

A Comparative Socio-semiotic Perspective of Invectives in Two African Languages: Isizulu and Yoruba

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ABSTRACT The diversified ways of language use in different geographic areas present valid reasons for the study of various usages of language. Invectives are a major aspect of language that have been greatly neglected in intellectual discourse. Motivated by the paucity of academic literature and other stereotypes in human communication, the thrust of this work is to discuss the socio-cultural factors embedded in the two cultures in their approach to invectives. The study examines a comparative taxonomy of invectives in isiZulu and Yoruba languages from a socio-semiotic perspective. Drawing examples from the two languages, the study explores instances of semiotic analysis that are created by the assumption that signs, utterances and messages are situated within the context of social relations and processes. The research tools included observation, interviews, and archival materials. The study indicates that invectives are context and culture-dependent. The study reveals striking similarities and differences in the invective-related discourses of isiZulu and Yoruba.