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Original Research Article

The Constraints Encountered during Interpretation of Idioms in *Witimbule* Programme, Radio Mambo Broadcast in Western Kenya

Solomon Luvonga Chenenje[1*], David Ongarora Ogoti[1], Jackline Atieno Okelo[1]

[1]Maseno University, Kenya

Abstract: The use of idioms in conversation among the Luhya speaking communities, especially during Witimbule Programme that is aired in Radio Mambo broadcast in Western Kenya, is common. Hardly does a social ceremony end without application of idioms among the Luhya people. The fact that they are interesting to use during the speeches, there are challenges that arise and if not resolved, they can cause misinterpretation, hence miscommunication. This study employs relevance theory by Wilson and Sperber (1995 /2002) which highlights that when the information is complex, it stands the risk of being misinterpreted or rejected by the mind. The study found that the hindrances to interpretation of idioms include deficiency in cognitive environment knowledge, dialectical constraints due to lexical mismatch among the Luhya speaking dialects ,lack of context ,ambiguity of idioms, lack of subject part of the idiom and lack of native speakers intuition .The results reveal that deficiency in cognitive environment knowledge was the main cause of difficulties encountered during interpretation of idioms in conversation among the Luhya speaking dialects. Dialectical variation contributed insignificantly to misinterpretation of idioms. From this assumption, the best strategy of interpreting idioms is the knowledge of cognitive environment approach besides others.
Keywords: Accommodation, Constraints, Dialect, Idiolect, Interlocutor, Interpretation.

INTRODUCTION

This study seeks to investigate the constraints that may lead to misinterpretation of various forms of idioms which are applicable during communication. It then delves into the strategies that can contribute to the correct interpretation of idioms to mitigate such constraints encountered and make communication effective during *Witimbule* programme in Radio Mambo FM broadcast. Relevance theory by Wilson and Sperber (1995/2002/2012) will be tested whether it is applicable to interpret idioms.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This area of study has attracted the attention of linguists in semantics, stylistics and communication. When idioms are being interpreted, the interpreter may face several setbacks that can lead to misinterpretation. Such constraints can vary from one form of idioms to the other.

Difficulties encountered during interpretation of idioms are lack of proficiency in native language, lack of exposure to idiomatic language, the degree of fixedness of the idiom, superiority of the first language over the second language, lack of cultural and historical awareness of idioms (Noor and Fallatah, 2010). This has contributed to the current study a great deal only that such constraints are mainly applied in second language acquisition. Some of them can be applicable to the current study such as lack of exposure to the native speaker's language during conversation, not exposed fully to the idioms and complexity of the idioms.

The current study found that such were not enough but several constraints encountered are not limited to lack of contextual clue, cognitive environment, dialectical variation, ambiguity of idioms and emerging idioms. Therefore there was need for appropriate strategies of interpretation of idioms to mitigate such constraints.

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*Corresponding Author: Solomon Luvonga Chenenje
Maseno University, Kenya

Noura and Hassan (2013) also investigated the difficulties in idioms interpretation by Libyan students of English and came up with the same results as Abdoun (2015). They emphasized on lack of exposure to the target language of idioms. This plays a big role in this study because it lays a background on the core difficulties in idiomatic interpretation. This study then digs into the native speakers of the language to investigate the main constraints they encounter in interpreting the idioms in their local language. The current study purported to investigate various levels of difficulties faced by interlocutors in interpreting idioms because each form of idioms has its own uniqueness hence the appropriate strategy of interpretation.

Amir (2012) investigates difficulties faced during interpretation of idioms in inter-languages and finds that the difficulty lies in translation due to word-to-word equivalence. The current study investigates various dialects and their idiomatic interpretation rather than word translation. Word to word translation is equivalent to literal interpretation. Such is the source of incorrect interpretation of idioms that result in misunderstanding.

Tran (2013) attributed the difficulties to lack of exposure to the target language. The study assessed the intelligibility of the dialects in pragmatics interpretation of idioms. The more the chances of interpretation of various forms of idioms, the more intelligible the Oluluhya dialects are. This study sought to determine the difficulties encountered during interpretation of idioms which included lack of exposure to the target language. During interpretation of pragmatic idioms you can be exposed to a particular speech community but fail to adequately interpret the idioms. This is because pragmatic idioms are quite demanding because you should be aware of the intention of the speaker of the idioms to interpret it. This shows that lack of societal knowledge or native speaker's intuition can easily cause misinterpretation and so there was a need to investigate how best the interpretation can be done for communication to be in place.

In processing idioms, Rachel *et al.,* (1987) experimented with the interpretation of idioms and discovered that those with more entries in mental lexicon are normally interpreted faster since one of their meanings will be encountered in a short time. Therefore, the difficulties in interpretation are dependent on the familiarity of its lexicon items. This shows that if an idiom is encountered most in the conversation, it can be easily interpreted. This cannot be always the case because such idioms can be used differently depending on the context of the speaker.

