

**CONCEPTUALIZATION OF SPEECH IN  
ORAL CULTURES: A LINGUO-  
CULTURAL STUDY OF YORUBA AND  
PUNJABI PROVERBS**

**BY**

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**NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF MODERN LANGUAGES**

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# **Conceptualization of Speech in Oral Cultures: A Linguo-Cultural Study of Yoruba and Punjabi Proverbs**

By

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **Thesis Title: Conceptualization of Speech in Oral Cultures: A Linguo-Cultural Study of Yoruba and Punjabi Proverbs**

Oral and aural communications are the most dynamic processes through which local wisdom is both preserved and transmitted. Reading the proverbs that carry the folk wisdom within a culture and across the cultures is an appropriate way to understand the cultural nuances that develop among certain communities over a long history of social existence. The comparative study of how one culture differs or concords with another as far as the transmittance of historical and folk wisdom is concerned brings forth a deeper understanding of human behavior both at intracultural and intercultural levels. A culture's proverbs indicate the verbal behavior of a language community which provides an insight into the norms, values, preferences and codes of conduct in that particular culture.

The present research is focused on the paremiological corpora of Nigerian (Yoruba) and Pakistani (Punjabi) languages which have been selected for multiple similarities discovered between the respective linguo-cultures, including their orality and traditionality, which in turn informs about other factors, including socio-cultural norms, colonial history, the state of economy as well as religious affiliations. In one culture, speech is encouraged, and in the other, it is relatively discouraged. This trend owes to the universality of interactive goals of speech proverbs, which makes them a rich source of data for cross-linguistic and cross-cultural comparison.

The conceptual framework has been adapted from the Linguo-Cultural approach proposed by Petrova (2016, 2019) and the theory of Cultural Scripts (Wierzbicka & Goddard, 2010) for a cross-cultural and cross-linguistic investigation of proverbs. Relevant dictionaries of proverbs have been used to solicit data related to the semantic domain of speech. For contextually relevant and authentic outcomes, cultural informants from both cultures have helped select, identify, and ensure the currency, categorization, back translation, and interpretation of the speech-related proverbs. Natural Semantic Metalanguage (NSM) has been used to explicate the dominant trends emerging from a culturematic analysis from both collections. This Cultural-Scripts based comparison

establishes the respective people's implicit 'cultural grammar' and a sort of shared interpretive background.

The study confirmed the hypothesis by Fischer and Yoshida that the population density of a speech community affects the positive or negative attitude towards speech. Punjabi proverbs from a speech community with higher population density delineate an overall image of the preference for silence, restraint, contemplation, and indirectness. While the Nigerian corpus, from a region with lower population density, delineates preferences for speech, clarity, appropriacy, and directness. Silence has been equated with wisdom, success, peace and enhanced performance in the Punjabi corpus. In comparison, a mixed response has been recorded in the Nigerian delta, where silence has been chiefly associated with defeat, undue shyness, apprehension, contemplation, and loss of eloquence. Gender segregation present in the Punjabi culture where feminine discourse is showcased as an unproductive activity also shows its traces in the Nigerian culture, emphasizing women's unreliability and insincerity. Further research can be done to seek the prospective reasons for these similarities and differences found in the proverbs of these two geographically distant cultures.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

CS Cultural Scripts

NSM Natural Semantic Metalanguage

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## **DEDICATION**

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter contextualizes the study by providing background to different dimensions related to the paremiological depiction of speech and silence-related norms in African (Yoruba) and Asian (Punjabi) languages. It also provides the rationale for choosing Yoruba among 6500 African languages for a proverbial cross-cultural analysis between oral cultures. It also provides a detailed logic behind the choice of the theme of speech/communication among hundreds of unexplored semantic domains. The chapter also includes the statement of the problem, significance, and objectives of the study, followed by research questions and delimitations. It also incorporates summaries of the chapters followed by a list of key terms with their operational definitions.

### 1.1 Background of the Study

The most robust approach to deal with culture and discourse studies is known as the ‘ethnography of communication,’ established and developed mainly by Hymes (1962), and Philipsen and Carbaugh (1986). At that time, linguistic theories were focused on Chomsky’s ideas about sentence structure and competence instead of actual application. Hymes accentuates that being a capable speaker calls for substantially more than linguistic information and grammatical knowledge. It implies realizing how to talk in socially suitable manners to various individuals, in diversified settings, about different topics. ‘Communicative Competence’ was coined by him to incorporate each of these elements mentioned above alongside the information on language structure.

‘Ethnography of communication’ focuses on ‘norms of interaction’ that refer to the rules followed or expected to be followed by the speakers in a culturally acceptable manner. These norms can only be discovered through mostly indirect means, including observing people’s reactions when these norms are deviated. Norms of interpretation include all the cultural knowledge required for comprehending a ‘Communicative Event.’ The absence of a principled approach for deciphering these cultural norms is the main trouble, and practically

ethnographers mostly fall back upon their own strategies and techniques. This research attempts to devise a replicable, systematic, authentic, and data-driven approach to unearth the tacit norms of communication through paremiological revelations from Nigerian and Pakistani languages (Yoruba and Punjabi, respectively). It is important to note that these cultural norms of communication consistently work as an interpretive system against which individuals comprehend and evaluate their own and others' practices.

The speech behavior in every community has deep marks of folk wisdom arising out of certain conventions and events that spring from universal human situations. Like stepping stones in a stream, indigenous and foreign proverbs give humans tried and tested means to help them in multifaceted domains. Sapir (2004) identified the language of proverbs as a symbolic guide to culture and vocabulary, a very sensitive index of it. As the vehicle of communication, proverbs can convey us far and long in mission. Although the proverbs are resilient to diachronic and synchronic variations, the spatial and temporal human experiences exhibit some variation in folk wisdom. It means that contemporary anthropological linguistics has plenty of uncharted paremiological territory to explore. While this requires some investment of time and exertion, it is well justified, despite all the trouble. Briefly, this study expects to contribute by testing the application of the Linguo-Cultural and Cultural Script Approaches, and devise a methodology to conduct cross-cultural research about oral literatures of geographically distant regions. It also intends to open new vistas of research for Pakistani linguists and literary scholars by introducing 'paremiology' and 'paremiography' in mainstream research. The theme of 'speech' will bring it to the notice of the researchers in linguistic anthropology, communication, and folklore for explorations in other linguistic contexts and geographical settings.

## **1.2 Oral Cultures and Proverbs**

The present study focuses on the folk wisdom delineated in the proverbs of oral cultures. The term 'oral culture' denotes that, even though literacy is quite widespread in all contemporary cultures today, oral traditions play a relatively more important role in cultures with limited literacy (Schipper 2010). When moving toward oral cultures, proverbs have been viewed as those rugged, reliable stepping stones set by the older folks which move individuals from the bank of disbelief to more developed faith. Rather than seeing proverbs

as just linguistic tools to be utilized, this study viewed them as a profound image inside a culture that uncovers the collective worldview and perspectives of the individuals. Moon (2009) endorses how “oral cultures, which are prevalent in Third World societies, are proverb-oriented ... proverbs and myths are significantly helpful in deciphering animistic worldviews” (p. 53). Thiong’o (1992) attaches the communication procedure to the construction and development of the actual social world, where language as a means of communication and language as a culture are used reciprocally. Hall’s (1992) argument that “culture is communication and communication is culture” (p. 217) fits pleasantly here. Language conveys culture, and culture conveys, primarily through orature (oral literature) and writing, the whole set of values by which we come to see ourselves and our place on the planet. It is not astonishing that the connection between language and culture in the traditional viewpoint is, to a great extent, unidirectional, with culture being determinant and communication subordinate.

Oral cultures rely heavily on the formulaic and conventional nature of proverbs. Moon (2009) claims that memory hooks are provided to oral learners by proverbs, which as symbols are particularly significant in oral cultures where conversations must be recalled to be valuable. Oral societies depend upon conventional articulations and mnemonic designs with the goal for individuals to recall information. Proverbs are especially helpful since they are frequently short and terse explanations that are anything but difficult to recall. People from a ‘literate background’ may neglect the worth that oral societies place upon proverbs. This frequent employment of proverbs, which is profoundly esteemed in oral societies, is relatively less expected and appreciated in literate and modern societies. Conversely, proverbs are not given a peripheral status in oral cultures; instead, they work as an incredible set of symbols to encourage the association of internal reality to outer reality by giving conventional or mnemonic aid to recall articulations.

A proverb is a distinct genre that oral societies regularly acknowledge and perceive as genuine talk. On account of their focal job in numerous parts of conventional, unlettered/non-literate social orders, the investigation of proverbs has pulled in researchers for a considerable time. As Sweeney (1990) remarked in a significant study of morality in pre-modern Malay society, “The discourse of any oral culture is heavily dependent upon the use of relatively fixed utterances in stylized forms, such as proverbs and sayings. Such

utterances are not merely used to underline a point: they are the point. The individuals think in these formulas” (p. 87). In social orders with rich oral conventions, individuals are intrigued by the individuals who have numerous proverbs available to them and who know how to utilize them at the right moment. Quoting is an art, and quotations pass on something that, for some reason, one does not wish to state overtly. The proverb in such a situation makes a feeling of generalization and detachment. It permits the speaker to stay back and introduce delicate issues in a detached and artful manner, to communicate what one needs to state, however securely, since the speaker cannot be considered personally responsible for a ‘conventional’ explanation. The statement gives a sheltered method to reprimand, taunt, or even affront.

‘Soul of the culture’ is revealed in proverbs because they are the time-tested stepping stones through which we learn our cultural ethos. Proverbs have been perceived in multiple eulogistic terms by scholars from different regional and academic backgrounds as “an integral part of the spiritual treasures of the culture and language of the people” (Syzdykova, 2014, p. 321). Proverbs are further elaborated as the items “which play the role of cultural touchstones and act as miniature theories” (Wierzbicka, 2017, p. 116); “the vibrant manifestation of the eternally developing soul” (Petrova, 2015, p. 251); the “the children of experience” (Mieder, 1993, p. 5); “Sapient nuggets” (Mieder, 2004, p. 23); “the wisdom of the street” (German) or the “drum of God” (Punjabi) (Basgöz, 1990, p. 9). It is curious to note the extent to which a German proverb goes by stating that “A country can be judged by the quality of its proverbs” (Samovar et al., 2009, p. 29).

