

Published By Scholar Indexing Society

E-ISSN: 2228-837X---DOI URL: <http://doi.org/10.53075/Ijmsirq/66577657765767677>Journal Homepage: <https://scholars.originaljournals.com/ojs/index.php/ojs/index>

Contemporary Use of Proverbs as a Tool for Directing Everyday Communication with Young Akan Speakers

Yeboah, Mensah-Aborampah

Catholic University College of Ghana, Fiapre Sunyani, Bono Region, Ghana

Email. yaborampah@yahoo.com**Dominic Frimpong, PhD.**

Valley View University, Techiman Campus, Ghana

Email. dfrimpong@vvu.edu.gh

Abstract: The use of language among the human race is an endowed gift from God. It is the means of communication through which humans interact to express all facets of human and psychological feelings. This study is situated within the purview of Sociolinguistics and Ethnolinguistics. One of the major languages used in Ghana is Akan. The use of Akan in Ghana is widespread; its widespread use goes beyond the native-speaker boundaries. It is expected that a native speaker of a language must know the language, understand its structure and meaning, and use it appropriately in given situations. This study focuses attention on the use of proverbs of the Akan speaking people of Ghana, with particular attention on the young speakers whose near-neglect of the use of local proverbs leaves a gap in their everyday use of language. Relevant data on the concept of proverbs and their use was obtained from primary sources, from experienced informants such as traditional rulers, folklorists, the elderly and my teachers, and secondary sources like the internet, newspapers, and books articles and storybooks on Akan culture. The expressions used in this paper are based on the Akan orthography and phonemic method. The study reveals that the youth of Akan speech communities do not attach much attention to the use of proverbs. They are to some extent unfamiliar with proverbs and their use, and this inadequate knowledge makes them communicatively incompetent in their mother tongue. To ameliorate this situation, the Akan youth needs to be conscientized on the importance of proverbs, which forms part of the linguistic repertoire of a people's language.

Keyword: Proverbs, Akan, language, Akan youth, Ghana

DOI: 10.53075/Ijmsirq/66577657765767677

1. INTRODUCTION

Culturally, one important thing that identifies a people as a unique group is language. Language, no doubt, plays a remarkable role among its users. People listen to what is said to them and upon that act accordingly through the use of language. "That proverbs abound in every living language is not untrue". Your own language and my language have proverbs. Proverbs, just like folktales; *Ananse stories*, serve as an archetype in all languages. It sounds prudent on the part of a native speaker in a speech community to examine the origin, common features, meanings, the use and value of proverbs in language use. Holmes (2001) opines that our speech gives clues to others as to who we are, where from and possibly what kind of social experiences we had. In this way, language primarily serves as a group marker. It gives the individual out as a speaker of a particular language. It is indeed a good practice as a native speaker of language to know, understand and

use some common proverbs in daily use in the speech community. Obeng (1996) opines that proverb are used extensively in Akan discourse. He adds that the proverb is highly valued as a mode of communication among the Akan of Ghana. But more noticeably, in the Akan speech community (which forms the largest ethnic group in Ghana 49.1% from the 2000 national population census, Agyekum 2006), young speakers are scarcely found communicating using proverbs in their utterances.

Obeng (1996) notes that Akan proverbs have been studied by folklorists and linguists (Rattray 1927; Finnegan 1970; Yankah 1986,1989a ,1989b) and by ethnomusicologist (Nketiah 1971). Obeng (1996) further notes that Yankah's (1989b) study on Akan proverbs was comprehensive. In that study, Yankah discusses the place of proverbs in Akan society, proverbs authorship and the use of proverbs and opportunities for creativity in the various contexts including jurisprudence and church sermons. Amissah-Arthur, J. B. (2022).

Obeng (1996) did a study on *The Proverb as a Mitigating and Politeness Strategy in Akan Discourse*. He sees a proverb as a highly valued mode of communication among the Akan. He demonstrates that Akan elders, in advising a young person even one of their own children engage in *facework*. He further demonstrates that proverbs are used to mitigate the upcoming potentially difficult, tense or risky utterances. In the context of advising, he states that proverbs serve to warn advisees of upcoming face- threatening acts (FTAs). A proverb thus "softens" the force of impending FTA. The use of proverbs and pre-proverbial utterances is thus in cognizance of the delicacy of the advice-giving event. Appropriate use of proverbs in this way, serves as a solidarity tool in language use and this harmonises and stabilizes the entire speech community Moasun, F. Y., & Mfoafo-M'Carthy, M. (2021).

