

Igbo Proverbs in the Context of Early Communicative Competence and Social Stability

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Abstract: In Igbo society as in many others, language plays a fundamental role in the formation of human character and child upbringing. It transmits societal norms and values from one generation to another by inculcating into the child the mores of his society. Proverb is one of the transmission processes examined in this paper as a viable means to deterring conflict prone vices in the Igbo child. Igbo proverbs are precise and incisive and if appropriately applied to the intellectual and moral developments of a child can serve as tool to reprimand, discourage, instruct and correct or praise the growing child's derailing tendencies more intricately. The work which is divided into five sections comprises the introduction, the literature review, methodology, data and analysis, recommendations and conclusion. The work basically collected its data which are proverbs from Igbo elders of different walks of life and from published literature texts. Some Igbo proverbs encouraging hard work, cooperation, hospitality, and justice were used. To achieve this goal, Bandura's social learning theory of human development and Durkheim's functionalism theory were reviewed. The paper observed that the proper mindset if already instilled in the child by proverbs can help to prune conflict and criminal tendencies. The paper suggests early exposure of children to consistent use of proverbs in their indigenous dialects.

Keywords: Character formation, communicative competence, early exposure, Igbo proverbs and social stability.

I. Introduction

One negative effect of globalization on languages is the waning of the indigenous languages and their dialects. It exposes the present generation to the risk of acculturating easily to various ways of existence appealing to them. Their foreign ideologies contradict their cultural worldviews and relegate to the background their indigenous ingenuity in communicating and responding to their daily societal endeavours. This creates a communication gap presumed to be responsible for youth restiveness manifesting itself in social instability such as conflicts. Conflict simply denotes controversies and tensions within an individual, between two or more persons or organizations within a geographical area. Rakhim in Baron (1990:197) defines conflict as "an interactive process manifested in incompatibility, disagreement or dissonance within or between social entities" (Wikipedia). When conflicts arise between members of the same group, it is seen as interpersonal conflict. It can also occur between members of two or more groups, and involves violence and psychological tension; this is known as intergroup conflict.

Jowett (2007:34), Jehn and Mannix (2001:238-251), and Amason and Sapienza (1997:499), reflect conflicts in two basic dimensions as affective and cognitive types of conflict. Affective arises from individual's inability to control their emotions and personal differences whereas cognitive conflict is task or content oriented. It is an offshoot of a group's perspective and judgment. Whichever way one decides to look at conflict, a glaring fact remains that it has no constructive goal to achieve. It has led to the loss of many lives and properties. In Africa and the world over, the vacuum and dilemma created by conflicts leave indelible impressions in the heart of many who in turn seek revenge. It revolves and seems to have no end. This research is of the opinion that because social conflicts arise due to ineptitude in communication, communication should be tailored towards achieving an effective goal; bearing in mind that appropriate articulation and dissemination of information goes beyond exchange of information to the pragmatism learned hand in gloves in the process of child development.

Communication, being the art of transferring information from one source to another through language can be distorted when there are inappropriate disseminations. As the only human weapon of disseminating information, language is manipulated at will to convey thoughts and ideas. Our means of dissemination being the vocal approaches are sometimes misunderstood, leading to exchange of verbal violence and unresolvable conflicts. The human crave for fame, material wealth or political powers exhume these conflicts as a result of inappropriate responses between the parties involved. Irrational approaches and improper pragmatic use of language learned while acquiring foreign worldviews could be the reason for conflicts in and around various societies. Indigenous cultural heritage like proverbs if properly harnessed and inculcated into the child early enough will adequately impact the human psyche to improve the mental orientation towards other

humans, avoid conflicts and stabilize the society thereby developing communicative competence. The paper examines the early acquisition of proverbs in language use and its effects on the development of the Igbo child as a way to resolving social conflicts and restoring the dignity of the Igbo by preserving these proverbs for posterity.

Having observed the misconceptions arising from inappropriate use of words, the work will reposition the focus of studies on language from structural context to appropriate channeling of speech and effective communication through a developmental re-orientation in children while inculcating social concepts.

