



CONTEXT, PRAGMATIC ACTS AND EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATURES IN ANNANG PROVERBS IN SELECTED SONGS OF UKO AKPAN

By

Nkopuruk, Imikan N.

Department of Arts Education,
University of Abuja, Nigeria

nkopuruk@gmail.com

+234(0)7080030792

Abstract

As effective means of communication and a repository of cultural knowledge, proverbs are an essential component of Annang oral tradition. The rich proverbial content of Uko Akpan's song provides a distinctive way to examine how context and pragmatic acts interact in Annang discourse. Even while proverbs have been studied, little is known about their practical use in traditional music, especially among the Annang people. As a result, this study examined how proverbs in Uko Akpan's music are interpreted by context and what it means for language acquisition. The research used a case study design and a qualitative methodology. Pragmatic Act Theory was used to evaluate twenty (20) Annang proverbs that were purposefully chosen from Uko Akpan's music. The process of gathering data included interviewing Annang elders for validation, song lyrics transcription and contextual analysis. The research shows that Annang proverbs in Uko Akpan's music have several practical uses, such as warning, advice, rebuking, and persuading. They reinforce values and conventions, and their meaning is firmly anchored in the sociocultural environment. The study also emphasizes the part music plays in bilingualism and language socialization. The study emphasizes how important it is to incorporate proverbs into language instruction in order to improve students' pragmatic proficiency and cultural awareness. It was suggested that in order to conserve indigenous languages and improve linguistic competency, educators should, among other things, provide multilingual resources, encourage music-based learning, and include Annang proverbs in their curricula.

Keywords: Annang Proverbs, Uko Akpan, Pragmatic Acts, Context, Language Education, Indigenous Knowledge.

How to cite this paper:

Nkopuruk, I. N. (2025). "Context, Pragmatic Acts and Educational Implicatures in Annang Proverbs in Selected Songs of Uko Akpan". *Planeyo Journal of Arts and Humanities (PLANJAH)*. Volume 2, Number 3, 149-182.

Introduction

Human communication relies heavily on language, which allows people to engage in certain cultural situations, express emotions and transmit meaning. Language, defined as a complex system of communication that encompasses spoken, written and gestural forms used by humans to convey meaning, create social bonds, and navigate cultural contexts (Ahmadu Lawal, 2017, p.639), serves as more than just a collection of words and grammatical rules. Beyond its grammatical and structural components, language serves as a dynamic instrument for meaning-making that is influenced by the social and cultural contexts of its users. Central to understanding how language functions in cultural contexts is the concept of pragmatics, which refers to the branch of linguistics that studies how context, speaker intention and social factors influence the interpretation and use of language in real communicative situations (George Yule, 2016, p.209). Pragmatics emphasises how language users accomplish specific communicative goals through interaction, going beyond the literal meaning of words to examining how meaning is constructed through social and situational contexts.

Proverbs, defined as concise, traditional sayings that express widely accepted truths, moral lessons, or practical wisdom through metaphorical or figurative language (Wolfgang Mieder, 2004, p.284), are one manifestation of how language demonstrates its cultural richness. These brief, figurative statements capture the morals, knowledge and beliefs of a society, serving as repositories of collective wisdom passed down through generations. Many African communities have long used proverbs as oral literary techniques that serve both aesthetic and educational purposes, functioning as pragmatic tools that accomplish various communicative functions within specific cultural frameworks. The Annang people of Southern Nigeria use proverbs extensively in conversation, especially in traditional music genres like Uko Akpan. One distinctive feature of Annang oral music, Uko Akpan, is the extensive use of proverbs that are incorporated into songs to discuss social standards, uphold group values and address contemporary challenges. In addition to serving as language embellishments, these proverbs have practical purposes that are consistent with the sociocultural norms of the Annang people. Proverbs are pragmatic acts that fulfil a variety of communication functions, including warning, praise, reprimand and persuasion when used in the appropriate settings. The way that meaning and context interact in these sayings emphasises how crucial pragmatic activities are to comprehending language usage.

Language is a tool that people use to traverse their social environments, create meaning and build connections. However, the study of pragmatics focuses on how listener perception, speaker intention and circumstance all influence meaning. Pragmatics stresses how language is utilised in interaction to accomplish communicative goals, in contrast to semantics, which deals with meaning in isolation. One of the key theories in this area is Pragmatic Act Theory (Jacob Mey, 2001, p.246), which builds on the classic Speech Act Theory (John Austin, 1962, p.212; John Searle, 1969, p.109) by emphasising the more comprehensive interactive processes of communication rather than discrete speech

actions. This method is especially helpful for studying proverbs, which frequently get their meaning from both their literal content and the social and cultural settings in which they are utilised. The Pragmatic Act Theory suggests that language users participate in pragmatic acts, which are intricate linguistic actions impacted by context, speaker purpose and listener expectations, rather than only producing single speech acts like requests, demands or affirmations. According to Jacob Mey (2001, p.290), language is essentially situated, which means that depending on the situation, a single utterance can have a variety of purposes. Given that meaning is jointly created by performers and audiences in culturally diverse contexts, this viewpoint is extremely pertinent to the study of Annang proverbs in Uko Akpan songs. The interpretation of proverbs in this context is based on common knowledge within the Annang community and may be used for a variety of communication purposes, including entertainment, admonishing, persuasion and instruction.

As a type of oral literature, proverbs are ingrained in African nations' communication customs. In a variety of social contexts, they act as conduits for the dissemination of knowledge, the upholding of cultural standards and the formation of discourse. African proverbs, according to scholars like Akin Odebunmi (2008, p.209), Michael Ndiribe (2020, p.730), Femi Unuabonah and Suleiman Akinwotu (2025, p.55) and Akin Odebunmi (2021, p.15), are powerful pragmatic tools that improve communication by utilising collective cultural knowledge. In order to properly understand the intended meaning of proverbs, speakers and listeners must rely on common experiences, historical allusions and cultural insights, according to these academics. A saying like "A child who does not listen to the sound of the drum will dance out of rhythm" illustrates the negative effects of disregarding knowledge or counsel. However, how and when this adage is applied determines its entire significance. The social context and the identities of the performer and the intended audience accentuate the significance of a song that is sung during an Uko Akpan performance to chastise a misbehaving young person.

The study of Annang proverbs in Uko Akpan songs is particularly important because it illuminates the ways in which traditional music functions as a site of pragmatic engagement and cultural transmission. This is in line with Adebayo Akande and Adams Mosobalaje (2014, p.43), who contend that the strategic deployment of proverbs in oral performances enhances audience engagement and reinforces the speaker's message. ([First Name] Bamgbose (2023, p.158) further explores how proverbs function as socially binding linguistic resources, allowing members of a community to express values and resolve conflicts in non-confrontational ways through the use of proverbs in music.

Even though African oral literature has a long history of proverbs, little is known about their practical application in musical contexts. Fewer studies have looked at the pragmatic roles that proverbs play in traditional music, despite the fact that many have studied their linguistic and literary features (Wale Adegbite, 2020, p.6; Akintunde Akinyemi, 2022, p.18). Furthermore, the Annang people have been frequently ignored in previous studies on African oral traditions, despite the fact that their proverbs and musical expressions are essential to comprehending Nigeria's larger linguistic environment. In order to close this

gap, this study looks at how context affects the pragmatic actions used in Annang proverbs in Uko Akpan songs. It specifically looks at how these proverbs serve as practical deeds and considers the pedagogical implications of these sayings. In doing so, the study hopes to advance the disciplines of pragmatics, discourse analysis and indigenous language instruction.

Review of Related Literature

Uko Akpan as an Annang Man

Through his musical, dancing and drumming practices, Chief Uko Akpan has created Ukokpan Music which is now recognised as a musical genre. Ukokpan music stands as one distinct musical genre. Dr. Uko Akpan Ekpo initiated his musical career in 1945 which extended through his final performance in December 2019 according to Victor Umanah (2014, p.17). Uko Akpan dedicated seven remarkable decades to his musical career. People often express appreciation to men after their death and to women only after they divorce according to traditional guidance. Before Uko Akpan died, he received massive appreciation from people throughout his 74-year singing career. Throughout his professional career, he received continual appreciation which followed him during every moment. When his fame reached its peak, he established himself as a popular entertainment option for major events organised by Akwa Ibom State Government and important figures in the state as well as other regions. The life work of the singer and balladist Uko Akpan along with his dancer, composer and oral poet roles has been thoroughly documented in recorded media and written press (Victor Umanah, 2014, p.22). These themes emerged in the artist's songs: oppression, religious bigotry, hypocrisy, immorality, politics, social, cultural alongside concerns about general human matters.

An Overview of Annang Culture

The Annang (also spelled Anaang) exists as an ethnic cultural group who inhabits Coastal Southeast Nigeria (also known as Southeastern Nigeria or former Southeastern State of Nigeria). The Annang currently exist in eight local government areas which make up thirty-one present local government areas in Akwa Ibom State of Nigeria. These areas include Abak, Essien Udim, Etim Ekpo, Ika and Ikot Ekpene together with Obot Akara, Oruk Anam and Ukanafun in the Akwa Ibom State of Nigeria. During the time of Eastern Region in Nigeria, these communities existed in the Annang Province inside the former Abak and Ikot Ekpene Divisions. Annang society is patriarchal. According to Ezekiel Ette (2025), every person in Annang society derives their social position from the *idip* which translates as the "womb." Someone who shares their *idip* with another sibling belongs to the same patrilineal or matrilineal group, thus possessing a common ancestral origin. The social practice of polygamy enables people to establish their common lineage from the same parents and form *ufok* (house or compound). Each *ufok* belongs to an *ekpuk* which forms an *idung* as an extended family group. The *idung* term stands for village while the *abie* term

stands for clan and each clan consists of multiple villages.

