

**SOCIOLINGUISTICS INVESTIGATIONS ON PROVERBS REFERRING TO
ANIMALS**

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**BEING A PROJECT WORK SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF
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APPROVAL

I, **ODUWA BEST IDAHOSA**, a student of the Department of Linguistics Studies, University of Benin with Matriculation number **ART2100769** completed the requirements for the course work and research for the Bachelor of Arts Degree of the University of Benin. The work embodied in this project is original and has not been submitted in part or whole for any other degree or diploma programme of this or any other university or institution.

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PLAGIARISM CERTIFICATION

I, **ODUWA BEST IDAHOSA** with matriculation number **ART2100791** declare that this work titled “**SOCIOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS ON PROVERBS REFERRING TO ANIMALS**” has successfully passed the anti-plagiarism test (with a score of %), and so does not violate any copyright regulations.

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Date: _____

DEDICATION

I dedicate this project to the Almighty God, the author and finisher of my faith. Lord, You have been my strength, my guide, and my ever-present help throughout this journey.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Title page	ii
Approval	iii
Plagiarism Certification	iv
Dedication	v
Acknowledgments	vi
Table of Contents	viii
Abstract	x

CHAPTER ONE: BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.0 Introduction	1
1.1 Edo language and its people	2
1.2 Statement of the Problem	3
1.3 Purpose of the Study	4
1.4 Aim and Objectives	5
1.5 Research Questions	5
1.6 Significance of the study	6
1.7 Scope of the Study	6
1.8 Methodology	6

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction	9
2.1 Conceptual Review	9
2.2 Previous Studies	16
2.3 Concern of the Present Study	17

CHAPTER THREE: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.0 Introduction	19
3.1 Cultural Semiotic Theory	19
3.2 Application of the theory	22
3.3 Relevance/justification of the theory	23

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.0 Introduction	25
4.1 Analysis of Some Edo	25
4.2 Discussion of Findings	39

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction	41
5.1 Summary	41
5.2 Findings	42
5.3 Conclusion	42
5.4 Recommendations	43
References	44

ABSTRACT

This study explores the sociolinguistic significance of animal-related proverbs in the Edo language, examining how they reflect the cultural values, social norms, and worldview of the Edo people. Proverbs that involve animals often serve as tools for communication, moral instruction, and conflict resolution, offering insight into traditional beliefs and human behavior as understood through animals' traits.

Using a qualitative approach, the study combines descriptive analysis with ethnographic methods, including interviews and observation, to gather authentic proverbs and their meanings from native speakers. The findings reveal that animal proverbs in Edo culture are rich in metaphor and symbolism, portraying animals such as the tortoise, dog, lion, and bird as representations of wisdom, cunning, strength, or foolishness, depending on context.

CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The origin of proverbs is something that varies from society to society because of the differences in the cultures of the various ethnic groups that use them. Among the sources that attempted to locate the origin of proverbs is the Oxford Dictionary of English Proverbs, which states that, "Proverbs are centuries old, dating back probably from the time when wisdom and precepts were transmitted by story and songs" It is pertinent to note that it is difficult to pinpoint how proverbs came about, especially in most African societies. Just as the origin of proverbs is not easy to trace, so is the definition. That is to say, it is very difficult to give an exact definition of proverbs. However, attempts have been made by various scholars to define the concept.

Different scholars have given definitions of proverbs. Mieder (1985) defines a proverb as a short, generally known sentence that contains wisdom, truth, morals, and traditional views in a metaphorical, fixed, and memorable form and which is handed down from generation to generation.

Lamidi (2008) gives a definition which is not too different from Mieder's, and according to him, proverb is a witty saying that captures the logic, culture and observations of a people.

This study is a sociolinguistic investigation of proverbs referring to animals within the Benin community of Edo State, Nigeria. It focuses on how animals are used in these proverbs to convey cultural meanings. By analyzing these linguistic practices, the study aims to highlight the role of language in cultural expression, social cohesion, and the preservation of Edo heritage.

1.1 ÈDO LANGUAGE AND ITS PEOPLE

The Èdo people are the primary inhabitants of Edo State in Southern Nigeria, with Benin City as their historic and cultural capital. The Èdo people (also referred to as Bini) belongs to the Edoid group of the Niger-Congo language family. It is the language of the ancient and powerful Benin Kingdom, which flourished from the 11th century AD and was renowned for its sophisticated administration, advanced metallurgy (especially in bronze and brass casting), and vibrant artistic traditions.

The Ẹdo society is traditionally hierarchical, with a deep respect for age, royalty, and social status, a structure historically centred around the Oba of Benin. This social organisation is profoundly reflected in their language use, which employs honorifics and strict codes of respect. The concept of

(taboo, law, custom) and (way of life, character) are central to the Ẹdo worldview, governing behaviour and social conduct.

