

Sociolinguistic Study of Metaphor in Yoruba Proverbs and Postproverbials Among Selected Native Speakers

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Abstract

This study attempts an analysis of metaphors in the context of Yoruba cultural proverbs. It discusses proverbs and postproverbials as a body of special speeches in which meanings are encrypted in figurative codes and deep structures by way of analogy and elevated comparisons. The objective is to demonstrate some intrinsic qualities of proverbs couched in a language that make them the 'salt' that sweetens conversation and preserves the message in the memory bank for meditation and corresponding response and action. The data for the study include proverbs and post proverbial metaphoric proverbs which were collected from oral interviews with native speakers and discussions with older Yoruba people in South west Nigeria. From the data analysed, this paper identifies that some categories of cultural metaphor that occur in Yoruba proverbs and underscore that the nature of metaphors in the proverb orients to Yoruba sociocultural and philosophical thought, and realizes that metaphors do not necessary have general meanings but contextual meanings and this is similar with the postproverbials. This present study establishes a common link between the elders and the youth in the same cultural environments by the social values upheld in them as demonstrated in the traditional proverbs and postproverbials under study. The findings inferred that postproverbials have little or no correlates to obscenity. It also suggests that deliberate introduction of proverbs and postproverbials versions of the proverbs should be included in the school curriculum.

Keywords: language, proverbs, postproverbial, sociolinguistic, Yoruba

Introduction

Sociolinguistics is the study of how language and society intersect, and one area of interest within sociolinguistics is the analysis of metaphors in proverbs. Proverbs are a rich source of metaphors that reflect cultural values, beliefs, and attitudes. In many societies, proverbs play a key role in communication, serving as a form of social commentary and a means of transmitting cultural norms and values from one generation to the next. Yoruba is a major ethnic group in Nigeria, with a rich oral tradition that includes a large body of proverbs and other forms of traditional wisdom. Yoruba proverbs are known for their use of vivid imagery and metaphors, making them a particularly fertile ground for sociolinguistic analysis. In recent years, scholars have begun to explore how Yoruba proverbs and postproverbials can shed light on various area of interest within sociolinguistics which serves as a reflection made after traditional proverbs. Sociolinguistics is the analysis of metaphors in proverbs. Proverbs are a rich source of metaphors that reflect cultural values, beliefs, and attitudes. In many societies, proverbs play a key role in communication, serving as a form of social commentary and a means of transmitting cultural norms and values from one generation to the next. Yoruba is a major group in Nigeria, with a rich oral tradition that includes a large body of proverbs and other forms of traditional wisdom. Yoruba proverbs are known for their use of vivid imagery and metaphor, making them a particularly fertile ground for sociolinguistic analysis. In recent years, scholars have begun to explore how Yoruba proverbs and postproverbials can be incorporated in the same contextual usages in the area of sociolinguistics and this leads us to this present study.

Proverbs and Sociolinguistics

A proverb, according to Finnegan (1970) 'is defined as a short, well-known saying, expressing a truth or pointing out a moral'. Whatever proverbs and other witty sayings do for 'expressing a truth or pointing out a moral', they achieve to a large extent through creative use of language. Language is the prime tool of literature whether written or oral. Daramola (2015) citing Finnegan (1970) succinctly describes proverbs 'as a model of compressed or forceful language'. They communicate sense in brief words. Nonetheless, proverbs are remarkable for their fondness for imagery, symbols, allusive wording, and other forms of figurative language. The significance of proverbs as an art form of timeless appeal does not lie in their literary value alone but also rests on the plank of language use and social relevance. Indeed, the aesthetic appeal and communicative effects of proverbs are especially striking to deserve an unending critical and linguistic attention. It is incontestable that proverbs are a form of oral literature that uses language creatively to transmit and reinforce a message. A conversation not spiced by a variety of proverbs is like soup without salt. Proverbs like other oral literary are necessarily an exploitation of language and exploration of experiences in society. Owing to their linguistic and social relevance across the ages, proverbs continue to be a subject worthy of study or interest among the oral poetic heritage. Iwuchukwu (2014) posits that, scholars have addressed themselves to the analysis of proverbs in their social

contexts and cultural settings. He points out that proverbs thrive best in context as Adegbola (2021) expresses that the meaning of proverbs is best revealed by actual usage in social situations. 'Social' in this context covers factors such as historical, political, cultural and economic events. This ties in well with the non-linguistic, relevant contextual features of the situation which gives birth to the proverb as researches in Sociolinguistics, Ethnography of communication and Semantics have shown.