This work shall limit itself to selected Igbo proverbs that connote hard work, human cooperation, hospitality, humility, reproof and justice.

Proverbs as Integral Part of Language

Achebe (1958) as presented in Onyejekwe (2001:129) reveals that proverbs serve as oil with which words are eaten. He implied that proverbs though metaphoric, are the only strong weapons of impressing words into the minds of individuals. Ejindu (1977) as cited in Okafor and Ewelukwa (2012:330) expressed proverbs as a matchbox used to ignite words (our translation). Consolidating on the views of Yusuf (1998), Mieder (1989) and Taylor (1994), Onyejekwe (2001:129) consent to proverbs as being metaphoric and requiring concerted thoughts but quickly adds that it encapsulates character and wisdom. Harold (1970: 151-159) describes proverbs as 'a means to social control'. He observes that proverbs are employed to control activities without the use of force, or devices of shame, and a means of praise. He stresses that the proverbs are employed as mechanisms of social or personal control within Tiv society. Nwadike (2009:10) studies the role of proverbs in the intellectual development of the Igbo child and concludes that the proverbs are the sum of the norms and values inherent in a society which shapes people's way of thinking and interpersonal relationships. He maintains that people gain insight into social structure of the society and even their belief systems through proverbs. Expounding further, Nwoga (1975:186-189) classifies proverbs into two; firstly, as illuminating usages used to reinforce message and secondly as a corrective measure which comments on behavior with the intent to correct. These views expressed by the above scholars imply that proverbs are integral part of language and are highly valuable in societies and the Igbo language is not left out. We could define proverbs in this paper as that quintessence of cultural wisdom expressed in situations to convey profound ideas. It differs from idioms in that while proverbs are vehicles for conveying some proven truth, idioms are nonliteral concise expressions that add style to speech.

As a corrective measure, proverbs serve as a weapon through which individuals especially the younger ones become culturally socialized in the mores of his society. A child who learns through this means is doubly advantaged; he understands the proverb as well as uses it as platform for troubleshooting among his peers. This could possibly endear him to the heart of both the young and old as a child with good 'home-training' a phrase accorded to cultured individuals and as the Igbo will say "nwáta kwócháá áká, o soro ókenye rié níri" literally meaning that when a child washes his hands clean, he dines and wines with the elders. In Yoruba oral literature, Sotunsa (2009:102) is of the view that performance is a highly invaluable ingredient for sanitizing a society. She cited an instance where the palace gágan drummers use their talking drums to display proverbs. This artistic performance platform for achieving a desired goal as these, serve the dual purpose of recreation while instructing, praising or even criticizing the audience who are spectators or listeners.

Proverbs should therefore be nurtured as that veritable tool available for inculcating values in the minds of human beings in a conversational manner during early developmental stages in such a manner that emotions are stabilized, positive goals oriented attitudes to life are inculcated and above all conflicts resolved. This projects proverbs as the exigent tool needed in attaining and directing judicious morals which is a key to a stable society. In essence, it could be concluded that proverbs are traditional vehicles by which thoughts resonate.

Importance of Igbo Proverbs to the Society

Finnegan (1970) perceives proverb as a highly prevalent and prestigious form of speech in Igbo society and other African societies. Onyejekwe (2001:129) affirms Penfield's (1983) belief of proverb as a tool for maintaining traditional norms and values in a sarcastic manner to redirect an erring individual. She tried to establish that the realities of life are expressed and imprinted on the mind of man; consequently, Igbo people use their proverbs to reconstruct deviants and straying beings. Any given environment becomes a society if it consists of individuals who share same values. The structure of Igbo society compels its individuals too solemnly to its morals and ethics. Ukaegbu (2006:167) critically analyzed the discourse of proverbs and opines that Igbo proverbs are vital heritage to its society in that it projects the Igbo philosophy as an agent of cultural and social control. This ascertains the fact that in Igbo society, proverbs give insight to their cultural setting, social structure and belief. It becomes very effective when a child is exposed early enough to the ethical standards of his environment through proverbs; as he imbibes social enlightenment to shape his thinking and relationships within and outside his immediate environment.