The importance of proverbs to reflect the worldview of a nation is acknowledged by Mieder (2004) too, “As a man’s speech mirrors his thoughts so do a people’s proverbs reflect dominant attitudes and cultural patterns” (p. 35). They reveal the way of life of the people who created them in a practically unsurpassed measure by any other folklore or literary genre as far as fullness, completeness, and exhaustiveness are concerned. Moreover, “whatever appears important for our wishing and willing, our hope and anxiety, for acting and doing: that and only that receives the stamp of verbal meaning” (Petrova, 2003, p. 337). According to Mieder (2008), “proverbs, just like metaphors, make cultural knowledge linguistically visible” (p. 153), so “If you want to know a people, know their proverbs” (p. 154). So the presence of a significant number of positive or negative evaluative proverbs may be a strong

reflection of the respective culture's stance toward a phenomenon. The proverbs of a community or a nation are, in a real sense, ethnography of the people, which, if systematized, can give a sharp picture of the people's way of life, their philosophy, their criticism of life, moral truths, and social values.

Another point of rationale regarding the choice of proverbs is the expression of human values in the language, divided into 'professed values' and 'internalized values.' The reason is that when human values are expressed in language, they are separated from the actual acts and behavior of man by the layer of the linguistic garment they wear. However, the values contained in proverbs may be said to have avoided the division between professed and internalized values. The values expressed in proverbs have gone through the vicissitudes of many people's long periods and experiences. So, what remains is a distilled, truthful, and remarkably simple expression of the inner-thinking and feeling of the people.

### **1.3 Cross-Cultural Paremiological Analysis**

The scope of this study includes paremiological data from two regionally distant cultures, i.e., African Nigerian Yoruba and Asian Punjabi. There are specific reasons behind this decision to conduct a cross-cultural analysis instead of confining it to a mono-cultural investigation. Globalization has brought the idea of 'culture' to the bleeding edge of human cognizance. It has given a space where societies meet, mix, amalgamate, and conflict. Facing other cultures makes us aware of our own way of life and how it is like or unlike other societies in new ways. As the anthropologist Hall (1992) explained, "What is known least well and is therefore in the poorest position to be studied, is what is closest to oneself" (p. 45). It is hoped that through this scrutiny, our cultural awareness will be enhanced for more productive and successful intercultural encounters. These linguistic and anthropological characteristics of proverbs are better featured by a comparative investigation of data from two regionally distant cultures.

The multiplication of cross-cultural contacts, calls for new types of academic work in the social sciences and humanities. Being exposed to different languages builds the observation that the world is populated by individuals who talk uniquely in contrast to themselves and those whose societies and ways of thinking are other than their own (Sharifian, 2017). A better survival on Earth requires mutual understanding, collaboration,

and cooperation, which is impossible without getting information about other's cultural norms and preferences. A comparative study of proverbs can reveal how much commonalities and differences exist, facilitating better comprehension and rapprochement.

Another supportive notion is the objectivity of cross-cultural studies because another person collects the data. At the same time, it is tested (compared) through theory by another, and it guards against the researcher's (conscious or unconscious) biases. Between the 'close reading' and 'distant reading,' Schipper (2010) suggests that both kinds of comparative studies have advantages and need each other. Close reading is an advantage for looking closely at a written or oral text regarding a specific culture. On the other hand, distant reading permits concentrating on smaller or bigger units than the content: themes, devices, topics, tropes – or classifications and frameworks. Last but not least, it is also hoped that Mieder's (2004) call for more cross-cultural paremiological studies in various life and cultural domains has been partially answered.

## **1.4 The Punjabi and African Yoruba Proverbs**

### **1.4.1 Galton's Problem**

The first reason to choose linguo-cultures from two distant continents is Galton's problem, quoted in Levinson and Ember (1996), which is about an undeniable flaw in the cross-cultural approach. Galton saw that since social orders could acquire customs by borrowing them, it is conceivable that the number of cultural adhesions (characteristics) could be lesser than assumed. He likewise asserted that the adhesion conditions, regardless of whether by dispersion or by free development, would influence the understanding of the cases. He offered a solution to avoid misunderstandings by not taking cultures within the same geographic region for a multifaceted cross-cultural investigation. Therefore, the Punjabi language from the Asian continent and the Yoruba of African Nigeria, as prototypical languages, fulfil the need to avoid 'Galton's problem.'

### **1.4.2 The Rationale for Choosing the Yoruba and Punjabi Proverbs**

Primarily, the presence of certain similarities between the Punjabi and Yoruba cultures led the researcher to choose them for cross-cultural analysis, preferably. Both languages belong to oral cultures with their indigenous knowledge systems. Their traditional

socio-cultural setups, post-colonial backgrounds, coupled with their under-developed socio-economic status, have reinforced their selection. These languages are thousands of years old, and the speakers share ethnic affiliations apart from their current religious belief systems (Islam, Sikhism, or Christianity). Though these languages are spoken by the people of diversified religions, there is a strong presence of Muslim and Christian speakers in Pakistani Punjab and Nigerian Yoruba land. Furthermore, the Nigerian village communities, having strong clan/tribal affiliations, provide a solid basis for comparing with the Punjabi society (with a similar social set-up) through their oral narratives: proverbs in this case.

Additionally, the Yoruba speech community has been reported and investigated by different paremiologists to be among the users of proverbs with high-frequency ratings (Osoba, 2005; Mieder, 2018; Yusuf, 2013). Another point of attraction is the availability of the highest number of proverb studies from various angles and perspectives on the Yoruba proverbs and culture among the Nigerian and African languages. Accessibility of a corpus of proverbs with English translations and interpretations reinforced the choice. The contacts with native speakers of the Yoruba in Nigeria and Pakistan also supported the decision. Still another important reason is the irreversible process of acculturation, which is taking place among both Punjabi and the Yoruba people, especially the young generation. Due to these specific processes of globalization and Westernization encountered by these non-dominant cultures, the rich and vital proverbial tradition of the Punjabi and African literature is in danger of vanishing from the spoken vernacular and written literature.

As far as the selection of the Punjabi language is concerned, being a cultural insider of the Punjabi language, the researcher is in a better position to choose her native language for cross-cultural analysis. An '*emic*' view of these cultural sapients has been provided with much less effort. The present study represents the most comprehensive and systematic collections of the Punjabi proverbs, folk-sayings, and aphorisms so far published, including Malik (2005) and Bajwa (2011). As correctly stated by Khan and Awan (2019), paremiological studies have been so far neglected in the Punjabi speech community. No significant exploratory, analytical, or anthropological study could be accessed during this investigation period of more than five years. The problem identified as 'Galton's problem,' the regionally distant settlements of the Yoruba and Punjabi speakers, along with the socio-

cultural and historical similarities found between the respective linguo-cultures, led the researcher to conduct a cross-cultural analysis of their proverbs.

## 1.5 The Semantic Domain of Communication

The theme of communication has been selected mainly because human beings are primarily differentiated from other species for their speech capacity and have been called '*homo-loquens*' means 'talking animals'. Kim and Markus (2002) have rightly identified talking as undeniably "the most important form of communication, one of the best avenues of thinking, and one of the most common forms of expression" (p. 434). Communication is an integral part of every culture, worldwide business, and academic activity that is altogether founded on the capacity of managers/academicians from one culture to discuss effectively with directors, students, and workers from different societies.

As Hunter and Oumarou (1998) rightly acknowledged that, "language keeps talking about itself and cannot seem to have enough of it. It spends a large part of its time calling attention to what it can accomplish" (p. 44), the semantic domain of speech in proverbs is particularly well suited for a trans-cultural comparison. The growing influence of the ethnography of communication approach in cultural studies has also provided additional support to this selection. In the words of Goddard (2010), "speech truly is a primary element in the world view of many oral cultures on account of the widely held concept of the power of words" (p. 467). Generally, we may either encourage or discourage speech. The universality of the interactive goals of speech proverbs makes them a rich source of data for cross-linguistic comparison. The speech behavior to which they refer can be found at any time and in any culture; this makes them resilient to diachronic and synchronic variation. Since folklore itself, including the proverb genre, is an aspect of speech, traditional attitudes toward speech may be of particular interest to those who study oral culture to understand the traditional view and the belief system which operates the communicative system of a speech community.

Kim defined norms (2003) as "rules of conduct, blueprints for behavior, and cultural expectations" (p. 99). The study of the tacit norms through the paremiological data would help to explicate the philosophy of communication held dear by the respective speech communities for specific reasons. The differences in speech norms held dear by each culture



often result in intercultural miscommunication. These illustrated differences among the communicative behavior of various cultures suggest that people are guided by their values to use different linguistic strategies and tools for similar situations. The act of talking is a practice replete with cultural meanings as the communicative behaviors are socially constructed and entail incorporating cultural models, which are sets of tacit ideas about how, when, why to talk. In her theory of Cultural Scripts, Wierzbicka (1996) also presented a similar argument that people speak differently in profound and systematic manners in different speech communities and cultures. Different cultural values and their hierarchies are reflected through these different speech practices and preferences. The specific speech behaviors manifest the tacit system of ‘cultural norms’ and ‘cultural scripts,’ which can be uncovered by a systematic and rigorous analysis of the linguistic evidence (including cultural keywords and proverbs) of the respective linguo-cultures. Fischer and Yoshida (1968), who published on the attitude toward speech in Japanese proverbs, suggested that the proverbs of society could provide its traditional view of speech, thus providing researchers who seek “an understanding of the various functions of language in society” (p. 37). To see how any culture regards speech is to consider something central to it; therefore, this thesis intends to investigate the African and Punjabi cultural codes of communication through paremiological data.

## **1.6 Statement of the Problem**

Proverbs are the essence of a people’s collective wisdom. Due to their evocative, emotive, and rhetorical power along with the tradition of incontrovertibility, reading these as instances of comparative wisdom in two distant, albeit orally orientated societies like Punjab and Nigerian Yoruba can give a deeper understanding of how human communication has evolved necessary practical wisdom to carry out the affairs of life in various parts of the world. Seemingly, the comparative paremiological dimension of folklore (in Punjabi and Nigerian Yoruba languages) has social, religious, and cultural similarities. Apparently, there is strong visibility of speech-related proverbs that can lead to a rigorous and verifiable insight into the paremiological representation of the cultural preferences between talk and silence. The study has used the proverbial data from two regionally distant areas (Asia and Africa) while avoiding provincialism and literary myopia. The study delimits its investigation to

uncover the attitude toward speech and silence and the preferred communication norms in both linguo-cultures. An additional aspect that has been covered is the relationship between gender and expected speech behavior that reveals inherent patriarchal socio-cultural tendencies in both cultures.

