

Metaphors and the Reflection of Ibibio Episteme in Ekaette Brian's Affimma

¹**Ndifreke Williams Nkan** *
Department of Performing Arts
Akwa Ibom State University,

²**Nkiruka Jacinta Akaenyi**
Department of Performing Arts
Akwa Ibom State University

³**Bassey Ekpenyong Bassey**
Department of Performing Arts
Akwa Ibom State University.

Abstract

The use of language to create outlets for activities, relationships and the general thought process within which morality is exacted in Ibibio has made the reassessment of language usage in creative arts represented in symbols, gestures and verbal interplays quite significant. As a trending art form synergizing the sociological, physiological and the psychological reality of the human nature, Ibibio films' calls for an in-depth interrogation. Drawing from Orality as a qualitative research approach, this paper seeks to critically analyze the metaphoric representations of Ibibio episteme in Ekaette Brian's Affimma with a focus on identifying the levels of metaphor deployed to orchestrate the pictorial elements of the film. Findings of the study reveal metaphorical representations in verbal and concrete forms in Affimma. The Verbal metaphors are identifiable through indigenous media such as proverbs, idioms, adages and riddles; avenues through which the indigenous language is configured and intents configured. Additionally, concrete metaphors are represented through living and non-living things, presenting a coding structure with deep cultural undertones that require in-depth knowledge of Ibibio signs system to unravel. The study concludes that creativity laced with morality can transcend space, culture and time and a culture projected in oral and concrete forms can easily transit as a code for cultural etiquette for social reorientation.

Keywords: Film, Ibibio-episteme, Metaphors, Orality, Symbol.

Introduction

The use of film in view of its capacity to harness the human culture through language usage within which salient social realities can be encoded and disseminated for cultural preservation and human development has made filmmaking a unique art that deserves a close attention and

* Corresponding Author: Ndifreke Williams Nkan

Email: endeewillz@gmail.com

Received 22 April. 2025; Accepted 28 April. 2025. Available online: 30 April. 2025.

Published by SAFE. (Society for Academic Facilitation and Extension)

[This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/)



in-depth analysis. Significantly, the medium primarily serves as a conduit for fine-tuning the human language into pictorials that communicate through moving pictures. An instance is deduced in the deployment of figurative expressions laced in oral literature which is made to come alive through the use of indirect comparison and direct representation of idea in the use of proverbs, adages and idioms to express the depth of intent in Nigerian verbal arts.

Notably, there is strong affinity between speech and action in Ibibio cosmology which transcends the mindset of citizens, highlighting perceptions of idea and referents within the society as realized in contemporary Ibibio films. In the view of Ekong, “ordinary utterance for pleasantries is a code for suggesting a response in the action in that, greeting may be regarded as both a form of communication and a repetitive behaviour” (72). Relatively, Ebewo opines that such rapport forms “ordinary body of information... that deals with customs and traditions of the people” (7). These oral codes are principally deployed by Ibibio contemporary filmmakers to encode salient information; and interestingly, some symbolic statements are concretised while some are left in their verbal form as dialogue or sound to distend to wanton referents in films which could serve as strategic emphasis. Additionally, Iyorza and Iseyen explain that “the controversy surrounding the value of arts within the society has continued to create a divide among scholars ..., arts is not just a mere imitation..., but also a reality that is representative and therapeutic to the society” (40). On a related note, Ekeke adds that, “communicating through arts has been globally recognised and accepted as a key vehicle for heralding change in various societies” (89).

Metaphors are indirect comparison in which a speaker compares an idea with/to another by concluding that the signifier (what is invoked in mind) is the signified or referent (what the signifier is meant to situate). According to Egudu, “metaphor, like simile, is comparison, but unlike simile, it is an indirect comparison. It operates on the principle of equation... with a picture or image which is meant to suggest an idea of life” (21). This indirect presentation of opinion by the people of Akwa Ibom State has been a cultural tool for transmitting their culture and perception of their universe to their progeny. In using them to communicate, “the individual artist is the main focus” (Okon 33), indicating the prominence of a good user of this art in speech delivery. This is because the use of metaphors among the Ibibio is “shrouded in obscurity” (Iwokedok 132). To this effect, metaphors as used in the Ibibio verbal arts are the distinguishable instruments that suggest the different layers of ideas from the plainness of denotation to the vagueness of connotation in Ibibio filmmaking. According to Atakpo, “the video film medium has borrowed and pitched most of its nuances on the life of the people. In this case, it has leaned heavily on all aspects of orality in its bits to tell its stories” (23).