From the sociolinguistic perspective, only the initiative and the wise of the community can use proverbs appropriately and confidently. This means that proverbs are closely tied to experience and achievement in the socio-cultural context. It means therefore, that proverbs are exclusive preserve of the elderly in the community. A proverb can signal warning, advice, direction, caution, reprimand, it can only be issued by a man or woman of judgement. Fatuase (2022) is of the opinion that proverbs often take place at family meetings, community council, palace court sitting, festivals, rituals gathering etc. whoever that is appointed to speak at such a forum must crave the indulgence and permission of the elders, who are the custodian of the community lore, before or after using a proverb; but if an elder, he takes authority as due to him and says his proverbs without any apology. If such a speaker realizes that there are young persons in the audience who may not understand the coded message, the elder is at liberty to 'unbundle' the proverb for the youngsters. This is essentially necessary where the speech is meant to serve a corrective purpose. Also, Yoruba elders believe that an elder does not look on (at the market place) while the head of an infant dangles on his mother's back (**agba kii wa loja ki ori omo tuntun ko wo**). By custom, when a young fellow says an apology before using a proverb, the elders around must grant the permission by pronouncing a blessing on him those proverbs will always do his bidding; or that he will never be in short supply of proverbs. So, the Yoruba use the proverbs based on age and experience. When using proverbs, they are always linked to events occasions or situation warranting a comment, admonition or judgement. Generally speaking, proverbs serve different purposes such as respect for elders, proper conduct, dressing, handwork, family life, women's conduct, perseverance, self-worth, sanctity of life, justice, love and so on.

The Yoruba have extremely rich linguistic repertoire from which they draw in the conduct of daily businesses in their various vocations, child and communal living. The use of spoken word is held in high esteem among the Yoruba, hence the saying, **"eyin lohun, boba bale, fifo ni i fo"** i.e., words are fresh eggs, once they fall, they just break. This saying proves that the culture context is relating the issue of warning. It reiterates the fact that one's utterances should be cautiously guarded unless one speaks amiss or in an offending manner to anyone. The human voice (i.e., speech) is considered to be very "fragile". Once it breaks, it cannot be gathered together again. This means that once one miss-speaks to a wrong person, it may be difficult or impossible to rectify the situation. As a result of being constantly careful when speaking, both in domestic and public forum, the Yoruba avoid bland speeches as much as possible. They take their time before making comments on issues and even when

they do, they test the waters, as it were, before plunging into extensive discussions. The people employ a wide arsenal of linguistic and non-linguistic conversational devices such as metaphorical expressions, body or facial movements, silences, turn-taking, etc. For the purpose of this paper, we shall limit ourselves to the use of metaphors in Yoruba proverbs and postproverbials, their relevance in speech making and their overall effect in the society. Among the youngsters of today, it common to hear slang expressions such as “old school”, “old fashioned”, etc. when they want to refer to the corrections that the elderly people give them concerning their conducts which negate the cultural expectations of the people. Young boys are found to wear ear-rings, perm or plait their hair in the female fashion or wear their trousers only half way up. When they are criticized, they retort: “you are uncivilized”, “you are not modern” (awa ja si, eyin ko jasi) and such derogatory remarks against the elderly. The decadence has gone so deep among them that it now affects their academic performance in the school. My argument in this paper is that constant and relentless correction is needed and such corrections must be based on the time-honoured values of decency and moderation.

In other words, proverbs go beyond the form and surface meaning to provide clarifications for statements. As said earlier, proverbs are highly figurative and they portray the linguistic style of the speaker. Being metaphoric in composition, they are sometimes ironical, allusive, paralellistic, sarcastic or advisory. The Yoruba holds proverbs in high regard and no discussion is considered full or mature without the use of appropriate proverbs. At the opening of a conversation or before one makes contribution certain proverbs are expected. Even as the conversation grows and one is about to advance an argument, proverbs are expected. This culinary allusion above emphasizes the fact that proverbs make a conversation delicious. On the other hand, the Yoruba believe that, **“amowe moran ni n yanju ejo”** that is, *only a man versed in proverbs and deep in thought can settle disputes*. A seemingly intractable situation can be brought under control by the application of an appropriate proverb used at the nick of time.