Wendy (2021) finds that translators and interpreters of idioms face challenges of language localization, culture and situation at hand. Such

challenges impact on the accuracy of results. This has spearheaded the current study to establish the measures to mitigate such constraints encountered during communication for efficacy in communication during *Witimbule* programme. This therefore implies that lack of cognitive environment is a great cause of difficulties encountered during interpretation of idioms in any setting.

Wendy (2021) also laid emphasis on the fact that pragmatic idioms may lead to multiple interpretations due to their uniqueness. If there are multiple interpretations, there is a great challenge of identifying the correct interpretation. She further explained that idioms are not so simple that machines can be applicable to interpret without cultural knowledge. Therefore the current study seeks to investigate how pragmatic idioms can be interpreted using the least effort strategy. Here is where it is imperative that ambiguity of idioms is such an impediment to interpret idioms correctly. Therefore there was a need to investigate the least effort strategies to resolve this puzzle.

Mudogo (2018) then finds that among the 19 Luluhya dialects, there exists lexical mismatch that makes translation of words from English to native language demanding. This setback can also be a challenge in Interpretation of Oluluhya idioms among the fans of Witimbule programme in Radio Mambo FM because interpretation of idioms depends on good mastery of vocabulary in the target language. This makes it necessary to study how idioms are interpreted in Radio Mambo FM, *Witimbule* programme. Because the previous study focused on translation of Oluluhya lexical items, there was a need for study in idiomatic interpretation of Oluluhya language varieties to ascertain whether this lexical mismatch can contribute to misinterpretation of Oluluhya idioms and cause misinterpretation.

Hazen (2006) defines idiolect as the language characteristic of the individual person. He further says that idiolect is the individual style which aggregates to dialect. However he did not elaborate how it affects the interpretation of idioms in the conversation. The current study then tested whether such variation contributed to misinterpretation of the idioms.

In the same concept, Kuhl (2003) includes mannerism, patterns and habit of an individual as the idiolect. He added pronunciation, lexicon and syntax. This is what makes an individual unique from others in terms of speech in the same dialect. We can conclude that idiolect is the variation within the dialect. The variation in pronunciation and lexical items can impede communication especially when idioms cannot be interpreted. There was a need to investigate whether or not the interpretation of idioms can be affected by idiolect.

Trudgill (2000) in dialectal analysis discussed accent as the manner of pronunciation of words by a particular individual or group. It was essential to the current study because it tested whether it would significantly contribute to misinterpretation or not.

Alati (2015) says that the mastery of a given language is measured by the ability of interlocutors to naturally use the phrasal expressions in diverse but appropriate situation. He finds out that idioms are difficult to interpret due to hidden meaning possessed. However, he did not point out the constraints incurred during interpretation of idioms and how they arise. This makes it necessary to venture into this area of linguistics study to investigate how misinterpretation of Oluluhya idioms may arise and seek for the suitable strategy to avert the problem of idiomatic misinterpretation.

Wilson and Sperber (1995) highlight that the more relevant the information is, the less the processing effort hence fast to interpret the given information. On the other hand, Ong'ayo *et al.,* (2018) reiterates that concepts with phrases are more complex than words or lexical units. The more complex idioms may demand more processing effort than the rest.

The contribution of Lubangah (2018) will be necessary to the current study because he reveals that there exists dialect continuum across Oluluhya dialects with some resemblances but slight difference at the level of phonology, morphology and lexicology. The current study tests whether or not such variations can cause constraints during the interpretation of Oluluhya idioms. If so then it will warrant thorough investigation into the solution to the problem.

Lwangale (2016) highlights that Oluluhya dialects only differ slightly in pronunciation, stress placement and vowel length.

This study assumes that Oluluhya dialects are highly intelligible. However, such variation may result into misinterpretation of Oluluhya lexical items and affect the interpretation of idioms because they are dependent on vocabulary of the target language. There is therefore need to study this area critically to find the extend to which dialectical constraints encountered affects interpretation of Oluluhya idioms during conversation in the local radio programme.

From this discussion, the constraints encountered during interpretation of idioms include dialectal constraints, idiolect, accent, ambiguity of the idioms, lack of contextual clue, absence of cognitive environment knowledge, lack of the subject part of the idiom, literal interpretation and emerging idioms.

Schroeder (2012) stressed that if there is no shared knowledge between the speaker and the hearer, there is a higher chance of misinterpretation of information. This shows that cognitive environment is such important that if it lacks in conversations, idioms can be difficult to interpret during communication.