The leadership position within family or lineage or clan or village belongs exclusively to the males and women maintain their lineage connection through marriage. In traditional village life, the many societies, together with associations called *nka*, hold great importance Victor Umanah (2014, p.14). According to Okon Essien (2020), people are assessed by how many *nka* memberships they have together with the various *nka* types they belong to, including the accomplishments obtained from these *nka* groupings. Emancipated males perform legislative duties as members of *afe isong*, while the Obong and *Obong isong* serves as the head executive though he lacks power above what *afe isong* grants him (Uwemedimo Iwokitok, 2011, p.99). A chief serves the role of leadership by either inheritance or through selection by the *Afe*. The social system leads villages and clans to achieve consensus about the strength of individual members and family groups. The status of Annang women stands independent from complete subordination to men within their society. Women in Annang exercise leadership positions as *abia idiong* (chief priest) along with roles as healing cult practitioners in their traditional Annang society. The first female child named *Adiaha* holds unique significance in the family and descends lineage because of her special position. Certain traditions dictate that the first birth experience of a woman must happen in her mother's household (Victor Umanah, 2014, p.45)

"Abi-de" alongside "nyaama" and "isong iban" operate as women organisations which provide essential roles to give their members social voice and societal status. The Annang cultural norms do not create any impediments which stop women from achieving leadership positions. Historical customs of Annang culture have enabled women to maintain economic independence in relation to men. Before the arrival of colonialism, the Annang society operated a matrilineal system. Before missionaries referred to matriarchy as anti-Christian such common female names as Essien Essiet Ukpong and Umo lost their feminine essence because missionaries interpreted them as male names (Ezekiel Ette 2025). Good speaking abilities together with skilled use of proverbs make desirable traits for Annang leaders specifically. According to Uwemedimo Iwokitok (2011, p.20), the Annang people earned their collective name by speaking well although an individual demonstrating exceptional speaking ability received praise through the designation *akwo Annang* which means Annang singer. Consequently, people recognise the Annang for their strong magic power and successful trade activities along with their distinguished artistic achievements. Mural paintings, raffia, masks, cement sculptures, markets, ceremonies and exceptional food are among the artistic achievements of this group. The Annang people hold exceptional educational and scientific competencies which stand unparalleled to any other group.

Proverbs in Annang Culture

It is imperative to mention certain unique roles of social proverbs in Annang community. Annang proverbs were frequently used in all manner of situations such as: social control, resolution of conflicts, judicial decisions, truth, justice, respect for rights and obligations,

law and order, filial piety and respect for one's parents and the common good of the society. Social proverbs had a strong significance on the lives of the Annang people, as they were elements of unity among them. Accordingly, of all the various forms of folklore employed today, Annang proverbs (*ufied*) stand out with its distinctive features (Victor Umanah, 2014, p.17). In view of this, they are often used to foster social values that are pragmatic and communalistic in nature in a bid to solving the problems of life. As it has been rightly put, social proverbs are characterised by communality and values.

Consequently, it is the contention of this paper that aspects of these proverbs (*ufied*) need be treated and they include: proverbs about human relationships, marriage and family life, and communal life. To better understand Annang proverbs and their meaning, it is important to see what role they play in society. Therefore, once they are used, it is important to understand why they are used in the first place. For example, “*Ama ana mme ewa, ademe mme nnan*” (When one sleeps with a dog, one wakes up with lice) reminds people to always try to identify and know the people that live close to them in the same environment or community as neighbours. This is because associating with people of questionable character could cause someone to be roped in a crime that he/she knows nothing about. Again, “*Nkosiosio mbiara ered, inua ata mkpo k'ukpeme*” (Until the rotten tooth is pulled off, the mouth must chew with caution) for instance portrays the fact that until an armed robber is fished out in a particular society, members of that society continue to live in fear.

In other situations, proverbs teach what is right, fair, honest, makes the immature wise and gives knowledge and sense to the young (Neal Norrick, 2014b, p.88). They provide a means of alluding to values and norms accepted by society without offending the beliefs of others. Proper application of a proverb in a given situation is a skill that is developed through time and experience. For example, “*Agwo isikamake mkpo iba idok anyong*” (One cannot hold two things in one's hand to climb up) teaches that trying to climb a tree top with things in both hands is difficult. It further shows that one cannot learn a trade in two different locations or place at the same time. This proverb calls for focus and concentration in a particular endeavour for better productivity and result. “*Inuen ked k'ubok afon akan iba ke ikot*” (A bird at hand is worth two in the bush) tells people that whatever they have succeeded in having or holding on to, like a job, is preferred to having an expectation of so many things without being sure of them. For instance, people are told to give up on their jobs through resignation to contest elections that they are not sure of being elected or selected and when they fail, regrets come after. Further, the importance of proverbs could be felt in its elaborate form. Thus, proverbs have a didactic function, used for ethical instruction and for traditional preservation to expand philosophical ideals (Essien, 2020, p.198).

In support of this, Alfred Montapert (2014, p.vii) states that “the sayings of wise and good men are of great value and they are like the dust of gold or the sparkle of the diamond”. *Ifiok ikeme agwo* (The knowledge and wisdom people possess is always inadequate). *Akpan mmafiok mma, afid asejire ke erem afong* (When people claim to know everything, they are bound to make mistakes). In view of this, Bolaji Idowu (2013, p.84) affirms that: A certain

man (Akpan Mmafiok Mma) lived in a far country of Cameroun and was very rich. He returned home to invest in business and was advised to buy the male bicycle that he could display his products on the front and back carriers. He refused and bought the female bicycle which made him unable to advertise his products. Also, when he was to marry in the next village, he wore his new and expensive clothes. On his way, he was pressed and went into the bush to use it as his convenience. On his return from the bush, people noticed remnants of the stool on him and told him but he refused to believe them just the same way he refused their advice of removing his clothes before going into the bush. On account of the smell from him and shame, his friends left him and never followed him to his marriage anymore (Personal Communication). This proverb tells everyone to always have a listening ear to what others may have to say or contribute towards their welfare. Claiming to know all things keep one in a disadvantage position which may bring disgrace and show the level of ignorance in a person.

Indigenous Music and the People of Anaañg

Alan Merriam (2014, p.225), in describing the essence of music, states concisely that "it is evident that music contributes to the continuity and stability of culture if it permits emotional expression, provides aesthetic pleasure, entertains, communicates, elicits the physical response, enforces conformity to social norms, and validates social institutions and religious rituals." The phrase "indigenous music" refers to the traditional music of the world's indigenous peoples, which includes the music of "original" ethnic groups that live in any given geographic area alongside maybe more recent immigration (Victor Umanah, 2014, p.15). The music that comes from Nigeria's numerous indigenous tribes is known as indigenous Nigerian music. Although certain forms have partially incorporated elements from genres performed by foreign and immigrant performers, it mostly includes traditional music traditions.

Men's souls are touched, inspired, transported, and released to enduring joy by indigenous music. "Music simply means an organized sound that is pleasant to the ear and a language of emotion," according to Godwin Nwonyeh (2017, p.271). Therefore, the audience or individuals would not like music if it was not properly structured and arranged to make it aesthetically beautiful. According to Michael Robinson (2017, p82), music is the art of creating sound in a harmonic, rhythmically structured manner, which can be generated by instrumentation or singing and often conveys a message or feeling. Indigenous music is characterised by this definition. Therefore, using traditional musical instruments, styles, and vernacular, indigenous music is created and performed by the people themselves (Godwin Nwonyeh, 2017, p.273). This is a clear indication that indigenous Nigerian music consists of the traditional songs of the people. Traditional music is basically the production of sounds which, if not melodious, are emotionally expressive, Godwin Nwonyeh (2017, p.276) retorts. This means that it was the music of the people, by the people and for the people and that there was different music for different occasions, purpose, audience and equally venues for the performance. Also not left out in giving more insights on the subject matter of music were John Leader and Hannah Haynie (2016, p.76) who observe that

participation in music offer unlimited opportunities for developing desirable social qualities and responsibility for sharing a joyous experience with others. This again tells how music involved the totality of human lives. Indigenous music is the traditional music of a generation that is more closely linked to tradition, religion, and the political system, according to Chrisantus Agu and Victor Ali (2012, p.38). It was one of the ways in which preservation was done in arts and crafts. Godwin Nwonyeh (2017) notes thus that:

Music is the outward expression of one's inner feeling either by singing and/or playing of musical instruments and indigenous music on the other hand, is one learned and shared by a large number of the societies, which embraces all aspects of life from birth to death (p.273).

This demonstrates unequivocally that traditional songs are the foundation of indigenous Nigerian music. According to Godwin Nwonyeh (2017, p.275), traditional music is essentially the creation of sounds that, although not melodic, are emotionally expressive. This indicates that the music was created by, for, and for the people, and that different types of music were appropriate for various settings, audiences and events. John Leader and Hannah Haynie (2016, p.79) were not excluded from providing more insights on the topic of music, noting that engagement in music provides many chances to cultivate positive social traits and the need to share a happy experience with others. This demonstrates once more how music touched every aspect of people's life. "Music has been regarded as the greatest of the arts and all sound is music; the more regulated and closely garnered the sound, the better the music," writes Anthony Onwuekwe (2019, p.62). Therefore, uncontrolled noises may prevent listeners from finding music appealing and appreciative. He goes on to say that music is "a cultural expression that is determined, molded, interpreted and dressed or colored by culture and the cultural environment of a people," as is widely recognised. According to Anthony Onwuekwe (2019, p.29), music is a cultural phenomenon that exist in all societies and are experienced by all people. As a component of African art, observers typically highlight how it influences drummers, singers and dancers who push themselves to a state of ecstasy and frenzied performance. John Glennon (2010, p.1) states similarly, "music is an expression in sound or the expressions of thoughts and feelings in an aesthetic form." Music's accompanying aesthetics provide a wealth of information. Those that watch, and especially the public, comprehend the information conveyed through the artistic and crafty interpretation of the performers. Yvonne Onyiuke (2019, p.69) states that "in festival of the arts in traditional society as well as that of FESTAC 1977, music and dance are prominent". According to the National Commission for Museums and Monuments (2016):

Music is a form of an entertainment and relaxation and sometimes played to serve as a tonic that energizes warriors in battle fields, played to console a grief-stricken person, and certain instruments used in making music include shakers (*nsak*), rattles, clappers, gongs (*nkwon*), drums (*ibid*), flutes and xylophones (*ikon*) (p.44).