But more often than not, when the Akan youth encounter simple statements in proverbial use, they fall flat with their meanings and interpretation making them aliens in the common day to day use of their own mother tongue. This leaves a gap in their day to today use of language. This is a matter of concern and needs to be addressed. This present study has links with Yankah's (1989) and Obeng's (1996) studies on Akan proverbs. Both studies have similar focus on the use of proverbs as a highly valued mode of communication among the Akan. Though both studies do not specifically examine the speaker attitude of the Akan youth in relation to their knowledge, understanding, interpretation, and use of proverbs in their day-to-day interaction, they (the studies) serve as pioneering works for this present study follow. This paper intends to fill the gap. I specifically intend to examine the use of proverbs among the Akan youth whether they know and use proverbs or whether they know proverbs but intentionally don't use them. In this discussion, the term youth (speakers) apply to young native speakers of Akan between twelve and twenty-one. Towards the peak of this age brackets speakers are deemed mature in the use of their mother tongue and could equally take firm decisions concerning their way of life Fernández, L. J. T. (2022).

It is firmly hoped that this discussion would bring to the notice of its beneficiaries the general concept of Proverbs, their use and meaning as part of everyday communication. Specifically, the discussion would educate Akan youth on the essence to understand and use proverbs appropriately in their language. They, as individuals, should also be able to discuss the origin, features and values of proverbs and also be able to analyse some Akan proverbs and their meanings and moral teachings in daily use. It would equally add to the available sociolinguistic and ethnolinguistic literature on Akan in Ghana.

2. LITERATURE SURVEY

This study is situated within the purview of Sociolinguistics and Ethnolinguistics. Hudson (2001) states that Sociolinguistics is the study of language in relation to society. Lyons (2009) sees Ethnolinguistics as the study of language in relation to culture taking *culture* in the sense in which it is used in anthropology and more generally in social science. Hudson (1980) describes culture as a socially acquired knowledge; that is knowledge that someone has by virtue of being a member of a particular society. The main import of what is implied here is that the culture of a people is the shaper of their use of language, their way of thinking and their general world view in a particular society. Agyekum (2006) captures this concept and simply states that, “there is a strong interface between a people’s language and their cultural practices”. Based on this conceptual frame, sources of proverbs, their analyses, interpretations, meanings, and moral teachings would be based in this study.

Proverbs form essential part of language use. This discussion provides the following general features of proverbs for our consideration. A proverb is:

1.	A wise or witty saying
2.	Short in structure/form
3.	True always (stands the test of time)
4.	A famous (well-known) saying
5.	A saying that intends to teach, educate, warn, advise and form a person
6.	Common in every language
7.	Common in everyday language use.

In its attempt to define Proverb, the Chambers’ Twenty-First Century Dictionary gives the etymology of the word from French as *Proverbe* and from Latin as *Proverbium*, from *verbum* (word). The Dictionary goes ahead then to define a proverb as “*any of as a body of well-known neatly-expressed sayings that give advice or expressed a supposed truth*” Benheddi (2012) states that, “a proverb is a phrase, saying, sentence, statement or expression of a folk that is transformed from one generation to another and which contains a piece of advice, truth, person experience and moral lessons concerning life”. She adds that proverbs are popularly known and some are used universally. Archbishop Emeritus Peter Kwesi Sarpong of the Catholic Archdiocese of Kumasi, Ghana, says that, “*proverbs are very witty simple statements that express philosophy of life*” He further comments that proverbs are simple formulae with which someone says something that meant a lot to them. To corroborate these definitions and expressed views on proverbs, an attempt at a working definition of a proverb in this discussion would be a well-known sort of witty saying with *permanent truth* (this truth stands the test of time). Generally, and/or purposely, a proverb intends to teach, advise, warn, educate and form the individual and also attempts to reconcile individuals who co-habit in society. Proverbs manifest in traditional folktales, idioms, poetry, songs, commercials, advertisement, euphemistic expressions, allusion and metaphor, See Obeng (1996:522). In view of this, a West African prolific novelist, Chinua Achebe, highly estimates the value of proverbs by saying: “Proverbs are palm oil with which words are eaten”