This study tests whether relevance theory can be applicable to explain how idioms are interpreted in the face of difficulties encountered. The fact that it did not put into account the dialectical constraints; idiolect and accent can adversely affect the interpretation of idioms.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
The study adopted descriptive research design due to its flexibility gather systematically factual information through observation and conducting oral interviews to respondents (Luvonga, 2017). The study area is western Kenya counties which are inhabited by the Luhya speaking dialects by sampling 69 respondents and 66 idioms based on saturation principle, while the respondents were sampled purposively depending on the dialect they speak. Unstructured oral interview was adopted due to its flexibility to individual situations and reveals the feelings of the informants (Ogula, 1998). The data collected was recorded on the content analysis guide and tables.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
This section sought to establish whether or not the constraints were encountered during interpretation of Oluluhya idioms in radio Mambo FM *Witimbule* Programme. The misinterpretation was mainly as a result of lack of native speaker's intuition. A few were attributed to dialectical constraints but quite insignificant as they were overcome by code switching. The conversation between Maragoli and Babukusu exhibited dialectical mismatch due to dialect continuum. However, it was not to a great extend to which communication would be compromised. It was successful because the fans encounter each other more often than not during the conversation in the programme.

Koracs (2016) observes that idioms are general and envelopes the metaphors, metonymies, similes, sayings and pair of words. He noted that such idioms are hard to interpret because the vocabulary which composes them cannot be analysed as a different entity but collectively. The findings imply that idioms are implicit and therefore demand strategies to interpret correctly. The current study has revealed several strategies of interpreting such as conceptual metaphor theory or mapping, cognitive environment approach besides native speaker's intuition and contextual clue.

The challenges that lead to misinterpretation of idioms during translation include dialectal variation, literal interpretation, lack of exposure to idiomatic

language and culture specific nature of idioms (Koracs, 2016).

Idioms are acquired through exposure but lack of sufficient vocabulary in the target language is the cause of misinterpretation during conversations (Vasiljevic, 2015). Idioms are culturally embedded and therefore the current study found that the best strategy to interpret them was cognitive environment and native speaker's intuition approach.

The other constraints encountered according to Vasiljevic 2015) are lack of cognitive environment knowledge, bias to literary interpretation and lack of contextual clue to disambiguate the idioms.

Anjarini and Hatmanto (2021) outlined the difficulties faced in understanding idioms as interpreting word by word, lack of exposure to idiomatic language and poor mastery of vocabulary in the target language. The strategies of interpreting idioms during communication were the use of contextual clue, and internet (Anjarini and Hatmanto, 2021). They also found that language and culture are inseparable. This is the truth that to be proficient in the language, you should be versed with what culture and their idiomatic expressions.

Given that the previous studies by Anjarini and Hatmanto (2021) found context and internet as the primary approaches to interpret idioms, the current study finds it feeble attempt because context provided can be weak to be anchored on to process idioms. Furthermore, internet can only be applicable to interpret English idioms. Oluluhya idioms are not on the internet connection hence need for the current study that has revealed a number of strategies to interpret idioms sufficiently.

This is the illustration on how such constraints encountered contributed to misinterpretation of various forms of idioms during conversation.

Cognitive Environment Deficiency
This was the major cause of idiomatic misinterpretation. When tackling most of the idioms the knowledge of cognitive environment precedes other approaches. For instance, metaphorical idioms code 001: *Wukwile mutsindang'unyo …Has fallen in black ants.* The interlocutor should first have the knowledge of black ants and their encyclopeadic entries before mapping them to police officers. Lack of cognitive environment leads to misinterpretation of this idiom.

Metaphorical idioms code 007: *Lekha okhweta etsinyende mubwoba…. Do not concentrate on worms in the mushrooms.* This idiom demands the knowledge of cognitive environment to identify how worms are perceived in the mushrooms before mapping

the idiom as focusing on the weaknesses in a particular person.

Metaphorical idiom code 014: *Elinani lisievile evukhwe… the hyena danced at the in-laws residence.* You need the knowledge of cognitive environment to detect attributes of hyena and the in-laws according to the Luhya culture. In the absence of such, there will be misinformation.

Proverbial idiom code 003: *Omukambi wulile amatsukhu….. Perfectionist has eaten the lungs.* You need the knowledge of cognitive environment to interpret how Luhya speaking communities value the lungs as part of food before you map the perfectionist eating lungs to landing on poor quality or valueless after complaining.

Proverbial idiom code 004: *Kakwile khushivoya… has spilled on the costume (clothes).* To interpret this idiom, you need to have knowledge of cognitive environment to interpret that blood has spilled on the traditional clothes called *eshivoya*. The Luhya speaking communities attribute it to the relative or closest friend having wronged you and you are to bear with the situation. It is either you know it or not. If the context is provided you can easily interpret it. In a nutshell, all proverbial idioms cannot be interpreted in the absence of cognitive environment approach unless the context is provided.