With these, music would hardly make any meaning and pleasing to the ears without the accompaniment of other musical instruments. According to Kim Cobb, Anna Hodson and

Samuel Tamayo (2018):

The context for many of the outfits was preserved and brought to life by the celebration of music and dance at festivals: the way the dresses were made, the sound of the jingles, the easy, elegant flow of the fringes, all animated by the dancers, keeping time to the beat of drums and singing. Seeing these dresses worn by dancers instilled a reverence for the outfits that moved them well beyond the static interpretation of an exhibit. (p.39).

For many arts and crafts, function was equally or more significant than the material qualities of the object, and safeguarding the intangible qualities of these object required more than just preserving their material appearance. In view of this, Lyndel Prott (2019) observes that:

Musical instruments and aircraft are good examples because if the object is a musical instrument for instance, it must be played to produce sound. Beyond that, people must have the skills to play it well, there must be music to play, and there must be an audience to enjoy the music, to sing to it, to dance to it, etc. (p.75).

A complete balance in the function of the music produced was equally important for effective means of preservation. Samuel Akpabot (2014) notes thus that:

Some of the instruments used in traditional music play include: a large conical gong (*nk Wong*) and a smaller twin-gong (*akankan*), a rattle (*nsak*) made of raffia and used as an orchestral instrument, horns (*nnuk*) made of wild animals such as elephant tusk/gourd and ram, wooden xylophone (*ikon eto*), wooden drum (*abodom*) (p.73).

The people of Akwa Ibom created these instruments as part of their cultural legacy. To create sound, horns (*nnuk*) were fashioned from elephant tusks and blown by a person or group, much like a flute. Anthony Idamoyibo (2016, p.329) cites Nketia (1986) as saying that African traditional music uses sound to convey and transfer cultural knowledge. But according to Kofi Agawu (2013, p.97), music is text-woven, an act created by the performers who also wrote it. The sound that is produced as a result of intimate collaboration or involvement is what makes traditional music so effective. Everything begins with the sense of collaboration among the participants, which leads to melodies within the rhythm of the style being performed. Thus, involvement, rhythmic correctness, determining the appropriate entry, coordination, and interaction typically come before other factors (John Chernoff, 2019, p.72).

Uko Akpan Songs

Uko Akpan's music of Ikot Obong, Afaha Obong Clan, in Abak Local Government Area, a subculture area of Anaañ in Akwa Ibom State, which is performed at Christmas, Easter and at special occasions, portrays a sturdy culture and celebrated all over the world. This traditional music style elucidates more on arts, crafts and ingenuity of the people with regards to their heritage. His music, perhaps the most influential amongst the Anaañ people

comes with a mixture of socio-religious and cultural lessons with lofty inspirational model that could leave one teary-eyed. According to Uwemedimo Iwokedok (2011, p.48), these lessons found in Uko Akpan's music are unquantifiable and have not dwindled over decades of demonstration of selfless and passionate release. His songs, about 200, are neither pedestrian nor pedantic, but they are obviously largely didactic; they are meant to give a message, to teach a lesson, to touch the raw nerves of those who hear them and to leave them thinking of the lasting import of the message.

Some of Uko Akpan's songs are: *Usung Calabar – Itu* (Calabar – Itu Road), *K'Ijak na Ekong Anwana Aba O* (Let War Not Break Out Again), *Atitia Akukpep* (It is the Teacher That Taught You), *Mmekoro Nsippe* (I sweat to eat), *Ngwed Afon* (Education is good), *Nse Ajen Ijaiya Ntom* (What Child is as beautiful as this?), *Ikiwawana Inam Jak Iwawana Idia* (We worked together, let us eat together), *Ukpono Se Ajen Akpono Ete* (What the Child should do to honour the father), *Ukapisua* (Christmas), *Asana Edet Asak Agwo Nkpo*, *Tum Kere* (Think Twice), *Nse Agwo Anam Mmiduko Afon Ino*, *Sabong Sabong Ajen Ufok Afo Ijakka Nna o*, *Nwong Anyong Anime Ikang Ukod*, Environmental Sanitation, *Afo Aado Ebe?* (Do you have a husband), *Nkuum Akpab* (Thorny Wig), *Uwa K'Unta* (Fate, don't fail me), *Ikerede Idiomo* (Think and Plan), *Ndok'edi*, *Ibonode*, *Ufik Ubok* (Thump Printing), *Se Agwo Ananam Anam K'ekikere*, Akwa Ibom State, Dr. Pepper, *Ekpoebe*, *Eliwile Uko Akpan Njen* (Let us play Uko Akpan Now), *Mbere K'Esa*, *Afo Amekpono Abong Awasi?*, *Utom Abong*, *Atufopufop*, and *Mbre Abadie?* (How is the Play?).

However, music preserves the cultural heritage of any nation. It keeps reminding all especially the youths the values cherished by the society as against negative western influences. Most of the lyrics embedded in Uko Akpan's music speaks volumes of the social being of man and how s/he lives socially with others. The moral lessons contained in his songs expatiate the moral values held in the Anaañ society and indeed the world. Uko Akpan's music titled, 'Asana Edet' frowns at people who laugh at others because of their predicament. He divulged that no one knows tomorrow and that no condition is permanent and therefore such acts of ridicule should not be encouraged and tolerated. In his music titled, 'Ukpono Se Ajen Akpono Ete' Uko Akpan advised on the need to respect the sanctity of life, care for one's parents, siblings and kindred at the appropriate time not until death. He sang on the need to be supportive to people when they are in need and alive, not when they are dead. He states that the resources for elaborate obsequies conducted for many should have been used and given while the person was still alive.

In the area of costumes, Victor Umanah and Mary Okwueze (2016) note that “the selection and use of costumes in indigenous music performers show elaborate elegance of artistry embedded in the people's culture” (p. 28). This explicitly tells how natural the scenario has always been with Uko Akpan's music for the audience to participate in dancing through the locally made instrument's melodious sounds. The curiosity and willingness of the audience to flow with the distinct musical statement made by the lead singer is always worthy of note; this is often followed by a song and dance sections where every worshiper is expected to participate. Active audience participation at performance reveals the extent of their cooperation with the artist. Cooperation is equally necessary between the artist and the

instrumentalists.

Uko Akpan's music promotes tourism as tourists buy such music as souvenir which boost the economy of any nation. The different performances at various functions attracts visitors from all over the world which further explains more on the need to accepting the cultures and beliefs of other people. His music dedicated to the end of the year and to usher in a new year titled, 'Ama Awo Isua Kaooo' gives an insight on giving up on all wickedness prior to a new year. He enjoined all those using diabolical means to aid their professions to renounce and turn a new leaf. He specifically divulged that during the eve of a new year when people shout *Isua Ka ooo!* (Let the year go ooo), that it actually means that the year does not go anywhere but rather it is a reminder for us all to change our lifestyles from being wicked to one another but to live an upright life. Little wonder why Godwin Nwonyeh (2017, p.272) described indigenous music as composed and performed by the people with traditional musical instruments, style, and in vernacular. That is the ambience that visitors and tourists long for. In this way peaceful co-existence is fostered among communities, states and nations.

Uko Akpan music is a profession not foisted on people but which is passionately exercised and showcased to the world. This music is an inspiration to many who continues to indicate interest in venturing into traditional music. As to continuity, the drum performance continues to function as an enhancement for productivity at work. Apart from professional drum performances, the drummers are also involved in other related occupational practices such as palm wine tapping and gate keeping at schools and private apartments. Others include drumming, building of drums and sales of musical instruments and other wares. They sometimes sing to entertain or accompany themselves in their occupational activities. They also sing at social gatherings without electronic and amplification equipment. The songs that are used to sustain drumming are in most cases spontaneous compositions that are created orally. On this note therefore, Uko Akpan music is one that promotes African culture. In the part of his last performance 'Timi Kene Uruod Essed', Uko Akpan used his music to persuade the youths and most especially the young women to embrace education and shun the acts of promiscuity and other vices. He categorically reiterated the need for everyone to be his or her brothers' keeper. He reminded people that are blessed to always extend such hands of magnanimity and help to others not so fortunate to be blessed as they are. Uko Akpan's music titled, 'Teacher Aku Kpep' upholds the dictum that 'there is dignity in labour'. He particularly spoke on the teaching profession that everyone is a product of a teacher and therefore teachers deserve better package and remuneration and our educational sector more funding. This exposes the incessant feud between the federal government and Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU). Uko Akpan's music is always very educative and this is worthy of emulation by all and sundry and a clarion call to people to use their profession to uphold societal values and norms.

Uko Akpan's music gave a feeling of self-satisfaction that is associated with every human being as many people were ready to sacrifice to listening and watching its performance to have that sense of self-worth. This could be seen in the show of exquisite and magnificent

arts and crafts decoration, and other artistic representations which adds value to the scene already created during live shows. It is in the light of this that the National Commission for Museums and Monuments (2016) describes music as the art of producing tones or sounds in harmonious succession and has been described as the food of the soul which drives away anger and replaces the heart of people with happiness and merriness. His music titled, 'Nse Agwo Ananam' gives a strong knowledge that there is nothing that one does that has no iota of suffering. The lesson in this is that there is always hope and success at the end of the tunnel and also that people should not be quick in thinking that life is a bed of roses. Uko Akpan' music titled, 'Atu Ufop Ufop' is not a dance for people malnourished, ill and not sound in mind. Dancing is a form of exercise and 'Atu Ufop Ufop' is not for those bereft of fitness to be part of the dancing and music. Uko Akpan's music bridges the gap between music and spirituality. This is true because there is an affinity between music and spiritual life and the ambience music brings through artistic symbols and decorations with designs which have symbolic meanings. Uko Akpan's music stems from a superior impulse that gratifies the soul of its listeners. There is a satisfaction that comes with the understanding of the words in a music. Lyrics of Uko Akpan's music soothes the mind and helps individuals to live long hence it contributes to healthy living. His music titled, 'Nwoñ Anyoñ' reminds every one of the needs to remember the oath taken during baptism to live right and shun all acts of wickedness. The music is a quick reminder to those who play God and exercise their heinous crimes to the extent of taking someone else's life. The activities of witches and wizards were not left out in the moral of this music which sounded a rhetoric question of "what gain there is in killing, maiming and subjecting people to untold hardship". He also made it known that the only person to look up to is the creator of the universe in times of trouble.