### **1.7 Objectives**

- To investigate the attitude to speech as delineated through the Yoruba and Punjabi proverbs
- To investigate the relationship between gender and talk in the Yoruba and Punjabi cultures through their proverbs
- To compare the communication norms propagated by the Yoruba and Punjabi cultures through their proverbs
- To contrast the communication norms propagated by the Yoruba and Punjabi cultures through their proverbs
- To construct the Cultural Scripts of communication norms for the Yoruba and Punjabi cultures

### **1.8 Research Questions**

- What is the attitude to speech as depicted in the Yoruba and Punjabi proverbs?
- What is the relationship between talk and gender in the Yoruba and Punjabi proverbs?
- What are the cultural similarities in speech-related norms, as revealed through the Yoruba and Punjabi proverbs?
- What are the cultural differences in speech-related norms, as revealed through the Yoruba and Punjabi proverbs?

### **1.9 Significance and Rationale of the Study**

This research, being of an interdisciplinary nature, would be beneficial not only in academia but also for the researchers and practitioners in anthropology, ethno-linguistics, sociology, politics, culture, communication, and gender studies. This research will also interest the members of civil society. It deals with changing horizons to increase social awareness about the rich heritage of folk wisdom hidden in folk pieces of literature and oral narratives globally, mainly Punjabi and African (Nigerian) folklore.

Looking at proverbs from diversified linguistic and cultural backgrounds will view their inhabitants' thinking patterns, belief systems, and the preferred ways of verbal behavior. By attempting to see their cultures, philosophy of life, customs, and traditions, we can coexist in a better manner. People living in a global world are more mindful of differences in cultures. This cross-cultural semantic investigation, which incorporates insights from numerous different fields like psychology, anthropology, sociology, ethnography, pragmatics, and communication, provides a chance to comprehend the nature of the similarities and differences between people's preferred ways of communication. Studying proverbs on parallel and explorative lines can be a step toward ethno-methodology. The investigation will help to understand why individuals interact in manners that keep up the social structure of the linguistic and social contexts where they find themselves. In such a situation, the comparison of proverbs would open two simultaneous windows to study the wisdom entailed in two diverse international cultures.

The significance of this study is multifaceted and multilayered. Firstly, it bridges, to some extent, the gap of paremiological research in the indigenous context. Secondly, a cross-cultural analysis enhances the cultural awareness of the indigenous and foreign norms of speech as communicated in their proverbs and highlights them. Thirdly, the gap about the attitude toward speech and communication norms in Punjabi and Yoruba paremia has been partially filled. A thorough investigation of speech proverbs provides authentic knowledge about the tacit norms of speech and culture-specific preferences. Awareness of speech-related cultural beliefs and communication norms also structure an essential part of a speaker's communicative competence. Despite this, numerous investigations focus more on depicting the utilization of routines instead of clarifying the sociocultural dimensions of their semantic aspects and how they influence their utilization. The developed Cultural Scripts about the speech norms of Punjabi and Yoruba linguo-cultures would guide the insiders and outsiders to adopt more appropriate speech behaviors and avoid specific manners that might be considered normal and acceptable in some other social contexts.

The synthesis of the Linguo-Cultural Approach by Petrova (2016, 2019) and Cultural Script Theory by Goddard (2010) and Wierzbicka (2017) would guide the future paremiologists to adopt their conceptual underpinnings to apply at a myriad of themes found in the paremia of almost any language. This study will open new avenues of research by

inviting the indigenous and foreign researchers to work on paremiology in semantic areas, still unexplored. The national character of Pakistani and Punjabi proverbs would be more clearly perceived when analyzed from comparative cum contrastive perspectives.

### **1.10 Delimitations of the Study**

The main population of the current study was the proverbs from the African and Punjabi languages. Out of 6500 African languages, the researcher has chosen Yoruba linguo-culture for having some socio-cultural and religious similarities with the Punjabi speech community. The Nigerian Yoruba language as a prototypical African language has been chosen to represent African linguo-cultures. Therefore, the proverb collections from both languages became sub-population surveyed and organized for constructing comparable parallel patterns. From several culturally significant domains like gender, marriage, parenting, economic ideology, hospitality, metaphorical representations of color names, food items, and animal names, the thematic domain of ‘communication’ has been selected to conduct a cross-cultural paremiological analysis. Thirdly, the researcher has used the proverb dictionaries to get an overall picture of the nature of communication norms. Fourthly, functions performed by the employment of proverbs and targets achieved would have been an interesting angle to the existing research. However, due to time constraints, the researcher could not incorporate this additional dimension into the current project.

Furthermore, the researcher is aware of the fact that proverb meaning may shift according to the situation. However, there is also an underlying, ‘relatively constant’ meaning that she calls the ‘base meaning,’ a meaning upon which all or most of those cognizant of the proverb can probably agree, complying with De Caro’s (1987) stance. Indeed, such base meanings in themselves allow for the analysis of cultural ideas and attitudes; even then, a fuller and more subtle analysis of cultural norms also calls for the wide-ranging observation of actual proverb use. To work from base meanings only calls for recognition of specific limitations and a realization that one cannot expect from such analysis any grand design which characterizes a total worldview or ethos. However, such an approach can be valid, perhaps mainly if focused upon a restricted aspect of a culture’s cognitive patterning just as the theme of communication taken for the current study.

## 1.11 Organization of the Study

A brief introduction to the current treatise is as follows:

Chapter 1 gives an overview of the background, motivation, research gap, and the rationale for selecting proverbs as the primary genre for a cross-cultural analysis of the Yoruba and Punjabi languages (as representatives of African and Asian speech communities). This chapter also provides the rationale for choosing oral cultures from two distant continents. The importance of choosing the theme of communication and speech is also a significant part of this chapter. It has also specified the general to specific objectives and the targeted research questions that this extensive research has attempted to answer.

Chapter 2 encompasses the field of paremiography and paremiology starting from an attempt to define ‘proverb,’ determine its characteristic features, types, functions, and importance in linguistic, cultural, educational, literary, and psychological contexts. Secondly, to set the context of the study, a brief introduction is provided for both Punjabi and Yoruba languages and speech communities. While discussing the previous studies, the review had to be narrowed down to the studies focused on the Yoruba or Punjabi proverbs, specifically investigating the attitude toward speech in proverbs, idioms, phrases, and metaphors generally from the world languages and their oral genres.

Chapter 3 gives a detailed account of the conceptual framework adapted from multiple theories and approaches to include comparative folklore, the Linguo-Cultural Approach, and the theory of Cultural Scripts. Among these, the study has extensively employed the last two to conduct a qualitative cum quantitative analysis of the selected corpus focused on the semantic domain of speech, talk, silence, and communication norms. The second part of this chapter has discussed the methods adopted for data collection, organization, classification, transliteration, translation, and interpretation. The access to African data and cultural informants had been the most challenging tasks made possible through the method of crowd-sourcing and social media platforms for Ph.D. support. The researcher has provided a detailed list of the thematic clusters and an introduction to the primary data sources.

Chapter 4 is the most essential and contributory chapter of this research as it encompasses a separate and comparative analysis of the emergent themes coming from the Punjabi and Yoruba proverbs. The study has situated the findings in the existing research

context of the nature of communication in proverbs starting from Fischer and Yoshida, Chatteris-Black, McNeil, Opata, Norrick, Chong-Ho, and Yusuf. The analysis is proximally entrenched in the theoretical perspectives and has taken extensive support from both theories of language and culture.

The last chapter concludes the thesis by providing the main findings and their possible reasons. This chapter also discusses the possible reasons behind these cultural patterns, some similarities, and differences. It also rationalizes the presence of opposite proverbs in a single linguo-culture. It also contextualizes the paremiological findings of the attitude toward speech and silence in both cultures. The chapter conclusion is followed by the contribution of research and recommendations for future researchers. Due to the limited scope of the current study, many significant semantic domains could not be investigated. Such areas of concern are recommended for future researchers, followed by References and Annexures A and B.

## 1.12 Operational Definitions of Terms

- a) **Speech (noun):** the activity of talking and way of talking
- b) **Talk (verb):** to say words/things aloud; to speak to someone (The verbs speak and talk both are used in their general sense ‘to say words.’)
- c) **Silence (noun):** a period without any sound; a state of not speaking or not making a noise
- d) **Proverb:** In the words of Mieder (2004), “A proverb is a short, generally known sentence of the folk which contains wisdom, truth, morals and traditional views in a metaphorical, fixed and memorizable form and which is handed down from generation to generation” (p. 119).
- e) **Paremiology:** the study of proverbs
- f) **Paremiography:** the act of collecting and writing proverbs
- g) **Cultureme:** one single significant element that a proverb remarks and assesses as positive or negative
- h) **Semantic Density:** the frequency of occurrences of a particular text and the degree of its lexical, grammatical, and thematic elaborateness, including synonymy, variability, conversion, propensity to form derivatives, elements for intertextuality

- i) **Cultural Script:** a technique for articulating culture-specific norms, values, and practices in terms that are clear, precise, and accessible to cultural insiders and outsiders alike

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

In this chapter, a comprehensive is taken view of the proverbs, their definition, characteristics, functions, types, cultural importance, types of paremiology and paremiography. This chapter also provides a brief introduction to the Punjabi and Yoruba languages and their respective speech communities, research studies done on the Yoruba and Punjabi proverbs from multiple perspectives, and investigations done on the nature of attitude toward speech in the paremiological data from diversified speech communities. The thematic literature review is arranged chronologically under the main headings.

#### **2.1 The Punjabi Language**

‘Punj’ and ‘aab’ are two Persian words combined to make ‘Punjab.’ ‘Punj’ means five, and ‘aab’ means water. Therefore, the meaning of ‘Punjab’ is believed to be ‘the land of five rivers.’ The Punjabi people are a tribe of Indo-Aryan peoples from Punjab, which is found in northern India and eastern Pakistan. Due to the strategic location of Punjab, it has been a part of many reigns and empires throughout antiquity, comprising the civilization of the Indus Valley, Aryans, Scythians, Kushans, Greeks, Arabs, Persians, Turks, Timurids, Ghaznavids, Mughals, Sikhs, Afghans, and the British (Ayres, 2008).

