

Negotiating Meaning Across Cultures: Proverbial Discourse as Intercultural Strategy in African Diasporic Communities

Zakka Shalom Kasham^{1*}, Olaitan Victor Olanrewaju¹

¹Department of European Studies, University of Ibadan

*Corresponding author: Zakka Shalom Kasham

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Abstract: The proverbial discourse is a significant yet under researched area of intercultural communication within African diasporic communities. Proverbs are tactical agreements for negotiating cultural identity, transferring ancestral knowledge, and engaging in cross-cultural transactions in transnational space. The systematic review is a synthesis of empirical and theoretical evidence on these subjects. Using PRISMA 2020 criteria, a systematic literature search has revealed the works that investigated proverbial speech in various African diasporic communities, such as African American, African Guyanese, Afro-Caribbean, Yoruba Nigerian diaspora, and Afro-Brazilian communities. There is evidence that proverbs are markers of cultural authenticity, vehicles of pedagogical critical consciousness, intergenerational transmission, and translation sites of negotiation of cultural worldviews. Some theoretical frameworks applied to illuminate the intricate meanings portrayed by the proverbs at the grammatical, cultural, situational, and symbolic levels include proverb praxis theory, poststructuralist discourse analysis, translatology, and Black theology. The findings demonstrate that diasporic subjects can establish ancestral control, oppose cultural annihilation, and form hybrid identities that link ancestral and host societies through ritual practices, literary translation, institutions, and vernacular discourse. But, the understanding of proverbs and the sense of belonging to a particular culture are in conflict with globalization and transnational migration, and it depends on the determination of authenticity and intergenerational continuity. This review has serious gaps in longitudinal studies of the proverbial adaptation and comparative cross-diaspora studies. The synthesis focuses on proverbial discourse as a fluid intercultural strategy that should receive greater attention in diaspora studies, communication studies, and practice training in intercultural competency.

Keywords: Proverbial discourse, intercultural competency, African, immigration, culture.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and Rationale

The African diaspora comprises various communities that were developed over centuries of involuntary and voluntary immigration and is distributed across the Americas, Europe, and other continents. All of them have complex relationships with their African cultural backgrounds and adapt to their new societies (Okome, 2012). These transnational environments view language as significant in the performance, contestation, and negotiation of cultural identity (Hollington, n.d.). Among these practices, proverbial discourse, or intentional application of succinct, metaphorical wisdom utterances, is the most versatile in terms of both intercultural navigation and cultural continuity (Yankah, 1989). Proverbs in African and African diasporic environments are speech acts of performance ingrained in social, power, and knowledge systems, rather than decorative ornaments (Yankah, 1989; Prahlad, 1996). Due to the compactness of the proverbial speech, it may

be interpreted differently, and as a result, speakers may deliver complex cultural messages in a way that is strategic yet ambiguous enough when required. Proverbial speech as a way of encoding ancestral power has been widely used to mediate conflict, pass on ethical codes, and express cultural distinctiveness in contexts of marginalization and cultural encounters, both the Akan idea of proverb praxis and the African American practice of mother wit (Richards-Greaves, 2016; John, 2014). Proverbs were also used as a secret tool of communication in the era of enslavement that allowed Africans to maintain cultural connections and denounce suppressive institutions (Prahlad, 1996). The gift of proverbs can still be used to negotiate cultural dissimilarity in the contemporary context.

1.2 Importance of the Study.

Proverbial discourse, as a concept, is a multidisciplinary field that spans sociolinguistics, intercultural communication, diaspora studies, and

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folklore scholarship. Yankah (1989), proverb praxis theory, which is based on Akan traditions of rhetoric, regards proverbs as speech acts that are context-dependent and whose meaning evolves during performance but not in a predetermined semantic content. Relative to written texts, where the meaning is relatively fixed, proverbial statements gain their meaning in the specific social context, in the relationship between the speaker and the audience, in the tone and style of the utterance, and in the general cultural context of the utterance. On the basis of these performative factors, the same proverb can be used to show approval in one scenario and reproach in another. It is specifically in cross-cultural contexts, where speakers must simultaneously accommodate many cultural frames, that proverbs are particularly flexible (Richards-Greaves, 2016). The discourse of the proverb has theoretical importance that extends beyond its performative features to encompass epistemological ones. Proverbs present distinctive forms of knowing that are often very different from Western rationalist epistemologies. Proverbial wisdom focuses on the implicit meaning, circular reasoning, mass culture, and experience, whereas the Western academic discourse focuses on explicit argumentation, linear reasoning, and individual authorship (Yankah, 1989). Such epistemological differences can be particularly evident in cross-cultural contexts, where proverbial speech may be perceived as a barrier reflecting cultural differences between countries, or even as a means of sharing understanding. These epistemological dimensions are fundamental to becoming equipped with intercultural competence beyond the conventional, superficial understanding of culture, which instead involves fundamental differences in knowledge formation, verification, and dissemination across traditions. Cultural worldviews are manifest in proverbs, which, according to scholars of translation studies, are arguably so (Bogle, 2016; Santos, 2019). The difference between African and Western cultural systems lies in their cosmological assumptions, social organization, and epistemology, since some of the proverbial notions cannot be translated. As an illustration, Bantu-Kongo proverbial concepts of cyclic cosmologies are difficult to render in European languages, which have a linear timespan (Santos, 2019). At the same time, the new techniques employed by translators to convey the proverbial sense across linguistic boundaries help explain the cultural negotiation and the formation of the hybrid identity inherent to the diasporic experience (Santos, 2016). Translating becomes a form of cultural mediation with serious consequences for how diasporic groups identify