Theoretical framework:

The theory of social learning as reciprocal determinism proposed by Bandura (1986) as captured by Shaffer and Kipp (2007:56) shall be the framework. Human development according to Bandura reflects an interaction among an active person, (P), the person's behaviour (B), and the environment (E) which is bidirectional; postulating that a child can influence his environment by virtue of his conduct. Piaget opines that Bandura's theory is deficient in the area of cognition which prompted Shaffer and Kipp (2007:387) to specify that the interactionism school of thought is of the view that language development results from a complex interplay among biological maturation, cognitive development and an ever changing linguistic environment that is heavily influenced by the child's attempts to communicate with her companions. It is deducible from their opinion that every child's language development is consolidated by

(i) "a powerful human brain that slowly matures, allowing the child to gain more and more knowledge.

(ii) Exposure of infants and children to meaningful social interactions involving language.

(iii) Culture and birth order; extending his views to the species-specific nervous system that directs the child's abilities and assertion that companions' intervention is crucial to an infant's acquisition of language".

The application of this theory to an Igbo neonate, whose receptive organ is confirmed as healthy, portends the possibility that constant use of proverbs in conversations by adults around him will gradually reside in his subconscious mind. As this child unconsciously begins to apply what he has acquired, he effectively begins to communicate appropriately in societal activities. This work is divided into five sections. The introductory overview is the first section. The next section comprises a review of effective communication and language development, language and human development; society and language development, the place of language in peace building and resolution of conflict. The methods of data gathering are reviewed in section three; section four classifies and analyses proverbs. The recommendation and conclusion form the fifth and last section.

II. Literature Review

Language and Effective Communication

Psychologists (Shaffer and Kipp, 2007) are of the view that children learn faster when their psychological exposure is reinforced by daily emphasis through interactions with older folks in their immediate socio-cultural environment. Effective communication skills become developed when cultural tools such as proverbs generally understood within the social environment of communicators are consistently reinforced and emphasised to the child's hearing. Since communication in every human being emanates from an already existing innate knowledge, the instilled proverbs begin to manifest as the child speaks.

What this implies, is that communication can only become effective when appropriate media are adequately employed, developed and used in a suitable environment. Language is one of such media. Language is simply a medium through which information is circulated. Copland cited in Makinde et al, (2010:241), referred to language as any symbol or system for the storage of information. Put in another way, it is through language that intended symbols are represented. Bloch and Trager (1948:5) opine that "language is a system of arbitrary vocal symbols by which a social group cooperates." From their point of view, it is pertinent to know that no language exists in isolation but among peoples in an environment with a particular motive and code of expression. Hall (1968:158) corroborates the view that language is 'the institution whereby humans communicate and interact with each other by means of habitually used oral auditory symbols'. He presumes from the above that language exists only among humans and is transmitted by means of speech communication, perception and interaction. This characterizes the human community as an environment of unavoidable speech which is repeatedly translated to a listener as an instructive agent or a means to actualizing harmony and exerting control. Consequently, Chomsky (1972:15) concludes that 'when we study human language, we are approaching what some might call the "human essence"—the distinctive qualities of the mind that are so far as we know unique to man'. Suffice it to say that for any individual to carry out an act, it evolves from already stored information in the psycho-linguistic system. Therefore, communication becomes more effective when language is viewed as the essence of communal existence and a better tool for expressing and conveying thoughts. Invariably, the mind of any human is central to his existence while language is his tool to self-realization. Therefore, any repertoire of thought properly developed in man's residual knowledge awakens on impulse to control situations. When therefore proverbs flood one's memory at a young developmental stage, he instantly and effectively employs it to tackle diverse daily opinions.

