

REVITALISATION AND SUSTAINABILITY OF ANNANG PROVERBS THROUGH ITS USABILITY

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Abstract

Annang proverbs have not been reinvigorated and sustained because they are rarely spoken by elderly Annang men and leaders especially during official meetings. Also, they are selectively and scarcely utilized in informal situations. It is very rare for the Annang youths to use Annang proverbs in their daily interactions; and if this trend is allowed to continue, in the next few years, the rich Annang proverbs may go into extinction. Lacks of its resuscitation and sustainability have made speech delivery devoid of humour, interest and diverse interpretations. In other words, the denotative presentations have deprived the listeners the logical interpretations of what they listen to and place them in a position where they just decode the surface meanings of what they hear. This study investigates Annang proverbs with a view to recommending ways of rejuvenating and strengthening them. The paper adopts pragmatics as its theoretical framework. Telephone conversation and Interview were used to collect data from Annang respondents in Ikot Ekpene, Akwa Ibom and Lagos. Ten (10) items self-structured questions were used to collect data from respondents. It was discovered that to revive and sustain Annang proverbs, these proverbs should be spoken by all the Annang people continuously. The paper also found that Annang proverbs are enveloped with interesting, humourous and diverse interpretations capable of enriching the listeners' knowledge. Having ascertained the importance of Annang proverbs, the study recommends that these proverbs should be learnt and used mostly by the Annang people so that their speeches would not only be replete with interesting, humourous and diverse interpretations but that Annang proverbs may be revitalised and sustained through their continuous usage.

Key words: Annang proverbs, resuscitation, logical interpretations, speech delivery, interactions

Introduction

Many scholars (such as Mensah (2010) , Adegaju (2009), Jegede (2008), Lamidi (2008), Tadi (2007), Ojaide (2007) and Meider (2004) have been interested in the study on proverbs because of the indispensable creative and cementing power that proverbs exert on individuals, communities and the societies at large. Proverbs are very important in uniting the entire community because they are extracted from the cultures of the people. In other words, they are the root of cultural norms and traditions of people. It is what makes a community and as such to revive and sustain that community, proverbs must be used. Proverbs have the potentials of beautifying words and making them wonderfully spoken; it also makes delivery interesting, humorous and contains inherent suspense that naturally keeps people to wait and get to the end of what they listen to. Proverbs are words coded with different interpretations; they are witty and stronger words that make interactions interesting, humorous and full of meaningful interpretations.

Also, Proverbs are short metaphorical sayings that centre on people's cultures. They sustain people's interest and make them sometimes enjoy presentations beyond speculated time if it is exceeded. Proverbs, according to Yusuf (cited in Akporobaro et al 2010), is the pithy, concise, succinct, brief and terse practical expressions that project moral and ideological precepts. Egbe (2003) also affirms that proverbs are witty sayings, usually popular, pithy and very sensible and that they convey pieces of advice and warnings. Egbe (2003) further adds, that Nigerian proverbs convey an air of authority and appeal to the fundamental laws of nature and that their predictions appear not to be opposed. Akporobaro (2006) states that a proverb is "an aphorism, a wise saying, based upon people's experience and that it is a reflection of the social values and sensibility of the people" (69). *Information Parlour*, a sponsored online article, also observes that proverbs are the core of any culture, they help to guide the normal ways of life and form the centre of living a healthy life.

Since everybody aspires to live a healthy lifestyle in all ramifications, it is therefore necessary that Annang proverbs are used to enliven its sustainability. To do this, it is important that every Annang speakers use Annang proverbs continuously and consciously both in formal and informal settings when necessary. They should also be taught as part of English studies right from primary schools so that by the time a child

enters secondary school, he should be able to master a good number of Annang proverbs that he can use easily in his interactions. Annang proverbs should also be used in social media to communicate with both Annang people and others.

Annang proverbs are the rich proverbs used mainly by the Annang people who occupied the Eastern part of Nigerian, specifically, the South-South part of Nigeria, Akwa Ibom. Annang proverbs are quite unique because they are uttered in a typically beautified natural accent of the Annang people. These proverbs have reviving tendencies, encouragement, admonition; protective, corrective and preservative power for the people in Annang society and beyond.