Proverbs serve as remarkable and indispensable language ingredients among the Akan and most probably other ethnic groups in Ghana. Proverbs catalyse human wisdom, philosophy, knowledge and moral ethics. Proverbs cover themes in relation to the existence and greatness of God,

ancestors, marriage, human-beings, family, death, values, magic, animal kingdom, plants, divorce, greed, jealousy, love, kindness, unkindness, hatred, sacrifice, meekness, generosity, love, abomination, sympathy etc. In fact, in all spheres of human life, both physical and spiritual realms, the philosophy of the Akan people, in particular, is embedded in proverbs.

Empirical evidence on proverbs from a private study by Joshua N. Kudajie into Ga/Dangme Proverbs, identifies fifteen major themes which he considered common among people. I itemize these themes below which include issues on: Making right use of opportunity and acting appropriately, Cause and effect, boomerang reaction, Circumspection, cautiousness and discretion, Co-operation and community, Self-reliance and individual responsibility, Virtues, Vices, The value of human being, Contentment, Being calm and letting things take their own natural cause, Against wrong doing or being too certain about the future, Preparing for the future, Respect for experience and the elderly past experience which is invaluable for success in the present and future, Keeping domestic matters private and God's providence and care.

These themes on proverbs identified by Kudajie fall in line with what I have earlier mentioned about the Akan concept on proverbs. These similar themes buttress my earlier claim in this discussion that proverbs are archetypes that share similarities in given situations in language use across cultures. Proverbs, so to speak, form an essential part of language and its usage and that any speaker's complete dearth of knowledge in the use of proverbs cannot boast of being communicatively competent in the language they speak. A speaker's eloquence in the use of a language is therefore incomplete without adequate knowledge of the use of proverbs and their use. Dzahene-Quarshie, J., & Omari, S. (2021).

3. GENESIS OF PROVERBS

Since time immemorial, the origin of human language could not be firmly established by research linguists, folklorists, anthropologists, historians, etc. In fact, all frantic efforts made by all manner of researchers over the globe to prove the origin of human language have proved futile. No concrete or specific result could be established. However, some research linguists have put up some speculations in their attempts to prove and establish the origin of human language and the first language ever spoken. One of such speculative sources is the Divine source theory. The Biblical account of the Divine source theory simply says that language is given by God, the creator of humankind at the beginning of creation, (Genesis 2: 19). But as to when, was the beginning of creation and the first language ever spoken, linguists could not up to now establish that. Since proverbs are part and parcel of a language, we cannot in this discussion put the origin of proverbs at a certain point in history. We can conveniently say that they constitute part of language and evolve with language in the beginning of time. We cannot in the same vein attribute the authorship of proverbs to a particular authority in a lineage group or tribe. Proverbs are oral and they are handed down by word of mouth from a generation to generation.

Proverbs are considered as having communal authorship. Obeng (1996) alludes to this assertion and talks of proverbs as national heritage and observes that speakers use proverbs generally to express a variety of purposes in a variety of ways. So, speakers who use proverbs usually start a proverb by saying, "our elders say", "our people say", "our forebears say" and then say the proverb, for example; Our elders say, "*Tikoroŋ nko agyina*" to mean, one head does not make a council. We can in this way talk of Akan Proverbs (Ebe), Kolangɛ Proverbs (Searegɛ), Igbo Proverbs (Ilu), Dagaare Proverbs (Sokpare) and English Proverbs etc. rather than to say, Dr Nuhu's Proverbs or

Nana Aborampah's Proverbs. If we should associate certain proverbs to a particular person, then what we seem to say is that there is something special about such proverbs and their use which is associated with that particular person who is fond of using those proverbs always to buttress his or her philosophy of thought. Another feature of proverbs is that it appears that the ability or power to create new proverbs is non-existent today because the proverbs we already know or have in a language are those we continually use day in day out yet there is the possibility for the creation of new ones. See Yankah (1989).