Euphemistic idiom code 001: *Amasimba kayelile mufulavu khusoko….. Mongooses have landed at the market clubs...* Before you map mongooses to prostitutes, you need to understand the cultural setting or whatever is going on at that place hence cognitive environment knowledge. If not mongooses can be attributed to thugs, thieves or police officers who come to arrest those who brew local beer. Lack of context paves the way for the knowledge of cognitive environment.

Euphemistic idiom code 003: *Imbwa imali yakhomba musikele…. Black dog licked my foot.* You need the cultural knowledge of the community from which the idiom is derived. Among the Luhya people, black dog is attributed to the bad omen. If you the knowledge of cognitive environment, you cannot interpret it. It means unlucky or being unsettled in life. All euphemistic idioms are culturally rooted hence cognitive environment knowledge to be the foundation to other approaches.

Hyperbolic idiom code 003: *Ndanina eshikulu shekarara vwelavula… I traversed the hill of Karara till evening but I did not make it..* With the knowledge of the culture of the community, you can the hill of Karara to toiling. Up to

evening is mapped to the whole life. The community also uses it euphemistically to mean something different from what it really is. Hyperbolic idiom code 009: *Ni shakhaya wamaruu… defeated the one with banana fibres.* Cultural knowledge is paramount here for you to identify the other information left out. In full, it is the anthill that defeated the most experienced from harnessing the white ants. Meaning that it can be mapped onto the person who is difficult to control or accommodate. This idiom means the same as that of code 010: *Shiakhaya weng'ang'a …defeated the ibis.* In full it is that what defeated the ibis from swallowing who could swallow?

In relevance theory by Schroeder (2012) cognitive environment deficiency leads to misinterpretation of idioms during conversation. She elaborated that cognitive environment is the knowledge which the interlocutor has at the time of utterance or the knowledge the interlocutor brings to the conversation. It is also what is at the back of the mind of the interlocutor at the time of utterance and interpretation. This is as a result of accumulated knowledge about the culture of the community from which the idioms are extracted and the situation at hand during the incident.

Lack of Contextual Clue

Cacciari *et al.,* (1993) found that contextual clue is of great essence during interpretation of idioms without which miscommunication can occur in any conversation involving idiomatic language. Context is crucial in disambiguation of ambiguous idioms. If the speaker does not have the knowledge of cognitive environment, context is provided to unravel the puzzle. All idioms can be easily interpreted in the presence of context, however complicated it can. Once it misses it becomes cumbersome especially to non-native speakers of the language.

For instance metaphorical idiom code 001 in context: *Avefi vetsingokho vakwile mutsindang'unyo mungolove wa vatsile… The chicken thieves landed in black ants yesterday when they went to steal….* We can use stealing to interpret that they landed in the hands of police officers.

Out of context: *Vakwile mutsindang'unyo …have fallen in black ants.* It sounds ambiguous because someone can interpret it by mapping as the one who has landed in problems or attacked by terrorists or *robbers.*

Wilson and Sperber (1995) views context as dynamic and mental entity of a person's assumption about the world. It means that if the interlocutor has the hint about the idiom from the surrounding environment,

there is a possibility of getting the correct interpretation about the idiom.

Emerging Idioms

These are idioms which are being used recently and have not passed the test of time. For people who are new in the community from which the idioms are being used there can be a misinterpretation unless the context is provided to lead the interpreter to the correct interpretation. Idioms in this conversation are not emerging but supposed it happens there can be a misinterpretation unless the context is provided.

Literal Interpretation

This is directly interpreting the idioms as they are. This causes misinterpretation because idioms are phrases with arbitrary meaning or a string of words with hidden meaning. Those used this method misinterpreted the idioms. However a few interlocutors use it. Metaphorical idiom code 004: *Akhamanga elinani….. Milks the hyena.* If you apply direct interpretation, it will mean an impossibility hence miscommunication between the speaker and the hearer.

Ambiguity of Idioms

An idiom is said to be ambiguous if context is not provided hence the interlocutor is not versed with the knowledge of cognitive environment to interpret. If context is missing with cognitive environment approach, all the idioms can be difficult to interpret. In pragmatic interpretation of Oluluhya idioms, the meaning of the idioms is not most what it is but what the speaker intends to communicate.

In the conversation, all idioms can be ambiguous depending on how it is used. Idioms can mean different to different people in various settings and so they are cultural based. We have already discussed in the previous section that contextual clue is the treatment of ambiguous idioms.

