing down on the person. It implies that grief is a physical and emotional strain, and that it can feel suffocating and overwhelming.

C. O dabi pe gbogbo eru aye ni o gbe si ejika

Look like all load life on Pro shoulder

It's like I'm carrying the weight of the world on my shoulder

Semantic analysis: This Conceptual metaphor suggests that the person feels as though he/she is carrying a tremendous and almost unbearable burden.

D. Eru to wuwo lati gbe ni adanu na

Load that heavy to carry is bear

The loss is a heavy burden to bear

Conceptual Metaphor: Eru to wuwo- heavy burden

Semantic analysis: This conceptual metaphor suggests that the person is struggling to cope with the weight of their loss. It implies that the person is finding it difficult to move on from the loss, and that they are still carrying the emotional weight of it with them.

Taking a closer view at this chapter, it can be deduced and observed that in line with the objectives mentioned before this chapter:

1. Various conceptual metaphors used in specifically expressing emotions using Yoruba language was extensively mentioned.
2. There were indepth semantic analyses made for each Conceptual Metaphors displayed in this chapter.
3. There was also a detailed examination of how these expressions of emotions contribute to the field of pragmatics.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION**

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

This chapter is concerned with the summary of the data presented above alongside a general conclusion of the whole project work. This chapter also aims to state the various observations noted while gathering data for this project. The data comprises of various ways the Yoruba speakers express their emotions with the use of conceptual Metaphors from the perspective of the Oyo speakers (Central Yoruba). It can be seen how that each emotions used have different contextual purposes.

#### **5.1 FINDINGS**

The findings were made in the course of the analysis of data collected for the study which has been outlined below:

1. Having given a general overview of what my project topic was about both to the literate and illiterate (Young and old) in order to start either a formal or informal interview procedure, I observed that there was no deep insights on what metaphorical expressions was in their respective Yoruba dialects.
2. The emotional expressions they made use of, they didn't have this in-depth knowledge that they were referred to the act of using metaphorical domains in expressing their emotions especially the Yoruba speakers that used proverbs in their everyday conversations.
3. There is no proper enlightenment of how and when conceptual metaphors are used in expressions to the world of Yoruba speakers.

### **5.2.1 RECOMMENDATIONS**

I humbly proffer the following recommendations for further Studies in order to address the negative findings observed during the data collection:

1. Encouraging the use of Yoruba language in everyday life and media, in order to preserve the metaphorical richness of the language.
2. Creating awareness and appreciation of Yoruba metaphorical expressions, both in the native speaker community and in the wider world.
3. Promoting education and research on Yoruba metaphorical expressions, in order to deepen understanding of the language and its cultural significance.

### **5.3 CONCLUSION**

This project has shown that the Yoruba language makes extensive use of metaphors to express emotions, and that these metaphors are deeply embedded in the Yoruba worldview and cultural values. By analyzing the metaphors used to express love, anger, sadness, joy, fear, happiness, and grief.

This project has also provided a window into the Yoruba people's understanding of these emotions and how they are experienced. The project has also highlighted the importance of proverbs and idioms in Yoruba emotional expression. This project work has contributed to a greater understanding of the role of language in Yoruba culture and society.

The findings of this project have demonstrated that language is not just a tool for communication, but a powerful medium through which we express and experience our emotions and culture. As such, it is important to preserve and promote linguistic diversity, so that we can continue to learn from the unique and varied ways that different cultures express themselves. This helps foster cross-cultural understanding and dialogue.

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