Over the years, Annang proverbs have not been revitalised and sustained because only elderly men and leaders in Annang community used them sparingly during their official meetings. Proverbs are said to be highly desirable among the leaders (Nairaland, 2019). This shows that proverbs are used by selected people; and if this continues, the rich Annang's proverbs may go into extinction. To revamp and strengthen the use of these proverbs, this paper recommends that every Annang speaker should use Annang proverbs in official and unofficial gathering (where necessary).

The objectives of this paper are to identify Annang proverbs, analyse them and recommend ways of resuscitating and sustaining them for Annang posterity and community. Annang proverbs will be presented in Nigerian English (NE) because the embedded meanings of Annang proverbs are better expressed in the variety of English that is very close to the culture of the people and in this context NE is the choice.

The Concept of Nigerian English

The existence of Nigerian English (NE) is no longer doubted in as much as new Englishes are in existence. English has spread to Nigeria; so, the variety used by Nigerians especially when they express themselves naturally is Nigerian English. Dazie (2004) avers that NE has come of age and its recognition as an international variety is a foregone conclusion. Adetugbo, (2004) observes that "it has long been recognized that the English language in Nigerian has certain features that set it apart from other varieties of English." Onyemelukwe and Alo (2015) state that the concept of Nigerian English is no longer a controversy since it has been

widely explored by many outstanding linguists such as Bamgbose , Banjo, Adetugbo, Adegbija, Adejare , and Akere.

Walsh (cited in Ajani, 2007) was among the first category of people who first identify the existence of Nigerian English. He maintained that the variety of English spoken by educated Nigerians may be called Nigerian English. Confirming, Walsh's disposition, Akere (2004) states that NE can certainly be counted now as one of the "new Englishes" which have emerged in many parts of the world and which has also assumed distinctive characteristics of various socio-cultural environments within which they evolve.

The English that exists in Nigeria and is widely spoken by almost all Nigerians at home and abroad is Nigerian English. It is the localized, nativised, widely accepted and spread language used by Nigerians in their daily interactions.

Nigerian great writers such as Chinua Achebe, Wole Soyinka and Ola Rotimi incorporate Nigerian English in their literary works. Admitting the uniqueness of these Nigerian great writers, Ajeigbe (2004) observes that these writers use English in the full awareness that it is no longer just the language of Britain and United State but as a part of the linguistic heritage of many Nigerians.

Akindele and Adegbite (1996 cited in Egwuwogu 2004) states that the variety of English that has developed into Nigeria non-native English situation is as a result of colonial imposition of the language and the nature that English culture had on the country. They further state that the variety is not wholly native English and totally Nigerian but a blend of two of them, and this is what they call NE.

Varieties of NE

There are many varieties of Nigerian English based on dialectical differences, social differences, level of education, status and even political differences. Okoro (2004) observes that there are over 200 indigenous languages spoken in Nigerian and by implication there are over 200 varieties of English.

Okoro (2004) further states that there are distinct Nigerian Englishes based on the major ethnic groupings in the country, thus he mentions the Hausa, Yoruba, Efik , Igbo , Edo and so forth variants as great varieties of Nigerian Englishes. Besides his geographical, educational and social

varieties, Okoro (2004) further observes that NE manifests greatly through phonology even among the majority of very highly educated Nigerian. Okoro (2004) further stresses that one can tell the part of the country a Nigerian comes from through that speaker's accent of English. In the same way, Adetugbo (2004) confirms that there are many varieties of English because features of native languages interfere on English; these, according to Adetugbo (2004) are they characteristics of NE.

Similarly, Akere (2004) concludes that English has developed from its ordinary contact or trade language between the British and American merchants and slave dealers (on the one hand) and African middle men with others (on the other hand) into numerous varieties replete with linguistic, social and cultural features. This he calls NE.

Considering the contributions of these great linguists above, the undeniable fact remains that NE exists and is effectively used in our day-to-day interactions by Nigerians.

Proverb Defined

A proverb is a "short popular saying of unknown authorship, expressing some general truth or superstition" (Akporobaro, 2006:49), Jegede (2008) observes that proverbs are "dynamic mode o discourse with unique identity" (182). Also, Adedun (2013) states that it is a wise, witty and summarized expressions about life or a given situation. In addition, Ohwovoriolo and Joy (2014) observe that a proverb is a short esthetic saying that expresses truth, abstract idea or philosophical thoughts. They further state that it deals with larger issues and deeper meanings of life and events.