Lexical Mismatch

Lexical mismatch among the dialects of Luhya speaking communities was evidenced. This was commonly between the Lubukusu and Maragoli, Lukabras and Lunyore. This is also called dialectal constraints. This is the illustration of lexical mismatch:

Lukabras: *Khufulasia*
Lunyore: *Khumwasia*
English: *Close the eyes*
Lukabras: *Mumuchela*
Lunyore: *Musitao*
English: *In the river*
Lukabras: *Mavanga*
Lunyore: *Matsai*
English: *Blood.*
Lubukusu: *Kamafuki*
Maragoli: *Madzai*
English: *Blood*
Lubukusu: *Kumusi*

Maragoli: *Mukidete*
English: *Daylight*
Lubukusu: Muluchi
Maragoli: *Mugitao /Mmugela*
English: *River*

Apart from dialectal variation, there exist ambiguous words (one with different meaning in various dialects). For instance:
Lubukusu: Inyokha…. *stand*
Lukabras: *Inyokha……. go home*
Lunyore: *Lakaya….. Cry*
Lukabras: *Lakaya… speak*
Lunyore: *Lama…. Pray*
Lukabras: *Lama… Curse*
Maragoli: *Muchoo …..in it*
Lukabras: *Muchoo… in latrine*

Such cases were not many in the conversation among the fans of *Witimbule* programme in Radio Mambo FM and therefore they did not impede communication during interpretation of idioms because of exposure to various dialects.

The cases of dialect proved insignificant as an impediment to interpret idioms during communication because of exposure to societal knowledge and idiomatic expressions.

Relevance theory explains that when information is repeated in every aspect of communication, it becomes familiar to the hearer and the most familiar it becomes, the more the cognitive effects hence interpretation of information (Wilson and Sperber, 1995). Relevance theory is effective in clarifying that once the Luhya speaking communities interact in various settings, the easier it becomes to accommodate each other in conversation. Once the information is used repeatedly, the mind gets used to it and as it gets used to it, the more the interest hence correct interpretation.

Native speaker's Intuition Deficit
Most of the findings illustrate that native speaker intuition is the knowledge of vocabulary in the target language. Good mastery of the vocabulary of the speech community easen the interpretation of idioms. If such knowledge becomes deficient you cannot interpret idioms correctly because they are culturally based. Almost a half of the respondents misinterpreted the idioms because of lack of native speaker's intuition, more especially proverbial idioms.
> For instance proverbial idiom code 003: *Amatsukhu….. Lungs* some could not understand it especially if their dialects uses it different from the one on Lukabras.
> Euphemistic idiom code 018: *Winyoshe…. Has gone home. Lukabras.*

Bukusu speakers misinterpreted it as has stood and then attributed it to a politician vying for a seat in the parliament. This is true because it was found that culture of the community is stored in the language. Therefore language and culture can-not be analysed in isolation but as one entity.

Lack of the Subject Part of the Idioms
Boers, *et al.,* (2004) Emphasized that etymological elaboration is the art of associating the whole idiom with its origin or literal interpretation that brings mnemonic effect to idiomatic interpretation. It is also echoed by Bagheri and Fazel in the next paragraph of this paper.

Bagheri and Fazel (2010) brought the concept of etymological elaboration as a strategy of comprehending idioms by associating their meaning with literal interpretation. This is vital to the current study which narrowed down to Oluluhya idioms which also posses such property. Its core aspect is the interpretation of idioms. Such strategy has been addressed by Kiguta *et al.,* (2020) whose findings will direct the path of the current study.

Kiguta *et al.,* (2020) aimed at investigating how the absence of the subject part of the idioms may hinder the interpretation. He found it impeding interpretation of idioms and came up with the strategy of etymological elaboration to find the subject. To use etymological elaboration, you must have the knowledge of cognitive environment or cultural knowledge entirely to be accurate.

These are examples of idioms without a subject: Metaphorical idiom code 001: *Wukwile mutsindang'unyo …has fallen in the black ants.* The subject (who has fallen in black ants) is missing .Using etymological elaboration (literal meaning) we are unable to identify the subject. Using the native speaker's intuition, it is still null and void. We base on the knowledge we have about the cultural environment and the prevailing circumstances (cognitive environment approach) to determine that it was a thief. Therefore if a thief has fallen in black ants, it can act as a hint or mnemonic to map the target domain to the source domain that the thief has been arrested by the police officers. Etymological elaboration is also the history of the idiom which can be traced from cognitive environment.
> Metaphorical idiom code 004: *Akhamanga elinani.. Milks the hyena.* We do not know who milks the hyena. If we use etymological elaboration we shall find that it is the person but we go back to cognitive environment approach to trace that it is a desperate person the we map the target domain to source domain as the desperate person who leads miserable life by attempting the impossibilities for survival.

Metaphorical idiom code 011: *Akanyile omukhono. Twisted or bend the hand.* We cannot interpret the idiom without identifying the subject and yet we cannot identify the subject if we do not know the historical background of the idiom by inferring from the cognitive environment knowledge then etymological elaboration.