Notwithstanding, signifiers of archetypes are usually suggested, implied or fully mentioned in the film, yet their representations mostly lay the films bare bereft of the undertone the archetypes command to the stabilization of the sign system and promotion of the Ibibio culture through the manipulation of the iris of the camera.

Metaphors are sometimes viewed from the scope they are used alike when their referents are identifiable across cultures of the world as archetypes. These are seen as universal metaphors reflecting the concept of myths. Idachaba and Okeye describe universal metaphor as “a strong element of traditional African drama... evident in the myths, religious visuals and ancestral worship of the African” (3). This brings metaphors in film to fall under a symbol or an imposed signage and sync with the view held by Udofia, Atakpo and Udoinwang that, “a symbol is an imposed representation in which an idea that may not have any natural connection with the signifier is superimposed as the signified (160-161). Implicitly, a metaphor is more or less a concept made to stand for an idea.

The use of metaphors to encode human cultures and worldview is realised in the art forms made from creativity. Metaphors then feature as the components for which the signage and meanings invoked through gestures are conceptualized. In the view of Ungerer and Schmid:

The source and target are not conceived in isolation ... A metaphor is not only the property inherent in the individual concepts but the structure ... A metaphor is a mapping of the structure of a source model unto a target model. As the distinction between concept and cognitive model is often vague, we use the more neutral terms such as concept and target concept. (118)

There is much need to take an in-depth look into the layers in which words are uttered in Ibibio film. This could unveil a creative height in language usage that may project the Ibibio people to the limelight of the global appeal and draw patronage from a wider spectrum to their creative works. Such attraction and patronage may centralize filmmaking as another tourist and economic factor in present day Akwa Ibom, from the axis of Ibibio films.

Principally, Ibibio films came to limelight in the twenty-first century, with video films made by Ibibio people, or made in Ibibio language, having the concerns of Ibibio people, their world, challenges and prospects discussed as subject matters and themes. Some of the films are acted by Ibibio actors while others are cast with professionals who speak other languages but possess the pundits to deliver the directors’ objective for the Ibibio man’s concern. Some of the films are written or directed or even produced by non-Ibibio indigenes; yet for the fact that there are numerous factors within the Ibibio confines ranging from her rich cultural outlay resplendent of her folklore and the interplays of the day-to-day occurrence in contrast or in conformity with the people’s values or so, many premises for filmmaking evolve and raise interest. Thus, the

major component of this subgenre is the survey of the physiological factors of the Ibibio man that tangles him with the social circumstances in which his psychological powers are raised to struggle for survival.

The prominence of word is central to the universal energy in which appearance, being and reverberation of the cosmic energy revolves. It reflects Jacques Derrida's notion of centralising the universe on the command of words. According to Widdowson and Raman, "Derrida would consider this kind of thinking, logocentric for supposing that a meaning is centred on a transcendental subject and can be recentred on another such subject" (51), and within the precinct of word prominence, human practices are conceptualised, developed and tailored in pockets of systems to befit the undertone of the society. Consequently, "the suitable portrayal of human cultures in their specificity elevates the development of the nation's semiotics and creative depth in filmmaking, making film itself a system" (57). According to Onuenkwusi, "the word is a capsule of the 'life force' which the human spirit conceptualises and nurtures... capsules by sounds that rely on cadences, pitch, tone, mood and paralinguistic features to emphasize meaning" (2). Similarly, Jacob avers that, "literature from inception has remained a predominant means of eliciting exhilarations and the sublime appreciation of man's inner sensation towards nature and the world around him, just as it has been a means of expression of inner thoughts and feelings" (123).