Literate and non-literate societies use music for verbal and nonverbal communication and understood by the parties involved that is, the singer and the audience. Uko Akpan's music is one of such music used as a means of communication. His music titled, 'Mkpo Anam' gives an ugly situation people pass through in life in a bid to meeting life's responsibilities. He narrated how he was of age and needed a wife but ended up in the hands of a wrong woman who had always wanted to assuage her wants. The woman was not just a drunk and heavy smoker but kleptomania as well. The moral of the music is that before venturing into any endeavor, task or project, one should explore and exhaust all avenues of survey and study of the phenomenon involved. It is not gainsaying that TV, radio, photography, portraits are all means of passing information but music creates an extraordinary communication with socio-religious lessons like Uko Akpan's music mostly understood by the audience or spectators except visitors.

Theoretical Underpinnings: Context and Pragmatic Acts

Over the years, context has been identified as a core matter of interest for pragmatists especially discourse analysts. The analysis of language stretches requires researchers to determine key aspects such as the participants' actions and communication goals while reviewing the setting conditions and participant roles. For Neal Norrick (2014a),

contextual components affect linguistic choices while removing the possibility of random choice selection. When people produce speech these relevant physical personal linguistic and social elements of their environment create meaningful contexts that help interpret spoken language. According to John Lyons (2017, p.572) context represents a theoretical construct that allows linguists to derive abstract elements from real-life situations to determine what affects language events. The systematic nature of contextual elements determines the shape of language utterances in addition to deciding their appropriateness. Before interpretation can commence four primary context types become essential: physical aspects, linguistic components, socio-cultural elements and psychological structures. Physical context comprises tangible components which include communication objects along with participants and activities in addition to specific communication locations and timing. According to Michael Halliday and Ruqaiya Hasan (2019, p.218) these factors play an essential role in creating meaning during discourse activities. Spatial elements together with temporal aspects within discourse communication function as indicators to help interpret meaning. The perception of advertising messages depends heavily on the chosen setting of the advertisement. The physical context in public speeches serves as a key tool for delivering emphasize while boosting performance.

The structure of language as an element of linguistic context refers to word selection and syntactic patterns in language texts. According to Gbenga Osoba (2014a, p.32) linguistic context helps meaning creation because words acquire new meaning through the surrounding text. The words appearing just before discourse influence the following phrases. Advertisers employ linguistic context to select specific words which develop marketing-oriented associations that serve their promotional purposes (James Gee, 2018, p.42). Discourse stays logical because speech elements arrange themselves in a comprehensible sequence while understanding becomes simpler. Speaking framework includes the social settings and cultural histories of the conversation participants. According to Wale Osisanwo (2013, p.116) various cultural backgrounds among societal members shape their religious orientation and belief system and cultural habits as well as personal values that affect how they understand language. Socio-cultural factors serve as a requirement for achieving effective communication. Religious community-directed advertisements successively employ faith-focused concepts and doctrinal values because they empower audience connection. The persuasiveness of political speeches depends on using cultural norms according to Norman Fairclough (2020, p.56). The mental and emotional aspects of communicators constitute the psychological elements of context. Gbenga Osoba (2014b, p.12) explains that psychological states including happiness and fear and anger along with anxiousness control how people speak. Under stress a person produces incorrect responses to match the verbal intensity of an enthusiastic speaker. The psychological factors within context stand vital for crucial situations such as courtroom discourse and media interviews according to Van Dijk (2018, p.100).

Pragmatic acts represent the latest pragmatic theory development which recognizes that language occurs within specific situations. The theories formulated by John Austin (1962) and John Searle (1979, p.101) together with Paul Grice (1975, p.211) set their focus on

understanding how verbal statements create actions and guide implication generation. Contemporary pragmaticists maintain meaning extends beyond linguistic structure because situations that surround verbalization directly contribute to its formation. Jacob Mey (2001) developed his theory of pragmatic acts to advance beyond speech act theory by studying utterance interactions with their surrounding social situations. According to Mey's 2001 speech acts function independently in traditional theory yet he presents evidence that utterances gain meaning only from their social setting interactions. Mey (2001, p.218) asserts that speech acts exist merely as situated speech acts which are also known as instantiated pragmatic acts. The significance of pragmemes emerges as key prototypes that show people how to make meaning specific to each situation. According to Nicholas Allot (2011, p.412) pragmatic acts require people to modify themselves according to the environment while simultaneously modifying the environment according to themselves. When interacting with contextual boundaries communicators change their language but also use their linguistic options to adjust and direct the environment. A mutually influential connection exists between language and context which appears throughout multiple types of discursive practices.

During political discourse leaders build credibility through pragmatic acts while using them to persuade their audience. Public sentiment guides their political messaging through rhetorical tools like metaphor and repetition and alluding references according to Paul Chilton (2019, p.65). Social media influencers create pragmatic acts that adapt their language to match audience needs in order to build credibility and audience engagement (Caroline Tagg, 2015, p.91). Advertising platforms display pragmatic acts through brand-created marketing messages targeting consumer beliefs and their relation to cultural values. Through the use of intertextuality, humor and emotional strategies advertisers establish extensive audience connections. These advertising strategies work best when they match the characteristics of the audience demographics together with socio-cultural elements (Guy Cook, 2020, p.49). Moreover, Pragmatic acts become noticeable during typical spoken discourse. Various pragmatic acts including conversational implicatures together with politeness strategies and discourse markers enable people to communicate without obstacles. A speaker uses expressions like "maybe" or "I think" through hedging devices to reduce face-threats and support social agreement in accordance with Penelope Brown & Stephen Levinson (1987, p.209). The combination of speech and context functions when speakers make requests using statements such as "It's cold in here" which indicates "Please close the window" (Geoffrey Leech, 2014, p.23). Journalists within the media sector utilize pragmatic speech through broadcasting to manipulate audience perception of issues. Newspaper headlines employ strategic wording to make readers notice them yet authorize defined reader interpretations. News reporting is an example of how pragmatic acts create meaning through strategic use of framing combined with presupposition alongside rhetorical questions according to Allan Bell (2021, p.23). Lawyers in courtroom settings adopt strategic pragmatic acts when arguing before judges and juries because they use rhetorical queries and emphatic declarations to fortify their cases (Janet Cotterill, 2020, p.112).

Educational institutions create an ideal environment to research pragmatic communications. Teachers enable student learning through different communicative strategies which include code-switching with scaffolding and reinforcement techniques. The pedagogical language decisions of educators together with learning environment factors determine how classroom discussions unfold (Neil Mercer, 2018). Educational environments benefit from pragmatic act analysis because it helps teachers develop effective educational practices that promote understanding in their students. When addressing people from different cultures speakers employ pragmatic acts to overcome both linguistic and cultural barriers which help them reach mutual understanding. The field of intercultural pragmatics studies how people from different backgrounds use pragmatic acts for both meaning negotiation and interaction management. Different cultural pragmatic norms create misunderstandings in communication because context plays a crucial role in meaning interpretation according to Istvan Kecskes (2014, p.453).

Consequently, language usage and interpretation are shaped by the interrelated constructions of pragmatic acts and environment. Pragmatic acts show how speakers adjust to and impact various settings, whereas context provides the situational framework in which discourse takes place. A wide range of fields, including political discourse, advertising, media communication, education, and cross-cultural contact, are covered by the study of pragmatic actions. Gaining insight into these dynamics improves our understanding of how meaning is created and helps us communicate more effectively in a variety of contexts.

Methodology

This study employs a qualitative descriptive research design to investigate the pragmatic functions of Annang proverbs in Uko Akpan's music. The descriptive approach was selected as it allows for systematic examination and interpretation of linguistic phenomena within their cultural context, making it particularly suitable for pragmatic analysis of proverbs embedded in musical discourse. Unlike case study designs which focus on bounded systems, the descriptive approach enables comprehensive analysis of pragmatic functions across multiple textual instances while maintaining analytical depth. The primary data for this study were drawn from Uko Akpan's musical corpus, specifically focusing on nine carefully selected tracks from his discography. The selection of these tracks was based on three key criteria: the presence of identifiable Annang proverbs within the lyrics, thematic relevance to wisdom transmission and social values, and demonstrated popularity within the Annang community to ensure cultural resonance and authenticity. The selected tracks include Mbere K'esa (I've been relegated to the background), Sabong Sabong, Ekuyak Ekong Anwwana Aba (Don't Let War Break Out Again), Amedo ndo? (Are you married?), Ekpo Ebe, Nse Owo Anam, Edibre Uko Akpan, Tom Kere (Think Well), and Kere Akangiba (Think Twice, Ponder over this). From these nine tracks, twenty distinct Annang proverbs were identified and extracted for pragmatic analysis, categorized

thematically into wisdom/foolishness, truth/untruth, and caution/advice based on their functional roles in promoting social cohesion and addressing everyday human experiences.

To ensure cultural authenticity and accurate interpretation of the selected proverbs, the study employed purposive sampling to recruit five Annang elders aged 60 years and above. This age criterion was established because individuals in this demographic are recognized as cultural custodians with extensive knowledge of traditional Annang proverbial wisdom and oral literature. The selection of five participants is justified by the specialized nature of the cultural knowledge required and follows the principle of data saturation commonly applied in qualitative research, where the depth of specialized knowledge takes precedence over sample size. The participants comprised three male and two female elders, ensuring gender representation in the interpretation process to capture diverse perspectives on proverbial usage and meaning. All participants were native Annang speakers with demonstrated expertise in traditional oral literature, identified through recommendations from community leaders and cultural organisations within Annang land.

Data collection involved multiple systematic phases designed to ensure accuracy and cultural authenticity. Close listening to the selected tracks was conducted to identify and extract proverbs within their musical context, with each track analyzed multiple times to ensure comprehensive identification of proverbial expressions. The verbal content from the selected tracks was then transcribed verbatim in the original Annang language to preserve linguistic nuances and cultural meanings essential for pragmatic analysis. The identified proverbs were subsequently presented to the five Annang elders for authentication and cultural verification, ensuring that the extracted expressions were recognized as legitimate proverbs within the Annang cultural framework. Following validation, the authenticated proverbs were translated into English by the elders themselves, with careful attention to preserving pragmatic meaning and cultural significance while making the content accessible for academic analysis. The study employed a descriptive and interpretive analytical approach guided by pragmatic theory to examine how the proverbs function communicatively within their musical contexts. The analysis focused on contextual factors influencing meaning, pragmatic acts performed through proverbial usage such as advising, warning, and teaching, functional categorization according to communicative purposes, and cultural interpretation within the broader Annang worldview and value system. This analytical framework allowed for comprehensive understanding of how proverbs operate as pragmatic devices within the musical discourse while maintaining connection to their traditional cultural functions.