and are identified as such, but not merely a language exercise.

1.3 Research Objectives

This systematic review has three objectives:

- (1) summarizes empirical evidence on proverbial discourse practices among different African diasporic communities;
- (2) determines the theoretical paradigms applied to the study of proverbial communication and their ability to explain phenomena; and
- (3) discusses the intercultural strategies that proverbial speech may employ and the impact of such strategies on intercultural competence, identity negotiation, and knowledge transfer. Beyond determining future research directions to improve theoretical knowledge and practical implementation in more diverse and transnational societies, the review seeks to demonstrate the proverbial discourse as an important direction of inquiry in the field of intercultural communication. The review will seek to determine general trends and context-specific differences in the manner in which proverbs have been utilised as intercultural resources by synthesising data across different diasporic settings.

2. METHODS

In this systematic review, the PRISMA 2020 principles of transparent reporting were followed. The extensive search was conducted across multiple academic platforms using query variations that combined terms addressing the proverbial discourse, the African diaspora, intercultural communication, and cultural identity. Search terms included combinations of the term's 'proverb', 'proverbial discourse', 'African diaspora', 'Black diaspora', 'transnational', 'intercultural communication', 'cultural identity', and some specific names of communities. Studies were required to meet the inclusion criteria: (1) they had to deal with intercultural dimensions and/or cultural identity and/or transnational communication; (2) had to deal with proverbial discourse as a main or important secondary issue; (3) had to provide empirical data, theoretical analysis, or important contribution to the concept.

Those that concentrated directly on the Africans of the continent, without examining the diaspora, linguistic studies without examining culture or communication, and superficial allusions to the proverbs without making a rigorous analysis were all eliminated.

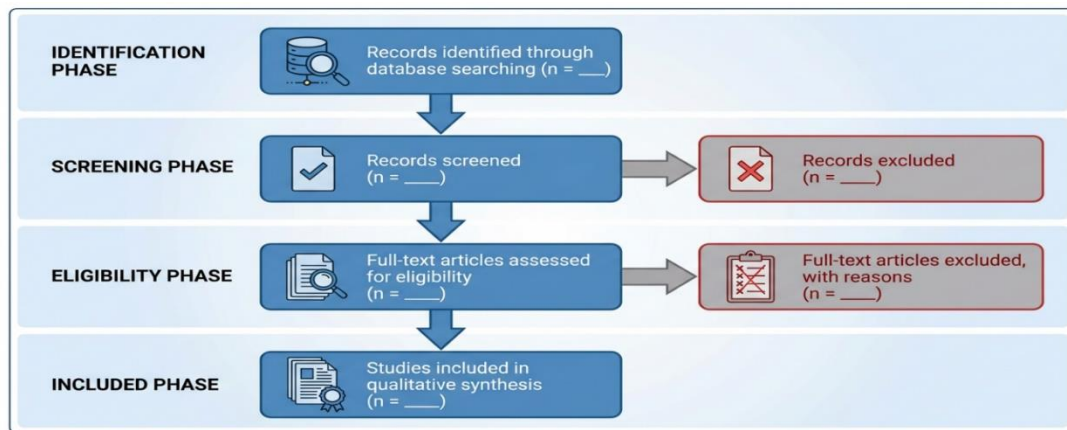


Figure 1: PRISMA Flow Diagram

Figure 1. PRISMA 2020 flow diagram illustrating the systematic review process from identification through inclusion of studies examining proverbial discourse in African diasporic communities. Data extraction captured: (1) diasporic community studied; (2) theoretical framework employed; (3) methodological approach; (4) functions of proverbial discourse identified; (5) intercultural strategies enacted; (6) outcomes for identity, knowledge transmission, or intercultural relations. Two reviewers independently extracted data from each study, with discrepancies resolved through discussion.