Conceptual classification (Proverb as metaphor)

Metaphor is the implicit comparison between two objects. It is the condensed form of simile. Human thought are mainly metaphorical. Metaphor is a way of thinking and a cognitive device which is systematically grounded in human cognition. One common metaphorical concept will give rise to numerous linguistic expressions and different metaphorical concepts which underlies both our speech and thoughts. There are two domains in metaphor, that is, source domain and the target domain. Bisilki and Nkamigbo (2017) opine that it is a mapping of the schematic structure of the source domain into that of the target domain, and metaphorical mappings are not arbitrary but are grounded in our bodily experience. Therefore, language is based on our experiences of the world and the way we perceive and conceptualize it. Experience is a product of interaction of our body with the outside world (including notions, living things etc.) or interactions between human and physical environment and other people within our culture, all of which constitute our conceptual system. The proverbs are popularly

defined as short expressions of popular wisdom which refer to common experience which are often expressed in metaphor, alliteration, or rhyme.

Metaphor is systematically grounded in human cognition and one common metaphorical concept will give rise to numerous linguistic expressions. Therefore, different metaphorical concepts form a coherent network which underlies both our speech and thoughts. A metaphor is a kind of comparison. It is an analogy. It is the way in which the attributes of one object are used to describe another unrelated object. This speech device is highly figurative and very common in literary discourse, a type of discourse in which the Yoruba proverbs thrive tremendously. According to Halliday (1994) views on metaphor thus: "Among the figures of speech recognized in rhetorical theory is metaphor and it has to do with verbal transference of various kinds." The general term for these is metaphor. The term 'metaphor' is also used in a more specific sense to refer to elevation of any kind, or contrast to 'metonymy' and sometimes a third term is introduced, namely 'synecdoche'. All three involve a 'non-literal' use of words. Halliday's view is that the direct transfer of attributes from one entity to another, and mostly in a non-literal sense, is metaphor. It is clear from the foregoing that any statement needing any type of comparative 'unbundling' before the embedded meaning could be accessed is categorized as metaphor.

Statement of the Problem

Yoruba proverbs have been considered from the sociological perspective (Olasupo, 2012) and the linguistic perspective (Yusuf, 1994, 1998; Asiyanbola, 2007). Yusuf (1994) presents gender bias and cumulative misogyny in English and Yoruba proverbs. Asiyanbola, (2007) also carried out a syntactic and semiotic analysis on female-related proverbs, highlighting the different functions of the proverbs and how they are structurally represented. Central issues in the gender/female related proverbs are the representation of women as being oppressed and the functions of female related proverbs. A few of these studies have examined the sociolinguistic study of proverbs using the literary device of metaphor. However, the metaphors in the sociolinguistic study of proverbs and postproverbials in Yoruba proverbs have not received particular attention. This study, therefore, explores the sociolinguistic study of Yoruba proverbs and postproverbials expressions using metaphor to relate to the ways the old and the young generations of Yoruba speakers portray proverbs metaphorically using Yoruba proverbs as points of reference. Postproverbials are twisted and hybrid speech act which are the recreations of traditional structure when compared to traditional proverbs. A major significance for the study of postproverbials is that they reflect the urban imagination of Africa, appearing as another form of proverbs popular among the younger generation particularly Yoruba speakers who are conscious of the socio-cultural happenings around them. While the older generation hold proverbs "as a subject of repetition rendering (with slight but insignificant variations) in knowledgeable circles so that a wilful undermining of its rigid structure is marked as blasphemous" (Raji-Oyelade, 1999:75), the younger generation are concerned with the deliberate perversion and subversion of these traditional proverbs.

Despite the rich use of metaphors in Yoruba proverbs and postproverbials, there is a gap in the study regarding the sociolinguistic analysis of these linguistic devices. Specifically, there is a lack of understanding of how metaphors in Yoruba proverbs and postproverbials contribute to the construction and maintenance of social identities, power dynamics, and cultural values within the Yoruba community. Additionally, there is a need to investigate how these metaphors are adapted and understood in contemporary contexts, considering the changing social and linguistic landscape in Nigeria. This study aims to address these gaps by conducting a comprehensive analysis of sociolinguistic implications of metaphors in Yoruba proverbs and postproverbials.