Ethical considerations were carefully addressed throughout the research process. Informed consent was obtained from all elder participants following clear explanation of the research purpose, procedures, and their voluntary participation rights. Participants were assured of confidentiality regarding their personal information and their right to withdraw from the study at any time without consequences. Cultural sensitivity was maintained throughout

the research process, with particular respect for traditional knowledge systems and appropriate acknowledgment of the elders' cultural contributions to the study. The research also ensured that cultural knowledge was treated with appropriate reverence and that findings would contribute positively to the preservation and understanding of Annang oral traditions. The study acknowledges certain limitations that may affect the scope of findings. The focus on a single artist's musical corpus, while providing depth of analysis, may not represent the full spectrum of Annang proverbial usage across different musical contexts or artists. Additionally, while the consultation with five elder participants is appropriate for this specialized cultural inquiry and follows qualitative research principles, it represents a specific segment of the Annang community and may not capture all possible interpretive variations across the broader population. These limitations, however, do not diminish the study's contribution to understanding pragmatic functions of proverbs in Annang musical discourse.

Analysis and Discussion

Proverbs in African oral literature serve as vehicles of wisdom, cultural identity, and social regulation, often carrying layered meanings that require contextual interpretation. This section examines how these proverbs function within the performative space of Uko Akpan's songs, and highlights their communicative intent, illocutionary force, and socio-cultural relevance. The discussion further considers the implications of these findings for language education, and emphasises how integrating indigenous proverbs into pedagogical frameworks can enhance linguistic competence, cultural awareness, and critical thinking among learners. The proverbs are presented below with the varying Nigerian English translations before the contextual and pragmatic acts analysis.

Context Analysis of Anang Proverbs in selected songs of Uko Akpan

Proverb One: *Awo nwan isituakatuak ukod, ndien awoden akakanga adon k'itu*

[A woman does not tap the wine while the man does the emptying into the wine-jar]

Culled from the track, "Are You Married?", the proverb has a lot of socio-cultural undertones. In Annang culture, women are forbidden from climbing the palm trees let alone taping of wine. Such roles are exclusively for the men. Uko Akpan uses this proverb to discontent and displeasure with role-switching in the society, particularly, within the family space (between the husband and the wife). In our contemporary society, most men have not lived up to their responsibility as married men. Hence, he asks if the woman is still calling herself a married woman when the benevolence of marriage has not been duly enjoyed.

Proverb Two: *Ajen amaadue ete, ete amum amia ikpa, ama ma anye akod adad*

[If a child offends the father, the father punishes the child but always takes him back]

This proverb has an undertone of biblical analogy which supports the spanking of children by the parents, by way of discipline and rebuke for them to earnest and repent. In the track, “Mbere K'esa”, which translates as “I've been relegated to the background”, Uko Akpan uses the proverb “Ajen amaadue ete, ete amum amia ikpa, ama ma anye akod adad” (If a child offends the father, the father punishes the child but always takes him back) in the social context to question the people of Akwa Ibom why he has been sidelined as a foremost indigenous musician of that origin. He is troubled and seems to think he has offended them. That is why he shares in the opinion that if a child offends his father, the latter punishes the child but always takes him back. Hence, he begs to be duly recognised and patronized.

Prover Three: *K'uyak edim abon (ikuo de); k'uyak edim abon (ibid ami)*
[Don't let the rain soak the song; don't let rain soak the drums]

This proverb is popular among the instrumentalists, especially the traditional ones. Drawn from the track, “Sabong Sabong”, Uko Akpan uses the metaphoric proverb from the social perspective to invigorate and revitalize the energies of his drummers and vocalists as he performs. Rain in this context symbolizes destruction. Hence, the songwriter urges his drummers and fellow singers to brace up in their acts to make sustain the enjoyability of the art.

Proverb Four: *Ufan amadia ituk ufan, adaatippe ekon*
[When a friend cheats a friend, it will breed war]

This proverb is drawn from the track, “Ekuyak Ekong Anwwana Aba” which translates “Don't Let War Break Out Again”. Uko Akpan contextualises the proverb to imply caution against any situation capable of breeding war, having been a life witness of the Nigerian Civil War which he considers gravely devastating. He uses the proverb because it shares a similar meaning with the causes of the Nigerian Civil War. According to the singer, the previous war sprung up as a result of inter-party treachery. Hence, he uses the proverb to throw out caution to friends never to cheat one another as that could breed yet another war.

Proverb Five: *Una-udud akobo ukobo anwan*
[It is the powerless that constantly presses for a fight]

This proverb also is found in the track, “Ekuyak Ekong Anwwana Aba”. It is a very common proverb among the Annangs. It is the powerless that constantly presses for a fight. Uko Akpan, having witnessed the Nigerian Civil War narrated his conscription to sing in praise of the Nigerian effort when they overran the Biafran soldiers. For him, it was a case of a brother killing another brother, and he hated such role. In his view, he considers the Biafran army as being powerless yet they were conscripted by their leader, Gen. Ojukwo, to fight the Nigerian army, which earned them an unbelievable defeat. He cautions therefore, through this proverb against any kind of luring and persuasive acts capable of breeding

another war in Nigeria.

Proverb Six: *Akpekud afia-agwo afo anam utom atikpa*
[When you see a Whiteman, you work hard]

Found in the track “Sabong Sabong”, Uko Akpan uses the proverb as a sword to attack the hypocrites in the society. These set of people are commonly given to “eye-service”. They are lazy and unproductive naturally but act otherwise when found in the midst of hardworking people. Before the advent of Nigeria's independence, indigenous workers were usually supervised by the whites (the colonisers). Hence, it was natural of the lazy workers to pretend in their absence. In view of that, Uko Akpan uses this proverb to remind the public not to only work when the Whiteman (supervisor) is around, adding that they too (the supervisors) are human beings like the workers.

Pragmatic Acts (Textual) Analysis of Anang Proverbs in Selected Songs of Uko Akpan
Proverb Seven: *Uma-ebe akama ndisan itie ndidia*

[A stingy husband carries a whip during mealtime]

Pragmeme: Pragmeme of reprimand

Inference: In the context of the music, this proverb does not literally translate to being stingy. Stinginess is only the assumption every lazy wife has of her husband for reprimanding her. Accordingly, the husband could reprimand by way of disapproval, restraints, restriction or even deprivation of food, especially in cases where the wife has bluntly or tactically refused to be productive economically

Reference: When a man carries cane during mealtime, he does not want anyone to come around him nor partake in the meal with him.

Relevance: This proverb expresses the moral of hard-work and tenacity. This is one trait that can enhance the rapid progress and development of a society.

Proverb Eight: *Una-ubok utom ade afun idap*
[A lazy man is a slave to sleep]

Pragmeme: Pragmeme of caution

Inference: Uko Akpan uses sleep as a metaphor of unproductivity. In the context of the music, this proverb may not literally translate to the natural or periodic state of rest during which consciousness of the world is suspended. One can infer the fact that is not ideal to be jobless.

Reference: (a) A man is deemed lazy when he sleeps incessantly.
(b) Nobody wants to be a slave, hence, the need not to sleep at the slightest opportunity.

Relevance: As in datum one above, this proverb expresses the moral of hard-work and tenacity. This is one trait that can enhance the rapid progress and development of a society.

Proverb Nine: *Owo anyene akpoho abo ufen idem*

- [The rich become slaves to their wealth]
- Pragmeme: Pragmeme of information
- Inference: Uko Akpan uses the rich as a metaphor of slavery. It can be inferred that wealth beclouds our politicians' sense of reasoning and does not allow them to assist the poor and their immediate society any longer.
- Reference: (a) One can be rich and still be enslaved
(b) Wealth has the power of turning one into a slave
(c) We become slaves to what we love
- Relevance: This proverb expresses the moral of grace to be humble when in affluence, and be one's brother's keeper. This is one trait that is lacking in our society today, especially among the ruling class; it does not enhance the rapid progress and development of a society.

Proverb Ten: *Adejoro mkpo, agwo itoono mkpo kiidem amo no aka akeworo ada*
[It is not easy to start a good thing and also sustain same]

- Pragmeme: Pragmeme of Encouragement
- Inference: Uko Akpan's music has been in existence for so many donkey numbers of years and has been certified excellent; hence, it should be sustained and promoted within the immediate society and in the global space, given the array of purposes it serves.
- Reference: (a) Qualities are hard to maintain
(b) Good things deserve special attention and care
(c) If care is not taken, quality things get spoilt so easily
- Relevance: This proverb expresses the moral of encouragement. When one is encouraged and celebrated, one is poised to no more and even better. The proverb is relevant and central to the cultural integration of every society. A society has to celebrate the talents of its members in order to bring about sustainable development.

Proverb Eleven: *Akpede ajen-uka ade ntak nnana'yen afo, idod-enyen afo adeede ke anie?*

- [On what will you put your confidence, if the source of your misfortune is your relation?]
- Pragmeme: Pragmeme of Betrayal and Disappointment
- Inference: As a result of lack of proportionate patronage and encouragement from his kinsmen and immediate community, Uko Akpan feels betrayed by his own people. He also wonders where to put his trust, if he could be betrayed by his own people.
- Reference: (a) A relation could be a betrayer
(b) A relation could bring misfortune
(c) When a relation betrays, the confidence is lost completely
- Relevance: This proverb expresses the moral of caution against envy of any form. The first form of encouragement should naturally come from within before from the outsiders. This proverb is relevant to advising the society to value and

encourage its members as that can usher in massive progress and development in the society.