2.3 Quality Assessment

The studies on the theoretical grounding of the research, methodological rigor, quality of evidence, and their contribution to the body of knowledge on proverbial discourse as an intercultural strategy were evaluated for quality. The diversity of theoretical positions and methodological approaches across the included studies enhances the trustworthiness of the synthesized results, even though it may be affected by publication bias toward positive outcomes.

3. RESULTS

3.1 General Perspective of the Study.

Some of the studied proverbial discourse included African American (Prahla, 1996), (Moore, 2015), African Guyanese (Richards-Greaves, 2016), Afro-Caribbean (Bogle, 2016), (Reddie, 2015), Jamaican (Hollington, n.d.), Yoruba Nigerian diaspora (Akanmidu and Adetomokun, 2015), (Bernard and Diaz Fernandez, 2015). Various methods were used in the studies such as

ethnographic observation, discourse analysis, literary analysis, translation studies and synthesizing theories. The multifaceted nature of proverbial speech implies the need to use a range of analytical tools, and this methodological versatility is evident. The geographic distribution of studies is uneven, with North American and Caribbean settings more represented compared to European, South American, or Asian diasporic settings. They have provided a longitudinal view of proverbial adaptation, tracing from historical studies of proverbs during the slavery period to the latest studies of transnational migration. Most studies, however, are conducted in cross-sectional and not longitudinal designs, and as such, we are unable to understand how proverb practices change over time in specific communities.

3.2 Theoretical Frameworks

Analysis revealed five primary theoretical frameworks that structure research on proverbial discourse in diasporic contexts, as illustrated in Figure 2.

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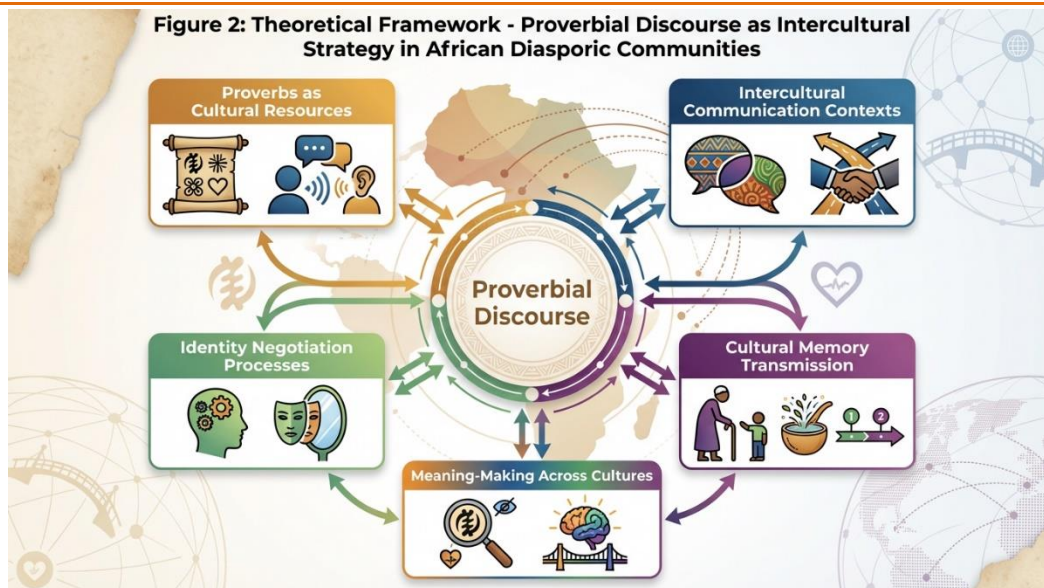


Figure 2. *Integrated theoretical framework for analyzing proverbial discourse as intercultural strategy in African diasporic communities, showing relationships between proverb praxis, multi-level meaning analysis, translatology, poststructuralist discourse analysis, and diasporic consciousness theory.*

The Proverb Praxis Idea

As pointed out in the framework provided by Yankah (1989), the proverbs are performative speech acts, with meanings that vary depending on their use in context, rather than depending on their set semantic value. The theory assumes that proverbial performance has four major elements, namely, appropriateness (choosing proverbs that are fitting in the social context), timing (when to use the proverb consistently), delivery (using the correct tone and manner), and interpretation (whether the proverb is recognized by the audience or not). On each of those dimensions, you should be socially aware and culturally competent. You have to be among many people to know what proverbs to apply in a particular case. Timing requires a level of consciousness of conversation rhythm and social interaction. You must be able to use paralinguistic elements to convey what you intend. Richards-Greaves (2016) extended this model to transnational space by showing how African Guyanese women strategically use proverbs in kweh-kweh rituals to negotiate among identities that include Guyana, North America, and ancestral African roots. The proverbs in such ritual contexts play a variety of roles, including regulating behavior, providing marital advice, addressing taboo issues indirectly, and sustaining culture despite geographical dispersal. Analysis of Meaning on Different Levels. Some articles used grammatical/literal, cultural/metaphorical, situational/pragmatic, and symbolic/cosmological frameworks to compare proverbs across different semantic levels (Bernard and Diaz Fernandez, 2012; Santos, 2016). Proverbs are syntactically complete utterances that have surface meanings that are only understandable under advanced grammatical proficiency. Proverbs at the cultural level carry metaphorical meanings rooted in shared cultural knowledge and collective memory. Proverbs acquire pragmatic meaning at the situational level when used in