Language Development in Human

According to Stock and Widdowson (1982), language development is closely related to the general muscular-maturation which begins when the child breathes in the first air. Generally, newborns lack control over their behaviors, vocalization and any muscular movement. This dictates that any action by this neonate is reflex. At the third month of a child's existence, the brain gradually develops inhibiting mechanism to reflex actions

and ultimately the child begins to take control. The neonates also begin to make reflexes connected to the vocal tract.

Yaqub (1999) corroborates that the child begins to develop his receptive skill too which now affords him the opportunity to understand and respond to sounds and strings of speech through gestures and babblings. This developmental stage is recorded to begin in every child at approximately six months of age. Some may start earlier than that while a few others begin after it. The receptive skill begins to store those information displayed repeatedly around him and this he reciprocates anytime he recognizes such habitual displays around him and hereafter a development stage is set for spoken language acquisition. If any delay occurs, it could result in poor speech development.

Society and Language Development

Man's environment plays a role in his development and his mind becomes influenced and furnished by what he hears. This includes his thoughts, beliefs and norms. The Whorfian hypothesis championed by Sapir and Whorf (1930) as cited by Hudson (1980) concurs and asserts that the linguistic form holds a tyrannical hold on human orientation; suggesting that it is only when you expose a child to a certain environment and perspective of living will the child begin to act as is inculcated. Hitherto in social activities, human language acquisition expands to include new vocabulary, becomes creative, generating new ideas and wise sayings (Proverbs) never ever spoken or heard which combines with what he has already acquired to meet the demands of generations to come if need arises. The orientation any human acquires fuses with an environmental influence. Consequently, the role of language in the development of man and his environment serves as a compulsory element in addressing culture, attitudes and moral values as these are the key components of existentialism. This environment of interest is that society or that speech community which communicates and share similar rules for the conduct and interpretation of speech. Schriffrin (1994:39) notes that 'communication is part of cultural knowledge and behaviour which demands recognition of both the diversity of communicative possibilities and practices and the fact that such practices are an integrated part of what we know and do as members of a particular culture'.

In Igbo land as much as in Africa, some of their writing systems did not commence early hence their communal experiences and beliefs were shared and embodied in their oral form of communication such as proverbs. It propelled the peace of such communities and consolidated their values. Ogbalu (1965) in Nnadi (2009) opines that Igbo language is one of such African languages which encompassed its wisdom, belief, and knowledge in proverbs for a better molding of the ideal Igbo man. The place of proverbs in promoting national peace should as a matter of fact begin from these communities as older people incline to the usage of these proverbs to rid the society of conflict prone ills. To this end, the language of proverbs becomes a veritable social tool for redirecting thoughts and actions of man within his society.

The Place of Language in Peace Building and Conflict Resolution

The social learning theory is society centered, intertwining human language development with the level of societal exposure and involvement. This obliges Durkheim (1938:70-81) in (Wikipedia) to see society as a functioning organism. Functionalism concerns "the effort to impute, as rigorously as possible, to each feature, custom, or practice, its effect on the functioning of a supposedly stable, cohesive system". This implies that language can manifest itself in a cultural feature such as proverbs to stabilize a society. Durkheim addressed crime as the major cause of societal conflicts indicating that crime plays a role in the evolution of morality and societal co-existence. When a child has been properly tutored in his social environment, well-fortified in the pragmatic application of language of proverbs, he quickly resents crime bearing in mind that it has a negative repercussion thereby enhancing peace. *Ájuzie ógu, íkpe áma ndi mmuo.* (when the needful is done, the gods share in the blame).