##### **2.1.1 History of the Punjabi Community**

The amalgamation of the several inhabitants, castes, and tribes of Punjab into a comprehensive joint ‘Punjabi’ identity originated from the start of the 18th century. Before that, the perception and sense of the ‘Punjabi’ ethnocultural community and identity were not present, although the numerous groups of Punjab had long experienced racial, cultural, and linguistic commonalities (Malhotra, 2012; Thandi, 1999). Conventionally, the Punjabi identity or character is chiefly geographical, cultural, and linguistic. It is free from religion, race, creed, or color. So, ‘the Punjabi’ refers to those for whom the Punjabi language is the



primary, first, mother or perceptible language and those who belong to the Punjabi region and associate with its inhabitants (Thandi, 1999). Assimilation and integration are part of the Punjabi society and philosophy since there is no particular Punjabi community or a specific tribe. More or less, all the Punjabis have a similar cultural and traditional background (Singh, 2012).

Simons and Fennig (2019) estimate that in the world, Punjabi is the 12<sup>th</sup> most widely spoken language having 88 million native Punjabi speakers. In Pakistan, Punjabi is the largest spoken language. 2008 Census of Pakistan claims that the Punjabi users constitute approximately 44.15% of Pakistan's total population. Of the native Punjabis in Pakistani Punjab, almost 97% are Muslim, and 2.5% are Christians. Punjabi is the language of a significant portion (44%) of the population, but it is one of the most neglected languages (Rahman, 2010). Other subgroups consist of Hindus, Ahmadi, Sikhs, Bahá'í, and Parsis. Punjabi is the 11<sup>th</sup> largest spoken language in India, with primarily Sikh and Hindu speakers with a small number of Muslim and Christian speakers. It is spoken by approximately 2.85% of the population of India (Ethnologue, 2019).

The Indian Punjabi is deeply influenced by Sanskrit, whereas Pakistani Punjabi is profoundly affected by Perso-Arabic vocabulary (Chaudhry, 1997). The popular dialect, which is spoken in Punjab and several regions of India and Pakistan, is the Majhi dialect. In Pakistan, many discrete dialects are spoken in different regions including, Jhangvi, Jangli, Malwai, Doabi, Pawadi, Saraiki, Hindko, Multani, Pahari, or Potohari, etc. In India, numerous regional, national, and social varieties of Punjabi exist including, Malawi, Majhi, Doabi, Rathi, Powadhi, Ludhianwi, Bhattiani, and Patialwi. In Pakistan, Punjabi is regarded as a regional language but has not been given any official status. The prestige of the Punjabi language is considered to be a communal/academic concern in Pakistan. Many people have been demanding official recognition of the Punjabi language like that in India.

## **2.2 Background of the Yoruba Speakers**

The Yoruba people live mainly in the south-western part of Nigeria, occupying virtually all of the area formerly known as the Western Region. They are also found in some parts of the Kwara, Kogi and Edo States. The language is Yoruba, which has many dialects – Ijebu, Ijesa, Ondo, Oyo, and Ekiti etc. (Makinde, 2012). The Yorubas are the most urbanized

and possibly the most industrialized ethnic group in sub-Saharan Africa. More than 21% of Nigerians are Yoruba, and Yorubaland has at least nine cities with more than 100,000 population and a 60-70 % rate of urbanization overall. Their cities are famous and were well-established before colonialism (Babatunde, 2015).

The Yoruba people are found in other countries along the coast of West Africa, such as the Republic of Benin and are also found in Brazil and Cuba (Lawal 1996). Most important is that Yoruba people are highly cultured and religious. There are about twenty-five million Yoruba speaking people who pride themselves on being urban people. Among the Yoruba, descent groups or lineages are the basis of family and group loyalty (the Federal Republic of Nigeria and UNICEF 1990) (Salamone and Adeyanju, 2019).

### **2.2.1 The Yoruba Language**

Yoruba is one of the major languages in Nigeria. It is the lingua-franca of the western states of Nigeria. It is also noted that three out of the twelve old states of the federation use Yoruba as their mother tongue; two of them have it as their principal language while it is the mother tongue of the third one. It is also used as a medium of instruction in the first three years of primary education in the western states of Nigeria (FGN – National Policy on Education). Although the internationality of the Yoruba language is not generally recognized, it embraces several African countries, and it has a strong influence on the Americans (Akinmade, 2011). There is no doubt that language is fundamental in any culture or civilization, and wherever you find a similar language being spoken, there is no doubt that there must have been some historical connection. Therefore, wherever the Yorùbá language or any of its dialects is spoken in West Africa, we must assume that that area at one time or the other formed part of what can be loosely called Yorùbáland (Makinde, 2012).

## **2.3 Review of Existing Body of Knowledge on Proverbs**

This section briefly reviews the existing body of knowledge on proverbs. It incorporates a comprehensive definition of proverbs, their origin, characteristics, types, functions and importance in world cultures.

### **2.3.1 Definition**

In the words of Mieder (2004), the leading researcher of paremiology and the editor of *Proverbium* (the journal dedicated to publish paremiological and paremiographical

studies), “A proverb is a short, generally known sentence of the folk which contains wisdom, truth, morals and traditional views in a metaphorical, fixed and memorable form and which is handed down from generation to generation” (p. 119). One could also simply state that ‘a proverb is a short sentence of wisdom.’ He also traces the origin of the word ‘Paremiology,’ denoting the study of the proverbs to the times of Aristotle.

### **2.3.2 Genesis, Evolution, and Origin**

Proverbs are a kind of folk literature; they have a long account recording experience of efforts in diverse areas. From folk stories to literary works, they start from a varied foundation, from natural phenomena to religious beliefs, from experiences to realizations and insight of folks in diverse periods and diverse societal groups. They embrace written ones and oral ones; they are a summary and the accumulation of the public’s knowledge and are homogeneously distributed. Mieder (2014) asserts that proverbs neither drop from the heavens nor come into being from the mouth of a metaphysical being. Instead, some individual coin them purposefully or inadvertently. If the announcement contains a component of truth or astuteness, and if it shows at least one of the proverb indicators (for example, rhyme, alliteration, ellipsis, parallelism, etc.), it may ‘get on’ to be utilized initially in a domestic context, and along these lines in a town, a locale, a nation, a continent, and inevitably the whole world. With the mind-boggling power of the mass media, a recently defined precept like proclamation may turn into a bona fide relatively rapidly.

Without a doubt, religious adherents quote excessively from their holy books like the Bible and Quran when expressing their values and beliefs. According to Schipper (2010), the holy books and significant scriptures and literary texts may be some possible essential origins of these cultural nuggets. Another view on the origin of a proverb from the Yoruba perspective, according to Osoba (2005), is that proverbs can originate from tales in addition to other sources, “They spring from an unknown source, increase in volume as they roll on, and are adopted by all as unconsciously as they have sprung into existence” (p. 27). Dabaghi, Pishbin, and Niknasab (2010) have further argued that proverbs are consequent from “folktales, beliefs, values, attitudes, perceptions, emotions and the entire system of thoughts and feelings” (p. 33). In any case, researching the Punjabi or Yoruba proverbs’ sources is beyond the scope of this investigation.

### **2.3.3 Types of Proverbs**

Petrova (1998) identified two types of proverbs: those with a universal, common morality guide for the practice of virtue similar in all societies, if not in shape, at least in the meaning; and those which are particular, born from a specific event, a local custom or a historical fact. Syzdykova (2014) also identified three types of proverbs: Universals proverbs, having not only the same basic idea, but also the expression which is mainly the expression of simple observations that became proverbs in every language; Regional proverbs, on the pattern of loan words, many loan-proverbs appear beside the indigenous or local ones given rise by the geographical vicinity; and Indigenous proverbs, specific to any language or community.

### **2.3.4 Characteristics of Proverbs**

Arora (1984) identified certain stylistic features of proverbs: alliteration, ellipsis, rhyme, and parallelism. The traits that can be optional with varying degrees include hyperbole, paradox, personification, and metaphors. Some other characteristics of proverbs identified by Mieder (2004) include their dependence on context, being not logical, terse, and figurative. Furthermore, proverbs are spoken instead of written or sung; they are instructional, general, prosodic, engaging, and amusing. While a few qualities, such as a convention, instructive reason, metaphor, and sweeping statement appear to be fundamental in deciding and characterizing the term proverb, different properties, for example, prosody and humor, appear to be optional attributes that are not found in each proverb. Osoba (2014) highlighted specific characteristics found individually or in combination in the Yoruba proverbs, which include, but are not limited to terseness, relative fixity, poeticality, figurativeness, allusion, hyperbolic, pithiness, and economy. "Pithiness, as a characteristic, draws proverb near poetry. Both poetry and proverbs are frugal with words and rich in meaning; both are most effective in conveying a meaning that goes beyond the simple material expression of words" (Norricks, 1997, p. 62). Regarding the antiquity and authenticity of oral tradition, we can say that even the Bible and Quran were oral tradition before these were committed to written forms.

### 2.3.5 Functions of Proverbs

One of the significant functions of folklore, especially the proverb, is that it is a mirror or a reflection of the collective attitude and ideas of the people or the ‘grammar of the values.’ In some ways, they even serve the same purpose as a photograph or image in a Power Point presentation -- an actual or verbal illustration. A Shona proverb states that, “The one, who quotes proverbs, gets what he wants” (Bwala, 2012, p. 460). Hence proverbs, through their authority, legitimize some norms and prevent such patterns from being questioned. Elmubarak (2017) sees proverbs as a popular expression succinctly used to teach, praise, recommend, advise, correct, indict, warn, rebuke, castigate, denounce, reprimand or condemn an undesirable act or behavior or a vice. The researcher has also expressed a pragmatic function to soften words and mellow and abolish the clash of contradicting opinions that appear to be common in oral societies. Thus, proverbs serve as an essential teaching tool and a fundamental means of approaching life from the oral culture. A fundamental characteristic of proverbs is that they are rarely applied in their literal sense.