a particular social context. The cosmological assumptions and epistemological forms of the proverbs encode comprehensive worldviews, as they are symbolic. Due to this stratified structure, proverbs can serve as landmarking tools to draw boundaries between insiders and outsiders. They may also be employed to strategically share cultural knowledge in cross-cultural interactions. Consider the example of a Yoruba proverb regarding the snail taking its house, which might be interpreted literally, as a statement about the biology of gastropods, culturally as an expression of self-sufficiency, situationally as a caution to a traveler, and symbolically as an assertion about cosmological conditions regarding personal accountability within group situations (Bernard and Diaz Fernandez, 2012). Translating Culture and Translatology. Researchers in translation studies view proverbs as examples of cultural worldviews that are explained by the problems of translation (Bogle, 2016; Santos, 2019). In the study, Bogle (2016) explored the issue of intracultural translation in the context of Caribbean Creole literature, in which authors move between the source languages, French and English, and the Creole proverbial phrases. In its own right, it is difficult to translate meaning within the boundaries of various dialects of the same cultural tradition or within a single culture, intra-cultural translations. The translators have to retain proverbial implicatures, or indirect meanings resulting from violations of conversational maxims, and ensure that even individuals who are not familiar with the source culture can interpret what they are saying. According to Bogle, translation can be done in three ways: translating proverbs of the target language to achieve functional equivalence, translating with comments and explanations, and creative adaptation that preserves the cultural logic but alters the surface form. Both strategies have advantages and disadvantages in terms of their

realism and ease of use. It was Santos (2019) who explored the translation of Bantu-Kongo cosmological ideas into proverbial language. The statement is that translation is a form of cultural negotiation, in which translators must adopt either the foreignization (preservation of the original culture's uniqueness) or the domestication (conformity of the original text to local cultural standards) approach. Foreignization can make something incomprehensible, and domestication can lead to the loss of cultural differences.

The Discourse of Poststructuralism.

Poststructuralism studies the role of proverbial discourse in shaping cultural limits, relations of power, and subject positions (John, 2014; Martin, n.d.). This strategy underscores how proverbs are cultural memory technologies that convey ontological assumptions and epistemological structures, as well as their content. Proverbial discourse belongs to the larger structures of making meaning, which designate social hierarchies and cultural identities. The proverbs do not merely reflect cultural realities; through repetition and dissemination, they actively help create them. The African American proverbs that emphasize group survival over individual success contradict American concepts of individualism and meritocracy (Prahlad, 1996). Poststructuralist approaches describe how marginalized communities use language to challenge subordination and the power processes as articulated in language by analyzing proverbs as discourses, as opposed to texts.

The Mind of the Diaspora: Black Theology.

Reddie (2015) has applied both Black theology and critical pedagogy to examine how the use of Caribbean proverbs can help African-Caribbean people in Britain be more cognizant of their issues. According to this framework, proverbial wisdom is counter-hegemonic, contradicting neocolonial and colonial power systems. Black theology highlights the liberating roles of cultural and religious practices for marginalized people. Caribbean proverbs are a form of folk theology that combats injustice, protects people's rights, and considers various possibilities for how society should be structured. Proverbs, according to diasporic consciousness theory, allow individuals to remain attached to their home countries while also helping them fit into their new cultures. This results in hybrid identities that do not wish to fit but rather engage positively with cultural differences. This theoretical framework links larger endeavors to enhance social justice and cultural recognition to proverbial discussions.

3.3 How Proverbial Discourse is Used in Diasporic Settings

Based on the synthesis, there are seven primary applications of proverbial discourse by the diasporic communities:

Encoding Ancestral Authority:

Proverbs relies on ancestral wisdom as authoritative knowledge to relate modern decisions to the

past (Yankah, 1989; Prahlad, 1996). The use of proverbial language confers a particular cultural legitimacy to potentially disputable statements by attributing them to shared ancestral sources rather than to the individual utterers. Depersonalization plays a significant social role by allowing individuals to offer feedback, advice, or corrections without appearing arrogant or provoking a fight. When an African Guyanese elder employs a proverb in kweh-kweh rituals, the proverb does not have authority; rather, it has power because of its connection to ancestral wisdom across generations (Richards-Greaves, 2016). Given this ancestral background, it is difficult not to disapprove of the proverbial assertion that one should not appear to reject cultural heritage itself. The use of an authoritative figure from the ancestors helps confirm the persistence and applicability of African knowledge systems in contemporary contexts, which is why the role is particularly crucial in cases when diasporic communities are subjected to cultural marginalization or erasure.