Aim and objectives

The aim of this study is to conduct a sociolinguistic analysis of metaphors in Yoruba proverbs and postproverbials to understand how they contribute to the construction of social identities and cultural values within the Yoruba community. To achieve this aim, the following objectives serve as basic instruments to the paper:

1. Identify and understand the linguistic features and structure of metaphors used in Yoruba proverbs and postproverbials.
2. To examine the sociocultural context in which these metaphors are used and understand their significance in Yoruba society.
3. To examine the relevance of metaphor in speech making and their overall effect in proverb and character reformation for social redemption as used in Yoruba proverbs and postproverbials.
4. This study is aimed to assert that postproverbial expressions are a variant of traditional proverbs in a contemporary Yoruba society and that the expressions are radical and is either derived or created from traditional proverbs.

Research Questions

1. How do metaphors in Yoruba proverbs and postproverbials contribute to the construction of social identities within the Yoruba community?
2. In what ways do metaphors in Yoruba proverbs and postproverbials reflect and reinforce cultural values and beliefs?
3. How are metaphors in Yoruba proverbs and postproverbials adapted and interpreted in contemporary context?
4. What is the significance of metaphorical language in shaping social discourse and communication in Yoruba society?

The significance of the study lies in its ability to provide a deeper understanding of the culture and communication patterns of the Yoruba people. By examining the metaphors used in their language, the study gains insights into the way Yoruba speakers view the world, their beliefs, values and social interacting. This can help researchers and linguists to better understand the social and cultural context in which language is used and to gain a more nuanced understanding of linguistic diversity and variation. Furthermore, studying metaphors in Yoruba language can also contribute to the preservation and documentation of Yoruba linguistic and cultural heritage, helping to ensure that these important aspects of the Yoruba identity are passed down to future generations.

Brief Review of Relevant Literature

Previous studies have examined postproverbials from sociolinguistic, feminist, linguistic and philosophical perspectives. Among such studies are Raji-Oyelade (1999,2021), Ademowo and Balogun (2015), Ayinuola (2020). Raji-Oyelade (1999) examined the emergence of post-proverbials in a modern Yoruba society. According to him, postproverbials are a product of the conflict between traditional culture and foreign modes of life. Unlike proverbs that are highly didactic and philosophical, post-proverbials are imaginative, malleable, and banal. Raji-Oyelade concludes that the fixed meanings in proverbs have been uttered in such expressions. Ademowo and Balogun (2015) examine the representation of sexuality and sex-related issues in the post-proverbial expressions. The focal point of the study lies on the effects of such sexual issues on the original meanings of the postproverbials. It revealed that while sex related Yoruba proverbs are essentially meant for communicating frank, stark and direct situations, postproverbial constructions of the proverbs have distorted the use of sex –related proverbs and proverbial expression in communication most especially because of the sex-image that were made more visible in the sex related postproverbials. The study suggests that Yoruba speakers need to be conscious of the influence of these postproverbials on the use of the sex related Yoruba proverbs and their distorted meanings which are quite different from original, intended philosophical meanings as well as the literary meanings. Also, Ayinuola (2020) addresses postproverbials from the linguistics angle. Here, he examines how social identities in such expressions are presented among Yoruba youths with a view to exploring the social realities that conditioned the representations of new identities in such expressions. He also infers that proverbs and postproverbials are context dependent. Also, Raji-Oyelade (2021) examines the COVID -19 PostProverbials: Twisting the word against the virus which focuses on a range of radical and newly formed sayings, which are derived almost directly from traditional sayings, in a number of African languages, in reaction against or engagement with the outbreak of the corona virus pandemic. It shows the ingenuity of the human mind in its creative powers as a regenerative, defensive and even playful forge against the choleric force of illness.

This study, therefore, aims at covering an historical gap by examining how metaphor can be used in relation to social cultural relation in the aspect of proverbs and postproverbial expressions among Yoruba speakers which

are basically about contexts among Yoruba speakers with a view to exploring the motivating factors that conditioned the representation of new identities in the motivating factors behind postproverbial expressions among the Yoruba youths in the urban settings.

This study will focus on the sociolinguistic analysis of metaphors in Yoruba proverbs and postproverbials, relating to the linguistic features, cultural context, and social implications of these metaphors. The research will involve the collection and analysis of Yoruba proverbs and postproverbials from traditional sources and contemporary discourse. The study will also explore the adaptation and re-interpretation of these metaphors in different social context.