The Ẹdo people of Edo State, Nigeria, possess a rich and complex oral tradition, with proverbs known as ("itan") forming a cornerstone of eloquent and impactful speech. A significant portion of these proverbs draws its imagery from the animal kingdom. Animals like the tiger ("ATALAKPA"), the leopard ("EKPEN"), the dog ("EKITA"), the bird ("AHIANMWE'N") the owl ("ESUGHUSUGHU") and the goat ("EWE") are not merely biological entities but are imbued with symbolic meanings that reflect the Ẹdo people's understanding of human character, social relationships, and cosmic order.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Many African societies are suffering from sharp decline in their oral tradition partly because of negligence. This has for some time now been a

serious problem to contend with, especially among the Edo speaking people of southern Nigeria who regard oral tradition with high esteem. The people, especially the young ones do not see any need of using proverbs to spice their everyday speech. They are mostly of the opinion that proverbs are meant exclusively for the old ones. They also think that using proverbs is a rural affair and that the residents of the urban areas have no need of them. For these reasons, they do not really see any need for the proverbs within the Edo domain. This study will therefore go a long way to correct this misconception by making the people, especially the youth, to see the significant linguistic and cultural role proverbs play among the Edo.

1.3 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study aims to document and analyze the sociolinguistic features of proverbs associated with animals in the Edo language. It seeks to explore the cultural values, social norms, and worldview within these proverbs, and to examine how they function as a tool for communication and social instruction in Edo society

This research explores Edo proverbs featuring animals, spoken by the Benin people in Nigeria. It investigates the connection between language, culture, cognition, and social organization in the Edo worldview.

1.4 AIM AND OBJECTIVES

This study aims to investigate the sociolinguistics investigation of proverbs associated with animals in Edo language. Its specific objectives are to:

1. To identify Edo proverbs that make reference to animals.
2. Analyse the selected proverbs
3. To interpret the meaning and then apply it to human behavior.
- 4.To explore the cultural and moral lessons embedded in these proverbs

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the proverbs Edo that makes reference to animals?
2. How are these proverbs analyzed?
3. How do these proverbs convey meaning and relate to human behavior?
4. What cultural and moral lessons do these proverbs convey?

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This sociolinguistic investigation of proverbs associated with animals in Èdo language is meant to enlighten the Èdo people on the need to use proverbs in their domain. It will help to find out the circumstances surrounding the use of proverbs as a medium of expression. This study will also help to bring to light the specific group of people that use proverbs in the Èdo society and how proverbial expressions will restore their oral tradition. Finally, it will contribute to existing body of knowledge and serve as important reference document in libraries for scholars.

1.7 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study is limited to proverbs in the Èdo (Bini) language that make explicit reference to animals. It will not cover other aspects of oral literature like folktales or songs, except where they provide context for proverb.

1.8 METHODOLOGY

This methodology explains the sociolinguistics investigation of proverbs referred to animals in Èdo language. The research uses a cultural semiotic approach to understand how these proverbs reflect Èdo culture, values, and social practices. It applies a cultural semiotic framework, which

sees proverbs as signs that carry deeper meanings in the society, like morals or power dynamics.

Data will be collected in two ways: fieldwork and written sources.

Interviews and observations will involve 10–14 Edo speakers (ages 25–80, men and women, different jobs) in Benin City, Uhumwonde, and Ekiadolor. Interviews (45–60 minutes) will ask people to share animal proverbs, like “What proverb would you use for a clever person?” Audio recordings will capture Edo and English translations, following methods from *Sociolinguistics: Method and Interpretation* (Milroy & Gordon, 2003). Observations during events like the Igue festival will note how proverbs are used in real life, including gestures or reactions.

Proverbs will come from writers like Omoregbe (2020), which lists animal proverbs, and *Indigenous Knowledge in Esan Proverbs of Edo State, Nigeria* Aghedo (2023) which covers a related dialect. *The Pragmatics of Animal Name Metaphors in Edo Language* (Iwemi, 2022) provides a list of 100+ animal metaphors. These sources add historical context and are checked against spoken proverbs

Proverbs will be written in the Edo alphabet and translated with help from bilingual speakers.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 INTRODUCTION

A literature review is a critical summary of existing research and publications on a This chapter reviews previous scholarly works related to this research work and it is divided into four sections which are: conceptual review or theoretical review as may be called, previous studies which gave rise to the motivation for this present study, the concern of the present study, and a summary of the chapter.

2.1 CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

The following concepts are to be reviewed and discussed:

Sociolinguistics, its relation to proverbs, proverbs themselves, and animal symbolism in proverbs.

2.1.1 Sociolinguistics

Sociolinguistics is the branch of linguistics that examines the relationship between language and society. It studies how language reflects social structures, values, identities, and interactions among speakers. According to Romaine (2010), In the Oxford Handbook of Sociolinguistics,

Suzanne Romaine defines sociolinguistics as "the study of language in relation to social factors, including differences of regional, class, and occupational dialect, gender differences, and bilingualism." She emphasizes its interdisciplinary nature, bridging linguistics with sociology, anthropology, and cultural studies to explore how language reflects and shapes social identities and structure

In African societies, sociolinguistics often intersects with oral traditions, cultural expressions such as folktales, greetings, songs, and proverbs. Proverbs, in particular, serve not only as linguistic units but also as cultural artifacts that encode wisdom, moral lessons, traditions, and social values.

Johnstone (2018), Johnstone describes sociolinguistics as "the study of how language functions in social contexts, including how people use language to create and maintain social relationships, express identities, and navigate power dynamics." She highlights the focus on language as a tool for social interaction and identity construction.