Proverbial idiom code 004: Kakwile khushivoya.. Has spilled on traditional clothes. We fast activate the knowledge of cognitive environment that leads us to etymological elaboration. All the knowledge that we bring to the idiomatic world is from the culture or the community from which the idiom was extracted. Such is cognitive environment approach without which etymological elaboration can yield fruits.

Euphemistic idiom code 002: *Wayile eliani liavene… Has plucked someone's vegetables.* We activate the knowledge of etymological elaboration based on the all idiom to find out that it was a thief who can be mapped onto adulterous man. Evidenced from the idiom (someone's). Vegetables can be mapped onto wife still basing on cognitive environment approach.

Euphemistic idiom code 0020: *Walia amachungu… has eaten the rats. Infact* to interpret such idiom we need the knowledge of cognitive environment. It is either you know it or not. It is peculiar to the Luhya speaking community only. It was only applicable during the funeral of the husband whose wife is tested whether she has eaten the rats. It is then mapped to having engaged with side chik (extra marital affairs). More than 20 idioms out of 69 have no subjects.

Basing on the examples given, a good number of the idioms lacked the subjects. The current study found out that etymological elaboration was applicable but not in isolation. There was need to apply the knowledge of cognitive environment before coming to etymological elaboration that needed literal interpretation of the idiom. This study also emphasize that etymological elaboration should not only dwell on literal aspect of the idiom but historical background.

The table 1 below shows how various constraints encountered contributed to misinterpretation of various forms of idioms.

Table 1: How various constraints contributed to misinterpretation of various forms of idioms

Cause of difficulties	Number of idioms misinterpreted
Lack of knowledge of Cognitive environment	60
Lack of contextual clue	30
Emerging idioms	0
Literal interpretation	66
Ambiguity of idioms	30
Lexical mismatch	10
Native speakers intuition deficit	30
Idiolect	5
Lack of idiomatic subject	20

From the above Table 1, what causes the difficult during interpretation of Oluluhya idioms are literal interpretation, emerging idioms, dialectical mismatch, lack of context, ambiguity of idioms, lack of subject part of the idiom and lack of cognitive environment.

Dialectical variation contributed less to misinterpretation of Oluluhya idioms. This is an indicator that the Luhya speaking communities which are represented in the study are intelligible. Those who are passive audience in the Programme found some dialectal constraints. Therefore *Witimbule* programme plays a big role in nativising the Luhya speaking communities hence proving that they are dialects and not languages. From this finding we can ascertain that with maximum exposure to the target language, efficiency in it can be achieved. Most of the fans had no problem of dialectical constraints due to exposure to the varied dialects during the conversation.

Bigham (2008) expounds that accommodation of languages or dialects depends on frequency of conversation. That therefore implies that the frequency of participation in the programme, the more deeply they are likely to accommodate their dialects hence effective communication. In relevance theory by Schroeder (2012) it is concluded that the more frequently the information is conveyed the higher the chance of interpretation. Therefore the idioms which are repeated in a particular dialect, the more it is accommodated and consequently effective interpretation which leads to apt communication.

From the above discussion we can also ascertain that the more the mastery of vocabulary in a given language, the more you sound native like and stand a chance of interpreting idioms correctly. In this study, most of the fans were able to comprehend and interpret idioms due to their ability to get the

vocabulary of each other in a variety of dialects due to dialectical accommodation in *Witimbule* programme.

Taylor and Francis (2007) have also agreed with the previous findings that speakers accommodate their speeches to their addressees by shifting their style of speech to be like their interlocutors. The current study then sought to determine whether speech accommodation can impact positively on interpretation of Oluluhya idioms. It was found that it is the combination of both accommodation and frequency in vocabulary usage that fans from various dialects are able to communicate effectively with each other.

For example euphemistic idiom code 005: *Wutsile Ekombe or Emakombe… Has gone to Ekombe.* The vocabulary Ekombe is understood by very many fans, infact all of them because of its frequency in usage. To go to Ekombe means to die. Among the Luhya speaking communities, death is feared so much that it cannot be mentioned directly but idiomatically. Such is euphemistic idiom.

Ondondo (2013) found that Oluluhya dialects are highly intelligible and ended up joining two dialects of Olunyala West and Olunyala East as one. However they are varied. The current study found that Olukabras dialect is more intelligible to Olunyala West than Olunyala East which borders them.

Literal interpretation of Oluluhya idioms and ambiguity of idioms did not cause significant difficulties compared to the remaining 3. This therefore implies that some idioms are ambiguous and still a few fans interpret the idioms directly without implicit knowledge. The idioms which are ambiguous can be interpreted basing on context given. If there is little or no context at all, knowledge of cognitive environment is applicable.