Theoretical framework

This study adopts Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT). Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) theory of conceptual metaphor adopts the position that language influences human thought and behaviour. This paper posits that metaphors are 'pervasive in our ordinary everyday way of thinking, speaking, and acting' (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). The theory sees to how people simply think and act more or less automatically along certain lines. As Whorf (2003) affirms, 'the forms of a person's thoughts are controlled by inexorable laws of pattern of which he is unconscious' and 'these patterns are the unperceived intricate systematizations of his language'. These metaphorical representations can therefore unconsciously determine societal behaviour. The Conceptual Metaphor Theory describes the mapping of two domains known as source domain (SD) and target domain (TD). This means in each metaphor, there are two mental representations. The former is a more concrete or physical concept, while the latter is a more abstract concept. Lakoff and Johnson argue that 'the essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another'. Concepts are systematically understood in terms of other concepts. Through metaphors, people express a picture of reality or a world view. Most metaphors are not neutral in their evaluative stance. Metaphors offer a window on the construction of social identity. Being channels of folk beliefs, many metaphors convey biases in favour of particular social groups that are considered as the normative in detriment to those individuals who do not conform to this group. Community views about the inferiority of social groups are verbally rendered using metaphor. Metaphors are considered beyond literary devices and linguistic ornaments, but as a matter of thought (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Lakoff & Turner, 1989) allowing for the interpretation and conceptualization of one sort of thing in terms of another. Society is saddled with many social problems including dominance and power abuse. These are enacted and reproduced in discourse in ways that may not always be obvious (Fairclough, 1992).

In analysing metaphor, several approaches could be adopted as pointed out by Ortony 1981. In the use of metaphors, or the value they have in the creation of verse or poetic texts, rhetoric or speech valorisation, metaphors can as well, and should also be appreciated in ordinary conversations and common speeches. Metaphors are relevant to our daily conversations and ought to be accorded the rightful recognition as they serve

to imprint and impress the message of the discussion on the hearer. Ortony devotes time and attention to the separation of the literary from the literal; the grandiose from the mundane and the special expression from the simple. However, for the purpose of this paper, Functional Stylistics (FS) approach shall be adopted which is founded on the ideology of the British School of Functional Linguistics as established by M.A.K. Halliday. The Hallidayan Systemic Functional Theory (Halliday and Hassan 1976; Halliday 1976; Halliday 1994, and Daramola 2008) sufficiently caters for the study of metaphors which abound in the proverbs of the Yoruba people of Nigeria. This theory recognizes language as a system of meanings and grammar as the essential resource for making meanings both in social as well as in other contexts.

Language functionality is perceived in terms of what people do with language on the one hand, and the function of language on the other hand. Halliday identifies three essential language functions of ideational, interpersonal and textual realities. For the purpose of this study, emphasis shall be on the interpersonal function of language. Here, the text of speech is created for an interactional purpose from which a point of view being established (by the elder speaker) is expected to be recognized and appreciated (by the (young) listener) for the purpose of an observable change in attitude, position of view, after due unbundling or interpretation of the special speech.

Methodology

The sources of the proverbs for this study are oral medium, internet, and Yoruba texts on proverbs, the present study shares in the methodological similarity of previous research on proverbs and postproverbials aspects in that the data were analysed by looking for recurring metaphors in the selected proverbs. Ten (10) Yoruba proverbs and postproverbials, which are sourced from anonymous Yoruba proverbs as well as the written collections of Yoruba proverbs by notable Yoruba scholars, form the data for this study. It must be noted that the postproverbial expressions were got from anonymous sayings also. The postproverbials are purposively selected and subjected to sociolinguistic analysis of metaphor in Yoruba proverbs and postproverbial expressions. The data were analysed by looking for the effects of each of the selected proverbs and the sociolinguistic strategies that foreground them and comments are made on them.

Data presentation and interpretation

Here, this paper presents a set of proverbs and post proverbials from Yoruba culture highlighting the traditional proverbs and its postproverbials as follows:

1. P1: Omi l'eniyan, to ba san siwaju, ko le san pada.

Mankind is water, if it flows forward, it cannot flow backward.

P2: Omi l'eniyan, to ba san siwaju, a tun san seyin, ole gbe eniyan lo.

Mankind is water, if it flows forward, it also flows backward, but can destroys one.