Eckert (2018), Eckert defines sociolinguistics as "the study of how language variation is tied to social practices and identities, examining how

linguistic choices reflect and construct social categories like gender, class, and community." She focuses on the dynamic interplay between linguistic variation and social meaning.

2.1.2 Sociolinguistics Relation To Proverbs

The relationship between sociolinguistics and proverbs is deep and symbiotic. Sociolinguistics provides the perfect toolkit for understanding why proverbs are more than just "old sayings," revealing them as dynamic, socially-grounded linguistic artifacts.

Sharifian (2017), proverbs are a concentrated form of social and cultural knowledge, and sociolinguistics is the field that studies how such language use is shaped by and shapes society.

Ushie (2012) examines proverbs as concentrated forms of cultural wisdom that reinforce social boundaries and communal values. He argues that proverbs serve as strategic discourse tools, shaping social interactions by invoking shared norms and mediating conflicts within specific cultural contexts. Ushie's work is praised for its detailed analysis of how proverbs reflect sociolinguistic dynamics, such as power relations and identity construction, in indigenous African settings. Critics note that his focus on a

single ethnic group may call for broader comparative studies, but his contributions enrich the understanding of proverbs as sociolinguistic mechanisms for maintaining cultural cohesion and navigating social hierarchies. His work remains influential in African sociolinguistic scholarship.

2.1.3 Proverbs

Mieder (2009) described a proverb as "a concise statement of an apparent truth that has had, has, or will have currency among the people." This captures the brevity ("concise"), expression of general truths ("apparent truth"), and cultural persistence as repositories of traditional wisdom ("currency among the people"), with an implicit nod to their metaphorical and memorable nature through widespread, enduring use—much like your description, though emphasizing communal transmission over explicit morality.

Naciscione (2015) describes a proverb as "a specific layer of the word stock that contains valuable information about national traditions and worldview," often investigated from cognitive and stylistic perspectives. She highlights proverbs as metaphorical expressions embedded in language and

culture, functioning as tools for conveying shared knowledge and rhetorical depth in communication.

Ademowo and Balogun(2024) define proverbs as "concise, metaphorical expressions encapsulating communal wisdom and ethical values that guide social behavior and promote sustainable development in African societies." They highlight proverbs' function as cultural regulators that address modern challenges like economic disparity and ethical lapses, using Yoruba examples to illustrate how these sayings foster collective progress and moral accountability.

African proverbs are heavily loaded with cultural knowledge. In Yoruba, Igbo, Hausa, and Edo traditions, proverbs are not ornamental but essential elements of serious discourse. An elder is often expected to “speak” with proverbs to prove wisdom or to settle disputes. Thus, proverbs serve communicative, didactic, aesthetic, and identity functions.

2.1.4 Animal Symbolism in Proverbs

Using animals in proverbs is something that happens all over the world. This is because humans have always lived closely with animals and can easily see human-like qualities in them.

Proverbs that refer to animals often encode cultural values, moral lessons, social behaviour and relationships between humans and nature. According to Lauhakangas (2019) in her study of animal metaphors in proverbs, animals in proverbs serve as “source domains” in conceptual metaphors, mapping animal behaviour or characteristics onto human traits.

In the Edo context (including Esan, a subgroup of the Edo-speaking region), proverbs continue to play a key role in transmitting indigenous knowledge, social norms and moral education. For example, the study by Aluede (2023) on Esan proverbs highlights how proverbs cover a wide range of domains including animal husbandry, farming, morality, and social behaviour.

Symbolism in Edo (Benin) Culture

In Edo culture, part of the historical Benin Kingdom in present-day Nigeria, animals hold profound symbolic roles in art, mythology, rituals, and royal iconography. They often represent power, hierarchy, divinity, and moral lessons, reflecting the interconnectedness of humans, nature, and the spiritual world. Below is a curated list of key animals, their Edo names

(where documented in cultural sources), and their primary symbolic meanings. These draw from Edo oral traditions, bronze plaques, and court regalia.

Leopard(Ẹkpẹn)

The "king of the bush" and primary emblem of the Oba (king), representing royal authority, ferocity, steadfastness, and dominion over the wild. The Oba is metaphorically the "leopard of the house," embodying unyielding power and loyalty from subjects. Often depicted in brass plaques and worn as pendants by warriors.

Elephant (Eni)

Symbol of powerful chiefs or high-ranking nobles, sometimes denoting ambition or rivalry with the Oba. Represents immense strength and wisdom, but with a cautionary edge in Edo cosmology, as elephants embody forces that must be balanced against royal supremacy.

Tortoise(Egwi)

The clever trickster figure in Edo folktales, symbolizing wit, cunning, survival, and moral ambiguity. Often matches wits against kings or gods in

stories, teaching lessons on humility, deception, and resourcefulness in the face of greater powers.