Above standpoints highlight the use of figures to express the subtextual level of creative work as found in Africa. Notably, literature "have proven valuable tools for engaging and analysing human concerns" (Ekpe and Wekpe 130). The use of encapsulated expressions among the Ibibio is commonly traced to their primordial folklore identified as oral literature, and as Ebewo submits, "Oral literature entails the use of riddles, puns, tongue twisters, proverbs, recitations, chants, songs, stories and tales, and these represent only a verbal aspect of folklore" (7). All these are dimensions of expressing opinion, ideas or making statements indirectly or with layers to encode the direct referent from an indirect statement. Such indirectness in Ibibio verbal arts is heightened in metaphors. This is further made unique in the coding of cultural values within cultural symbols dispensed in speech and objects that indirectly suggest basic moral position and cultural episteme. In Ibibio films, this indirectness is made to surface in three layers: "a concept that looks like what is intended by the writer, a concept that causes another to exist, and a concept that stands for what is intended yet does not have a natural connection with what it is made to represent" (Umoh 268). Implicitly, "such practices in African context serve as avenue for teaching traditional cultural morals, inculcating value system, and traditional ethics" (Jacob 142). The indirect used referents in speech and object in

Ibibio film is the metaphoric representation of Ibibio episteme as significantly represented in *Affimma*.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical base of this paper is orality. The theory came to limelight in the work of Walter Ong in his 1982 *Orality and Literacy: The Technologising of the Word*. The tenets of the theory express two ideas. The first idea addresses it as a structure that harnesses dialogue as the orbit of cultural integration and progression. It is the assumption that the oral form of literature predates other creative components. According to Akwang and James, “the term orality connotes a system of communication by oral means.... In this approach, thoughts are expressed using the voice only” (109). That means, orality is a “convenient term that refers to all form of aesthetic expressions in word by which man in pre-literate societies sought to entertain, educate, inform, and excite the motions of his follows” (Onuenkwusi 14). This makes orality to function as a people’s practice preserved in speech. To Atakpo, it “embraces all forms of aesthetic expressions whose functions include entertainment but are not limited to education and information” (23).

Orality is tool of literacy in the African society, and as a literary thrust, “orality helps to develop a sense of communal responsibility and unity... (and) also provides a means from which the learning and acquisition of native language is enhanced” (Akwang and James 121). In Akaenyi’s view, the theory specifies a discourse structure through which social dominance is produced... in news report, conversation, play text, or other genres of communication. More so, “since orality has to do with the presentation of drama, games, and other activities by oral means, oral literature has been found to be very indispensable aspect of Ibibio culture, it offers people the opportunity to express their cultural ideas using the voice” (Akwang and James 116). It could therefore be deduced that, in the African context, orality must be viewed as a way for societies of various complexity to regulate themselves, organize their past and present, create formal spaces for philosophical reflections, express their opinions on power, challenge and sometimes contest power, and generally honour language as a tool that was used to create and continuously shape humanity. Gunner reports that “orality was the means by which Africa made its existence, its history long before the colonial and imperial presence of the West manifested itself. In this sense, orality needs not to be seen as absence of literacy’ but as something self-constituting”. This position concretizes orality as a philosophy and a moral speculation in Africa.

Synopsis of *Affimma*

Affimma is an Ibibio film written and produced by Ekaette Brian. It was directed by Frank Abasiokong. The film has two plots which successfully connect to each other to situate love and Ibibio conception of the duality of the universe. The subject matter is love. The characters are Ibibio people with Ibibio names. However, the language is mixed: there is the use of pure English, the use of Ibibio, the switching and mixing of codes in the film towards establishing the metaphoric usage and archetypal depth portrayed in the various utterances and ideas representation in symbols.

As *Affimma* is born in Ukana kingdom without encumbrance, Edemudo, betrothed to her from birth is a mystery. Edemudo's mother had birth four children, but none stayed alive. She sought the help of Affianwandem, the princess of the sea and got into a covenant that the child she will have next will live and grow but at old age, would be taken back to the sea. After which Edemudo was born. He grows into a handsome young man with strong appeal to both human and spirits in the kingdom, with very favourable outcomes in his fishing profession and other activities engaged in. Edemudo's love for *Affimma* was borne out of a betroth arrangement between Udo, Edemudo's father and Ita, *Affimma*'s father, as a gesture of their friendship. Edemudo and *Affimma* grow as inseparable friends pending when they would get married.