4. USING PROVERBS

Undoubtedly, all manner of persons, folklorists, chiefs, chief spokespersons, courtiers, heads of state, laymen, professionals in any trade, adults or youths irrespective of gender employ the use of proverbs in their day-to-day interaction in society. This means that the use of proverbs is in no way restricted. Whoever has knowledge of proverbs could use them when and where the need arises. For example, parents, teachers, chiefs, chief spokespersons (akyeame), priests /pastors, soothsayers, craftsmen, juju men, lawyers, adults, magicians and even youths, all these persons in their day-to-day activities such as conversation, music and in visual form use proverbs. However, in spite of this plausible idea of judicious use of proverbs in society, it cannot go without some challenges. We now turn attention to some prevalent challenges identified in using proverbs.

In recent times, a great majority of the populace mainly the youth in Akan speech communities, perceive the use of proverbs as being ancient and obsolete practice and so scarcely attempt to use them. Besides, the terse language in which proverbs are expressed, coupled with the semantic ambiguity that go with many of them when cited in isolation, pose a big difficulty for the youth to understand and use proverbs, (See Schottman 1993:540; Obeng 1996:522). Some interesting weekly cultural programmes on local FM stations are poorly patronized by the youths in the local communities. A cross section of some Akan youth speakers (of both sexes) in the institution I teach, are not even familiar with some common local proverbs in use. Their everyday utterances are completely devoid of proverbs. Because they don't see the value of using proverbs, they care less to learn to use them. The apparent motivating factor behind this philosophy of the youth is modernity and change. But in reality, any speaker of language who shuns local proverbs in their speech community becomes communicatively incompetent and is likely going to suffer the consequence. Yule (2007) notes that speech is a form of social identity and used consciously or unconsciously, to indicate membership of different social groups in different speech communities.

This is summed up in a common Akan proverb, *Obibiara a nte ne kuromhene abɛn ase no, yera wɔ badwam*, which translates literally into English means; *He who is unable to interpret the message from the trumpet of his chief gets missing at social gatherings*. Therefore, it stands to reason that a speaker of a language must strive to know and use the commonly used proverbs in their speech community because they (proverbs) are part and parcel of language use. And as a clue to overcome the semantic ambiguity of proverbs, Obeng (1996) cites (Siran 1993) as saying that considerable significance or emphasis be placed on the "contexts-of-situation" in which the proverb is cited or appropriately applied to unravel its meaning.

The value of understanding and using proverbs in human society cannot be underestimated. It is believed that the Ghanaian society abounds in rich traditions and that one of the fabrics that builds life in Ghana is proverbs. Proverbs always spice up one's speech and clads him/her with

the robe of wisdom. Among the Ibos of West Africa, Chinua Achebe, a prolific African novelist expressed that, the art of conversation is regarded very highly, and proverbs are palm oil with which words are eaten'. People, who know and use local proverbs judiciously and cautiously are held in high esteem in society because they display high sense of traditional wisdom. Again, knowledge with the use of proverbs makes the speaker self-confident and his or her language becomes beautiful and enjoyable. Also, knowledge with the use of proverbs could liberate a speaker from an awkward predicament. Furthermore, a speaker's ability to use proverbs appropriately helps to educate, form, transform and inform others in society in traditional wisdom. We can add that knowledge with the use of proverbs could reveal the historical background of an ethnic group. More so, the appropriate use of proverbs could bring about stability and social cohesion to society. Above all, the Good Book also provides many proverbs, which comes as no surprise since all wisdom comes from God. For the significance of using proverbs, see also Seitel (1977) cited in Obeng (1996).

5. MATERIALS AND METHOD

This research article, examined some common Akan Proverbs in daily use in Ghana with their literal meanings and moral teachings. Akan is a member of the Niger-Congo (Kwa group) languages found in West Africa. The major dialects of Akan in Ghana are the Akuapem Twi, the Asante Twi and Fante. (Adomako 2015). The rest of Akan speaking people in Ghana include the Akyem, the Akwamu, the Bono, the Kwawu, the Agona, the Assin, the Twifo, and the Wassa. (See Agyekum 2010). Their system of inheritance is matrilineal. The Akans use the Arabic script and phonemic method in its orthography. The Akan orthography has two additional unfamiliar letters [ɛ] and [ɔ]. The Akan expressions rendered in this discussion are rendered in this orthography. (See Agyekum 2006).