2.2 PREVIOUS STUDIES

This section highlights and discusses previous studies which are related to this research. Here are some notable previous scholarly studies and publications on proverbs in the Èdo (Edo or Bini) language, drawn from academic journals, articles, and related works. I've focused on those directly addressing Edo proverbs, their cultural significance, usage, and analysis, while noting that some research overlaps with related Edoid languages like Esan (spoken in Edo State, Nigeria). These studies often explore proverbs as tools for cultural transmission, morality, and social commentary. I'll summarize key ones chronologically where dates are available:

Thomas (2020)rephrase to a collection of Èdo folktales embedding proverbs, many involving animals, with updates in 2020 emphasizing their sociolinguistic role in Benin culture.

Omozuwa & Ekiugbo (2018) their study set out to examine nature of Èdo (a subgroup/variant within the Edo language area) proverbs and their

didactic and pedagogical functions within contemporary parlance. The objective includes analysing how these folk proverbs serve as windows into indigenous knowledge systems (and culture. From the abstract: this study therefore examines the nature of EDO proverbs even as they perform their didactic and pedagogical functions in contemporary Edo parlance

Babatunde (2018) assessed the role of Edo proverbs in child-rearing, emphasizing the central role of women in instilling moral values through these terse expressions, and argues for their revival to combat societal value erosion.

Ighile (2017) discusses how Edo proverbs, rich in imagery from local nature and observations, elevate the Benin monarch's spiritual and poetic expressions it examines how proverbs feature in the songs of a Benin (Edo) minstrel, using cultural semiotics as a framework.

The study aimed to analyse the poetic and aesthetic elements of proverbs embedded in Edo songs (specifically in the work of Akobe) and to argue that these proverbs are not only social - moral tools but possess literary/artistic qualities as part of oral tradition.

2.3 CONCERN OF PRESENT STUDY

Recent sociolinguistic investigations into animal-associated proverbs in the Edo (also known as Bini) language—primarily spoken in Nigeria's Benin region—focus on their embedded roles in cultural preservation, social interaction, and communicative strategies. These studies often draw on frameworks like cultural semiotic theoretical framework to analyze how such proverbs function beyond literal meanings. While research specifically on animal proverbs in Edo remains somewhat niche (with more abundant work on general Edo proverbs or animal metaphors in related Nigerian languages like Yoruba), emerging studies highlight several interconnected concerns.

CHAPTER THREE

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on the theoretical framework for the research on sociolinguistics investigation of proverbs associated with animals in Edo language. The theoretical framework to be employed for this research is the "Cultural Semiotic Theory" which is a type of Sociolinguistic theory.

3.1 CULTURAL SEMIOTIC THEORY

Cultural semiotic theory, propounded by lotman(1993)

Cultural semiotic theory, situated within the broader Sociolinguistic Theory framework, delves into how signs, symbols, and language function within cultural contexts to create meaning. Semiotics, at its core, studies how humans use signs (words, images, gestures, etc.) to convey messages, and in the cultural semiotic approach, the focus shifts to the social and cultural environments that shape these signs.

Lotman (1993) work laid the foundation for what is often called cultural semiotics, a field of study concerned with how culture itself operates

as a system of signs and how meaning is produced, transmitted, and transformed within cultural systems.

One of Lotman's pivotal contributions is the concept of the semiosphere the semiotic (sign-making) space in which all culture occurs. In his essay "On the Semiosphere" (first published in Russian 1984, later translated) he describes the semiosphere as "the semiotic space without which semiosis (the process of sign creation and interpretation) cannot exist." In broader terms, culture for Lotman is not merely a collection of artefacts or customs, but a dynamic system of signs, texts, codes, and interactions.

Eco (1932) His relationship to semiotic theory is central and highly influential, particularly in expanding semiotics beyond linguistics into culture, communication, literature, and media.

This theory asserts that meaning is not inherent in the signs themselves but is produced through the interaction of signs within particular cultural and social frameworks. In other words, signs only make sense when interpreted within the specific cultural context in which they are used.

Sociolinguistic theory, which emphasizes the relationship between language and society, plays a crucial role in cultural semiotics by highlighting how language practices are deeply embedded in cultural norms and social structures. The cultural semiotic perspective suggests that language is more than just a tool for communication; it is a medium through which social identities are constructed and cultural ideologies are perpetuated. For example, the way people speak, the gestures they use, and the symbols they employ can reflect broader societal values, power relations, and group identities. This ties into how semiotics examines how the meanings of signs vary across different social and cultural groups, as different communities might attribute different meanings to the same symbol or word. The theory also takes into account the dynamic and evolving nature of culture and language. As cultures change over time, so too do the meanings and interpretations of signs. In this sense, cultural semiotics looks at how new forms of communication (like digital media) influence the way meaning is constructed and shared. Through this lens, it becomes clear that cultural semiotics is not just concerned with the static analysis of signs but is also

attuned to the social and cultural forces that shape the ways in which people use and understand these signs in everyday life.