The Importance of Proverbs

Proverbs are very significant in any given society because of their unifying power to any society that uses them properly. Its language is very sensitive and characterizes with imageries and allusions that are mainly based on cultural, social, environmental, economic and political life of the people.

The essence of proverbs is numerous; however, some of them are to:

- i. Educate members of the community of the prevailing proverbs;
- ii. Warn erring members of the society of the impending danger due to their wickedness or hardness of heart;
- iii. Present humourous delivery to the members of the society;

- iv. Make delivery interesting;
 - v. Sustain delivery;
 - vi. Admonish people;
 - vii. Persuade people to do so certain things that will be beneficial to them;
 - vii. Encourage members of the society to do good things and
 - viii. Lampoon societal abnormalities with a view to correcting them.
- (source : author)

Akporobaro (2006) observes that proverb has proved to be of great continuing relevance to modern man. He further adds that it has been and it will remain a most powerful and effective instrument for the transmission of culture, social morality, manners and ideas of a people from one generation to another.

The Annang culture

Many Annang communities are highly patriarchal; men are the mouth pieces of their wives. It is believed that a husband can speak for the wife, because what are in the hearts of the wives are easily revealed by their husbands. Also, it is not ideal for a woman to get up and start talking in the gathering of both men and women. She must be permitted to talk; and if her husband has already spoken before she shows interest in taking, she will be reminded that her husband has spoken her mind. Again, if she is the first to speak, opportunity will be given to the husband to do so; except he declines and it is very rare or not existing at all for a man to decline.

The Origin of the Annang People

The history of the Annang people can be traced to the Central Africa where they are said to have migrated into the Equatorial West Africa through Congo Basin. Udo (1983 cited in *Afud Mbong Ikpaisong Annang 2008*). The Annang people finally settled in the 3rd and 4th centuries BC at Eket. The Annangs are also believed to have migrated from their origin in Egypt and settled in Ghana before arriving in their present area. The name Annang is said to have originated from Twi in Ghana and this means fourth son. The Annangs are said to have started their migration from Egypt in about 7500BC (Ette 2008). Again, the Oral tradition also states that the ancestry of the Annangs is the Israelites from the North who left Israel to Egypt before Babylon was captured. The Annangs , according to Ette (2008) , are said to be the products of marriages of the people of Israel and Egypt who migrated from Egypt to the Coastal Southeastern Nigeria through Ethiopia and Sudan.

Annang People

The Annang people are fearless, bold, courageous, hardworking, neat and lovely people from the South-South, Nigeria; they have occupied their land for thousands of years. The Annang people are special cultural group that reside precisely in Akwa Ibom State and Cross River State. They speak well and have the gift of eloquent speech (*Nairaland*, 2019, *Pulse.ng* 2019). The Annang people occupy eight local government areas in Akwa Ibom; and these are: Abak, Essien Udim, Etim Ekpo, Ika , Ikot Ekpene, Obot Akara, Oruk Anam and Ukanafun. They also reside in Akirika, Obi Ngwa in Abia State (where many of them speak Ibo language). Annang people are also found in many or all the States in Nigeria and abroad.

The Annang people believe in Abasi-Ibom or Abasi- Enyong (the supreme being) and Abasi Ison also called Abasi Ipa- Isong. (the god of the earth). Some new breed Annang people solely worship the “Abasi Enyong” while many old traditionalists, although many of them are elders in orthodox churches, still worship the Abasi Ipa-Isong.

The major economic stays of the Annang people are farming, local crafts and trading and civil servicing (*nairaland*, 2019). As a result of their hard-working nature, many Annang people are comfortable with their living conditions. It is very rare to see a typical Annang person begging for alms; it is not the tradition of the Annang people.

In terms of education, the Annang people are highly educated now. It was in those days that they were used as servants to do menial jobs such as house helps and labour. In many Annang families there are professors, doctors, masters’ holders, and others in various professions.