5.1 Source of Data

The whole compilation of Akan proverbs in this paper includes those that I personally know from experience as one who interacts with other users of Akan language. Others were gathered from primary sources from the stock of other experienced language users such as traditional rulers and their spokespersons in the Akan speech community. I gathered other sources from my parents, grandparents, the elderly and my teachers from the speeches and conversation sessions I usually have with them. Often, I sat closely with these important personalities endowed with traditional wisdom during leisure times and record their life time episodes, stories, and conversations that are often pregnant with proverbs. I always sought for explanation of some complicated or terse proverbs I seem not to understand, after which I become convinced with their structures, context, meanings and usage. Other proverbs were compiled from secondary sources from the Internet, newspapers, books, research articles and story books on Akan culture. I made frantic effort to understand or know the structure or form of all such proverbs I provide here as well as their purported meanings accepted by society. The reliable sources from where I gathered data for this discussion, was the motivation that strongly urged me to undertake this study.

Find below a table of some Akan proverbs with their structures, meanings and moral teachings.

Proverb	Meaning and teaching
1. ɔba nyansafo, wɔbu ne be na wɔnka no asɛm	We speak to the wise man in proverbs and not in plain language. (There is no need to talk at length to an intelligent person)
2. Abɔfra bɔ nwa na ɔmmɔ akyekyedegɛ	A child breaks the shell of the snail but not that of the tortoise. (Do not attempt what is beyond your strength or do not be over ambitious)
3. Abrewa hwɛ akokɔ na akokɔ hwɛ abrewa	The old woman cares for the chicken and the chicken cares for the old woman. (When someone cares for you, you are also expected to care for that person when he is in need.)
4. Obi dɔ wo a na ɔbawo fie.	It is when someone loves you that he comes to your house. (a person keeps the company of the one he loves)
5. ɔba dueduefoɔ nto ne nafunu. ɔba kyimakimafoɔ nto ne nafunu	The wandering child does not see the body of his dead mother before burial (a person who does not keep in touch with his home usually misses important occasions, eg the burial of his close relative.)
6. Obi nim a obi kyeregɛ	If one does not know, another man teaches him. (Men depend on one another for knowledge)
7. Woto woboase (dwa ntatea a, wohu ne nsono	If you patiently dissect an ant, you see its intestines. (With patience, difficulties can be overcome).
8. ɔbosom anim wokɔ no mprensa	The oracle is always consulted three times. (if at your first attempt you do not succeed, try, try and try again until you succeed)
9. Ayɔnkogoro nti na ɔkoto annya ti	It was because of bad friends that the crab has no head. (One should be careful in making friends).
10. Onyame nkum wo a, wonwu	If it is not the will of God, you will not die. (This show that everything depends of God)
11. Kwae a agyewo no, wɔnfrɛ no kwaewa	Anybody who has helped you is not a mere person to you.
12. Wote puupuu a wɔbi di	Don't think too much about what others are doing, you can equally do the same.
13. Wosenewo yɔnko a ɔtanewo	He who is greater than his neighbor is hated

Published By Scholar Indexing Society

E-ISSN: 2228-837X---DOI URL: <http://doi.org/10.53075/ljmsirg/66577657765767677>Journal Homepage: <https://scholars.originaljournals.com/ojs/index.php/ojs/index>