Emerging idioms are difficult to interpret during *Witimbule* Programme if the interlocutor is not versed with what is happening in the community as at that time. Such respondents also lack the context to ease the interpretation. Such idioms include code 001 of euphemistic idioms: *Amasimba kayelile mufulavu khusoko (mongooses have landed at the market clubs).*

Those without context may apply literal knowledge to say that mongooses are finishing chickens at the market or foreign men are tampering with village girls. The correct interpretation is that the harlots have frequented the village market clubs and they are really harvesting money from community men. This interpretation is made possible by use of cognitive environment.

Lack of cognitive environment was the main cause of difficulties in interpretation of Oluluhya idioms. Most of the idioms demanded cognitive environment but those who were difficient in it were partly or unable to interpret. This then signifies that the difficulties encountered during interpretation of Oluluhya idioms are lack of cultural knowledge, interaction with the target community which is the store of such idioms.

Lack of native speaker's intuition means poor mastery of vocabulary in the target language domain.

Idiolect can be one of the difficulties encountered during interpretation of Oluluhya idioms during communication in *Witimbule* programme. Interpretations of idioms vary from one individual to the other (Tilmatine *et al.,* 2021). This means that information can be interpreted differently by different people. This shows that personal characteristics affect how interpretation of idioms can be. This include environment, exposure to the native speakers language or idiomatic expressions and the interest. The current study sought to investigate the ways of mitigating such hindrances for effective communication. Relevance theory by Wilson and Sperber (1995) postulated that the more the interest in the information communicated the less the cognitive effort, hence high cognitive effects leading to communication.

How the Interlocutors Mitigated or Counteracted the Difficulties Encountered
Several difficulties encountered during interpretation of Oluluhya idioms were overcome by various ways: Cognitive environment knowledge deficit and lack of native speaker's intuition were overcome by searching for the context in which the information was gathered from. This shows that lack of the knowledge of cognitive environment and native speaker's intuition automatically leads to misinterpretation and cannot be overcome.

Idioms being the community property cannot be interpreted without communal or cultural knowledge entirely. Having been exposed to the language of the speech community for a long time and mastering the vocabulary is advantage to the interpreter in dealing with whichever form of idioms. Schroeder (2012) laid emphasis on cultural knowledge and native speaker's intuition besides knowing the situation at hand to tackle figurative language accurately.

Dialectical variation was overcome by code switching and code mixing. This is in line with Magdalena (2012) who found that two speakers can understand each other when speaking dialects of the same language but if they do not understand each other, then they are speaking two different languages. From this assertion we can deduce that Oluluhya is made of dialects because they understand each other. If the assumption was contrary, there would be no conversation in Radio Mambo FM *Witimbule* Programme.

Magdalena (2012:1) resolved that human beings have innate ability to accommodate each other in communication to foster interaction with others. She said people have the way of making their speech similar to that of hearers to create smoothness in conversations. Such process is called dialectal accommodation. Among the Luhya speaking communities, the presenter manages to accommodate speakers from various dialects by dialectical accommodation. In this case, those fans who have been active in the programme for over three years have mastered the art of accommodating each other during conversation without many dialectal constraints. Relevance theory a accounted for dialectal accommodation by being exposed to the target language to master the vocabulary and the knowledge of cognitive environment. However, it was found to be partial because to accommodate each other we should strike a deal between the two dialects to convincingly carter for eachothers constraints. Magdalena (2012) provides the solution by highlighting of accommodation theory.

LEXICAL ACCOMMODATION

Mudogo (2017) had already expounded that the presenters of Mulembe FM radio station programme attempt to accommodate all the speakers of Luluhya languages in order to communicate effectively. This is true only that he did not illustrate the accommodation processes as Magdalena has explained next in this study.

Magdalena (2012) resolved the problem of dialectical constraints by dialectal accommodation through neologism where a word from either Kiswahili or English is borrowed into the local dialects by only changing its morphological structure or phonological aspects. Several words have been applied in Oluluhya language using such process. For instance:

Kiswahili: Mkono
Lukabras: Omukhono
Lubukusu: Kumukhono
Lulogoli: Omugono
Lunyala East and West: Mukhono
Kiswahili: Kitabu
Lukabras: Eshitabu
Lubukusu: Sitabu
Luwanga: Eshitabu
Lulogoli: Ekitabu
Lutirichi: Shitabu
Lumarachi: Shitabu
Lutura: Eshitabu
Lusonga: Shidabu.