Annang’ proverbs

Annang proverbs are wise sayings that guide mainly the social and moral lifestyles of the Annang people. There are many types of Annang proverbs. For me, Annang proverbs are grouped based on the functions they perform. They are resistible and irresistible proverbs, predictive and non-predictive proverbs, redeemable and irredeemable proverbs. The predictive proverbs are those that the speakers can forecast their outcomes while the non-predictive ones are those that the future occurrence cannot be known. The resistible proverbs are uttered to warn the intenders to resist from impending danger while the irresistible ones are those used in situations, where those addressed cannot resist the danger, even though

they want to. In other words, they are destined proverbs. The redeemable proverbs, as the name implies are those ones that can be remedied while the irredeemable means those that cannot be redeemed. This applies mainly to situations and not destinies as applied to irresistible cases.

Theoretical framework

Pragmatics

Pragmatics is a subfield of linguistics that incorporates The Speech Act Theory, conversational implicature, talk in interaction and other approaches to language behavior, philosophy, sociology, linguistics and anthropology.

Osisanwo (2003) observes that pragmatics includes the following:

- (i) the message being communicated;
 - (ii) the participants involved in the message;
 - (iii) the knowledge of the world which they share;
 - (iv) the deductions to be made from the text on the basis of the context;
 - (v) the implications of what is said or what is left unsaid; and
 - (vi) the impact of the non-verbal aspect of interaction on meaning.
- (51)

From the foregoing, context is very crucial in interpreting what is meant. Griffiths (2006) differentiating semantics from pragmatics, observes that if one deals with meaning without contexts, one is therefore doing semantics “but if there is a context to be brought into consideration” (6), then one is engaged in pragmatics. Mey (2001) avers that pragmatics extends its analysis of meaning beyond words, phrases, clauses and sentences. It also analyses the relationship between the participants and the background knowledge that participants bring into the situations under discourse. Pragmatics deals with the analysis of meanings in interactions. Griffiths (2006) submits that it is the study of utterance meaning.

Pragmatics is relevant to our study because it centres on culture and our study is a typical research based on Annang people’s proverbs, an aspect of Annang’s culture. It is only a subset of pragmatics that is applicable to this work; and these are its contexts, possible interpretations of utterances using the contextual information (i.e. explicatures) and implicatures of Annang proverbs.

Methodology

This paper adopts two methods namely; telephone conversation and interview as its instruments for data collection. Telephone conversation was made to a research assistant who is an Annang lady; who resides in Ikot Ekpene. The researcher sent her research conversations to her through her *Whatsup* to the assistant's *Whatsup*. The research assistant then converse with many Annang speakers and forwarded the conversations to the researcher who then pruned them, and randomly selected 10 proverbs from telephone conversations and 10 proverbs from the interview she (the researcher) conducted in Lagos where she resides.

The Annang speakers from Ikot Ekpene (IK) constitute the sample for this study. The Annang people were selected because they are the original owners of Annang language. Being the bonafide owners of Annang language, they have in-depth knowledge of almost the neglected Annang proverbs in their language. Convenient Sampling technique and simple randomisation were applied to choose the respondents, the scope and the sample for this paper. Data from the telephone conversation were coded and analyzed based on Pragmatics. In addition to this, responses from the interview were analyzed descriptively. The two sets of data were then used to answer the research questions.

Data Presentation and Analysis: Excerpts from Telephone Conversations and interview

Data are first presented in Annang before they are translated in Nigerian English and analysed using Pragmatics. Arabic numerals are used for data, "NET" (Nigerian English Translation) is used for translation in Nigerian English and "Ana" is used for analysis. All the participants are Annang speakers. The semantic or literal meanings of each Annang proverb provide the bases for their explicatures and implicatures.

1. *Awo akute uruk-ikot ke iso essien mkpok idun amo , abohiyo akpon anun amanake abo ke ibeheke emo, idionoke ibo k'uruk-ikot ade asana aka esit ufok amo.*

NET: He who sees a live snake in his neighbour's compound and passes by does not know that that snake is moving directly to his living room.

Ana: This proverb is usually said to those who are not concerned about the difficulties that others are passing through. The linguistic context shows the utterance between two people, a concerned person to a carefree

individual. The non-linguistic context is that the use of snake indicates any unpleasant situation which can occur to anyone at any time. The background knowledge comes in here because the speaker is an experienced person who knows exactly what life offers.