14. Hu manisọ mame nti na atwe mmienụ nam	It is because of help that is why antelopes move in two
15. Ayonko gorọ nti na ọkọtọ annya tiri	It is because of friendship that is why the crab has no head
16. Nea ọwọ akano no suro sonsono	He who has been bitten by a snake is frightened at the sight of an earth worm, once bitten twice shy
17. Tikoro nko agyina	One head does not make a council
18. ọkọtọ rewewa, neba nso rewewa, hwan na ọbegye ne ba taataa?	The adult is crawling, its offspring is crawling where does the help come from
19. Nam dodoọ nsge nkwan	Too much meat does not spoil the palatability of soup
20. ọbra ne woarawabọ	Life is how you make it
21. Dofokyege da nsuom a ọndane ọdenkyem	For long a wood plank remains in a river, it would not turn into a crocodile
22. Dua bata bọọ netwa yę twana	It is difficult to cut a tree that stands firmly against a rock
23. Bibiara nso Nyame yę	Nothing is impossible with God.
24. Obi nkyere akwadaa Nyame	Nobody shows the child God
25. Obiara emfa ne nsa benkum nkyere ne kurom kwan	Nobody points to the direction of his hometown with a left hand
26. Woankọ obi papa afuom a, wose wo papa nkoa na ọyę okuani	He that has not gone to anybody's father's farm claims his father is the only farmer.
27. Woso atuduro a yęnom taa	He who carries gun powder does not smoke
28. Dinpa ye sene ahonya	Good name is better than riches
29. Kwasea dua wọhọyi, yentia so mprenu	No fool is deceived twice
30. Okusie a ọte kwantenpon mu no, nni amerika a na ọwọ akokuoduru	The rat that lives in a main road is either courageous or smart
31. ọbra yę bọna	Life is war / life is not
32. ọkwasea na ọse yęde meyonko na yęnne me	It is the fool that says it is my neighbor but not me
33. Apupuo a ọbọ n'asuo da nsukakye	He who is the cornerstone is rejected
34. Sę wuhu sę ogya atọ woyonko abogyesę mu a, sa nsuo si wodeę ho	If you see your neighbor's beards on fire get water ready to safeguard yours.
35. Abọfra a ọnim nensa hohoro no, ne ahenfo to nsa didi	A child who knows how to wash his hands well dines with elders
36. Yenhwę sum mu ęnkọ tia mu	We do not see a glaring problem and walk into it
37. Kwatrekwa se obęma wo ntoma a, tie ne din	If a have –not promises you something, examine his name.
38. ọsoro boa nea ọboa ne ho	Heaven helps those who help themselves

Published By Scholar Indexing Society

E-ISSN: 2228-837X----DOI URL: <http://doi.org/10.53075/ljmsirg/66577657765767677>Journal Homepage: <https://scholars.originaljournals.com/ojs/index.php/ojs/index>

39. Sɛ woannya biribi amma w'ase a, yɛmmɔ no korɔno	If you have nothing for your in-law do not deprive him of what he has.
40. ɔkɔtɔ didi a na ɛyɛ apɔnkyerɛni yeya	The frog is envious when the crab eats
41. Nsatea nyina annyɛ pɛ	All manner of people is not the same
42. Sɛ wonnyini nwiea a, yɛnsere akwatia	If you are not fully grown do not tease the short man
43. Wosum brɔdeɛ a sum kwadu	You equally serve the plantain and the banana plant
44. Dabidabi asɛm ntina yɛdi kwadu a yɛgya nehono	It is for the sake of tomorrow that is why when one eats banana one peels it
45. Dua a ɛbewɔ w'ani no, yɛtu aseɛ na yɛntwa so	Any stick that intends to pierce or prick your eye is removed completely rather than cutting part of it
46. Wotefaako a wote w'adeɛ so	If you settle at one place without moving, you settle on your wealth
47. Sɛ anoma antu a, ɔbua da	The bird that does not fly goes hungry
48. ɛnkyɛ nkyɛ wɔ n'afe	Time flies fast
49. Nea ɛwɔ anisoɔ no na yɛde kɔ daɛɛ mu	What you have in mind is what you realize in your dream
50. Owuo da amansan kɔnmu	Death awaits mankind
51. Duakorɔ ntuminnyɛ kwaɛ	One tree does not make a forest
52. Kontronfi se, nesuman ne nani	The gorilla says seeing is believing
53. Kɔnsuo na ɔbɔ ahina	He that fetches water is liable for breaking the water pot
54. Dakorɔ bɛyɛ dabone ama wo	One day may be a bad day for you
55. Sɛ wobɛɛ na wonnya a na ɛyɛ	It is better to toil to get wealth
56. Awurade nnyɛ nsafufuo na y'aka ahwɛ	Marriage is not like palm-wine to be tasted before entering into it.
57. Awadeɛ kwan ware	Marriage has a long way to go
58. ɔkyeso Nyame, ɔkyɛ ma neso obiara so	God is our provider
59. ɔhɔhɔɔ na odi akokɔ a n'ani abɔ	It is the inexperienced who gets into an obvious problem
60. Sɛ onifrani kasɛ ɔbɛ to bɔɔ abɔ wo a, na nenan si bi so	A blind person who intends throwing a stone at you, surely has his leg on one
61. Papa nnyɛ hwee a bone nnyɛ hwee	Tit for tat is a fair play
62. Aniberɛ nsɔ gya	Anxiety does not glow like fire
63. Onyankopon koraa fɛre n'ase	Even God has reverence for his in-law
64. Aserewa su agyenkuku su a ne to pae	He who wishes to carry a heavier load suffers the consequences
65. Sɛ wo yɛ Ananse a me yɛ Ntikuma	If you are Ananse I am Ntikuma / if you are wise, I am wiser