Proverbs may be used to create a particular effect by changing the listener’s state of consciousness according to the intention of the proverb user. They can be used in any mood or situation; they cut across the normal boundaries of language registers and amount to a polyvalent, all-purpose register of their own. Coinnigh (2015) singled out several functions of proverbs, including emotional highlighting, semantic highlighting, summarizing, structural organization of discourse, cognitive economy, euphemistic and phatic functions. In conflict situations, by contrast, proverbs are used less for their truth or wisdom than to take advantage of their impersonality; indirectly expressing disapproval, they drawstring from criticism and make an angry response less likely.

Osoba (2014) identified two significant roles performed by proverbs in the Yoruba society: Educational Role: the Yoruba people rely on proverbs as one of the means of preserving their culture and educating their youth on their religious belief, tradition, philosophy and moral; Rhetorical Role: to win an argument, establish a fact, settle disputes, express sympathy, caution, warn or entertain. It is noteworthy that one proverb may perform more than one function. Akinmade (2005) also identified certain functions: as an impersonal vehicle for individual correspondence; to smooth troubles and add essence to the discourse; for commenting and persuading; for stereotyped sarcasm; as a vehicle for ridicule and

mockery; As games and entertainment; as humor; for smoothening social frictions; and as a vehicle for education.

Sociolinguistically, proverbs help preserve a language by holding its obsolete items that reflect the basic thinking patterns and mental schemas and transmit them to the next generations. As indicated by Kohls (2001), viewing at aphorisms, adages, and axioms of a country offers a way to deal with and “get at the concrete yet evasive values that guide our lives” (p. 40). Concerning the capacity of precepts, Monyai (2003) accepts that supplied with power; they assist model people’s identities and roles. The people who do not fit the endorsed conduct are derided as well as stigmatized. These linguistic units are like medicinal doses, which are kept ready-made in a drug store for making a quick treatment of frequently occurring demands of the community.

### **2.3.6 Cultural Significance of Proverbs**

Adages and proverbs both reflect and can be reflected by beliefs and values embraced by the culture, opening a window to the brain of the given social group in intercultural correspondence and training. Mieder (2004) aptly describes proverbs as “gems of generationally tested wisdom” (p. 331). Therefore, it is not surprising that the value of proverbs in conversation and oratory in traditional society is relatively high. Often, an accomplished speaker has been the one who can use proverbs effectively in conversation. Truth be told, if one gathers the folklore of a people and conduct a content analysis, one is probably going to portray the critical subjects of anxiety and crisis in that speech community. As an object of investigation, folklore is the most rewarding as it reflects the culture and is well worth investigating (Arewa & Dundes, 1964). In the words of Mieder (2004), “proverbs are indeed alive, and as sapient nuggets, they still perform a significant role in the modern age” (p. 33). We can say that proverbs enable researchers to make legitimate determinations about the perspective or mindset of those speakers who make continued, vigorous and energetic use.

### **2.3.7 Proverbs in African Communication**

Proverbs have been described as the “core of verbal interaction in Africa” (Oduaran & Oduaran, 2006, p. 217). Writing on them, Momoh (2000) has noted that just like Bible or Quran for religious people, proverbs have a relevant significance for a traditional African

where he would search for a relevant proverb in times of peace and a crisis. As opposed to some unsystematic conclusions, the usefulness of proverbs is not lost in the modern social setups. They work well for individuals in oral and written discourse and emerge effortlessly as pre-assembled verbal units. Despite the variance in frequency of occurrence among different people and settings, proverbs still provide the rhetorical force to various means of correspondence, from frank chats to ground-breaking political discourses, from expressive verse to religious discourse, and hit books to the compelling mass media. Finnegan (2018) also observes that in many African people's inclination for language, symbolism and an explanation of abstract conceptual considerations through an allusive and compact manner are revealed unmistakably in their use of proverbs. Proverbs are, in actuality, all over the place. Their omnipresence has driven researchers from numerous disciplines to consider them from the old times to the modern period.

### **2.3.8 Proverbs in the Yorubaland**

Ademowo and Nuhu (2017) establish that the Yoruba people, as typical traditional African people, utilize their proverbs (indigenous information) to transmit information, check moral and social violations, display affection, give cautions and warnings; which are mostly communicated figuratively. Negotiation of profound thoughts and intentions is carried out by proverbs both formally and functionally, and they are linguistically and culturally an essential piece of the Yoruba speech events (Ehineni, 2016). Akinmade (2005) has asserted that no speaker can utilize a language, for example, Yoruba, like other African languages, with power and finish except if these proverbs have framed a piece of his mental picture. They consider proverb to be a vibrant element of the Yoruba African oral custom, significant in an entire scope of ways. A specific issue may be given a general status by using their position of being a cultural repository. In troublesome circumstances, individuals go to proverbs for answers. They are creatively utilized to accelerate correspondence, pass on profound messages, and hone arguments. They are similarly utilized for bare criticism, analysis and explanation of troublesome thoughts. Among the Yoruba, the ability to use proverbs is a measure of one's expertise during conversations.

## **2.4 The Yoruba Paremiology**

A thorough review of proverb studies in the Nigerian context has been conducted to identify their nature and scope. Along with other miscellaneous studies of Nigerian researchers, two main interest areas have emerged, including conflict management and gender. Following is a comprehensive overview of these studies to cover the maximum dimensions explored during this survey of the existing literature. The arrangement of this section is thematic cum semi-chronological.

### **2.4.1 Conflict Resolution and the Yoruba Proverbs**

Agbaje (2010) has focused on the reconciliatory impact as one of the prescriptive elements of proverbs in Yorùbá society. Any sort of entering remark on conduct might be made as a proverb and is used to caution or prompt or bring somebody to his senses. In this manner, at whatever point the proper proverb is exhibited to the groups in a debate, the pressures innate in such connections are controlled using proverbial elliptical discourse. To delineate the role of proverbs in resolving conflicts, the researcher has referred to a Yoruba proverb: “A person who knows the issues and appropriate proverbs is the one who settles society’s problems” (p. 33). The researcher has quoted six Yoruba proverbs that have been employed when a conflict arises among different people. The themes of these proverbs include cautions to overlook, keep secrets, avoid boasting, be aware of the mischievous person, keep endurance, adopt diplomacy, forgive and forget, taking adequate measures, and avoiding careless attitudes toward societal matters.

The examples of proverb’ role in marital peace-making are drawn from the Urhobo and Yoruba proverbs from Nigeria (Ohwovoriola, 2011). The usage context is geared toward persuading disputants to overcome resentment, lack of forgiveness, anger, retaliatory impulses, and conciliatory behavior. Some proverbs are intended to illustrate qualities that bring peace, including cooperation, patience, and identification with the opponents. The mediators (elders) use their wealth of marital experience and traditional wisdom to achieve conflict resolution. Most of the time, proverbs are used, and these are geared toward soothing hurt feelings and overcoming resentment and lack of forgiveness. They also encourage couples to douse anger, de-emphasize retaliatory impulses, accusations, and counter-accusations, encourage conciliatory behavior, and reach a compromise that may improve



future relationships. The proverbs' primary function is to serve as tools of persuasion, teach couples ethics, preach the message of goodness and propriety, counsel about the right way to behave in marriage and express the need and benefits for peaceful coexistence. They could be used to resolve communal conflicts and interstate boundary disputes. Mediators (elders) know the art of telling the appropriate proverb as a forceful weapon for persuading and coaxing disputants and, in effect, promoting peace.

The role and use of proverbs in promoting peaceful coexistence and conflict management have also been highlighted by Ademowo and Balogun (2014). They have emphasized the lack of language skills to employ the traditional wisdom of proverbs as the primary cause of miscommunication. By using content analysis, different aspects of conflict management have been taken into account: warning and conflict management, and cooperation, diversity, and conflict resolution. The researchers have concluded that the proverbs unveil the norms of cooperation and acceptable conduct, essential for patient survival and coexistence. In this regard, it is also contended that proverbs help us learn and propagate the ethical code of conduct, peaceful coexistence and repairing emotional damage. The values which are encouraged through proverbs include patience, love, kindness, and discernment. It can be inferred that words have the power to make complex tasks easy. Soft words can help in avoiding as well as resolving the existing conflicts. The conclusive argument entails that words hold the way to friendly compromise. It is additionally an admonition to the individuals/groups to be aware of their articulations during clashes. Convincingly, the authors have concurred that the utilization of sayings unearths the high estimations of ethical conduct, regard for older folks and the younger ones, cautioning and guidance, sincerity, and participation crucial for serene conjunction.

By applying the socio-semiotic approach, Gebregeorgis (2015) has explored how the proverbs of conventional African communities add to delineate their conflict aversion and peace-making norms. Along with the "*prevention is better than cure*" (p. 232), teaching, assuming shared liability, straightforward truth-finding, win-win plan, bargain, and revamping of social congeniality are among the standard African harmony making principles that are portrayed through different African proverbs. In this examination, strife evasion and management, mediators and disputants, and proverb laden discourse as a method for passing on conflict avoidance and management rules are comprehended as the field, tenor, and mode

individually. Words should be spoken cautiously; they are the main reason for conflicts. To resolve a conflict, discussion and dialogue are encouraged. The Yoruba proverbs have also urged people to think before they utter something. Community leaders and wise mediators are held responsible for settling disputes through dialogue. In their proverbs, customary African speech communities propagate settlement of difference through tolerance and peaceful discussion.

In another study on conflict resolution strategies, Ademowo (2015) identified specific methods in African traditional societies, though with variations across the ethnic groups. These methods sometimes include employing extra-judicial devices like gods, curses, or charms to convince and involve individuals and groups about the consequences of their misconduct. Ademowo and Nuhu (2017) emphasized the importance of language in resolving conflicts by taking the Yoruba proverbs as the main object of study. By analyzing 20 Yoruba proverbs through discourse analysis, the researchers have concluded that African means to handle disagreements and conflicts include proverbs, idioms, wise sayings, and folktales. Their usage is aimed to achieve compromise, involvements, and settlement in social relationships. The study also highlighted the role of patience in conflict resolution. Different conflict management strategies adopted by native Africans according to the personality type of the person/s involved are avoiding, accommodating, compromising, competing or forcing, collaborative or cooperating, and win-win. The paper also tried to establish that the proverbs could be used in numerous circumstances and conflict management and peace-building ways.