The implicature of this utterance is to deter the listener from putting a nonchalant attitude toward others. The speaker of this has a cordial relationship with the listener. The listener may infer that the speaker has either positive or negative intention toward him or her.

2. *Etono ke uyen edion ayop adiye eti ayan.*

NET: The palm fronds that would be good for making brooms start being good from the tender age.

Ana: The “palm fronds” stands for people, things or objects. The Annangs believe that any person that will make it in life must start doing well in his or her childhood. If things work out well at its inception, it is believed that it will end well. This proverb actually violates the belief that one cannot predict the future. The implication of this is that it discourages waste of time and encourages people to do the right thing at the right time. The listeners may give both positive and negative inferences to this. On the one hand, if the person spoken to has already found some things irredeemable in his/her life, he/she may feel that there is no way out for him/her. On the other hand, a young person who has made it in life will be happy to conclude that all will be well throughout his life time; this is a typical pragmatic disambiguation displayed in this proverb.

3. *Ndiyion akabak isan ikpon, anye adad uwak ntokayen.*

NET: Plantain was afraid of walking alone; so, when it was the time for it to come to the world, it came with plenty children.

Ana: “Ndiyion” is a unique Annang’s word; a typical Ibibio man or woman, for instance, will pronounce it as “Ukom”. The pronunciation of “Ukom” is quite different from Annang’s “ndiyion”; the articulation of “Ndiyion” is embellished with beauty, weight, interest, honour and meaning. “Ndiyion” has a multifunctional interpretations depending on its linguistic, non-linguistic and social contexts. It could stand for a married person, a project at hand or any person. If it refers to a married person who is still expecting children in the marriage, it may cause anxiety but if it refers to a person who has children, such a person will be fulfilled. Its implicature therefore, is for those concerned to have productivities; and

the inferences can be both positive and negative depending on the listeners.

4. *Nti ofon isisioho uyo k'akebe; ndio ese sio*

NET: Good clothes do not make noises in the box; the worst ones do so.

Ana: This proverb has an inherent pragmatic disambiguation; it is always uttered to those who are either proud or haughty. Its implicature is to remind the proud ones of their emptiness with a view to preventing them from doing so. The listener may interpret it for jealousy or takes it as a warning to desist from pride.

5. *Nko awo akpapa anye aboko atibe eyen*

NET: It is only when someone dies that he or she can boast of having two eyes.

Ana: This proverb means that it is only the dead that are precluded from calamities. Its implicature is that one should be ready to face any form of trouble anytime in life. This is one of the predicative proverbs prevalent in Anannng community. Its intention is to make people ready to face problems especially death.

6. *Ebu ufok asekedoko ebu ikot abo k'ndidia mmo ke akobod asine*

NET: It is the inside rat that goes outside to inform the outside rats that there is food in the cupboard.

Ana: This is one of the predictable, irredeemable and irresistible proverbs; clearly issued to ingrates who reward their benefactors negatively. The implication of this is to reprimand the evil doers to refrain from evil.

7. *Ubono, ubono afid ifono akani iba*

NET: It is not good to shit purging shits twice.

Ana: This means that disgraceful situations are not good to be repeated. This leads to different explicatures. First, if the addressee is already facing a shameful situation, he will probably interpret this as, "this is very shameful; don't allow it to happen again." Secondly, if the addressee is not experiencing a scandalous situation, it may mean that he is reminded to be careful so that he doesn't engage in any despicable situation.

8. *Ese ekere ebo ke nsad eto adi ito ikpa, ede nsek ato akpa*

NET: People always think that it is the dry branch of a plant that will first die but the freshly parts are those that will first die.

Ana: The pragmatic interpretation of this proverb means that what people do not always expect are what normally happen to them. This proverb has innumerable contexts that fit into the proverbs. The implicature of this is for the addressee to always prepare for the unusual. He can infer from here that he should comport himself very well when the unexpected occurs. He can also interpret it to mean that the unanticipated can happen to anyone at anytime. So the contexts in which this proverb occurs facilitate its disambiguation

9. *Ayen amana ke isong urua, ete eka fot ukot*

NET: The baby is already born in the market place; they now tell the mother to cover her legs.