Cultural identification and authenticity:

Akanmidu and Adetomokun (2015) and Richards-Greaves (2016) indicate that proverbial competence, the knowledge and application of correct proverbs, is a sign of cultural identification and authenticity. Through proverbs, the Yoruba Nigerian diaspora students in South Africa claimed to be indeed Yoruba and distinguished themselves from other African communities. Proverbial performance is one way to labor over identity, demonstrating cultural qualifications and belonging to global communities. Being an insider implies that one is capable of seeing references in proverbs, knowing what they imply as well as reacting to them accordingly. However, when younger generations are unfamiliar with the proverbs, this role creates trouble and raises doubts about standards of authenticity and cultural sustainability. What happens with those who have a deep sense of belonging to their cultural background but do not have the standard linguistic skills when the real cultural membership is defined by the proverbial competence? This war reveals how difficult it is to develop diasporic identities in general, with even straightforward notions of cultural authenticity complicated by factors such as relocation, acquisition of a new language, and generational shifts.

Critical Thinking Teaching Tools:

Proverbs serve as pedagogical tools that convey social norms and moral values as well as analytical insights into power dynamics (Reddie, 2015; Moore, 2015). Through the proverbs, African American counselor educators were able to teach their students about culture and good professional. Proverbs are useful for memorization and practice because they break down complex teachings into easy-to-repeat formats. The African Caribbean communities in postcolonial Britain use Caribbean proverbs to raise awareness, help people understand the critical situation, and fight against being pushed to the fringes (Reddie, 2015). The adage that

when a cockroach gives a dance, it does not invite fowl expresses the value of being smart and cautious in a vulnerable situation, and of learning not to overlook power differences.

Passing Down Cars through Generations:

Among the key methods of transmitting cultural knowledge across generations, proverbial discourse is notable (Oduaran and Oduaran, 2006; Ojaide, n.d.). Proverbs assist individuals in the Niger Delta in intergenerational communication by translating difficult-to-comprehend cultural concepts into easily memorable, replicable words. The elders apply proverbs to educate the young individuals on how to behave in a morally right way, how to relate with others, how to be conscious of their surroundings, and how to know history. Proverbs are easy to remember because of their nonfictional, brief style, and they are interactive because of their use of metaphors, which engage students in the meaning-making process. Migration and globalization alter how proverbs are transmitted, and younger generations of the diaspora find themselves with gaps in their knowledge. It is more difficult to spend time with family members from different generations when families relocate to other countries or cities. The young people might lack the cultural and linguistic skills in the heritage languages needed to comprehend proverbs. Since schooling in host societies rarely assists in the transmission of cultural knowledge or the preservation of heritage languages, the entire task falls to families and communities. This interference threatens the sustainability of culture, and it becomes difficult to apply the old rules in new circumstances.

Organizational management and management metaphor tools:

Cultural metaphors, such as Yoruba proverbs, are used to help people understand how they should go about living and working within organizations in the Caribbean (Bernard and Diaz Fernandez, 2012). The Proverbs encode cultural beliefs about leadership, authority, group decision-making, and conflict resolution, unlike Western models of management. Yoruba saying that a single hand would not raise the calabash to the head is an indicator of how important teamwork and interdependence are, which is not the way the West values individual success. With a diverse group of people in workplaces, understanding these proverbial structures can help one develop more culturally aware methods.

Negotiation and Cultural Translation Locations:

The proverbial discourse literary translation reveals inherent difficulties in transmitting the cultural worldviews across language boundaries (Bogle, 2016; Santos, 2016; Santos, 2019). Translators should find the right balance between their work being comprehensible to the target audience and remaining culturally appropriate. The translators of Afro-Brazilism face inherent contradictions between cyclical African

cosmologies and linear European time scales when translating Bantu-Kongo proverbial ideas into Portuguese (Santos, 2019). Translation decisions significantly influence how diasporic cultures are depicted and interpreted.

Ritual Performance and Social Integrity:

Proverbial discourse enhances individual identity and facilitates community integration in ceremonial settings such as the African Guyanese kweh-kweh ceremonies (Richards-Greaves, 2016). Proverbs are ritualistically used by people to transform individual utterances into community performances that connect them to transnational community networks and a common cultural heritage. Proverbs govern behavior, offer marriage advice, address taboo subjects in kweh-kweh ceremonies, and enhance a sense of cultural survival in the face of geographical dispersion.