3.2 APPLICATION OF THE THEORY

The cultural semiotic theory provides a valuable framework for analyzing the sociolinguistics investigation of proverbs associated with animals in Edo language. Semiotics, allows us to explore how proverbs in Edo language convey deeper meanings beyond their literal interpretation. In Edo culture, proverbs are not only a from of intelligence and eloquence but also carries significant cultural weight. These linguistic practices, embedded in proverbs, songs, and blessings, function as a means of communication that reflects the values, beliefs, and traditions of the Edo people. Edo proverbs, originating from the Edo people of Nigeria (primarily in Edo State), are concise, wisdom-packed sayings that encapsulate cultural values, moral lessons, and social norms. Rooted in the Edo language (also known as Bini), these proverbs are often metaphorical, drawing from everyday life, nature, and human behavior to convey deeper truths. They serve as tools for teaching, guiding behavior, and preserving cultural heritage, often passed down orally through generations.

do proverbs frequently incorporate animals as metaphors to convey moral, social, and practical wisdom. Animals are drawn from the local environment such as forests, farms, and villages and their observed behaviors or traits symbolize human qualities, relationships, or life lessons. This use reflects the agrarian and communal lifestyle of the Edo people, where animals represent cautionary tales, virtues like patience or humility, and warnings about consequences. Below, I'll explain several examples, grouped by animal for clarity, with the original text (where available), English translation, and interpretation. These are sourced from various Edo dialect collections.

Cultural semiotic theory provides a framework for understanding how Edo proverbs use animals as signs within a broader cultural sign system, or semiosphere, to generate and transmit meaning. In this view, proverbs are "texts" in the secondary modelling system built on natural language but functioning as symbolic tools to model human behavior and societal norms. Animals act as signifiers (the observable form, like a goat's behavior) that point to signified concepts (abstract meanings, such as temptation or vulnerability), embedded in Edo cultural memory.

3.3 RELEVANCE/JUSTIFICATION OF THE THEORY

The cultural semiotic theory is particularly relevant to researching Sociolinguistics investigation of proverbs associated with animals within the Benin community of Edo State, Nigeria, because it focuses on how language and other cultural symbols convey meaning in social practices. Proverbs, deeply embedded in cultural traditions, use language not just for communication, but as a medium through which symbols, values, and social norms are expressed. This theory allows for an analysis of how signs and symbols (animals) in the proverbs of Edo State (such as words and gestures) convey specific meanings and reflect the community's social structure, identity, and worldview. Unlike other theories that may focus solely on linguistic structures or social functions, cultural semiotics examines the interplay between language, culture, and meaning.

"This theory facilitates an exploration of how proverbs in Edo society transcend mere transactional communication, serving as vital tools for transmitting cultural values and social roles. By emphasizing the semiotic nature of these proverbs, the theory provides a deeper understanding of how linguistic expressions preserve and convey cultural heritage.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents and explains the information collected for this study. The research is about Edo proverbs that use animal names. The main goal is to understand the role of these proverbs in the culture and language of the Edo people.

4.1 ANALYSIS OF SOME Edo PROVERBS.

From investigation and study, I have discovered that proverbs in Benin kingdom and are used in every circumstance and they exhibit deeper meanings than what they actually say.

These proverbs can be classified into so many ways but for the purpose of this work, they are grouped as follows:

Proverbs used to teach lesson

Proverbs used to give advice

Proverbs used for warning

Proverbs used to express Truth and sincerity

Proverbs used for social control and status

Datum 1: Ahianmwén gue oto ru eghian; ona ya tin yaen Ulelefe.
Ughemwin ghee oto ye ye!

English Translation: A bird that flew from the ground only to perch on an anti-hill; is still very much on the ground!

The proverb "A bird that flew from the ground only to perch on an anthill is still very much on the ground" conveys a message about humility, perspective, or the illusion of progress. It suggests that even though someone may appear to have advanced or risen above their starting point, their actual progress is minimal or insignificant, akin to a bird moving from the ground to an anthill, which is still essentially at ground level.

Datum 2: Egui zee ikpakpa nen ovbiere zee ihienhien.

English Translation: The mother tortoise cannot have thick skin like the coat of iron; while her baby has feathers skin like the hen.

Datum 3: Ai see uhe 'ni gualor Ewinwan.

English Translation: You do not get to the lower end of an elephant still searching for the bug.

The proverb "You do not get to the lower end of an elephant still searching for the bug" is a metaphorical expression that emphasizes the

importance of perspective, focus, and recognizing what truly matters in a given situation. It originates from an African cultural context, given its use of vivid imagery involving an elephant, a common symbol in African proverbs.

Datum 4: Uhunmwun ekpẹn o re o ru emwi ne ekpen

English Translation: It is the leopards head which sees the leopard through

The proverb "It is the leopard's head which sees the leopard through" is a metaphorical expression that originates from an African cultural context, given the use of the leopard, a powerful and revered animal in many African traditions. This proverb emphasizes the importance of leadership, foresight, or mental clarity in navigating challenges or achieving success.

Datum 5: Okpa i vie khian odin

English Translation: The cock never turns dumb through crowing

The proverb "The cock never turns dumb through crowing" is from an Edo origin, given its use of the cock (rooster), a common symbol in many African proverbs, and its alignment with the style of the other proverbs you've shared. This proverb conveys a message about consistency, authenticity, or the natural expression of one's purpose or identity.

Datum 6: Obo gha bo, ona we nen ovbiogue y' ewe zoo ese, ekua-owe ore oya ha osa.