Here, mankind is metaphorically described as water and his movement compared to the flow of water forward or backward. Ordinarily, water and mankind do not collocate as each belongs to a different semantic field. Man

is a living, animate object while water is non – living and inanimate. The two different referents, however, share a similar feature in their movement ‘forth’ and ‘back’. This movement is not a past phenomenon but a present and future reality. The application of the proverb will continue to be apt from one generation to another when used in respect of movement of people. An occasion for use may be when two or more people who had met in a distant place a long time ago, still found themselves meeting in their village or town.

Metaphorically, they flowed forward – abroad and backward to their root/source in their village or town. However, the **P2** indicates different meaning to show that water can lift one out of the way and if one is not careful, it can lead to someone’s destruction.

2. P1: Bi ojo n ro ina, maa de ibe (Even if it rains fire, I will get there).

P2: Bi ojo nro ina, ebu omi pa (Even if it rains fire, we shall quench it with water)

The original proverb here is an exaggeration because it only depicts the gravity of the rainfall and this is presented as ‘raining fire’. It is not humanly possible to go out under a rain of fire. The effect is to underline the determination of the speaker. The juxtaposition of two items – rain and fire with opposing features – cold and hot respectively is linguistically striking. The occasion for the use of the proverb may arise when one is determined not to give an excuse for not attending a programme. On the other hand, the P2 expression is addressing the issue of metaphor here in an opposite way. It expresses that the fire will be quenched with water and fire cannot stop one from getting to one’s destination. This shows an act of youthful expression as it is common nowadays

3. P1: Aa kii fi ikanju la obe gbighona (No one licks hot soup in haste).

P2: Aa kii fi ikanju la obe gbighona ko ma ba boni ni ahon (No one licks hot soup in haste or else it will cause damage to one’s tongue).

All things are best done when we apply caution and restraint. On the other hand, the P2 is telling us the effect of licking hot soup in haste. It shows to us that it can lead to destruction.

(Advice, Counsel, Caution against any rash action)

4. P1: Adiye funfun ko mo ara re ni l’agba. (The white fowl does not recognize its own superiority as elder).

P2: Adiye funfun, lo dara ni odede. The white fowl is suitable in the homestead).

This proverb is addressing the fact that one needs to dignify oneself or conduct oneself in a respectable manner. On the alternative, P2 is digressing by pointing out that such a fowl is good at the homestead. (It shows element of reprimand, and caution).

5. P1: Okunkun ko mo eni owo (Darkness does not recognize the noble person).

P2: Okunkun ko mo eni owo, koro le n ke si un (Darkness does not recognize the noble person, the praise name of coronavirus).

Comment: this is another classic example of a post proverbial text composed with a supplement. The conventional proverb is used to qualify the state or area of darkness as a place of anonymity which does not respect an individual's importance or class. In the post proverbial, the quality of darkness is invoked as the power or praise-name of coronavirus. As it were, the disease is just infused with the epithetic and descriptive agency of darkness over man, irrespective of their standing, stature or status.

6. P1: Eni eegun nle, komaa roju, bo ti n re ara aye naa lo n re ara orun.

He who is pursued by the masquerade should endure; as the human tires so does the spirit tire.

P2: Eni eegun koro nle, komaa roju, bo ti n re ara aye naa lo n re ara orun.

He who is pursued by the corona masquerade should endure; as the human tires so does the spirit tire.

Comment: The traditional proverb is emphasizing on endurance in the face of struggle and intimidation, in this example, the deflation of the power of corona virus is the subject of the post proverbial utterance. Both proverbs establish the importance and necessity of endurance in the face of adversity. The masquerade in the conventional proverb becomes the corona masquerade in the radical proverb, but the impermanence of trials is the constant trope of the post proverbial text.

7. P1: Ajoje o dun, b'eni kan oni. (To share a meal is not pleasant, if a person cannot contribute).

P2: Ajoje o dun, fun eni to lahun. (To share a meal is not pleasant, for a person who is miserly).

Comment: here, there is a clear transportation from (P1) the pain of sharing felt by someone who wishes but cannot contribute to a communal meal. He is not a happy individual because he cannot contribute like others, compare to (P2) which indicates the pleasure of not sharing by someone who is incurably stingy.

8. P1: San-an la a rin, aje nii mu ni pekoro. (Life journey requires forthrightness; it is the race for riches that causes crookedness).

P2: San la a rin, bi aba mo ona. (Life's journey requires forthrightness, if we know the route).