3.4 Intercultural Plans:

Implementing Intercultural Plans with the help of Proverbial Language. Through analysis, five major intercultural strategies in proverbial discourse have been identified: **Strategic Performance of Authenticity Claims.** According to Richards-Greaves (2016) and Akanmidu and Adetomokun (2015), diasporic individuals also perform strategically as they are aware of doing what they know to assert their cultural authenticity as well as demand inclusion in the transnational communities. It is a strategy in which proverbs are selected based on cultural knowledge, applied appropriately, and the intent of other individuals in applying proverbs is calculated to demonstrate that they are insiders. The women of African Guyanese kweh-kweh ceremonies demonstrate their status in their culture by applying proverbs to be clever. But if proverbial knowledge is used as a gatekeeping mechanism, the strategy creates exclusionary dynamics.

The intracultural translation to combat inter-generational barriers:

In diasporic societies, individuals apply intracultural translation to help the elderly understand proverbs (Bogle, 2016). This entails the description of proverbial allusions, the setting of contexts, or the modification of proverbial phrases to fit modern circumstances. To help younger people cope with new issues, older people can refer to a proverb and explain how it was applied in the past or how it can be applied today.

Proverbial Pedagogy to teach culture:

Educators and community leaders use proverbs as teaching tools to instill moral values, socializing practices, and critical thinking (Moore, 2015; Reddie, 2015). African American counselor educators use proverbs to demonstrate how the wisdom of the past can be translated into present-day professional practice, teaching about cultural competence and professional ethics (Moore, 2015). Proverbs help Caribbean teachers

in Britain connect old knowledge with new social justice movements and sensitize people to racism and colonialism more (Reddie, 2015).

Transfer of Metaphor to Cultural Contexts in Organizations:

Proverbial metaphors are transferred to advance the adoption of African cultural frameworks in organizations where Western models of management are prevalent (Bernard and Diaz Fernandez, 2012). This approach means locating proverbs relevant to business issues, interpreting them across cultures, and demonstrating how they may apply to current management issues. Yoruba proverbs on group decision-making can influence participatory management, and those on timing and patience can be used to guide strategic planning.

Intergenerational Negotiation of Cultural Change:

Proverbial discourse. This is the area where two generations engage in discussions about the preservation and transformation of their culture (Oduaran & Oduaran, 2006). The older generation uses proverbs to convey traditional values, while the younger generation either does not believe in them or attaches new meanings to them. Such a process of negotiation enables cultural adaptation to occur without losing contact with ancestral knowledge systems. The younger generations may reinterpret old proverbs to suit the new world, or they may accept some and reject others.

3.5 The Results of Proverbial Discourse as an Intercultural Approach.

The synthesis presented four major results:

Enforced Cultural Memory and Collective Identity:

Proverbial speech fosters a connection to ancestral motherlands and collective identity beyond borders (John, 2014; Ojaide, n.d.). Diasporic communities preserve their cultural memory by ensuring they always remember the wisdom of their forefathers, even when they are far from home and from the time of their birth. Proverbs are mnemonic tools that capture the body of knowledge, cultural values, and past experiences in a way that is difficult to forget.

Dual recognition construction:

The proverbial practice enables the creation of hybrid identities that combine African heritage with aspects of the host society (Richards-Greaves, 2016; Santos, 2019). Proverbial discourse allows one to work with several cultural systems simultaneously, rather than choosing between cultural structures. It is through African Guyanese women that identities of African, Caribbean, and North American ancestries are created simultaneously by means of proverbs that touch on both African ancestral practices and Caribbean Creole experiences.

Promotes Inter-ethnic Relevance:

When individuals engage in proverbial discourse, the result is intercultural competence, necessitating the understanding of various knowledge systems, the navigation of cultural systems, and the interpretation of subtle meanings (Bernard & Diaz Fernandez, 2012; Gourdet, 2009). Persons who achieve the proverbial competence are capable of navigating within the cultural systems, understanding the indirect communication, recognising different levels of meaning, and valuing diverse epistemologies.

Ethnic Bargaining:

Translating Proverbial Discourse in Literature and Daily Life. Translating proverbial discourse is a type of cultural negotiation that affects intercultural understanding, identity, and authenticity (Bogle, 2016; Santos, 2016; Santos, 2019). The decisions about translations are an indication of broader diasporic negotiation between maintaining cultural uniqueness and engaging with host societies. These options include whether to be more accessible or culturally specific.