Published By Scholar Indexing Society

E-ISSN: 2228-837X---DOI URL: <http://doi.org/10.53075/ljmsirg/66577657765767677>Journal Homepage: <https://scholars.originaljournals.com/ojs/index.php/ojs/index>

66. Obi nim adekye mu nsem	No one knows what is in store for us tomorrow
67. Adwaeg fœeg ansa na nsuo reto	The bathroom has been wet already before a rainfall
68. Sɛ wode kokromotie ko ayie a yɛde asotrɔ gya wokwan	If you go to a funeral with an accusing finger, you get a slap in returns
69. Wɔwoo ɔhene no na ɔpanin tease	The elderly person exists before a chief was born
70. Sɛ ɣhuru a ɛbɛ dwo	However, heated a problem has risen to, it soon subsides
71. Wohuuhuu nnyɛ mehu	I am not a scared by your threats
72. Yɛ noa nosɛn na ammene	What is the meaning of this? How does it happen
73. Nnomaa a wontakra sɛ na wɔtu bom	Birds of the same features flock together
74. Kyerɛ me w'adamfo na menkyerɛ wo wo suban	Show me your friend and I will show you, your character
75. Nea woguo no, ɛno ara na wotwa	You reap what you sow
76. Sɛ y'ankoto a yennda	He who intends to sleep bends down before
ɔbaakofoɔ nsa ntumi nkata Nyame anim	No one person's hands can cover the face of God
77. ɔmama ho yɛ ahi	He who is great has his enemies
78. Owuo sɛi fie	Death destroys family /household
79. Abosomakotrɛ se, brɛbrɛ bi yɛ na ntɛmtɛm bi so yɛ	The chameleon says it is equally good to be slow or fast
80. Sɛ wofom kum a wo mofom nndwa	Two wrongs do not make a right
81. Sɛ ahwennee te wɔ ɔpanin anim a ɛnnyera	A case that is brought before an elder does not get out of hand
82. ɔpanin a ɔhwɛ ma nkwadaa we nanka no, sɛ wokan nankawefoɔ a ɔka ho bi	An elderly person /adult who supervises the eating of a puff adder is also counted as puff adder eater
83. Ahoberaseɛ ma nkonimdie	Humility brings success
84. Ankorɛ hunu na ɛyɛ dede	Empty barrels make the most noise
85. Abanoma bi yɛsene ɔbapa	A step-child is sometimes better than a biological child
86. Sɛ wode w'ani mmienu hwɛ toa mu a wo hwene na ɣhunu mu	If you look into a gourd with both eyes, it is your nose that see through
87. Akwadaa bɔ nwa na ɔmmo akyekyedeɛ	The child can easily crake the shell of a snail but should not crake the shell of tortoise
88. Sɛ akyekyedeɛ pɛ ne mogya dodoɔ a onya	If the tortoise asks for too much of its blood, it gets it

89. ɛnnɔye obi na okum Antwi, nanom, Boasiako na ɔde netiri akɔgye akyerɛma	Nobody calls for the Antwi's death but Boasiako offers his own head for execution
90. Sika yɛ mogya	Literally, money is blood
91. Bɔne nyinaa nhini ne sika	The root of all evil is money
Sɛ ɛhyia wo a nnwu	Don't kill yourself if you are poor / in need.
92. Sɛ wowɔ nkwa, na wowɔ adeɛ	He who has life has wealth
93. ɛnnɔye deɛhyerɛn nyinaa na ɛyɛ sika	Not all that glitters is gold
94. Yɛsoma Nyansani, na yɛ nsoma anamɔntenten	It is the wise one that we send not, the one with long strides

6. IMPLICATION OF THE USE OF PROVERBS IN SOCIETY

The use of proverbs is more sociolinguistic in orientation. It concerns the knowledge, understanding and the appropriate use of proverbs for different purposes and in different situations serving as a pointer of communicative competence in language use. This is what the Akan youth need to know and it is what they need to equip them well for language use. The Akan youth only have the linguistic competence of their language (knowing a lot of grammar rules). This is not only the language. For the purpose of everyday interaction, their attitude towards the use of proverbs must change. They need to know how to use their language in different situations and contexts to free them from being aliens in the use of their mother tongue.