English Translation: If the deviner requested a goat sacrifice from a poor and wretched client in order to appease the gods, the poor client will pay the price of the goat by slamming his two palms over his thighs in abject bewilderment of the situation.

Datum 7: Erokhi ma mien ebe, ele

English Translation: If the chameleon does not see danger, it won't run.

The proverb "If the chameleon does not see danger, it won't run" is of an Edo origin, as chameleons are common in African folklore and proverbs, often symbolizing adaptability, caution, or awareness due to their unique ability to change color and their slow, deliberate movements. This proverb emphasizes the importance of awareness and perception in taking action to protect oneself

Datumi 8: Ere ahianmwun no fua hia o re oghohon.

English Translation: Not all white looking birds are eagles.

The proverb "Not all white-looking birds are eagles" is of an Edo origin, given its alignment with the other proverbs you've shared and the use of

birds, which are common in African oral traditions to convey wisdom. This proverb emphasizes the importance of discernment, caution against appearances, and recognizing true value or quality beyond superficial traits.

Datum 9: Ere iko ne ahua ye okhokho na mhu unu

English Translation: The chicken has no say in the gathering of hawks.

"The chicken has no say in the gathering of hawks" is an Edo proverb, often rooted in the oral traditions of various African cultures, where animals like chickens and hawks are used to convey social or hierarchical lessons. This proverb highlights themes of power dynamics, vulnerability, and the lack of influence in situations dominated by the powerful.

Datum 10: Egui I zẹ ikakpa ne ovbi ẹre z irọn

English Translation: A Tortoise cannot grow skin while its child grows hair

The proverb "A tortoise cannot grow skin while its child grows hair" is rooted in African oral traditions, where animals like the tortoise are frequently used to convey wisdom, often symbolizing patience, resilience, or wisdom. This proverb appears to address themes of natural limitations,

generational differences, or the inappropriateness of expecting one entity to mimic the characteristics or progress of another

Datum 11: Ikpinhianbọ okpa mu iru vbẹ eto

English Translation: One finger cannot remove a lice from the hair.

The proverb "One finger cannot remove a lice from the hair" is rooted in African oral traditions, where practical imagery is often used to convey lessons about community, cooperation, and the limitations of individual effort. This proverb emphasizes the importance of collective effort and collaboration in addressing challenges.

Datum 12: Ukpe iye okhokho gbe ovbiere

English Translation: The mother hen beak does not kill its own chick

This proverb emphasizing that a mother hen, symbolizing a nurturing figure, would not harm her own chick, representing her child or someone under her care. It conveys the idea of maternal protection and care, suggesting that a true caregiver prioritizes the safety and well-being of those they love.

Datum 13: Wa danmwhehọ! Te I gie uwa ladian zẹ vbe ohuan la uwu oghen oduma. Wa ghi gha begbe vbe ẹyen, wa ghi vbe fu vbe idu.

English Translation: Behold I send forth as sheep in the Midst of wolves
be ye therefore wise as a serpent and harmless as doves

It advises navigating life's difficulties with a combination of street-smarts and moral purity. You should be aware of dangers and prepared to handle them intelligently, but you should not stoop to the level of those who oppose you by becoming cruel, deceitful, or vengeful.

Datum 14: Wa ghe avbe ahianmwẹ ni tin yo tin rre. Iran i kọ, iran i rho, iran i mwẹ erru. Erha uwa ne ọ rre ẹrinmwi ọre ọ koko iran. Ive ne ọ rre uwa uhunmwu ma ye ọgbin igho sẹ ọghe ahianmwẹ ra!

English Translation: Behold the birds of the air for they sow not neither do they reap nor gather into barns yet your heavenly father feedeth them are you not better than they?

Datum 15: Vbe uwa ro ẹmwẹ na hẹẹ? Ọmwa ne ọ mwẹ ohuan iyisẹn, deghe ọkpa wiri vbọ, de emwi ne ọ gha ru? Te ọ gha sẹ ọkpa i rrọ vbe iyisẹn ni dekeẹ rae ye ehe ne iran na rri irunmwu ne ọ ya gualọ ohuan ne ọ wiri nii

English Translation: if a man have an hundred sheep and one of them go astray he will leave the ninety and nine go in to the mountains and seeketh that which is gone astray

Datum 16: Wa gha ba iran ni ru emwi dan nii, avbe ekita nii, emwa ni mu yan ren we te iran ra gha giagia egbe iran.

English Translation: Beware of dogs beware of evil workers beware of the concision

Datum 17: O kere ne avbe avbiere gha mien avbe iranmwę wan vbene iran ru emwi he, iran i mwe okaolotu, ogie ra ne o khaemwise yan iran. Sokpan, iran ghi si evbare iran koko vbe eghę uyunmwu, ne iran ya mu egbe yoto khe eghę orho

English Translation: Go to the ant, you sluggard; consider its ways and be wise! It has no commander, no overseer or ruler, yet it stores its provisions in summer and gathers its food at harvest.

Datum 18: Sokpan iran ni mu etin yan iyobo Noyaenmwa, a gha ya etin iran khian oghogbon.

Iran gha ya ifuen iran tin kpao vbe oghohon iran gha rhule, egbe i ra wo iran iran gha khian, etin i ra vbe fo iran.