The feud between Ukana and Ikot Ekong kingdom lingers, however, Obong Ukana chooses Daramfon, the daughter of Obong Ikot Ekong, as his son's (Utibe) bride. The intention is accepted, partly, as a truce between the two villages. However, Utibe is engrossed with desire for *Affimma*, and *Affimma* willingly flaunts herself in the palace supplying water and other services. She constantly prefigures herself becoming a queen someday, which often baffles her friends. The illusion between the prince and *Affimma* leads to Daramfon's suspicion and Daramfon conceals her reservation only to escape on the day of her marriage leaving both kingdom in chaos.

Meanwhile, Ita, Udo, Eka Edemudo and Affiong (*Affimma*'s mother) resolved to see their children marry each other. Edemudo is persistently visited at the river by a maiden, who introduces herself as Affianwandem. Affianwandem wants Edemudo to follow her to her kingdom and be her king. Edemudo objects mentioning his love for *Affimma*. Affianwandem insists that Edemudo should inquire and have insight about her bond with him from his mother. However, she grows jealous of *Affimma* and begins to trail her activities. During a moonlight play, a maiden lauds *Affimma*'s beauty as being far more elegant than that of Affianwandem. This further worsens her anger and inflicts *Affimma* with a mysterious ailment at the river. The ailment leads to unravelling of the mystery behind Edemudo; that he was covenanted from

birth to be taken when he grows. Eka-Edemudo pleads for him to live; Affianwandem rejects her plea and threatens to take him alongside more persons. Everyone around including Prince Utibe, under the auction of Obuma pleads for Affimma to live but Affianwandem threatens to destroy them. Edemudo obliges to follow her. By this, Affianwandem consolidates Prince Utibe as the chosen one for Affimma, equipping him with a mysterious vase which by his words would make Affimma to live again, and disappears with Edemudo. Utibe brings Affimma to life; they profess love to each other.

However, the Queen-mother had earlier warned Affianwandem over her constant upsetting of the cosmic order in which she intrudes in affairs of the mortals. She warned her of the impending consequence if she does not desist. As Affianwandem takes Edemudo to the water kingdom, the presence of the mortal infuriates the Queen-mother. She stripes her of her powers and sends Edemudo back to the human world. Edemudo resurfaces in the human world, being pushed by the water to the shore and interestingly to Daramfon's feet. In her asylum, Princess Daramfon sees another chance to embrace the man who once saved her from the river.

Metaphors in *Affimma*

Metaphor is one of the noticeable figures of speech that which a thing outside the target referent is indirectly compared to the referent by affirming it to be what is called. According to Egudu "a metaphor is an indirect comparison. It operates on the principle of equation... to suggest an idea" (21). This directly hints that by asserting that one thing is another, metaphor highlights the similarities between two things, typically inferred and indirect. Similarly, metaphor explains a topic by claiming that it is comparing two dissimilar objects without using the terms "like" or "as. Also, Oluikpe sees it as "an implicit comparison between two essentially unlike objects" (195). He adds that the magic of metaphor can "thus transform a drab abstraction or an elusive emotion into a familiar sensory image that is concrete and specific... Aristotle called metaphor the most-valuable ornament of style..." (196). Consequently, the use of a noun that appropriately refers to something else is called a metaphor. The transfer might occur from one species to another, from one genus to another, or by analogy. Eyo adds that metaphor "compares two dissimilar things directly without the connector 'like' or 'as'... which involves a direct comparison" (131). Suffice then to say that metaphor is situated as a tool of comparison. Furthermore, it could be ascertained that metaphor is a veiled expression that just alludes to the connotation while embodying a denotation. Something more familiar is used to illustrate a certain concept. Such expressions eventually get calcified, and their metaphorical equivalency is no longer discernible. The core of a riddle is that it presents facts by combining

impossibilities; this cannot be accomplished by combining other types of words, but it is achievable by employing a metaphor. Such metaphors are dispersed throughout riddles, idioms, adages, and riddles. Metaphors can capture proverbs, idioms, adages, and riddles in a community that values orality, such as Ibibio. It implies a flurry of signified and operates as a multifaceted signifier. Because a metaphor is the word of something used for something else, it conjures up language imagery in our thoughts. Concepts that we would not even think of as related are connected. The ubiquitous principle of mind is metaphor. To Lakoff and Johnson:

Metaphors specify different kinds of object... and thereby allow us to focus on different aspects of mental experiences. The machine metaphor gives us a conception of the mind as having an on-off state... and an operating condition. The brittle object metaphor is not nearly as rich. It allows us to talk only about psychological strength. However, there is a range of mental experience that can be conceived of in terms of either metaphor... We use ontological metaphors to comprehend events, actions, activities, and state events and actions are conceptualized metaphorically as objects, activities as sub-stances, states as containers.... (30-31)

From the above notion, metaphors that maintain their signified across universe exist and the ones that only delimit their referents to the context of usage equally exist. This alludes that metaphors are in shades as orchestrated in Ibibio films.

Below are extracts from the film *Afimma*, that shows the deployment of verbal metaphors and morality:

- *Ayen amana; ndidio owo 'den idahado* (2:04:26)/ (A child is born; I am now a man): Ita has stayed for many years without fathering any child. He is eager to see his wife born a child. When the wife finally puts to birth, he utters this indirect self-reclamation. The metaphor suggests that one who sires an offspring is a man. In Ibibio society, a married man who raises his children properly is a responsible person.
- *Isong Adot Ukana* (4:56/2:05:34)/ (The earth is Honourable): This is generalized comparison of the earth with capacity in the Ibibio land. The metaphor is used to establish the order and aura of intimacy. It is used to suggest the prominence of nativity and togetherness of ethnicity.
- “The Rites of Passage... makes you a woman” (14:06/2:05:34)/ The Queen of Ikot Ekong uses this expression to inform Daramfon, her daughter, that a woman in Ibibio cosmos is a complete one only when she adheres to the etiquette of womanhood. This etiquette is synonymous to cultural rituals in which she would be indoctrinated with the dynamics of spousal affairs, domestic attitudes and home management. The metaphor suggests physical circumcision and moral re-orientation in Ibibio society.

- *Ima mi, Inem mmi, Uyai Koko; Inemesit Edemudo* (17:56/2:05:34)/ (My love, my delight, my beauty; the joy of Edemudo):Edemudo uses addresses Affimma with these phrases: The words are likely to be situated this way: (*Afo ado*) *ima mmi*; meaning, you are my love. (*Afo ado*) *inem mmi*; which means, you are my delight. (*Afo ado*) *uyai Koko*, meaning, you are Koko's (my) beauty. (*Afo ado*) *inemesit Edemudo*; meaning, you are the joy of Edemudo (my joy). These are Ibibio phrases used to making an indirect comparison of a beloved woman to an abstraction or quality that evokes sweetness of the mind.
- *Se unyie fien, unyie fien* (20:05/2:05:34) (What belongs to you, belongs to you):In the conversation between Udo and Ita, Udo is suggesting that they should fix a time and make their children marry formally since they were contracted to each other from infant. Ita uses the metaphor: *se unyie fien, unyie fien*, to indicate that he does not have any intention of breaching the contract. Affimma that was betrothed to Udo still remains Udo's wife.
- "The gods were too generous with Eka-Affimma: She is a rare beauty among maidens" (22:34/2:05:34): Two villagers are dialoguing as Affimma and Usiere pass to fill the water pots in the palace. They associate the beauty of Affimma to the generosity of the gods. The metaphor suggests that Affimma's appearance is a divine endowment.
- *Akpan Itiaba* (1:42:01/20:05:34) (Akpan raised to its seventh): The statement is comparing Edemudo to seven (first) sons put together. The metaphor is a praise to the status of Edemudo.
- *Iyak nte iyak* (1:42:01/20:05:34): This expression can be translated to "fish like fish". Although it is used as a directly comparison (simile); the usage is metaphoric. It is suggesting "fish, you are fish indeed". The metaphor suggests the bigness and quality of the fish Edemudo gives to his father-in-law.
- "My lord, you came" (1:36:25/2:05:34): This is an indirect comparison of the husband to the ruler, king, or the owner of the woman in Ibibio society. Affimma uses this metaphor to address Edemudo, her husband-to-be. The full expression reads "You are my lord, Edemudo".
- "My Queen...the one whose dazzling beauty can be compared to the sun" (1:34:46/20:05:34) Prince Utibe uses this metaphor to address Affimma. The expression indirectly compares Affimma to only the dazzling of the sun. It suggests, your beauty is sparkling.
- "Ukana extend their hand of friendship" (1:25:51/20:05:34): Chief Uko uses this expression to make an indirect reference to the cease-fire which the Ukana people have