4. DISCUSSION

4.1 Summary of Key Findings.

This review organizes proverbial discourse as an intercultural complex approach to help African diasporic communities negotiate their cultural identity, pass on ancestral knowledge, and enable cross-cultural interactions. There are indications that proverbs are considered indicators of cultural authenticity, educational tools, intergenerational transmission channels, and venues for cultural translation. Proverbial speech is especially flexible concerning cross-cultural situations where speakers have to negotiate through different cultural systems because it is performative. The theoretical models used across diverse research explain complementary understandings. According to the theory of proverb praxis, the agency of the speaker and the contextually-generated meaning are important. Proverbs represent multifaceted cultural information as evidenced by the multi-level analysis of meaning. Translatology examines the problem of translation, revealing cultural differences in people's perceptions of the world. Poststructuralist approaches focus on the relationships of power and the subject's positions, developed through proverbial speech. The diasporic consciousness theory relates the struggle against cultural erasure and the creation of mixed identities with the usage of proverbs. The various diasporic groups studied have some similarities and differences in proverbial discourse practices. Encoding ancestral authority, marking identity, imparting knowledge, and translation of culture are some of their common uses. Community-specific differences are manifested in migration histories, host-society contexts, and connections to ancestral homelands.

4.2 Conceptual Outcomes

These findings largely impact the intercultural communication theory. One, proverbial discourse exemplifies the enactment of cultural identity rather than its ownership; it is a dynamic process of strategic practices rather than a fixed feature. It is a performative component that emphasizes that the choice is part of identity negotiations and is anti-essentialist regarding cultural identity. Second, the multi-level sense of proverbs demonstrates how cultural knowledge is displayed and concealed when individuals from various cultures communicate. Although deeper cultural meanings can be known primarily by those already members of the culture, surface meanings allow those who are not members of the culture to be privy to some of the secrets. Such an ordered level allows control of the boundary of strategy in cross-cultural environments. Third, the challenges of translation posed by the proverbial text reveal key differences in cultural paradigms, epistemological frameworks, and ontological assumptions. Such differences should be negotiated and creatively adapted through cultural negotiation rather than seeking a direct translation. As a result, translation is an apt illustration of how individuals from different cultures can communicate. Fourth, the educational role of proverbs suggests the various means of enhancing intercultural competence. Proverbial pedagogy is more concerned with embodied wisdom, contextual judgement, and ethical frameworks, which are demonstrated in stories and metaphors as opposed to implicit cultural knowledge or communication competence. Fifth, the findings render the linear models of cultural change, which presuppose the cultural loss or assimilation in the diasporic location, less probable. Rather, proverbial discourse illustrates how transnational migration may preserve, alter, and even increase cultural practices. The hybrid identities created by the proverbial practice are cases of creative synthesis rather than cultures diluting each other, allowing an individual to engage with various cultural systems at once.

4.3 Helpful Results

Its results are applicable to educational practices, the development of diaspora communities, and intercultural communication training. Proverbial discourse that analyzes the use of proverbs as cultural resources and intercultural strategies should be included as an important area of study in intercultural competence programs. To cope with the underlying ontological and epistemological divergences presented by proverbial worldviews, one should not simply be exposed to other cultures during training. Schools that educate diasporic communities must recognize the proverbial knowledge as legitimate cultural capital and create ways of passing it on to the next generation. This can include the tolerance of non-Western knowledge, the request that elder members of the community impart their knowledge, and the inclusion of proverbial forms of teaching as part of the curriculum. Proverbs might be digitized in schools, or schools might use proverbs in

classes, or they might initiate programs in which older generations teach proverbs to the youth. The proverbial metaphors in organizations with many different cultures ought to be viewed as alternative ways of handling things. Organizations ought to allow diversity in cultural approaches to leadership, decision-making, and conflict management rather than assuming that Western management styles apply to all individuals. Companies that effectively apply various cultural constructs can gain more innovation, happier workers, and enhanced collaboration among people of other cultures. Translational and interpretation services must also be aware of the cultural negotiation required to achieve proverbial speech work across language borders. The training must cover not only linguistic equivalence but also cultural differences between worldviews and the moral implications of translation decisions. The professional standards are expected to recognize the complexity of cultural translation and offer guidance on dealing with moral dilemmas.