III. Methodology

This study adopted the unstructured observation methodology which according to Ezeah (2004) involves watching and listening to persons overtime without manipulating or controlling it and recording findings in ways that permit some degree of analytical interpretation. Two major instrument of data collection were used in this work: listening, discussions and oral interview. The primary data for this work which are proverbs were gathered through oral interviews and discussions with elderly men and women of Igbo descent who are between the ages of 45 and 65 engaged in discussing causes of conflicts and rate of moral decadence among youths and possible ways of restoring sanity to the society. The secondary source of data was collected from written texts. Meanwhile, the tone marking convention adopted recommends the following:

- 1a. mark all high tones.
- b mark all step tones.
- c. leave all low tones unmarked

The following are examples of this recommendation

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|---------|------|------|---------|
| 2a. (i) | ísí | ísí | (head) |
| (ii) | áká | áká | (hand) |
| b. (i) | égō | égō | (money) |
| (ii) | ézē | ézē | (teeth) |
| c. (i) | àkwà | akwa | (bed) |
| (ii) | àlà | ala | (land) |

IV. Presentation of Data and Analysis

The following proverbs will be grouped under five major subheadings. Group A will highlight proverbs used to encourage hard work and determination, B shall have its emphasis on proverbs used for reproof, while C displays cooperation and hospitality adages. D showcases those proverbs portraying humility. Proverbs also empowers one to pursue justice and this is exactly the crux of group E.

NOTE: The proverbs cited here were given literal, contextual or philosophical meaning to reflect the African culture except where equivalent English proverbs give exactly same concept like the African ones.

4.1 Group A: Encouragement and Determination

Proverbs	Literal Translation	Contextual/Philosophical
Ákáájá ajā n'ebute ónụ nmanụ	Sandy hands cause oily mouth.	Success is the fruit of persistence and hard work. (no cross, no crown)
ńkú ónyé kpara n' ókòchì ka ó na- anyá n' ùdùmmiri.	Firewood gathered in dry season becomes very useful in rainy season.	Early preparation saves future embarrassment.
Úgwú mutá n'gbàjí úkwu, ágádí nwányi amutáágbátu ezutú ike.	When a hill learns to get an elderly woman tired, she learns to rest at intervals.	Resilience is the key to life.
Ọkúko ghará kwóm, o ji gini ázụ úmụ ya.	When the hen leaves the cackle sound, with what shall it feed its children?	There is no food for a lazy man.
Ónyé ndi n'eri ázụ ukpo	One patient eats the dry fish.	Determination and patience is the key to success. A patient dog eats the fattest bone
Ngana kpuchié ákwa, ágúú ékpughé ya.	When a lazy man covers himself with cloth, hunger uncovers him.	There is no place for an idle man.
Chọé éwú ójii mgbe ihé di	Look for a black goat when there is daylight.	Make hay while the sun shines. (Do every necessary thing while you can.)
Áhíá omá na-eré onwe ya.	Good market sells itself.	Good wine needs no push.
Máálughí, a díghí égbó	When there is no fight, there is no separation.	No success comes without attempts and efforts.
Ótu otu ,abụọ abụọ, mere ite éde.	One, one, two, two, makes a pot of cocoyam.	Do every necessary thing while you can. (No great achievement comes on a platter of gold).

4.1.1 Analysis: These proverbs in group A are applied to inculcate the spirit of hard work and persistence in a child. The Igbo believes in hard work and determination. Idleness and begging are highly frowned at. Every Igbo parent strives to impact the attitude of independence by encouraging hard work even when faced with adverse situations. It is the today's child who becomes the adult of tomorrow and will endure every storm knowing that anyone who has begun an endeavor encounters one or two delays but with long suffering all his genuine efforts are rewarded. Note that the efficacy of these proverbs lies in their effective application by the older ones involved.

4.2 Group B: Reproof

Proverbs	Literal Meaning	Contextual/Philosophical
sépu áká enwe n'ófè túpú oghoáká mmádu.	Remove a monkey's hand from the soup pot before it turns to that of human.	A small leak will sink a great ship.
Ntúkwu na-agú ngwere mana ódu ekweghi ya.	A lizard wishes to sit, but its tail won't allow it.	Reckless youth makes rueful age.
Ónyéújo ji ndu yá na onye ike	The coward preserves his life and that of the mighty man.	Barking dogs seldom bite.
Ónyéúlo yá na-agbáókụ anághí achú oke.	A person whose house is on fire doesn't chase rats.	Discretion is the better part of valour.
Agwá ntí ma ntí ánuhí, egburu isi egburu ntí	When the ear refuses to hear, when the head is cut off, it is cut off with it.	A word is enough for the wise.
Ọkúko ntí íke, n' ézu ike n'eko nínunụ	A stubborn fly ends in the grave.	Every man is the architect of his own fortune.
Ukpana okpóko gburu, nti chírj yá.	It pays to heed advice.	Don't make a fire you can't quench.
Ajo nwányi bú n'ká di ya.	A bad wife is her husband's old age.	Every man is the architect of his own fortune/A deviant character sends a loved one to an early grave.
Á tuóró ó mara o mara, mana á tuóró	When you advice the wise, he becomes	As you make your bird, so you lie on it.