instituted and wishes the Ikot Ekong kingdom should embrace the gesture as a mark of reunion.

- *Isidehe ayin amana ke urua ete eka fud ukot* (1:26:27/20:05:34). It cannot be the child is delivered in the market square, they tell the mother to close her legs): In the excitement of the proposed peace, an elder uses this metaphor to compare secret joy and the open one. The expression denotes, may we not conceal the acceptance of this marriage any longer; let us embrace and make others acknowledge that we have accepted.
- “My eyes behold a beauty like the sun... behold the queen” (1:31:54/20:05:34): Edemudo accosts Affianwandem and compares her indirectly to the sun. When Affianwandem introduces herself, imploring that he can call her queen, Edemudo emphasizes the “queenship” to be an indirect comparison to the wife of a universal king.
- *Ntokon akpusung asime akukpe* (The roadside pepper is plucked by every passerby) (1:14:44/20:05:34): In the moonlight play, one of the riddles used by a maiden is an indirect comparison of a roadside pepper which passers-by are not restricted in plucking. The metaphor paints the image of an unprotected possession as being a public one.
- “I am Affianwandem, Goddess of the River” (1:09:12/20:05:34): Affianwandem is using this metaphor to associate herself with the dominion of the marine kingdom.
- “The child of an elephant cannot be a dwarf” (51:09/2:05/34): The Obong of Ukana uses this indirect comparison to indicate Utibe, his son, procrastination as cowardice which negates his regal position. The metaphor is creating a contrast between the pragmatic king who seeks to annex Ikot Ekong through marriage tie and the docile prince who seeks to slip from the prominence of a royal bride to a commoner in his imagination.
- “It is the early bird that catches the (fat) worm” (49:55/20:05:34): Obong further uses this statement to stimulate Utibe to immediate action of accepting to marry Daramfon; and that they must hurry. It is an indirect referent to speed as the soul of achievement.
- “Your colourful eyes and your glistening skin” (47:30/20:05:34): Edemudo uses this expression to make an indirect comparison of Affianwandem’s dotting and monitoring as revolving and dynamic (Colourful eyes). He equally uses “Your glistening skin...” to denote bodily allurements.
- “Make me your queen; I will make you my king, for that is who you truly are (46:37/20:05:34): Affianwandem indirectly establishes Edemudo as an immortal being who only sojourns the mortal world. The metaphor reads: you are the king of marine kingdom.

- *Owo oro edi afo; Afo edi owo* (30:14/20:05:34) (The person has come; you are the person): This metaphor is rendered by the Ukana people on their visit to begin marriage negotiation of Daramfon for Utibe. The metaphor is a direct suggestion that Utibe is the chosen husband to Daramfon.
- “The Maiden is following me everywhere I go. She is not from our community/my son’s life is in danger” (21:31): Edemudo mentions of a certain woman following him about to his mother. He mentions that the maiden is not from their kingdom. The mother concludes that he is in danger. The dialogue is an indirect comparison of indigene and aliens. However, it actually denotes that Edemudo is haunted.
- *Asop Itok aduk ikot ewa, asop mkpad ayom ekpo*:(12:41/2:05/34) (The fast runner hunts the games; while the fast foot yearns for ghost): This statement is an incantation by Obuma, the native doctor. Though it is an incantation; it necessarily does not have a specific referent; but it evokes the eerie aura of the god’s presence, Obuma indirectly intones that speed achieves success while wantonness result in deadness.
- “You are the chosen one” (8:00/2:05:34): Affianwandem uses this indirectness to expression that Utibe is the custodian of divine powers and the mediator between the mortal and immortal world. She seals this metaphor by offering Utibe a vase containing a mysterious power with which he can command physical and physical circumstances to change.