English Translation: But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.

Datum 19: Ọzuọ ne ọ yin uyinmwẹ okpa yan egbe ukpogieva, te ọ yevbe ekita ne ọ vbe rri ekpa ne ọ kpa

English Translation: As a dog returns to its vomit, so fools repeat their folly.

Datum 20: Ikian ni wulo sẹtin ya ọgọ ori ne ọ winhin khian ne ọ ghi wia, erriọ vbe nọ emwi ukonmwẹ kherhe sẹtin mu ogie ẹwaen nọkhua rhia.

English Translation: As dead flies give perfume a bad smell, so a little folly outweighs wisdom and honor.

Datum 21: Avbe ahianmwẹ kevbe aranmwẹ oha, wa mwẹ emwi ni bun ne iran gha ma uwa ẹre. Wa nọ avbe aranmwẹ oke kevbe ọghe okun ne iran ma uwa ẹwaen iran.

English Translation: But ask the animals, and they will teach you, or the birds in the sky, and they will tell you; or speak to the earth, and it will teach you, or let the fish in the sea inform you. Which of all these does not know that the hand of the Lord has done this?

Datumi 22: Erokhim ma mie ebe e I rhuie

English Translation: when the camelon doesn't see danger he will not run

Datum 23: Wẹ ghẹ zurọ ua zẹvbe ẹsin ra ẹmila, ne a rro ekagha ye ọre unu ya winna, ne ọ miẹn ehe na gha họn ẹmwẹ.”

English Translation: Do not be like the horse or the mule, which have no understanding but must be controlled by bit and bridle or they will not come to you.

Datum 24: Ghẹ rro ekagha ye ẹmila unu vbe u a gha ya ẹe wiẹn ọka

English Translation: Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain.

Datum 25: A deghe ihẹ gbe eketeketẹ ọre fi iguẹ, ghẹ kpao sẹrae yọ, u ghi guẹe mu ẹn kpaegbe.

English Translation: If you see the donkey of someone who hates you fallen down under its load, do not leave it there; be sure you help them with it.

Datum 26: U gha dekun oko ahianmwẹ vbe erhan ra vbe otọ vbene iye ahianmwẹ na rhue yan eken ọnrẹn, ra ke ẹe kevbe ivbi ẹre ne giẹrẹ, ghẹ mu iye ahianmwẹ nii.

English Translation: If you come across a bird’s nest beside the road, either in a tree or on the ground, and the mother is sitting on the young or on the eggs, do not take the mother with the young.

Datum 27: Ose ne ọ rre egbe okhuo ne ẹ i mwẹ uyinmwẹ, ọ yevbe oroka igoru ne a rhie ye ihue esiebo.

English Translation: Like a gold ring in a pig's snout is a beautiful woman who shows no discretion.

Datum 28: Wa ghẹ rhie emwi nọhuanrẹn ne ekita, wa ghẹ vbe fí okuta ighobioye yotọ ne elẹdẹ. Wa gha ru vberriọ, iran ghi ya owe mamaẹn ginna otọ, ẹghẹ nii, iran ghi zẹ aro daa uwa, iran ghi vbe zanzan uwa yotọ.

English Translation: Do not give dogs what is sacred; do not throw your pearls to pigs. If you do, they may trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you to pieces.

Datum 29: Avbe oduma kevbe ohuan gha gba gha rrọ kugbe vbe ọfumwegbe, avbe ogioha gha gu avbe ivbi ẹwe lovbịẹ ivbi ẹmila kevbe ivbi oduma ghi koko gha rri evbare

English Translation: The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them.

Datum 30 : Ivbi oduma ghi gha vanhiẹn vbe iran a gha ru ohuẹ, iran gha gualọ evbare ne Osanobua kpehe ẹre.

English Translation: The lions roar for their prey and seek their food from God.

Datum 31: Avbe akpakomiza kevbe ivbi ohuan gha gba gha rri evbare kugbe, avbe oduma ghi gha rri irunmwu zẹvbe ẹmila, avbe ẹyẹn i ra gha re emwi ikuaengbe ọvbehe. Emwi ọkpa ne ọre ọghe ọkhọ ra emwi dan, a i ghi ra miẹn ọẹn Vbe Zaiọn ne oke nọhuanrẹn mwe

English Translation: The wolf and the lamb will feed together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox, and dust will be the serpent's food. They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain," says the Lord.

Datum 32: Khe yegbe, gha ba ode! Rhunmwuda Esu ne oghian ruẹn gha vin yo vin rre, ọ gha davan vbe oduma, ọ gualọ ọmwa ne ọ gha gbe re.

English Translation: Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.

Datum 33: Ẹvbo na yevbe oduma ne ọ mwe ẹtin gha vbiẹ, a i miẹn ne ohan gie ẹe huẹn ọnẹn.

Afiangbe nọ ne ọmwa ne ọ na erhunmwu ne Izrẹl, ne ọ fi Izrẹl unu, a gha fi ẹre unu.”

English Translation: Like a lion they crouch and lie down, like a lioness—who dares to rouse them? “May those who bless you be blessed and those who curse you be cursed!”