Proverb Twelve: *Awo nwan isituakatuak ukod, ndien awoden akakanga adon k'itu*

[A woman does not tap the wine while the man does the emptying into the wine-jar]

Pragmeme: Pragmeme of Caution and Displeasure

Inference: Uko Akpan is against role-switching within the family circle. Annang married men should live up to their duties as men and provide for their women. It is in the evidence, that the society confirms their manness.

Reference: (a) It is a crime for a woman to tap wine
(b) It is a crime for a man to do the emptying of wine into the wine-jar
(c) It could be disastrous and detrimental to default in this rule

Relevance: This proverb expresses the moral of caution against and displeasure for married men who do not spend on their wives. The proverb will educate men of the need to show care and affection to their wives, because every successful society or individual starts from the family unit.

Proverb Fourteen: *Ajen amaadue ete, ete amum amia ikpa, ama ma anye akod adad*

[If a child offends the father, the father punishes the child but always takes him back]

Pragmeme: Pragmeme of Apology, Reprimand and Forgiveness

Inference: Tendencies are that Uko Akpan, in the course of his career as a sociocultural musician might have stepped on many toes; hence, he is pleading for forgiveness in order to enjoy the blessing that comes with indigenous patronage.

Reference: (a) A child who offends the father will be punished
(b) A child who offends the father has some chances of forgiveness

Relevance: This proverb expresses the moral of forgiveness. As a society, there is that need for forgiveness among the members. A society in chaos, hate and malice cannot enjoy progress and development.

Proverb Fifteen: *K'uyak edim abon (ikuo de); k'uyak edim abon (ibid ami)*

[Don't let the rain soak the song; don't let rain soak the drums]

Pragmeme: Pragmeme of Invigoration and Revitalisation

Inference: This proverb is metaphoric. It means a call to keep one's dreams, aspirations, family, job, skills and other human endeavors always invigorated and revitalized.

Reference: (a) The song quality should not be any less
(b) The drums could be destroyed should rain fall on them

Relevance: This proverb expresses the moral of courage to face life's challenges. As a society, there is that need for the members to always stay alive to their environment, dreams and aspirations.

Proverb Sixteen: *Ufan amadia ituk ufan, adaatippe ekon*

[When a friend cheats a friend, it will breed war]

Pragmeme: Pragmeme of Warning and Caution

Inference: Uko Akpan is aware of the various forms of war incitements; he feels friends could also incite war; hence the need for friends to stay loving and caring without fights so as to evade wars.

Reference: (a) Every friend has the tendency to cheat another

(b) Friends could war among themselves

(c) Friends should remain sincere and loyal to avoid quarrels

Relevance: The proverb is very relevant to the collective growth of the society. When friends remain at loggerheads, war is at the slightest possibility. So, healthy friendships build a healthy society.

Proverb Seventeen: *Una-udud akobo ukobo anwan*

[It is the powerless that constantly presses for a fight]

Pragmeme: Pragmeme of Caution

Inference: The Biafra army is powerless yet they keep pressing for war every time not minding the defeat they once conceded.

Reference: (a) Someone is in the habit of fighting

(b) The strong and mighty do not press for a fight

Relevance: The relevance of this proverb lies in its cautioning against every form of fight and rancor. A society that craves sustainable progress and development should live above fights and incessant wars.

Proverb Eighteen: *Akpekud afia-agwo afo anam utom atikpa*

[When you see a Whiteman you work hard]

Pragmeme: Pragmeme of Pretense and Hypocrisy

Inference: Most Nigerians are hypocritical and they love eye-services. Uko Akpan feels strongly about this behavior and sings against it.

Reference: (a) There is a Whiteman at sight

(b) There is work sight

(c) People only work when the Whiteman approaches

Relevance: This proverb serves to remind the public not to only work when the Whiteman (supervisor) is around. Pretense and Hypocrisy destroys the workforce of any establishment in a society.

Proverb Nineteen: *Isan anyon awod ebok*

[Sky-walk has killed the monkey]

Pragmeme: Pragmeme of Caution and Wisdom

Inference: a) As crafty and smart as the monkey is yet still dies of skywalk makes it convincing that human strength is not enough in life. There is that room for grace.

- b) Over relying on one's wisdom alone is dangerous
- c) The power of grace and fate should not be undermined.
- Reference: (a) A monkey has been killed out of carelessness
- (b) Sky-walks are deadly
- Relevance: This proverb serves to caution the public against the detrimental effect of over-confidence. It does not allow for tenacity. Every sane society needs this caution to thrive.

Proverb Twenty: *Etok unen afaha atan*

- [Tiny hen that breaks through the fence]
- Pragmeme: Pragmeme of Caution
- Inference: a) There is a purpose for every admonition and advice.
- b) Most children refute elderly advice
- c) It is bad to refute elderly advice
- d) There is a repercussion for every disobedient child
- Reference: (a) Larger hens cannot break out of the fence
- (b) Only small hens can break out of a fence
- (c) It is strange how a tiny hen and break out of a fence
- Relevance: This proverb serves to caution the public, especially the children against disobedience. The act of disobedience has grave consequences which could be detrimental. Obedience will bring about progress in our societies.

Implications for Language Education

Given that Annang is widely spoken in Akwa Ibom, the examination of Annang proverbs in Uko Akpan's music offers important insights on language acquisition. Proverbs are useful linguistic aids for language learning and understanding because they capture moral principles, social conventions, and cultural knowledge. Language learners can gain a greater knowledge of the Annang language and the ways meaning is mediated in conversation by researching the pragmatic activities and contextual uses of these proverbs. The improvement of learners' pragmatic ability is one of the study's main implications. Proverbs are used strategically in Uko Akpan's music to accomplish a variety of pragmatic tasks, including warning, instructing, persuading, and advising. Learners will be able to appreciate the subtleties of meaning beyond the literal interpretation of words if they comprehend how these proverbs operate in various communicative circumstances. This is especially important in multilingual settings when students have to switch between Annang and English while making sure their phrases are suitable for the context in both languages.

The study also highlights the significance of contextual learning for language acquisition. Inherently, proverbs are closely linked to certain cultural and social settings. Effective language acquisition involves more than simply learning grammar and vocabulary; it also calls for knowledge of the context in which certain phrases are employed. The usage of proverbs by Uko Akpan in various musical performances may be examined to help students understand the significance of context in meaning-making and to hone their contextual

interpretation abilities, which are crucial for learning a first or second language. The study also emphasizes how important language socialization is to language acquisition. In Uko Akpan's music, proverbs serve as more than just ornamental features; they are proactive tools for educating listeners about the Annang people's traditional values and communication customs. Learners can internalize Annang discourse patterns, such as rhetorical devices, tonal variances, and culturally distinctive phrases, by being exposed to such language structures. This immersive method makes learning more efficient and significant by encouraging a more organic and intuitive command of the language.

The development of Akwa Ibom bilingual and bidialectal proficiency is another important impact. Understanding how Annang proverbs work can help learners in the area negotiate multilingual conversation, as many of them operate in both Annang and English-speaking situations. A deliberate examination of how proverbs accomplish various speech actions might aid in pragmatic transfer, which is the process by which learners adopt communication tactics from one language to another (Efurosibina Adegbiya, 2022, p.430). To improve their general communication competency, learners can improve their ability to articulate equivalent thoughts in English by understanding how an Annang proverb delivers a warning or counsel. Additionally, Akwa Ibom's mother tongue-based multilingual education (MTB-MLE) policy can be strengthened by including Annang proverbs into language instruction. Incorporating traditional linguistic components, such as proverbs, into formal and informal learning environments might support language preservation initiatives, especially in light of the progressive loss of indigenous language usage brought on by urbanization and globalization. Proverbs may be used as entrance points to teach not just the Annang language but also the cultural and pragmatic aspects of communication, making Uko Akpan's music a legitimate teaching tool for schools and community-based education initiatives.

Lastly, this study supports the necessity of performative and participatory language learning methods. Performance is at the heart of Uko Akpan's music, where language is not only spoken but also sung, acted out, and embodied in narrative. This implies that interactive discourse analysis, role-playing, and music should be incorporated into language learning activities in addition to conventional classroom training. Engaging learners in activities where they may sing, act out, or interpret proverbs in diverse situations can boost retention and application, making language learning more dynamic and engaging.

Conclusion

Studying Annang proverbs in Uko Akpan's songs provides significant understanding of Akwa Ibom language acquisition. Proverbs are more than simply words; they are symbols of moral principles, cultural knowledge, and effective communication techniques. This study highlights their function in fostering language ability beyond vocabulary learning by examining their pragmatic acts and contextual importance. Students who study these proverbs get a stronger comprehension of discourse patterns, metaphorical language, and

the significance of cultural context in communication. This study's emphasis on pragmatic competence, which gives students the tools to use language effectively in a variety of situations, is one of its main contributions. The proverbs improve discourse abilities in both Annang and English by illuminating a variety of speech actions, including as persuasion, caution, encouragement, and social critique. Furthermore, by promoting bilingualism and linking local and international language patterns, proverbs strengthen the socialization process. Furthermore, including Annang proverbs into the curriculum guarantees language preservation and combats the linguistic deterioration brought on by industrialization. Through performance, narrative, and dramatization, Uko Akpan's music—a rich oral tradition—offers a captivating, immersive approach to education. A multilingual society that cherishes its linguistic legacy will be fostered by implementing these discoveries in schools, which will also provide students the communication skills they need in an increasingly interconnected world.

Recommendations

In light of the study's conclusions, a number of suggestions are made to improve Akwa Ibom language instruction by incorporating Annang proverbs and the pragmatic acts present in Uko Akpan's music into teaching methods:

- i. There is need for language teachers of English who understand Annang to incorporate Annang proverbs into language teaching materials for deeper understanding of cultural expressions and pragmatic competence.
- ii. There is need for the government to facilitate the development of bilingual textbooks and digital resources featuring Annang proverbs alongside English translations and interpretations.
- iii. There also the need for language scholars and teachers from Akwa Ibom to leverage Uko Akpan's music and oral traditions as interactive tools for teaching Annang and English.
- iv. Government and school owners should train language teachers on teaching pragmatic functions of proverbs.
- v. Establishing indigenous language clubs and organizing proverb recitation competitions can facilitate the propagation of proverb-based learning approach.
- vi. There is need for Government to foster collaborating academics, educators, and cultural practitioners to document, analyze, and promote teaching of Annang proverbs.
- vii. Parents and community elders should be encouraged at all times, to pass down proverbs and oral traditions to younger generations.
- viii. Lastly, there is need for the Akwa Ibom State Government to support language preservation efforts by funding research, organizing workshops, and implementing policies promoting indigenous language education in schools.