Ana: This is a lamentable proverb over a painful experience that cannot be remedied. This proverb can be uttered any time an irredeemable occurrence takes place. The “baby” here represents any ugly situation. The implicature is that the addressee has to accept the situation; the intention of the addresser is to ensure that the addressee realises the pathetic condition he or she finds himself or herself. The addressee may infer that the addresser sympathises with him or he is realistic about the addressee’s irredeemable condition.

10. *Edim akpan iwan, ikpanna urua*

NET: Rain normally stops people from going to the farm and not those who are going to the market.

Ana: The explicature of “farm” here could mean any significant event while “the market” is an unimportant event or activity. “Rain” is any obstacle or discouragement that may hamper the smooth advancement of an individual. This proverb is always uttered by a speaker himself or herself as a source of encouragement to forge ahead.

11. *Awo nkara nkara, abasi nkara nkara*

NET: A cunning man normally meets a cunning god.

Ana: It is an irresistible proverb for dubious people to stop their crooked activities. It spells out the retributions for evil. It’s semantic interpretation

means that whatever anyone sows that will he reap or a biblical expression, “an eye for an eye, or tooth for tooth” (Exodus 21:24). The context of cruelty denotes the level of punishment that the addressee will be made to go through. The “cunning god” here could mean any context that will relinquish punishment for a wicked person.

12. *Awo aseke fehe nkpo asekwot ndon awo anannake ayin*

NET: It is always the coward that points the dilapidated compound of the fearless man to people.

Ana: The explicatures of this proverb are multifunctional, the word “coward” can be referred to careful people, hardworking individual, visionaries, planners, etc. They are said to be those whose dreams, works, visions, plans and activities are going to last longer than the haughty and visionless people. The implicature is that the sender intends to encourage people to be positive and be creative thinkers and doers.

13. *Awo awotowo ke ofut adipa ke ofun.*

NET: Whoever kills by matchets will die by matchets

Ana: The pragmatic interpretation of this expression is that anyone who thinks of evil against another person shall also encounter evil. The implicature is to discourage people from occupying their minds with negative thoughts.

14. *Awo asinne afia ke abasin adidiono ananga asana asio afia do.*

NET: He who puts a trap inside a basket will be the person who will know how to remove it.

Ana: This also has possible multifunctional interpretations depending on the contexts; for example, if it is used for a man who has impregnated a lady without paying the bride price, the parents of the lady may use this proverb for the man to explain to him that the same way he impregnated the lady, will be the same way that he will meet them to pay the bride price and at the same time helps the lady to be delivered of the baby safely. The implicature is to remind people that whatever negative things they do, they will be the ones that will correct or amend them; so they should not venture into them.

15. *Akepde mma diono mmo ke ufok ito adi kappa urua, mkpa kesine ufa iba*

NET: If I had known that toilet will become a public market place, I will have won a new pant

Ana: This proverb also has many explicatures depending on its contexts which are quite unique. It is a lamentable proverb, literarily interpreted as , “Had I Known.” It is a self-directed proverb, uttered to indicate the regrettable state of the speaker. For instance, if the speaker suddenly becomes partially rich as a result of the little efforts he puts into his business, he may utter this proverbs to lament his irreversible situation. Its intention is to show self-encouragement for better productivity.

16. *Nyen udon asetie ke nte eka atie*

NET: The pestle always sits where its mother sits.

Ana: The “pestle” here means the loyalists or one’s children, relatives or friends. The intention is to encourage unity and togetherness. The addressees will be encouraged to be supportive.

17. *Awo abiahake nnan abeneidem adide nnam.*

NET: He who cheats the blind is preparing to be blind.

Ana: This means that people should not ill-treat the less privileged ones because there are laws of distributive judgment. Its implicature is to deter people from being evil.

18. *Afon ebobob ubok emum ntatam mbak edibom idip*

NET: It is good to fold one’s hands very well when one holds a cricket in order not to burst out its stomach.

Ana: This means that one needs to be very careful when dealing with or handling crucial issues/matters in order not to complicate the issues. Its implication is to enable people to be very careful in dealing with complex issues.

19. *k’ito ke anunune afid unen yak ewa aketibe ayen.*

NET: It should not be as a result of the hen’s smelling shits that a dog suddenly loses it eyes.