7. CONCLUSION

The study focused on the general concept of proverbs and their use especially among the youth speakers of Akan. The origin of proverbs was discussed. Also discussed was the use of proverbs and challenges that go with usage. Again, the value of proverbs, themes of proverbs, meanings and moral teachings of proverbs were adequately examined. Some recommendations were given as a guide to the use of proverbs among the youth speakers in Akan speech communities. We ended on the note that Language serves as a group marker of all humans. Any speaker who cannot use his or her own language appropriately is communicatively incompetent. The youth speakers of Akan seem to neglect proverbs, an important aspect of the language, they speak. They care less to learn and use proverbs in their day-to-day communication. The motivating factor behind this youthful philosophy is modernity and change. This leaves much to be desired because this attitude of the youth speakers if left unchecked, will affect their communicative competence and the future of their endowed mother tongue. To ameliorate the situation, we put forward the following recommendations to guide the way forward of the youth speakers towards the use of proverbs that: i. traditional rulers and opinion leaders in the Akan society should encourage the use of proverbs as part of language use in the various speech communities. ii. proverb-based competitions to be organized at local levels by traditional rulers in the speech communities with winners moderately rewarded. iii. the teaching and learning of local proverbs be made part of the basic school curriculum in Ghana. iv. parents and guardians should step in to encourage their wards and children to use proverbs in and outside the home frequently. v. scholars of local languages should try to document local proverbs to be read and sung in schools and public social gatherings.

REFERENCES

- Adomako, K. (2015). Truncation of Some Akan Personal Names. GEMA online- Journal of Languages Studies. Volume 15 (1), February 2015 <http://dox> doi. Org/10.17576/GEMA- 2015-1501-09
- A, David (2000). Wisdom of the Ages, Dawn of a new day publications, Accra.
- Agyekum, K. (2006). The Sociolinguistics of Akan Personal Names. In Nordic Journal of African Studies 15(2): 206-235 (2006)
- Agyekum, K. (2010). Akan Verbal Taboos. In the context of Ethnography of Communication. Accra: Ghana Universities Press.
- Amissah-Arthur, J. B. (2022). Pudendic cult and public discourse: Pornogrammar as a rhetorical strategy in Ghana's public spaces. In Sexual Humour in Africa (pp. 65-87). Routledge.
- Benheddi, K. (2012). Spotlights on Dialect in Benhadouga's Popular Culture Novel Rih El Djanoub. Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Letters and Foreign languages in Candidacy for the Degree of "Magister" in Sociolinguistics.
- Dzahene-Quarshie, J., & Omari, S. (2021). Viewing gender through the eyes of proverbs: Reflections of gender ideology in the Akan and Swahili societies. Journal of pragmatics, 174, 128-142.
- Dakubu, M. E. Kropp (ed). (1988). The Languages of Ghana. London Ec4p: KPI Limited.
- Fernández, L. J. T. (2022). Perpetuation of sexism through proverbs: The case of Martínez Kleiser's Refranero General Ideológico Español. Language & Communication, 83, 77-96.
- Holmes, J. (2001). An Introduction to Sociolinguistics. UK: Pearson Education Ltd.
- Hudson, R. A. (1980). Sociolinguistics. Second Edition. Cambridge University Press.
- Hudson, R. A. (2001). Sociolinguistics. Second Edition. Cambridge University Press.
- Lyons, J. (2009). Language and Linguistics. An Introduction. Cambridge University Press.
- Moasun, F. Y., & Mfoafo-M'Carthy, M. (2021). The power of the tongue: Inherent labeling of persons with disabilities in proverbs of the Akan people of Ghana. Qualitative Social Work, 20(4), 911-927.
- Obeng, (1996). The Proverb as a mitigating and politeness strategies Akan Discourse. Anthopelgid Linguistics38 (1)521-549
- Sarpong, K. Rt. Rev. (1998). "In DEAR NANA – Letters to my Ancestor". Franciscan Publication ISBN 9988-7905-2-X (pgs169 and 170).
- Yule, G. (2007). The Study of Language; 2nd edition, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.