References

- Adegbija, E. (2022). A Speech Act Analysis of Consumer Advertisements. *Journal of Pragmatics*. 6 (4), 419–442. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0378-2166\(82\)90022-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/0378-2166(82)90022-9)
- Adegbite, W. (2020). 'Reading for all in Africa: Building Communities where Literacy Thrives.' A. Oyetunde, J. S. Aliyu, M. S. Haggai, & V. L. Onukaogu (Eds.). *Towards the Development of a Reading Culture in Nigerian Society*. [Matador Publishing], 1–14.
- Agawu, Kofi. (2013). *Representing African Music: Postcolonial Notes, Queries, Position*. New York: Routledge.
- Agu, C. S. & Ali, V. E. (2012). “The Role of Art Objects in Technological Development of Nigeria: An Archaeological Perspective”. *Professor Bassey Andah Journal of Cultural Studies*. Vol. 5, 23–45.
- Akande, A. T., & Mosobalaje, A. (2014). The Use of Proverbs in Hip-hop Music: The Example of Yoruba Proverbs in 9ice's Lyrics.' *International Journal of English Linguistics*. 4 (3), 42–51. <https://doi.org/10.5539/ijel.v4n3p42>.
- Akinyemi, A. (2022). 'A Linguistic Study of Proverbs and Language Identity in Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* and *Arrow of God*.' *International Journal of Language and Literature*. 10 (1), 15–26.
- Akpabot, S. E. (2014). “Folk Music and Dance”. S. W. Peters, E. R. Iwok & O. E. Uya (eds). *Akwa Ibom State: The Land of Promise – A Compendium*. Lagos: Gabumo Publishing Co. Ltd, 105–123.
- Allot, N. (2011). “Relevance Theory”. *Perspectives on Pragmatics and Philosophy*. Eds. A. Capone, F. Lo Piparo and Micarapezza, Springer, 78–99.
- Austin, J. L. (1962). *How to Do Things with Words*. Oxford University Press.
- Bamgbose, G. A. (2023). Metaphorical Constructs and Semiotic Expressions in the BBC Yoruba's Facebook Football Memes. *Linguistics and Applied Language Studies*. 41 (2), 158–170. <https://doi.org/10.1515/lass-2024-0032>
- Bell, A. (2021). *The Language of News Media*. Wiley-Blackwell.
- Brown, P., & Levinson, S. C. (1987). *Politeness: Some Universals in Language Usage*. Cambridge University Press.

- Chernoff, J. (2019). *African rhythm and African sensibility: aesthetics and social action in Africa musical idioms*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Chilton, P. (2019). *Political Discourse in Theory and Practice*. John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Cobb, K. C., Hodson, A. & Tamayo, S. A. (2018). "Preserving Aboriginal Heritage: Technical and Traditional Approaches". In C. Dignard (ed). *Proceedings of a Conference Symposium September 24-28, 2007*. Canada: Canadian Conservation Institute
- Cook, G. (2020). *The Discourse of Advertising*. (3rd ed.). Routledge.
- Cotterill, J. (2020). *Language and Power in Court: A Linguistic Analysis of the O.J. Simpson Trial*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Essien, O. E. (2020). "Annang in the Polyglot Africana." Ed. D. Dalby. *African Language Review*. Vol. 9, 55–74.
- Ette, E. U. (2025, January 5) Annang Heritage Preservation. *Seirra Nature*. [Accessed: June 5, 2025] Available: <http://www.annangheritage.com>
- Fairclough, N. (2020). *Language and Power*. (3rd ed.). Routledge.
- Gee, J. P. (2018). *An Introduction to Discourse Analysis: Theory and Method*. (5th ed.). Routledge.
- Glennon, J. (2010). *Understanding Music*. London: Macmillan.
- Grice, H. P. (1975). 'Logic and Conversation. Eds. P. Cole & J. L. Morgan. *Syntax and Semantics. Speech Acts*. Vol. 3. Academic Press, 41–58.
- Halliday, M. A. K., & Hasan, R. (2019). *Cohesion in English*. Routledge.
- Idamoyibo, A. A (2016). "Indigenous Music in a New Role". *Nordic Journal of African Studies*. 25 (3&4): 329–348.
- Iwokedok, U. E. (2011). *Beyond Entertainment: A Study of Uko Akpan (The Ekere of Akwa Ibom State)*. Plateau: Africa Christian Textbooks (ACTS).
- Kecskes, I. (2014). *Intercultural Pragmatics*. Oxford University Press.
- Leader, J. A. & Haynie, W. S. (2016). *Music Education in the High School*. Chicago: Prentice-Hall Inc.

- Idowu, E. B. (2013). *African Traditional Religion: A Definition*. London: SCM Press.
- Leech, G. (2014). *Principles of Pragmatics*. Routledge.
- Levinson, S. C. (1982). *Pragmatics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lyons, J. (2017). *Language, Meaning, and Context*. Fontana Press.
- Lyons, J. (2017). *Semantics*. Vol 1. Cambridge. Cambridge University Press.
- Mercer, N. (2018). *Exploring Talk in School: Inspired by the Work of Douglas Barnes*. SAGE Publications.
- Merriam, A. P. (2014). *The Anthropology of Music*. Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press.
- Mey, J. L. (2001). *Pragmatics: An introduction* (2nd ed.). Blackwell Publishing.
- Mey, J.L. (1993). *Pragmatics: An Introduction*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Montapert, A. A. (2014). *Distilled Wisdom*. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc.
- National Commission for Museums and Monuments. (2016). *Nigerian Belief Systems and Igbo World View*. Enugu: NCMM.
- Ndiribe, M. C. (2020). 'A Pragmatic Analysis of Proverbs in the Domains of Knowledge Construction in Igbo.' *International Journal of Language and Linguistics*. 7 (4), 725–733. <https://doi.org/10.30845/ijll.v7n4p7>.
- Norricks, N. R. (2014a). *Foundations of Pragmatics*. De Gruyter Mouton. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110214260>.
- Norricks, N.R. (2014b). 'Proverbial Perlocutions: How to do Things with Proverbs.' *Wise Words*: Ed. W. Mieder. *Essays on the Proverb*. New York. Garland Publishing, Inc, 112–130.
- Nwonyeh, G.I.R. (2017). "Influence of Technology on Indigenous Nigerian Music". *Nigeria Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*. Vol. 1, 67–82.
- Odebunmi, A. (2021). 'Pragmatics, Discourse and Society.' *Volume 1: A Festschrift for Akin Odebunmi*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 93–119.
- Odebunmi, A., (2008). "Pragmatic Functions of Crisis-motivated Proverbs in Ola Rotimi's *The Gods Are Not To Blame*." *Linguist*. 33 (1), 200-218.

- Onwuekwe, A. I. (2019). "Religious Music Composition: A Valuable Instrument for Cultural Transmission and Reconciliation in Nigeria". I. A. Ezeaku (ed). *Bulletin of African Religion and Culture (B.A.R.C)*. 5 (1), 45–59.
- Onyiuke, Y. (2019). "The role of Music in Religion, Culture and its Reconciliatory Nature in Nigeria". I. A. Ezeaku (ed). *Bulletin of African Religion and Culture*. 5 (1), 60–74.
- Osisanwo, W. (2013). *An Introduction to Discourse Analysis and Pragmatics*. Lagos-Nigeria: Femolus-Fetop Publishers.
- Osoba, G. (2014a). *Linguistic Context and Meaning Construction*. *Journal of Pragmatics*. 66, 1–14.
- Osoba, J.B. (2014b). 'The Nature, Form and Functions of Yoruba Proverbs: A Socio-pragmatic Perspective'. *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS)*. Vol. 19, Issue 2, Ver. IV 2014, 44-56.
- Prott, L. V. (2019). "Some Consideration on the Protection of the Intangible Heritage: Claims and Remedies". *Safeguarding Traditional Cultures: A Global Assessment of the 1989 UNESCO Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore*. Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press.
- Robinson, M. H. (2017). "Beyond the Zoo: The Biopark". *Defenders of Wildlife Magazine*. 62 (6), 79-90.
- Yule, G. (2016). *A Study of Language*. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Searle, J. R. (1969). *Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language*. Cambridge University Press.
- Searle, J.R. (1979). *Indirect Speech Acts in Syntax and Semantics*. Vol. 3. *Speech Act*. Peter Cole of Jerry Lee Morgan (eds.). *Speech Act*. New York: Academic Press, 59-82.
- Tagg, C. (2015). *Exploring Digital Communication: Language in Action*. Routledge.
- Umanah, V. S. & Okwueze, M. I. (2016). 'Social Change: Challenges to Cultural Preservation of Artifacts and Religious Objects in Akwa Ibom State'. In *Niger Delta Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*. 3 (2). Ekpoma, Edo State: Niger Delta Christian Association for Academic Research.
- Umanah, V. S. (2014). "An overview of Ethical Significance of Annang Proverbs". *World Multidisciplinary Journal of Research Development and Reformation*. 1 (1), 123–138.

- Unuabonah, F. O., & Akinwotu, S. A. (2025). Investigating the Pragmatic Functions of Nigerian English-based Proverbs: A Corpus-driven Method. *Corpus Pragmatics*, 9 (1), 51–73. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s41701-024-00178-x>.
- Lawal, A. (2017). “A Pragmatic Study of Selected Pairs of Yoruba Proverbs”. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 27, 635-652.
- Van Dijk, T. A. (2018). *Society and Discourse: How Social Contexts Influence Text and Talk*. Cambridge University Press.