Ana: This proverb also has innumerable interpretations; for example, it means that one should not get hurt in an attempt to settling other people's disputes. Its intention is to call for wisdom in settling cases.

20. *k'ukpon ufiat ke iba owo nwen.*

NET: Don't be excessively fat (obsessive) in other people pants.

Ana: This proverb has several pragmatic meanings; for example, it can be used to a mother in-law who takes over the management of her son's family as if it were hers or to a sister, who, instead of getting married, confiscates her father's property as if it were hers. The daughter-in-law, for example, may tell the mother-in-law that she should not control her and her husband. This is intended to make people know that they should have total control of their property and not that of others.

Findings

From the analyses of Annang proverbs, the following findings were made:

- i.* Annang proverbs are mainly multifunctional and unique; each can be interpreted in different contexts to mean different things depending on the participants.
- ii.* Annang proverbs are harmonious and purgative ; capable of making people excited and removing burdens from the listeners.
- iii.* Annang proverbs can function as encouragement agents to someone who faces distractions or difficulties.
- iv.* Annang proverbs are replete with inherent pragmatic disambiguation.
- v.* Some Annang proverbs have only two interpretations, for the good and the bad.
- vi.* Many Annang proverbs are mainly used to warn people to desist from evil in order to avoid danger or impending doom.
- vii.* Few proverbs are self-directed proverbs aimed at checking self activities.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The Annangs, the second largest ethnic group of people located in the eight local governments in AkwaIbom, are cultural group of people who are endowed with the gift of good and organised speeches. Their speeches are embellished with innate orations and proverbs of which renditions are always harmonious, interesting and replete with semantic and pragmatics interpretations. This work investigates the Annang's proverbs with a view

to indicating that Annangs' cultural heritages may be rejuvenated and strengthened through the usage of these proverbs. The study recommends that Annang proverbs should be used constantly and consistently in necessary official and unofficial contexts. It also recommends that there should be a paradigm shift from its usage mainly by the elders and leaders to its usage by everybody including the women and the youth; it is believed that its usage may attempt to revitalise and sustain the rich Annang proverbs.

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Appendix 1: Excerpt from one of the Telephone conversations

Section A: Preliminary section

The Researcher : Hello!

The Respondent: Hello!

The Researcher: How are you?

The Respondent: Hello, I am fine

The Researcher: Please I will like to discuss with you based on the previous interactions will had on the information about my research work.

The respondent: Hello,

The Researcher: Are you ready to respond to my conversations

The Respondent: Yes, of course

The researchers' conversations are found in sections B and C below.

Section B: Nigerian English

Please answer "Yes" or "No" from these (closed)questions

SN	STATEMENTS	Yes	No
1.	Is there Nigerian English?		
2.	Do you prefer Nigerian English to British English?		
3.	Do you consider Nigerian users of Nigerian English as illiterates?		
4.	Is Nigerian English spoken by many Nigerians in your locality?		
5.	Do you enjoy when people use Nigerian English?		

Section C: Annang Proverbs

Open Questions

S/N	STATEMENTS
6.	Annang proverbs have not been fully used by Annang people
7.	Annang proverbs add humour to speeches
8.	People are interested and satisfied when they listen to Annang proverbs
9	It is ideal to just speak in plain language rather than using Annang proverbs
10.	Annang proverbs help us to sustain speeches

Appendix 2: (Except from one of the interviewees)

Name : Mrs Roseline Pius

Age: 45

Language: Annang

The researcher: Do you use proverbs in your daily interactions?

The interviewee: No, but I use it rarely

The researcher: Why

Interviewee: Ikpo wo ese etata iko (Proverbs are meant for the elders)

The Researcher: How do you get the proverbs that you sometimes use?

The interview: Ami nde ayen yen obong (I am from the descendant of the King)

The Researcher: Can you tell me some of the proverbs that you think may go into extinction if not utilize daily?

Annang proverbs collected through interview and their interpretations are shown in the table below

SN	Annang proverbs	Interpretations
i.	Ubok mum, ubok mum anye aben ekpat	Collective effort or team work results in fast productivity
ii	Aboboho afid ifono akaniba	It is not good to be disgraced repeatedly
iii.	Nko awo akpapa anye aboko atibe eyen	Until someone dies before he is freed from calamities in the world.