The above discussed paremiological studies regarding conflict-avoidance and resolution have identified a strong emphasis put by the Yoruba people on the proper use of language, proverbs, folktales, discussion, dialogue, and mediators (elders).

#### **2.4.2 The Yoruba Proverbs and Gender**

Most of the studies in the domain of gender and the Yoruba proverbs have focused on female subjugation. However, a few researchers have also tried to develop the idea of masculine denigration found in these items of folk wisdom. Ogunwale (1998) presented arguments to posit that the women have occupied a sheltered position from the depreciating masculine metaphors in almost all the essential instances. His classification is guided by the coherence of the facts deducible in each of the selected proverbs, which are: i) Attribution of

negative characteristics to the male; ii) The presence of negative masculine (mostly animal) metaphors or personification. The writer has concluded that the masculine species is symbolized as an inhibitor, a bad-tempered person, and a false claimer and emphasized that the male is depicted as sub-standard stock in a set of Yoruba proverbs, just to exalt women above them, on the other hand. This study contrasts with several other investigations that have highlighted the negative portrayal of Yoruba women in proverbs.

The elements of linguistic oppression in the Yoruba culture related to women have been highlighted by Balogun (2010). Such discursive tools are used to denigrate and violate the fundamental rights of womanhood. He has also challenged Ogunwale (1998) for citing several proverbial instances where males are represented as disgraceful, insolent, disobedient, absurd, and indolent. He has also pointed out that seniority in the Yoruba culture is based on social relations and age, not on the person's gender. Women have been delineated as childish, untrustworthy, characterless, unable to make logical decisions, inefficient as financial supporters and managers, and jealous by nature. In the Yoruba language, very few proverbs reveal women's safety, rights, and well-being. The researcher analyzed the proverbs related to different themes in which women are oppressed and inferior and concluded that they are considered senseless as children, so men should neither trust them nor share any secret information with them. A great emphasis is being put on women as characterless and unreliable gender. Women must be married at an early age; otherwise, their respect would be at stake. Women are not wise enough to make workable decisions or impart expert advice. Women are jealous by nature and unable to support the family in financial terms. The researcher has tried to recreate a section of the proverbs identified to make them gender-neutral along these lines adding to the rebuilding of African females. Conclusively, the researcher's ultimate perspective is that the proverbial denigration and mistreatment of females are more articulated than males.

The use of explicit sexually grounded proverbs by males and females has been analyzed by Fakoya (2007), who concluded that the youth in the villages still use the name of sexual organs in their day to day conversation. The study also highlighted that men are more likely than ladies to utilize vulgar articulations. Fakoya considers the contextual and conversational relevance of Yoruba sexually-grounded proverbs and states that "... most

Yoruba sexually-oriented proverbs are somehow misogynistic” (p. 209). This paper has offered a thumbnail assessment of some ‘hostile’ Yoruba proverbs that are outfitted at checking whether the creation of ribald symbolism can make discussion overbalanced and whether the conversational estimation of such proverbs is adequate for questioners to disregard their ‘disagreeableness.’

Adetunji (2010) has also claimed that the Yoruba proverbs are filled with female depreciation and dehumanization cases. In proverbial examples, women are compared to animals, plants, food, property items, and trouble. In Nigerian literature, the researcher concludes that the subtle and abusive terms are evident in showing the linguistic oppression of women. He has further discovered that the abusive and subtle linguistic forms were used to silence and dominate Nigerian women, a situation traceable to the patriarchal mindset. This study goes a step further by aggregating existing views, replenishing them with new insights, and charting ways toward gender equity in language use.

Olasupo, Kikelomo, and Adeniran (2012) have dealt with gender equalities and equities in the Yoruba culture. The researchers have highlighted women’s role in six domains: power, spirit, governance, tyranny, economy, and war. Taking all things together, six proverbs that challenged male/androcentric society and exhibited feminine equity with their male partners have been analyzed. They show that women’s assignment in all circles of human life in the Yoruba conventional society is as old as the society itself. Also, they demonstrate that the battle to correct this by women precisely and all devotees of gender equity generally is as antique as the gender disparity and ruthlessness. Accordingly, current endeavors to uplift women, snared somewhere by customary and social inclinations, are impetuses to address the Yoruba conventional predispositions against women. Proverbs feature the issues as well as make moves to address them solidly. Nonetheless, the United Nations’ intercession and globalization of gender issues, just as ways forward, have affected unequivocally intending gender issues raised by the Yoruba axioms over three decades ago.

Agbaje (2016) also attempted to show that men are not left out in society’s social misbehavior through proverb analysis. They are equipped to complicate the love, harmony, and solidarity anticipated from the typical socio-cultural setting in the Yoruba and the outer world. Hence, this paper reasons that men are at risk of social ills in the general public like

their female partners. Such bad conduct incorporates mischievousness, impropriety, cowardliness, lethargy, infidelity, silliness, hostility, recklessness, idiocy, pride, parsimony, prejudice, taking, and bungling, among others. Yusuf (2013) conducted a comparative analysis of linguistic sexism in the Yoruba and English languages with a marginal focus on their proverbs. The researcher has pointed out that the English language gives less significance to females by using the generic 'he' and 'man' for both genders. Though such expressions are absent in the Yoruba, there are other ways of demeaning the softer sex, but derogation is very much there. Yusuf (1994, 1998) presented gender bias and cumulative misogyny in English and Yoruba proverbs in some previous studies. In all the proverbs, women have had to adapt to or accept various forms of linguistic oppression and abuses, cumulatively underlining their 'second citizen' status.

Omoera and Inegbeboh (2013) based their analysis on the southern Nigerian proverbs and discussed the surface meaning, artistic qualities, images used, the deeper meaning, and the context of usage. The researchers have also pointed out that the proverbs are still capable of carrying out the specific roles to entertain and educate their respective communities. The researchers have used the metaphor of Lakoff and Johnson (2003) to point out symbolic, figurative, and other metaphorical elements in the Yoruba language to represent sexual terms in interpersonal communication. It is shown that sexual linguistic items are 'cumbersome' to be pronounced explicitly. However, a means of presenting them has been sorted by the application of metaphors.

Ademowo and Balogun (2015) examined post-proverbial constructions involving sex-related Yoruba proverbs and proverbial expressions and their effects on the original meaning of these proverbs. The study revealed that while sex-related Yoruba proverbs are mainly meant for communicating frank, stark and direct situations, post proverbial constructions of the proverbs have distorted the use of sex-related proverbs, and especially proverbial expression in communication, because of the sexual images that were made more visible in the sex-related post proverbial texts. Olojede (2015) considered the representation of women in Yorùbá popular genres and whether the representation of females corresponds to the social realities of the Yoruba females living in Nigeria. The researcher drew on the writings of seminal theorists on the Yoruba culture to ascertain the status accorded to women in this culture and argue that there is a disparity between the representation of women in popular

texts and the realities of their day-to-day lives. In dramas and movies, women are frequently stereotyped as wanton, perfidious, diabolical, contentious, and materialistic. In the proverbs, the major themes include the association of women with loquacity, insincere or undependable nature, and women's association with malevolence and promiscuity. It is contended that the image created by the popular texts does not correlate with either the biblical view or the current state of female participation in the social dialogue. Coker (2016) investigated the proverbs that harped on sex and direct reference to the sexual organs and concluded that vulgar archetypes are examples of didactic aesthetics, moral education, and sexual consciousness among the Yoruba uniquely. They indicate a deeper level of signification directed at guiding the society and creating moral templates from everyday experience that people can easily relate to themselves.

In the next section, the studies on miscellaneous topics with reference to Yoruba proverbs provide a glimpse of the multidisciplinary nature of research conducted in the Yoruba paremiology.

#### **2.4.3 Miscellaneous Aspects of the Yoruba Proverbs**

Arewa and Dundes (1964) worked on twelve Yoruba proverbs about training the children and discussed their contextual application. The proverbs had diversified thematic content, including how children should be taught what to or not to utter about their parents; how parents should maintain a balance of discipline as well as a demonstration of love; children's responsibilities toward taking care of their parents; strong effects of parental influence; family solidarity as the dominant trait to be cherished and maintained; the principle of seniority and age-related norms and verbal ethics; the burden of regulating the child on the shoulder of the eldest sibling; children should serve their elders in specific tasks where they feel difficulty.

Regarding the usage of the proverb genre, Arewa and Dundes (1964) contended that the speaker and the addressee's proverbs directly link as the situations or topics that might produce/expect a proverb include a younger individual's behavioral responsibilities. The addressee being single or in some group may also be a deciding factor to use a proverb in a particular context. The connection between utilization of proverbs and channel, be that as it may, requires particular thought. Although most of the proverbs are transmitted through

spoken discourse, some now and again are conveyed by drums. In any case, it is somewhat more outlandish that proverbs would be utilized as regularly in funeral services as in more joyful occasions, such as wedding ceremonies. What folklorists believe is that chance variation may, in reality, be an impression of channel choices. At last, the scholars have argued that the investigation of old stories ought to incorporate investigation both of folk and lore as a study without reference to the people who are actual practitioners would be incomplete and misleading.

Lawal, Ajayi, and Raji (1997) explored illocutionary acts performed through the Yoruba proverbs. They considered the situational, linguistic, psychological, sociological, cultural, and cosmological contexts of the proverb usage. The researchers analyzed five plays of Ola Obafemi to highlight the design features and functions of proverbs which she divided into three groups: Firstly proverbs which targeted to decrease boredom of colloquial proverbs; second, the proverbs organized by unusual rhetorical elements; the last group consists of the proverbs which outshine in their translation through the vivid images of the source language and its culture.

Ondo, which is one of the prominent ethnic identities of the Yoruba speakers and the source of a high frequency of the Yoruba proverbs, has been taken by Akinmade (2011) to collect, document, translate and examine some of the dominant aspects of its proverbs with a particular focus on their thematic content, linguistic devices, and rhetorical functions. The study also made an effort to prove proverbs as a tool that can educate the youth about the norms and values of their society. Different functions of the Yoruba proverbs had been identified, which include as an impersonal vehicle for personal communication; smooth difficulties and add pith to the speech; for commenting and persuading; as stereotyped sarcasm; as a vehicle for ridicule and mockery; as a means of entertainment; for smoothening social frictions; and as a vehicle for education.