ofeke, o fényé isi na óhjá	wiser but when you advice a fool, he becomes more foolish.	
Ágbá mbụ atụ n'ógwe, ágbá ábụo átu n'ógwe, ọ bụ ógwe ka apiri aku?	Shoot the first inside a pit, shoot a second inside a pit; is the arrow meant for the pit.	Once beaten twice shy.

4.2.1 Analysis: In the instance of the first proverb in this group, a monkey can never be a human being, the erring child is made to understand that no amount of pretense or smartness can achieve him anything good except things are done in the right way. The second supports the first in a manner that it is only when things are done in order that you will be proud to associate with the noble. The third asserts that two wrongs never make a right. It is preferable to avoid trouble. People who are serious minded do not go after frivolities and finally when a child rejects corrections, he bears the repercussions alone. In these words of reprimand, any fervid listener recalls them whenever he is involved in an ordeal and will not hesitate to abstain from negative influences.

4.3 Group C: Cooperation and Hospitality

Proverbs	Literal translation	contextual/philosophical
Gidi gidi bụ ugwu éze	A crowd is the honour of a king	unity is strength
Éléchá aghará bụ utó	To overlook wrongs sustains a relationship.	The least said the soonest mended.
É buru ózu íne ónyé ozo, ọ dị ka ọ bụ ukwú nkú	When another person's mother's corpse is being transferred to a grave side, it looks like a heap of firewood.	A friend in need is a friend in deed.
ányúko mámiri ónu, ọ gbó ufúfu.	When people collectively urinate, it foams.	United will stand, divided will fall. /Better results are achieved when there is team work.
Agbata óbi ónyé bụ nwánne ya.	A person's neighborhood is his relation.	We can live without our friends but not without our enemy.
ótu áka rụta mmanu, yáezuó ọha	When a finger is dipped into oil, it affects others.	Evil weeds grow apace.
Ugbogoro miri m mikwáránwányi íbem	Let the pumpkin of my co-wife be fruited as mine.	Sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander.
Ótu ukwu ósísí ádjighi eme ozara.	One tree cannot make a forest	Two good heads are better than one.
ọko kowa mímadu, íbe ya akọ ya.	When a human is in need, he looks for a human.	Be your brother's keeper.
Áká nri kwọ áká ekpe, áká ekpe ákwọ áká nri.	When the right hand washes the left hand, the left hand also washes the right hand.	One good turn deserves another.

4.3.1 Analysis: The Igbo believes in oneness and being a brother's keeper. There is no gainsaying the fact that one who is fortified with a spirit of brotherhood and cooperation is indeed a communal asset. Such a person aims at protecting not just an immediate interest but that of a wider society. He learns to disparage cheating and distortions at any elected position he may find himself. The above proverbs contribute to such selfless disciplines.

4.4 Group D: Humility

Proverbs	Literal meaning	contextual/philosophical
áká ala na íkpere ala, ka nwá ehi ji añú nne ya afa.	With arms and knee on the ground, a calf sucks its dam.	A humble person wins the attention of people.
Ókwuru ádjighi akáji ónyé kuru ya.	The okra plant does not grow taller than the one who planted it.	Do not kill the goose that lays the golden egg.
Nwányi ólúómá, di anaghi ajuru ya nrí.	Husbands do not refuse food from a woman with tender voice.	A good wife makes a good husband.
á na esi n'úlo mára nma puó áma.	One's beauties start from the home to the outside environment.	Charity begins from the home.
agbógho tóchá, yá echere íbe ya.	When a girl child gets to the peak of her maturity, she awaits another.	A man is never too old to learn.
ónyé feé éze, éze erú ya áká.	He who bows for the king will become a king.	Great oaks from little acorns grow.
í gáfée n'obi eze, gbá mbo kelé ya.	When you pass by a throne, endeavor to greet it	Hasty climbers have sudden falls.