Concrete Metaphors and Morality in *Affimma*

- **Newborn Child:** The newborn child is used as an indirect referent to the beauty of the moon in the film. However, it compares human existence to a journey. Life is a process from birth.



Plate 1: Child – Life Journey (*Affimma*)

- **Fish:** This metaphor is used as the referent to divine fortune. It compares human progress to the good substance or yield from the boundlessness of the sea.



Plate 2: Divine Fortune (*Affimma*)

- **Sick Bed:** The sick bed in *Affimma* is a metaphor comparing deadness to peace and love. That is to say, it is the dead that are truly loved by all.



Plate 3: Dead Brings Peace and Love (*Affimma*)

Discussion of Findings

The use of metaphors in the films reflects dual utilization of orality in Ibibio cosmology. Verbal metaphors used in *Affimma* incorporate virtually all the media such as proverbs, adages, idioms, and riddles, which Ibibio people to interact with. This seems to be in tandem with Ekpe and Thompson’s assertion that performances “does not develop in a vacuum, they are given impetus, shape, and direction by social, political and economic forces in a particular society” (98). Concrete metaphors encapsulate a set of ideas pooled as a single moral thrust among the Ibibio. Nonetheless, the two levels of metaphor make the film a harbinger of Ibibio cultural values, preserved in speech and in artifact, which can transit to persons and generations anytime.

Conclusion

The use of metaphors in *Affimma* shows the oral nature of Ibibio literature which is embedded in orality. Associating the target content with an abstract idea or a well-known object with identifiable characteristics helps in expatiating the cultural denotation and connotation of the idea expressed in the metaphor. The use of primitive figment existing in the unconscious

makes the undertone of the film to stimulate nostalgia, which draws the audience minds and focus the subject matter as cultural situation demanding a rethink towards alteration or promotion as seen in the verbal and concrete coding of proverbs, idioms, adages, and riddles as levels of metaphor in the film. This attempt to explore Ibibio ethics from the perspective of film symbols and dialogue supports Ibibio films to function as a tool for projecting and preserving the heritage and culture of the Ibibio people, thereby projecting its demand globally as a means to unravel the rich cultural practice and worldview of Akwa Ibom people.

Works Cited:

Affimma, Directed by Ekaette Brian. Jopabee Investment, 2025.

Akaenyi, Nkiruka. Promoting Masculine Hegemony through Humour: A Linguistic Analysis of Gender Stereotyping in the Wive's Revolt by J. P. Clark, *Contemporary African Literature: Confluences Currents and Constants. Essay in Honour of Dr. Bassey Ubong*, edited by Effiong Johnson and Ofonime Inyang, Amazon, 2022, pp. 184-98.

Akwang, Etop and Justina James. Orality as Dramatic Elements in Ibibio Children's Performance: An Assessment of Bassey Ubong's by Any Means and Zero-Sum Game as Teaching Materials for the Classroom. *Contemporary African Literature: Confluences Currents and Constants. Essay in Honour of Dr. Bassey Ubong*, edited by Effiong Johnson and Ofonime Inyang, Amazon, 2022, pp. 100-29.

Atakpo, Uwemdim. *From Theatre Stage Germaneness to Nollywood's Artistic Synergy and Economic Survival*. 61 Inaugural Lecture, University of Uyo, Dorand Publishers, 2018.

Ebewo, Patrick. *Ika Folklore: Oral Traditions of the Ika People of Nigeria*. JANyeko Publishing Centre, 2005.