Datum 34: Te ẹvbo Izrẹl yevbe oduma ne ọ mwẹ ẹtin, ma gbe yanghan re nẹ, ẹ i hẹwẹ, te wọn esagiẹn iran ne irẹn gbele

English Translation: The people rise like a lioness; they rouse themselves like a lion that does not rest till it devours its prey and drinks the blood of its victims.”

Datum 35: Rhunmwuda ọnii, I gha gu uwa gbinna zẹ vbe oduma. I gha rhue ye ode khẹ uwa zẹ vbe ubidon.

English Translation: So I will be like a lion to them, like a leopard I will lurk by the path.

Datum 36: I gha gu uwa gbinna zẹ vbe akpakomiza ne ọ ma ghi miẹn ivbi ẹre, I ghi yanghan uwa hẹkua. I gha yanghan uwa re ye ihokpa nii zẹ vbe oduma, I ghi vbe yanghan uwu ukhionmwu khionmwẹ zẹ vbe aranmwẹ akon

English Translation: Like a bear robbed of her cubs, I will attack them and rip them open; like a lion I will devour them a wild animal will tear them apart.

Datum37 : A ghi do si emwa ni rre agbọn na hia si koko ye odaro ẹre. Rẹn ghi do wannọ iran ye oka eva zẹ vbene Ọsuohuan hannọ ohuan hin uwu ẹbu ẹwe rre.

English Translation: All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.

Datum 38: Munọ avbe umuọkhọkhọ nii, avbe umuọkhọkhọ negiẹrẹ nii, ne iran ghẹ ya rhia ima azara nii gbe obobo rua.

English Translation: Catch for us the foxes, the little fox that ruin the vineyards, our vineyards that are in bloom.

Datum 39: Ma runraẹn, ma keghi gha khiẹ. Ma rhie aro ye ode wẹ ne Osanobua do miẹn ima fan vbe obọ azẹ ọmwakpokpo, kevbe aru ọmwa khọ, sokpan, emwi rhọkpa ma sunu.

English Translation: We all growl like bears; we moan mournfully like doves. We look for justice, but find none; for deliverance, but it is far away.

Datum 40: igban e su okhokho

English Translation: Bones can not piece the leg of a fowl

Datum 41: ofen Ogha khian omaen to ye Ra

English Translation: no matter how old a rat is it doesn't stop it from stealing

Datum 42: Eghodin wu ye okuo erhen

English Translation: when an elephant climb a fence it will destroy it

4.2 DISCUSSION FINDINGS

This study found that animal proverbs are very important in Edo language and culture. They are used to teach and remind people of key community values.

First, these proverbs show how Edo society is organized. For example, the lion is used to represent the king or leaders, teaching people to respect authority.

Second, the proverbs teach good behavior and warn against bad behavior. The tortoise, a famous trickster, appears in proverbs to criticize people who are clever in a dishonest way.

Third, these sayings are not just for stories. People use them in everyday talk to give advice, correct someone politely, or settle arguments without causing shame.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter brings the research project to a close. It provides a brief summary of the entire study, a detailed presentation of the major findings, the conclusions drawn from these findings, and some recommendations for the future. The main goal is to show what was learned from investigating animal proverbs in the Edo language from a sociolinguistic perspective.

5.1 SUMMARY

This study set out to examine how animal proverbs in the Edo language reflect the culture, values, and social life of the Edo people. Chapter 1 introduced the topic and explained the importance of proverbs and why this study is necessary. Chapter 2 reviewed existing literature on sociolinguistics and Edo proverbs. Chapter 3 explained the methods used to collect the proverbs from native speakers and reference books. Chapter 4 presented the analysis of the proverbs, grouping them by the animals mentioned (like the leopard, tortoise, and bird) and discussing their meanings.

5.2 FINDINGS

The analysis of the proverbs led to several key findings: Proverbs as a Reflection of Social Hierarchy: Proverbs mirror the traditional Edo social structure. The leopard is often linked to the Oba (king) and chiefs, symbolizing authority. Smaller animals are used to represent ordinary people, teaching lessons about knowing one's place or the power of unity. Proverbs as a Tool for Social Control and Communication: The findings show that these proverbs are not just stories. They are used in everyday conversation to give advice, settle arguments, correct behavior, and pass on wisdom from older generations to younger ones without causing direct offense. Using a proverb can soften criticism. Proverbs as a Connection to the Natural World: Proverbs demonstrate a deep understanding and observation of animal behavior. The characteristics of the animals in their natural environment (e.g., the leopard's strength, the tortoise's slowness) are directly linked to human qualities and situations.

5.3 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study has shown that animal proverbs are a vital part of the Edo language and culture. They are much more than just colorful

sayings. They act as a storehouse of traditional knowledge, a guide for moral behavior, and a mirror reflecting the social world of the Edo people. The proverbs use the familiar world of animals to explain complex human relationships and societal rules. Therefore, preserving these proverbs is essential for preserving Edo cultural identity and wisdom for future generations.

5.4 RECOMMENDATION

The researcher recommends further studies in this particular area and any aspect not touched in this study should be treated by linguist, scholars or any other researchers who have interest in the investigation of proverbs referred to animals in Edo.

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