4.4.1 Analysis: This section centers on the importance of being humane in heart. Humility and respect are highly esteemed in Igbo cultural worldview. When humility is sung into the heart of a child, he affects the next person in love, esteem and regard and such revolves. Emphasis must always be drawn from such a child to influence another child. An Igbo adage puts it this way, *ányá na íhe óma gbara ndu*. Every parent will encourage his child to emulate such a behavior knowing that in humility greatness is achieved; this will in turn build a better society.

4.5 Group E: JUSTICE

Proverbs	Literal meaning	contextual/philosophical
Égbé beré ugo beré,nké si ibe yá ébela,nku kwaá ya.	A hawk perches, an eagle perches, any that says no to the other,let the feathers break.	Live and let live.
O ji fhe nwata welie áka elu,áká jiwe ya,yá ewétuó ya.	Anyone raising his hand with that which belongs to a child, when he is tired he brings it down.	Uneasy lays the head that wears the crown.
Nwáta ásoghi nsi di m n'ike taá m áru,agághim asókwa uburu kee ya okpo	Revenge is more painful when it is intentional.	Tit for tat.
Nwáta riéáwo,ọ jú ánu.	When the child eats frogs, he rejects meat.	Give the devil his due.
Ékeé okee na-áká na-áka,amárá ónyé ákporo áshì	When gifts are shared hand by hand, a hated person will be known.	Examples are better than precepts.
Ókenyè taa isi ọkụ'kọ,ụ' mụaka abuo nri mmuo ubu.	If the elder eats the fowl's head, children will struggle over the food meant for the gods	Honesty is the best policy.
A ga m ékwo na nna m loro m uwa nyegbuo ya na nri	I will not because my father reincarnated, overfeed him.	Forewarned is forearmed
Égbúru tinyere úru,egburu tinyere okpukpu.	If you cut and add to the fleshy part, also cut and add to the bony part.	Much coins, much care.

4.5.1 Analysis: Justice is a great asset in any society. When there is a call to justice, even the down trodden learns to show uprightness. Ásokata éze ányá,e kpuru nkata n'isi gwa ya okwu (when the king has trampled on his subjects,he in turn receives negligence) is also a proverb to instigate uprightness even among kings and leaders. Igbo people are filled with experiences from where they admonish their young to always tread with caution. The proverbs in this group will go a long way to instill upright character in children who will not hesitate to act sequel to such.

V. Summary/Recommendations/ Conclusion

Moral and socio-cultural decadence in our society has been blamed on the inadequate exposure of children to an early interaction with their immediate cultural endowment. Every Igbo child is endowed with some unique wisdom to contribute in some sense. Uche bụ àkpà,onye ọ bụla nya nke ya. This intrinsic quality teaches the child to be tolerant with every individual bearing in mind the principle of individual differences. This work solemnly advocates an early exposure to social learning and interaction as a reciprocal approach of language development. It posits early social interactions with older people who embellish their expressions with proverbs within the community of existence in the process of child development. Hence, a stable society is anchored on the communicative competence and early exposure to proverbs. The society will benefit as wars and conflicts will be drastically reduced. It is therefore pertinent that every parent henceforth should reposition the thinking of these young ones by allowing them socialize among age groups, in community development programs and cultural activities where seasoned people endowed with proverbs can be allowed to interject their messages with proverbs as a way to emphasize importance. The research concludes that conflicts can be tremendously averted in our various societies when the development of a child includes a pervasive exposure to the daily application of proverbs.

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