Ekeke, Nnanake Emmanuel. "A Critical Evaluation of Theatre for Development Praxis in SBCC Approach". In *Akwa Ibom State University Journal of Arts*. Vol 5, No. 2, 2024, pp. 88-96

Ekpe, Bassey Nsa and Emmanuel Ekere Thompson. "Women and the Niger Delta Crises: Ahmed Yerima's Social Vision in Little Drops." In *International Review of Humanities and Scientific Research*. Vol. 5, No. 1, 2020, pp. 97-105.

Ekpe, Bassey Nsa and Israel Meriomame Wekpe. “Interactivity and Ecomedia in the Digital Age: A Comparative Study of Black November and Niger Delta Commando.” In *Interactive Film and Media Journal*. Vol 3, No. 1, 2023, pp. 126-131.

Egudu, Romanus. *The Study of Poetry*. University Press Limited, 1985.

Ekong, Ekong. *Sociology of the Ibibio: A Study of Social Organisation and Change*. Modern Business Press Ltd., 2001.

Eyo, Luke. *Effective Use of English: Vol.1* Scholars Press, 1999.

Gunner, L. “African and Orality.” *African Literature: An Anthology of Criticism and Theory*, edited by Thomas Olaniyan and A. Quayson, Blackwell Publishing, 2009, pp. 67-73.

Idachaba, Armstrong and Godfrey Okoye. “Archetypal Interpretation and Analysis of Nigerian Video-Film”. <https://www.research.gate.net/publication>, 2018

Iwoetok, Uwemedimo. Ibibio/Annang Women Oral Performance, *Ibom Cultural Offering: Arts, Crafts and Performance*, edited by Effiong Johnson, University of Cape Coast, 2013, pp. 131-43.

Iyorza, Stanislaus and Iseyen, Lucy Michael. “Media Artists’ Reflections on Nigerian Politicians: Analysis of Select Cartoonists’ Frames”. In *Jos Journal of Theatre, Arts and Film*. Vol.5, No.1, June 2022, pp. 39-54

Jacob, Okon. Scene Design Approaches and Materials for African Cultural Preservation in Anietie Usen’s *Village Boy*.” *SAPIENTIA Gopal Journal of Arts Humanities and \development Studies*, vol.7, no.1, 2023, pp. 141-153.

Jacob, Okon Udofot. “Language Communication and Efficacious Performing Arts Practice in Nigeria: Theatre and Film Experience.” In *Sapientia Foundation Journal of Education, Sciences and Gender Studies (SFJESGS)*, Vol.5 No. 4 December, 2023. Pp. 87-101.

Jacob, Okon Udofot. “Scene Design Approaches and Materials for African Cultural Preservation in Anietie Usen’s *Village Boy*”. In *Sapientia Global Journal of Arts, Humanities and Development Studies (SGOJAHDS)*, Vol.7 No. 4 March 2024. Pp. 141-153.

Lakoff, George and Mark Johnson. *Metaphors We Live by*. The University of Chicago Press, 2003.

Oluikpe, Benson. *The Use of English for Higher Education*. African First Publishers Limited, 2003.

Ong, Walter. *Orality and Literacy, 2nd Ed*, Routledge, 2002.

Onuenkwusi, Jasper. *Fundamental of African Oral Literature*, Alphabet Nigerian Publishers, 2001.

Udofia, Anietie *et al.* “Contextualizing the University of Phenomenology in the Art and Ibibio Signified in ‘Emergent Ibom Films.’” *International Journal of Arts and Social Science*, Vol.6, no.4, 2023, pp. 44-58. <https://www.ijassjournal.com>. Accessed 19th March, 2025.

Umoh, Stephen. “Semiotics and Perspectives of Meanings in Bassey Ubong’s *Praise the Lord*.” *ICHOKE Journal of the Faculty of Humanities*, vol. 19, no3, 2021, pp. 267-283. <http://www.ichekejournals.com> accessed 19th March, 2025.

Ungerer, Friedrich H. and Schmid, Hans-Jörg J. *An Introduction to Cognitive Linguistics*. Longman, 1996.

Widdowson, Peter and Selden Raman. *Reader’s Guide to Literary Criticism*. The University of Kentucky Press, 1993.