Lamidi (2008) analyzed the Yoruba and Igbo proverbs with a special focus on the shared texture and the structure of the two languages. The study revealed that there are identical textual and structural items in higher frequency than the different ones. The study seemed to conclude that proverbs might have universal structures and textures, as revealed by analyzing these two languages. However, it seems an insufficient sample to conclude such a

broad generalization. The design features and functions of interrogative Yoruba proverbs were investigated by Olumuyiwa (2012). The researcher examined that nearly all such proverbs have a question word either in the sentence-initial or final position. Two primary forms of these proverbs had been identified: the proverbs that precede the question words throughout the sentence and the proverbs that show the direct questions. The Yoruba proverbs had been classified into four distinct types: simple, complex, parallel, and sequential. The investigation revealed that the interrogative proverbs in Yorùbá are not used to look for answers. Instead, they are utilized logically to express a doubt, an assertion, affirmation, create a comic impact, and invite individuals to consider what must be the undeniable response to the question(s) in the proverbs.

In another study, the nature, form, and function of the Yoruba proverbs had been highlighted from a socio-pragmatic perspective (Osoba, 2014). He also brought to light the contextual usage and manipulation of certain proverbs' meaning by the native speakers. The Yoruba proverbs had been identified to be short, comprehensive, and allusive, coupled with poetic qualities and figurative expressions. Along with detachment and generalization, proverbs are replete with similes, metaphors, and personifications. The researcher also discussed the role of elders in the Yorubaland. Proverbs were considered evidence of elders' wisdom and intelligence as the custodians of their socio-cultural heritage. Two significant roles had been identified: 'Educational Role' and 'The Rhetorical Role.' Under the former, the Yoruba proverbs' content includes beliefs and philosophy, moral, individual, and collective roles. Moreover, under the latter, the content included warning and advice, allusions and anecdotes, personal ends, settlement of disputes/conflicts, and entertainment. Many Yoruba proverbs mainly served a practical purpose and are often used to win an argument, establish a fact, settle disputes, express sympathy, caution, or warning or entertain.

Daramola (2013) based his examination of the Yoruba proverbs on Eco's work. He exhibited metaphor as being implanted in a Global Semantic Field (GSF) – one of his primary thoughts semiotic theory. This suggestion is situated on a subjacent chain of metonymies. He uncovered "the genuine linguistic mechanism" in metaphor to show how it might be viewed as the procedure of boundless semiosis – the persistent creation of signs. Other than these components of meaning toward distinctive societies of English and Yoruba,



other topical issues of ethical code, demise, predetermination, disdain, time, life are essential topics in the axioms. Usman, Mustafa, and Agu (2013) compared and contrasted proverbs in Igbo, Yoruba, and Hausa languages to explore their cultural backgrounds by analyzing the lexical choices, tone, and imagery. However, the researchers concluded that although it is very intriguing to attempt to pass judgment on various societies dependent on the expressions found in their dialects, it is most likely neither reasonable nor prudent to do so. People are too complicated to see them as copies of their language or true representative of their social norms. This examination is an endeavor to underline that correspondence matters a lot. That viable correspondence in Nigeria requires a decent mastery of proverbs, which pass on more content and accomplish a more significant number of results in the listeners' sensibilities than common regular articulations.

Carefulness as a theme was investigated by Abiodun (2014) in the Igbo and Yoruba proverbs which the speakers regularly use to express carefulness in individuals, in order to impart caution, ensure a better life for them, and obviously to make the individuals avoid inconvenience consistently. Taking everything into account, it is for sure relevant to state that both Igbo and Yoruba individuals esteem the utilization of proverbs so much, thus regularly use proverbs as a weapon of placing individuals in good shape in terms of conduct, especially in making them understand the way that caution involves outrageous significance in their lives, so as not to go off cause. The individuals of these two ethnic groups in Nigeria have the cognizance that a man or a cautious woman has a base in wisdom. The nexus among language and advancement with specific instances of proverbs about various values was identified by Ademowo and Balogun (2014). They also discussed how the utilization of axiom and its exercises could help resuscitate moral/social values, and in this manner, be utilized as a veritable instrument of improvement. The most emphasized values were analyzed through content analysis, including taking care of other community members, cooperation, uprightness of character, self-reliance, solidarity, good breeding, respect for elders, patience, and conflict resolution.

Oluwaseun (2016) applied the theory of discourse medium to reveal the communication goals achieved by the speakers while using the Yoruba proverbs. The researcher identified three main types of usage, including face-threatening acts, carefulness, cautioning, warning and attention, and face-saving acts, including supporting, encouraging,

and comforting. Native speakers used proverbs to negotiate deep notions and ideas. After a functional and formal examination, Proverbs had been underscored as a linguistically and culturally significant aspect of the Yoruba speech behavior. Fadumiye (2017) conducted a pragmatic analysis of politeness in selected Yoruba proverbs using Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness strategies and Speech Act Theory. It explained how politeness strategies were used in the language in general and proverbs in particular. The analyzed proverbs were collected from relevant texts written by Yoruba native speakers. Fifty proverbs were selected for the analysis, and the themes included hard work/laziness, wisdom/foolishness, truth/untruth, and decency/indecent. The bald on-record strategy used explicit language by quoting the elders to avoid using harsh language. The off-record politeness strategy used indirect language to minimize conflicts, and the negative politeness strategy used apology to save the face of people involved in an interaction. Politeness preached how to respect other people's feelings by showing good manners. When using proverbs to correct, warn, rebuke, advise, it is imperative to be polite to maintain social equilibrium and friendly relations. The use of politeness strategies in the Yoruba proverbs gave people fewer chances of developing enemies, and politeness eases tension along the rough road of life. They were essential in conversations and proverb usage because politeness made communication run smoothly. Proverbs could not be stated bluntly; therefore, politeness strategies are employed so that the level of communication will not break down.

A study about moral conduct in Hausa proverbs tried to investigate the moral pieces of advice and conduct. The first theme that the researcher analyzed is the significance of silence, which reinforced that if people have nothing good to say, they should keep quiet and avoid unnecessary talk as careless utterance can lead one to danger. The second theme was honorable earning through legal and fair means while condemning being idle and lazy. Regarding solidarity, proverbs reflected that whatever affected one member also affected the relating people and family members. Proverbs highlighted the consistency and stability of character and the virtually good behavior. Proverbs determined that one can achieve and maintain his position in society only by adopting moral qualities. This paper's findings showed that proverbs were deeply rooted in Hausa culture, and sound knowledge of proverbs served as helpful guidance in all life (Abubakar, 2013).

Ottuh (2011) argued that present-day Nigerian parents had been challenged to give their kids good moral brought-up. The procedure adopted in this paper is the Enculturation approach. The examination point was to draw the consideration of parents on the need for financial, socio-cultural, educational, and socio-religious brought-up of their children. The study indicates that the disregard of moral upbringing and the absence of reasonable control of kids by parents were some of the reasons for waywardness in the general public. Poverty is identified as another cause of improper upbringing. The study suggested creating jobs/earning options for the parents, accessible or cost-effective education, and the stress on moral character building at school and home. In this context, control or reprimand inferred guidance and rectification; the preparation, which improved, shaped, fortified, and culminated character. It was the ethical education acquired by the implementation of obedience through supervision and control. It also taught the father not to yield from amending the kid by physical flagellating or reproofing.

In another study, the Yoruba proverbs on the family relationships were collected through meetings during their fieldwork and built up that connection development and recreation by the international returnees generally, and by Nigerians specifically, did not happen in a social vacuum. The idea and thought of family relationships were intricate and dynamic in Nigerian returnees, mainly because its practical usefulness fills in as the deciding component. 'Kinship' ordinarily alluded to blood relations. However, this article indicated that family relationship was likewise built dependent on its genuine convenience and interfaced with different relations, for example, friendship, as against that which must be kept up and supported at all expense since it is given to the general public. The international migrants' worldview regarding kinship revealed that it is mutable and based on practical usefulness. It can best be understood through traditional proverbs (Akanle and Olutayo, 2012). In another study, Olaosun and Akinwale (2013) used eco-semiotics to analyze animal and plant-related Yoruba proverbs as the semiotic products of un-cleaned cultural ideology and unfiltered environmental facts. Analysis of the data revealed that some Yoruba proverbs are 'nature-texts' (Maran) because they are products of environmental orientation.

The scope of this study includes paremiological data from two regionally distant cultures, i.e., African Yoruba and Asian Punjabi. There are specific reasons behind this decision to conduct a cross-cultural analysis instead of confining it to a mono-cultural

investigation. As the anthropologist Hall (1992) explained, “What is known least well and is therefore in the poorest position to be studied, is what is closest to oneself” (p. 45). A comparative study of proverbs will reveal how many commonalities and differences exist, which may facilitate better comprehension and rapprochement. To avoid Galton's problem, the researcher has chosen Punjabi proverbs for a cross-cultural analysis with the Yoruba proverbs. Following is a brief review of the studies available about proverbs in different Pakistani languages:

## **2.5 Pakistani Paremiology**

Even though proverbs play such a prominent part in Punjabi life, they have not received the scholarly attention they deserve. As a result, little information exists about the Punjabi proverbs and their use. The available sources are two compiled lists of proverbs with a brief definition for each proverb (Malik, 2005; Bajwa, 2011). For unknown reasons, proverbs in the Pakistani context, especially the Punjabi proverbs, have been ignored and taken for granted by indigenous and foreign researchers. Though a few studies on gender and proverbs of different Pakistani languages emerged in recent years, this rich Punjabi proverbial data set is unexplored mainly as no significant study could be discovered from any other perspective while doing a thorough literature review. Most of the existing literature on the Punjabi language focused on its speakers’ language policy and indifferent attitude toward their mother tongue (John, 2009; Zaidi, 2012; Shafi, 2013; Gillani, 2014; Rahman, 2017). This section covers the proverbial studies on Pakistani languages, including Urdu, Punjabi, Pashto and Balochi:

Siddiqui (2013) included a brief section on Urdu proverbs in his book on gender in South Asia. He contended that these proverbs construct, legitimize, and perpetuate gender-based stereotypes that decide people’s functions, desires, and expectations according to their gender. These truisms and proverbs built up and broadened the gender gaps each time they were utilized. Being a significant source of social information, these stereotypes influenced each section of society, women inclusive. Women, as the main target of these proverbs, internalized the social knowledge perpetuated by these proverbs. Many women started seeing themselves in the picture developed by the generalizations contained by the gendered proverbs.