Comment: The difference between these points of illustration is in the transformation of acting forthrightly as a will be at ease when one's mind is free from any bad acts. Even at the point of being conscious of doing the right thing and one is not being carried along due to societal influence, it is ideal that one should forge ahead in doing what is best for posterity sake. (this is an act of caution and advisory).

9. P1: Okele akobu, kii ra hun obe. (The first bolus of a meal does not lack the full recompense of stew).

P2: Okele akobu, n maa ngbona gan an. (The first bolus of a meal is usually steamy hot).

P2: Okele akobu, ni i so gangan ile imi. (The first bolus of a meal goes straight to the anus).

Comment: this is an apt metaphoric expression which means a lot based on the context of usage. It simply means that whatever one sets out to do at the beginning of one's life, one may not have problem in achieving the best out of it. The traditional proverbs make use of image of food but this is quite philosophical in nature and it has

to be related with the context of situation and culture. It is instructive to note that the postproverbial here enjoys current usage in formal discourse.

10. P1: Eni ti ko mo ibi ti egbe e ti la, yoo wule sare ku. (he who does not know how his mate gets wealthy, will keep running until he dies).

P2: Eni ti komo ibi ti egbe e ti la, a sare senu moto ni. (He who does not know how his mates gets wealthy will run and run, until he collides with a speeding car).

Comment: this is a philosophical/metaphoric proverb that relates to people that are struggling to make ends meet and without finding out the basic sources of an individual's income. Some belief that manna does not just come from heaven and therefore, one needs to be so cautious of someone's ways of life. This proverb is a didactic one which teaches one that plans to make money at all cost to rescind and face reality of life. When one tries to make money at all cost, one is putting himself in a precarious situation. But when one does it in a moderate way, it shall be well with the person. If on the other hand, one is complacent and thinks that manner will fall from heaven, one might likely die poor. From the postproverbial angle, it shows that anyone who doesn't understand the source of another person's wealth will run and continue to pursue mirage.

Essentially, the selected postproverbials meanings and interpretations show lack of wisdom which proverbs intend to promote. It designates the lack of guiding value embedded in postproverbial. It is in this light that Raji-Oyelade (2013: 21) is of the opinion that postproverbials are, Consequence[s] of new consciousness of African modernity resulting from the vanishing of the real village or community square tradition, decline in the deployment of the standard resources of Yoruba language, and the indifferent or triumphalism sense of overcoming Yoruba with the use of the English language.

Conclusion

This paper has attempted to highlight the unique value of proverbs in Yoruba society by x-raying their position among the Yoruba people in Nigeria. The continuous use of these highly metaphoric expressions not only makes a speech very special but also makes such a speech unforgettable. From the foregoing, the study has examined language use in the postproverbial expressions among Yoruba youths. It is by constantly remembering these nuggets of wisdom and community intelligence that the youngster can invariably adjust his ways and improve on his conduct: thus, making his /her elders or parents proud. As each family builds and strengthens the moral fabric of their children, the whole community, in the long run, becomes identified with sustainable norms and values.

The paper inferred that postproverbials have little or no correlates to obscenity. The meanings attached to them bear no iota of relevance to the native metaphors and wisdom to the proverbs in their unperturbed form. Postproverbials find convenience and favourable condition for its exercise in the open space of the cultural sphere, be it urban, semi-urban or rural. These have been the reasons why some scholars have rejected the notion

of postproverbials and criticized their usefulness. Despite the criticisms that have been raised against the postproverbial expressions, postproverbials have come to stay and the concept has continued to gain attention among scholars from different disciplines. It is needful that the elders, school teachers, community leaders as well as parents and guardians should make it a habit to use appropriate proverbs as occasion demands. Curriculum planners should include modules of native wisdom in the school curriculum up to the upper secondary school in order that the school children might be taught by a deliberate effort. The oral beauty of the proverbs must be emphasized as well as their seminal importance. Finally, the study also suggests that deliberate introduction of postproverbial versions of the proverbs should be inculcated into the school curriculum of Yoruba and English language teaching at all levels of education so that the distorted proverbs would be learned alongside the original proverbs.

Yoruba proverbs and its postproverbials will continue to attract attention because their messages and concerns are interwoven with striking effective linguistic devices and literary creativity. New proverbs which is the postproverbials emerge in the course of conversation to fit the needs and thought of modern age. They enrich the repertoire of proverbs and show their resilience. Proverbs do indeed continue to play an incredibly important role in human communication of all sorts.

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