Appendixes

Excerpts of Uko Akpan's Tracks (Annang)	English Translation
<p>Mbere K'esa Ukang ajid, Akwa Ibom ajid enntud eno edem, mbere k'esa Nse ke mman nam ndue? Nnanga ake'dehe Cross River State, Ema'se ekod yak nkwo ikwo ke afud mbono astate. Itimi'de nyen Akwa Ibom, awo inkodo aba yak mbide mkpo kea state.... Ubok, ebib enno ise, nte nnam ndue; <i>Ajen amaadue ete, ete amum amia ikpa, ama ma anye akod adad...</i> ...Se mkpe kara ntang ke ekom k'fut ndambem anyin akpade Yak Obong ifod nyine amana adiong ubokutom anyin. Mme anyie ke mkpemana Ndong yak aka ndungo k'iwod ami'm? Mfanaibaha, yak ndon Bishop Etokidem. Ubok, Bisiop, nwed Abasi abo, yak anam utom adia mkpo; <i>K'usin anyen k'ubok utom agwo; k'usuaan ubok-utom agwo</i> Ubok Bisiop, yak udon utom nno ndito Akwa Ibom: Bip ammo se k'nam ndue, ubok yak ektopad enim.</p>	<p>I've been relegated to the background My people, our Akwa Ibom has relegated me to the background What have I done to deserve this? When it was Cross River State, I was invited to perform at all the state functions. But now it's Akwa Ibom and I'm not invited to perform at state functions.... Please ask what my offence is; <i>If a child offends his father, The latter punishes the child but always takes him back...</i> ...what I can say in appreciation to your support is to ask God to prosper your endeavours in life. Who else can I send to make enquiries on my behalf? Okay, let me send Bishop Etokidem. Please, Bishop, the Bible says we should work to eat; <i>We should not envy others or try to destroy the work of others.</i> Please Bishop, let me send you to Akwa Ibom: ask whatever offence I have committed to be pushed aside.</p>
<p>Nse Owo Anam A'kede akon eyo usen kiet, nkam mbo yak nduok udud k'ikuk ami, Akikere ammen aka usung ande Idehe ami nkede akikere afud akon eyo mbanga se wo akpenam yak adiboho ufen. <i>Imowo aduk afun ano inyene amo.</i> Imowo ikude idap idaiya. K'ukem usung ade, <i>Ifu aduk afon ano idap.</i> Idap adide Abasi anoa nye. Uko Akpan abo, ke ibaha se'wo nam yak adiboho ufen...</p>	<p>Nse Owo Anam One night, while reclining on my bed, My thoughts wondered over this subject, And I thought over and over about what one can do and is not a slave to it. <i>The rich become slaves to their wealth.</i> They hardly sleep. On the other hand, <i>a lazy-man is a slave to sleep.</i> His sleep becomes his god. Uko Akpan says there is nothing one does that is not burdensome...</p>
<p>Edibre Uko Akpan Nkomo anyin ake bo ke nke nam idiok. Nkomo anyin ake bo ke nke unek Uko Akpan ade unek ibok. Awo ufok Abasi ama kpa, ema ebo Ukp Akpan adi bide ikwo k'itie mkpa, Afud anyin ete iyo ooo Ete ke uto mbide ade ifono k'itie mkpa amemud ufok Abasi... Emekud nte mbon ndad ndom or nsoi nno iso ibok akpa? Akpede iboro ade iyo, ndien nside endodo uyo k'mbide idiong, Iyaka mbide ikwo Uko Akpan k'tie mkpa aaka ufok Abasi? Ade ubok utom andidiok, sa'de, <i>imeme awo itongo eti mkpo</i> <i>mmana ntongo ntak nnam yak akaiso.</i> K'eset...</p>	<p>Everyone is performing Uko Akpan now I thought you all said I was doing the wrong thing. I was engaged in fetish dance. When a church member died, and Uko Akpan was to be invited to perform at the funeral, You all rejected the proposal. You said you didn't want such a performance at the burial rites of a church member... Have I offered red chalk or trout to some god? If the response is negative, why am I accused of fetishism, And not allowed to perform at the funerals of churchgoers? It's enemy action because <i>it's not easy to start a good thing And also sustain same.</i> In the past...</p>

<p>Ekpo Ebe ...idehe Amma abo akuk mbib atongontak anam nte asuk eka ijiem Akema anye atime edem nne mbuk unaiwod. Uduak amo ade nanga akpe tude mfonido ukud adiaha ato ebe'yen Ete, ken se k'afo.... ...de akpa k'ubokutom afo. Ke etok ini, idehe eyaebio idiwud k'adinam, mme nsisio ubokutom ajid. Afudowo ayamen ikwa eduk ikot. Ema'tem ntem ima, esin ikan; efud atuk, ndien de eto mkpo. Mbon ibid, ebibide yak ason aboho. Ama mana etok, iban eya'wak ibide k'iwang, ndien amakem ini udok Eya ewoko utoh <i>Uma-ebe akama ndisan itie ndidia</i></p>	<p>Ekpo Ebe Madam collects consultation fees and pretends to carry out a search And later returns with more stories of future losses. Her motive is to stop the support her inlaw is receiving from her husband. Mr. Man, on what do you... be the best in your profession. Soon, it will be time to demonstrate our different professions. Everyone will take a matvet and gets into the bush. After clearing the bush, we'll set it on fire; clear the debris, and then Plant the seeds. Instrumentalits you are too loud. After a while the women will weed the farm and when its harvest time The produce will be harvested... <i>A stingy husband carries a whip during meal time</i></p>
<p>Sabong Sabong Sabong Sabong, ebod afo iyaka ntie k'ufok afo; Ayem inwodwod, ayem inyamyam. Anwanwa akesongo ajen k'usen Ederebo. Idehe nditoeka eneng ekene ekewong ukem adung'm Ajin mme'tan iko edem, <i>Akpekud afia-agwo afo anam utom atikpa;</i> Ade nte'nye idehe aduwem awo nte anyin?... Mmon ibid ami, jukpo ibid ade yak asok etok <i>K'uyak edim abon (ikuo de); k'uyak edim</i> <i>abon (ibid ami)</i> Yak ererimbot ekob uyo anyin'em</p>	<p>Sabong Sabong Sabong Sabong your goat does not want me to stay in your house; It wants to kill me, it wants to sell me. Anwanwa has committed abortion on Ederebo. Her siblings also commit the same crime by drinking some herbal mixture. You hypocrites, <i>When you see a whiteman you work hard;</i> Is he not a human being like you?.... My drummer boys, beat the drums a little harder <i>Don't let the rain soak the song; don't let rain soak the</i> <i>drums</i> Let the world hear our voice...</p>
<p>Amedo ndo? ...nakanaika ubok ibaha...ndien emaubib mme'ado ebe Afo te 'i' Ubok, mmon ibid ami, enam yak asong uyo, yak AfahaObong ikob jide. Tongo nke mana, nkude ufang nkobo nto mkpo adam akpa <i>Awo nwan isituakatuak ukod, ndien awoden</i> <i>akakanga adon k'itu.</i> emaubib mme'ado ebe Afo te 'i' Ade, ukudo idioho mkpo ebe k'idem. Ukuneke afonisin...</p>	<p>Are You Married? ...No wristwatch...and when you're asked if you have a husband You say 'yes' Please, my boys sing loud enough so Afaha Obong can hear us. Since I was born, I've not seen or heard about <i>Women tapping wine and the men emptying it into the wi ne-</i> <i>jar.</i> When you're asked if you have a husband, you answer 'yes' Meanwhile, you have no marital evidence on you. No wrapper...</p>

<p>Kere Akangiba Nkomo ekejem ikpong, igwa nne nnaira. Ukam, ubok nno ujad ami. Ujad adikaba afia. Idehe ajen-iban Antekon ake songo idib akpa <i>Isan anyon awod ebok</i></p> <p>K'sang ade, idehe edibo, yak ndikwak mbre k'itie mkpa. Itung awo ema ebo k'ndi... <i>Etok unen afaha atan</i> <i>Atikonkon ada unek</i> <i>Inua ikum aduoro ebod</i></p>	<p>Think Twice Ponder over this ...They ask for cocoyam, cassava, and some naira. Granny please let me have my hat. The hat has become a trap. Antekon's daughter committed abortion and died <i>Sky-walk has killed the monkey</i></p> <p>In the process and they said I should perform at her funeral. Some said I shouldn't... <i>Tiny hen that breaks through the fence</i> <i>The mantis is on a dance display</i> <i>The grass has become slippery in the goat's mouth</i></p>
<p>Ekuyak Ekong Anwwana Aba <i>Una-udud akobo ukobo anwan</i> Ntang'am nno ndito ajid e'kedi kudo ekong. Ekuyak Ekong Anwwana Aba. Ubok Ward One. Kutuk Ward Two. Ward Two, ku bide nkara nne idem anyin. Ward Three, ubok ekujibe idem anyin. Ekpenam'am, aya sin ubahade... <i>Ufan amadia ituk ufan, adaatippe ekon</i></p>	<p>Don't Let War Break Out Again <i>It is the powerless that constantly presses for a fight</i> I am telling this to the youths who did not witness that war. I'm warning against a reoccurrence. Please Ward One, Don't cheat on Ward Two. Ward Two, don't defraud your group. Ward Three, don't cheat your fellow members. If you do, it'll lead to division.... <i>When a friend cheats a friend, it will breed war...</i></p>
<p>Tom Kere ...Mmen mbong ensiungo mmien tutu. Ibon'ami iyeme ikud nnanga nyene nkori <i>Akpede ajen-uka ade ntak nnana'yen afo,</i> <i>idod-enyen afo adeede ke anie?...</i> ...dawo, akefo, asuk akud nkori ke ndap; Asuk anyene enangukwak ke ndap; ndo'fo asuk ade k'ndap. Ndito ikwo'mi, ubok anyin, ekwo ikwo'fon oo – mbak edimen isiungo ke anwa. Ekwo ikwo nde'fon mbak ererimbot ema ino nnyo. Emende ekwooo....</p>	<p>Think Well ...The elders are cursing me badly. They don't want me to progress <i>On what will you put your confidence, if the source of your</i> <i>misfortune is your relation?....</i> ...Youngman, your fortunes are visible only in your dreams; You own a bicycle in the dream and you only marry in the dream not in real life. My boys sing well – 0 lest you attract curses from the audience. Sing well so that neophytes will not ridicule us. I am signing off at this point...</p>

This Paper is Published Without Open Access Publication Charges
Courtesy the NLNG