Both English and Kiswahili words are finding their way into Luhya dialects as a result of accommodation processes. This is called code switching or code mixing but once the word is adopted into the new language it becomes neologism. In this study, the process has been used successfully and has yielded the fruits because the idiom has been interpreted correctly. Metaphorical idiom code 021: *Enetiwaka yilovile… The network is lost.* English word *Network* is adopted into Luhya speaking communities as *Enetiwaka.* The prefix e is the marker of singular noun. Luhya dialects as Bantu languages are, is capable of vowel insertion for the word to fit in their language. They have inserted *i* after t sound and *a after the= consonant sound* k. Then the word fits into the Luhya lexicon. This is a morphological process.

Katie (2001) explained that neologism is a newly invented word in a given language. This shows that a word can be borrowed or invented in a particular language from the other one. Once it is borrowed, it is calibrated to fit into that language using a morphological process called coinage. Such word changes its morphology to that of the target language.

> For instance metaphorical idioms code 006: *Mupanipepa* is Oluluhya word coined from English word *pan paper. Mupanipepa* is translated as *in pan paper.*
> *Enetiwaka.. Network*
> Euphemistic idioms code 001: *khusoko.* Translation from Kiswahili *Sokoni.* It is the matter of changing the affixes from one position to the other or removing it completely. Therefore, neologism is an accommodation process in solving the problem of dialectical constraints.

Muhind and Ningsih (2021) have done a lot in this area and their contribution cannot go in vain. They explained that various dialects should do inter-dialect accommodation for convergence. This is where one speaker adjusts their dialect to be like that of the second speaker. The current study found out that the speaker of one dialect who acquires more words from the other dialect makes it superior to the other because of increase in vocabulary. When one interlocutor strives to speak like the other one, it is also called dialectal assimilation process. In this study some dialects have followed this suit. For example:

Table 2: Dialectal Assimilation

English	Lukabras	Lunyore
Chair	Eshifumbi	Essala, esifumbi
Praying	Okhusala	Okhulaama, okhusaaya
River	Mmuchela	Musitao, mumwalo, Mumuchela
Teacher	Omwalimu	Omwivali, omwalimu
Examination	Elichela	Amareevo utiani
Pastor	Omwilwatsi	Omukambi, omwelwachi

From this table we can conclude that Olunyole dialect has passed the test of assimilation process and hence superior to Olukabras dialect. Olunyole has borrowed more words from Lukabras in order to accommodate them in the conversation. Of this is how Oluluhya speaking dialects manage to accommodate each other hence effectiveness in communication.

Lack context was overcome by cognitive environment and native speaker's intuition. Emerging idioms as a difficulty would be overcome by cognitive environment. This shows that lack of societal knowledge (Cognitive environment) was the main difficult encountered during interpretation of idioms. This is because lack of such knowledge would mean you look for an expert but deficiency of other methods or difficulties encountered would be mitigated by cognitive environment. Therefore cognitive environment knowledge approach is the best strategy to interpret idioms without which miscommunication can be encountered in the conversation among the interlocutors who applied the idioms. Ambiguous idioms could be overcome by using contextual clue or cognitive environment approach when context is not provided by the speaker or the speaker.

Under this chapter, the causes of difficulties encountered during interpretation were attributed to lack of knowledge of cognitive environment, native speaker's intuition deficit, lack of context clue, lexical mismatch, idiolect, literal interpretation approach, emerging idioms, lack of the subject part of the idiom and ambiguity of idioms. Such constraints encountered were overcome by code switching and dialectal accommodation process (lexical mismatch), cognitive environment approach (ambiguous idioms) and truth condition semantic approach (hyperbolic idioms).

CONCLUSION
The constraints encountered during communication caused misinterpretation. They include lack of cognitive environment as the main hindrance, lack of context, lack of native speaker's intuition knowledge, emerging idioms, lack of subject part of the idiom, ambiguity and lexical mismatch that resulted in dialectal constraints.

RECOMMENDATION AND THE AREA FOR FUTURE RESEARCH
During Oluluhya social ceremonies, Luhya speaking communities should majorly speak in their own tongue regardless of dialects until the trend becomes a habit because the study has revealed that Oluluhya dialects are mutually intelligible. The lexical mismatch as a hindrance to idiomatic interpretation was not significant. It is only that Luhya speaking communities lack confidence in their conversation in public. Such confidence can be built by regular conversation in the native speaker's language and dialectal accommodation process such as code switching, neologism and assimilation.

The future study should be carried out on protolanguage among the Luhya speaking communities for effective communication.

PUBLIC INTEREST STATEMENT
Idioms are mostly used in day-to-day conversation among the Luhya speaking communities to make their language interesting, face saving and the regulator of human behaviour. However among the Luhya people, there is a possibility of misinterpretation of such idioms and hence miscommunication as a result of lexical mismatch. Therefore there is need for study to establish whether there are other challenges encountered during interpretation and investigate the best strategies of interpreting such idioms correctly.

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