4.4 Conflicts and Stress

This evidence demonstrates that proverbial discourse is fraught with conflicts as an intercultural strategy. To begin with, there are proverbs that contain and those that do not contain. The proverbial discourse may serve as a gatekeeping mechanism that excludes individuals who are poor at working with proverbs, despite the fact that it also helps individuals from different cultures better understand one another. This strain can be applied to younger generations of immigrants who are very attached to their cultural background, yet have not traditionally mastered the language they use. Second, proverbs exhibit both change and stability. Proverbs are significant in preserving ancient customs, and they have to adapt to the times to remain applicable today. This poses a dilemma: retaining the old meanings and shapes of proverbs while assigning them new meanings in new circumstances. Communities where adaptation is free to occur are likely to lose distinct cultural content, whereas those that demand that it is preserved at all costs tend to ossify their culture. Third, both accommodation and resistance exist in proverbial discourse. Different ways of knowing may be encouraged, and different forms of being pushed out of the mainstream culture may be opposed with the aid of proverbs, but on the other hand, it may become easier to adjust to the existing culture. It may be useful to translate proverbs into the dominant languages to reach more people, yet their cultural uniqueness might be less apparent. Fourth, proverbial authority both empowers people and restricts them. The collective authority, alongside invoking the wisdom of the ancestors, gives the speakers power, yet creativity can be overcome, thereby placing tradition over current knowledge. When society employs traditional authority to safeguard traditions that the younger generations would like to challenge, they will perceive it as a form of oppression.

4.5 Limits and Opportunities

It has certain limitations that should be identified. To begin with, the number of studies that meet the inclusion criteria is minimal (20), implying a rather limited evidence base. This indicates the extent to which proverbial discourse has been under-researched in the field of intercultural communication. Second, the geographic distribution is uneven, with more individuals from the Caribbean and North America than from other regions of Europe and Asia. Third, a quantitative study of the patterns of proverbial discourse, understanding, and performance remains to be conducted, and most studies use qualitative methodology. Studies of proverbial discourse in modern social movements in diasporic settings; cross-diasporic studies of the variability of proverbial practices within the community and situations; longitudinal studies of proverbial adaptation and intergenerational change as time progresses; studies of how proverbial knowledge is mediated using social media and online communities; quantitative studies examining the relationship between proverbial competence and intercultural effectiveness; and experimental studies examining pedagogical interventions based on proverbial models are all major gaps in the field. Further studies on the topic should be conducted through comparative cross-diaspora research that examines the similarities and differences in the use of proverbs across various populations. Longitudinal studies examining the dynamics of proverbial knowledge and practice would help us identify critical issues concerning the continuity and adaptation of culture. Exploring how proverbial knowledge is spread through social media using digital ethnography would shed light on modern channels of cultural transmission. The investigation of proverbial discourse within contemporary social movements would help us recognize the role of our ancestors' wisdom in the political course of action. Pedagogical intervention studies that examine the effectiveness of interventions in relation to popular frameworks would offer empirical support to educational practice.

5. CONCLUSION

This systematic review makes proverbial discourse a substantial but under-researched aspect of intercultural communication among communities of the African diaspora. Research reveals that proverbs are complex intercultural strategies that facilitate cultural identity negotiation, the conveyance of ancestral knowledge, and the mediation of intercultural experiences in transnational settings. Theoretical approaches such as the proverb praxis theory, multi-level meaning analysis, translatology, poststructuralist discourse analysis, and diasporic consciousness theory offer complementary perspectives on how the proverbial speech functions as a cultural marker, educational tool, medium of translation, and source of identity. The results suggest that proverbial speech helps the diasporic members to build up hybrid identities, fight cultural erasure, establish authority of their ancestors and attain

intercultural competence. Due to being performative, proverbial speech is highly versatile in cases when individuals of various countries are concerned. The cross-cultural interaction between proverbs and strategic management of boundaries is the translation of the multifaceted meanings in the form of grammatical, cultural, situational and symbolic meanings. The proverbial discourse is very hard to translate due to the creative balancing process between the cultural specificity and accessibility as it reveals the underlying differences between cultural views of the world. The influences of globalization and cross-national migration, on the other hand, make the difference between belonging to the culture and knowing proverbs tense. Proverbs are individual and collective, continual and transformational, both oppositional and accommodative, and including and excluding at the same time. Such battles prove that it is difficult to maintain cultural traditions and develop diasporic identities. Its synthesis emphasizes the need to be more attentive to proverbial discourse when conducting research in the diaspora studies and communication studies and intercultural competency training. Proverbial wisdom comprises of ontological suppositions and sizeable epistemological frameworks which influence intercultural communication, as well as decorative cultural aspects. The identification and communication with these frameworks reinforce the fact that there are multiple ways of knowing and makes people who belong to different cultures understand each other better. Proverbial discourse should be incorporated in schools, businesses, and community programs as a part of training programs, classes, and attempts to preserve cultural traditions. In order to deepen the understanding of proverbial discourse as an intercultural negotiation tool, which is changing in a more transnational environment, the further research is to be elaborated on this basis. Comparative, longitudinal, and experimental studies are needed to increase the quality of qualitative research that already exists. By doing such research, the scholars will be in a position to enhance their theoretical insights and practical assistance of social justice, intercultural competence and continuity of culture in the diasporas.

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