Another study by Khan (2014) in the local context is from the translation perspective of English and Urdu idioms and proverbs. Cultural equivalence regarding animal connotations between Urdu and English idioms and proverbs was also investigated. Theories of cultural equivalence in translation were consulted for theoretical support. The investigation uncovered that the Urdu interpreters have, for the most part, employed one of these three techniques: i) finding an equivalent idiom or proverb comparable in content and form, ii) discovering one with comparable content yet different in structure and iii) using non-proverbial paraphrasing. There were three kinds of social equivalences concerning animal names: full, fractional, and no equivalent. The literary examination of the interpreted works exhibited that the interpreters generally embraced domesticating, semantic, and communicative interpretation approaches.

Khan, Sultana, and Naz (2015) argued that the language of Pakhtu proverbs played a critical job of language in developing and forming gender ideology in the social arrangement. After breaking down almost 3000 Pakhtu proverbs, the study revealed that the proverbs hold fast to the occupants of *Pakhtunwali* and strengthen the male-centric social structure. The gendered linguistic articulations likewise performed as a tool to protect the well-established gender-based disparities, which thus are controlled and misused to raise a social structure set apart by gender unevenness. The precepts advocated male domination and masculinity in the basic leadership process, division of work in the residential and public domains. Pashto proverbs were also analyzed by Sanauddin (2015), and he employed theories of feminism, folklore, and sociolinguistics as theoretical frameworks. While patriarchal values are transmitted through axioms, the investigation likewise uncovered that the implications and messages of proverbs are context-dependent. Females may, consequently, use proverbs to talk about, challenge, and undermine gender ideologies. All the more explicitly, it was contended that proverbs as ‘knowledge writings’ speak from the perspective of those having the power to characterize appropriate and inappropriate conduct. Accordingly, instead of targeting reality, they speak of a divided reality, which was chauvinist and sexist most of the time.

Balochi proverbs were analyzed from a gender perspective by Shah, Sultan, and Kakar (2018) through purposive sampling technique to collect data from four books on Balochi proverbs. The theories of Hegemonic Masculinity and Social Constructionism were

used to analyze the data. The findings of this study suggested that women were represented in a gendered way depicting their role as dependent, submissive, marginalized, and lacking agency. In contrast, men were portrayed as powerful and brave persons who hold greater autonomy over the economic, social, religious, and political domains. On the other hand, Khan, Mustafa, and Ali (2017) employed Feminist CDA as the theoretical framework to uncover that many Punjabi precepts focused on female characters compared to male characters. A large portion of the precepts focusing on females undermined them. In contrast, those focusing on men were, for the most part, positive. Nonetheless, proverbs referencing mothers were generally appreciative. This investigation presumed that the Punjabi proverbs held fast to conventional society standards and reinforce a male-centered societal setup.

Gendering the childhood of the Punjabi boys and girls through proverbs was exposed by Khan and Awan (2019) in a feminist quantitative cum qualitative analysis, which rendered that girls were target characters in a more significant number of proverbs as compared to boys. The study contended that the male babies had been presented in a glorifying and satisfying manner while female babies were depicted as calamities and burdens. The feminist critical analysis revealed that the Punjabi society is biased toward children based on their gender. These discursive patriarchal tendencies were depreciating female children and depriving them of their self-esteem and social confidence.

In the same year, a comparative analysis of the Punjabi and African proverbs focusing on gender representation from the perspective of FCDA by Khan, Awan, and Hussain (2019) uncovered that the portrayal of women in both communities is primarily biased, face-threatening and nullifying. Both languages presented womenfolk as unreliable, insensible, loquacious, insincere, ungrateful, opportunist, materialistic, and trouble makers. For the most part, men were depicted as essential, aggressive, rational, and anxious to take risks. This analysis inferred that in asymmetrically organized Punjabi and African (Yoruba) communities, proverbs are deliberately sustaining inequality.

A thorough review of the previous paremiological studies on Pakistani and Punjabi proverbs uncovered the researchers mostly ignore the state of affairs, which is not at all exhaustive as a significant part of linguistic and folklore repertoire, and the few identified studies have mainly focused on the investigation of gender-biased ideologies about different identities with the help of multiple theoretical lenses. Other studies on the Punjabi proverbs

include the tradition of hospitality, the depiction of economic ideology, animal imagery and connotations, cross-cultural analysis of translation techniques for animal imagery in idioms and proverbs, and the expression of agro-ecological wisdom in the traditional knowledge system. No significant study could be discovered, focusing on the proverbs of Punjabi or any other Pakistani language to explore the attitude toward speech and silence from either individual or cross-cultural perspective.

## **2.6 Paremiology and Speech**

The review of the related literature about speech and communication identified several studies starting from the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, including researches done in Japanese, Indian, American, Sudanese, Korean, Turkish, Haya, Igbo, Hausa, and comparative cultural contexts. Some brief glimpses of these studies are discussed below:

### **2.6.1 Population Density Hypothesis and Attitude to Speech in Proverbs**

In a 1968 article, Fischer and Yoshida argued that a ‘considerable start’ on this kind of speech-related investigation “can be made by noting the traditional beliefs and values about speech codified in proverbs” (p. 38). They supported this contention with an investigation of several Japanese proverbs concerned with speech. The authors maintained that similar societies would have similar attitudes toward speech. At the same time, those with “different traditional social structures, settlement patterns, and demographic characteristics” (p. 40) would possess a different proverbial view of the speech. In their view, in a sparsely settled society where individuals see a few of their fellows in everyday life, proverbs about speech would be much more positive than they are in Japan. The view of speech in Japanese proverbs, which they found, could be described as a negative or a distrustful one. They found that “the most ubiquitous lesson about speech in Japanese proverbs might be expressed as ‘Shut up’ (p. 40), which was to say that the proverbs emphasized the dangers of speaking, warned against speaking or expressed suspicion about speech act. This notion was called Population Density Hypothesis regarding the attitude toward speech and silence, as depicted in proverbs of a particular speech community.

The ideas presented by Fischer and Yoshida were put to the test by McNeil (1971), who published a study dealing with Indian proverbs. India, to be sure, was very populous but not as densely settled as Japan. Unlike Fischer and Yoshida’s hypothesis regarding other

aspects of culture, McNeil restricted his argument primarily to the demographic factor. He examined twenty-one collections of proverbs from different languages spoken in India (as opposed to the three used in the Japanese case) and found almost eighty relevant proverbs. McNeil found that the overall attitude toward speech in Indian proverbs was more favorable than that in the Japanese precepts. Many Indian proverbs suggested that one should certainly not refrain from talking, and sometimes it might be 'essential' to speak. Overall, the Japanese view of speech seemed more hostile than the Indian perspective. According to Fischer and Yoshida, several Japanese proverbs conveyed a pessimistic attitude toward speech and implied little value in talk. On the other hand, Indian proverbs were suspicious of speech, but only when misused or by individual speakers. Unlike the Japanese, Indians saw the person who was unduly silent as suspicious. The Japanese implied that talk itself interfered with work, but the general Indian attitude was that only excessive talk hindered the work. The Indians believed that the talk of some people was especially worthwhile and deserved enunciation also differed from the Japanese concept of speech. If the view of speech in Indian proverbs was accurately reflected in this study, then it is proof that Fischer and Yoshida's reasoning is accurate. This means that nations that differ in any structural or demographic characteristics will also differ in their attitude toward speech.

De Caro (1987) also took into account the factor considered by Fischer and Yoshida (1968) and McNeil (1971) regarding American proverbs about speech. The United States certainly has a population density considerably less than that of India; in fact, the Indian population density was about eight times greater than that of the USA. Thus he expected American proverbs to express a positive attitude toward speech. American proverbs were found to be 'anti-speech,' although American proverbs in this area were not as logically consistent as were, evidently, Japanese proverbs. Beyond this, over 77% proverbs, took a dim view of speech so that the overall attitude is predominantly if not exclusively negative. De Caro presented an exciting outline of proverb meanings centered around 'speech' in reaction to Fischer and Yoshida's thesis that the negative view of speech in Japanese proverbs followed from the high population density and intricate patterns of social interaction in Japan. He showed that proverbs in the United States reflected the same negative tendency, concluding that an alternative explanation was needed in this sparsely populated country. In this vein, De Caro pointed out especially those proverbs that warned of speech getting in the



way of action, which opposed speech in favor of action, illustrated the same principle. Therefore, it was proposed that the anti-speech bias in the proverbs of the United States followed from the opposition of ineffectual speech with practical action.

In response to De Caro's classification in the first part of his article, Norrick (1997) based his analysis on achieving a goal that differed markedly from Caro's goals. In this study, he tried to present a complete picture of American proverbial folk linguistics about speech and noted themes that frequently appeared in the collections under the keywords: 'speech, language, tongue, word, and talk' in Mieder (1999) and compared them with the collection quoted in De Caro (1987). He separated his thematic groups from each other and showed how they yielded a complex but ultimately consistent positive view of language. The analysis yielded that the first significant theme in American proverbs concerned the intensity of language throughout everyday life. In contrast, the second most prominent thematic class consisted of those warning against careless speech and aggressive words. The writer concluded that De Caro could not discern the complex nature of a positive attitude toward speech in the American proverbs. The Population Density Hypothesis by Fischer and Yoshida (1968) seemed to carry significant weight.

The 'Population Density Hypothesis' was reinforced by Opata (1992) about Igbo (a Nigerian language) proverbs by concluding that Igbo proverbs are significantly positive toward speech and negative toward excessive silence. The speech was decidedly preferred over reticence. The writer also commented on the presence of contradictory proverbs while investigating the established cultural norms through proverbial analysis, "Consequently, the existence of contradictory proverbs as well as the contextual meaning of proverbs do not make it incompetent for proverbs to be used in the study of 'national or local traits'" (p. 195). Opata wrote this paper about Igbo proverbs in response to Fischer and Yoshida (1968), and De Caro's (1987) calls for specific studies of attitudes to speech in particular cultures not only to understand, in broader perspectives, the various national dispositions to speech but also to discover the underpinning principles on which such attitudinal dispositions are founded. Using five collections of proverbs, eighty-six proverbs about *okwu* (speech) and sixteen proverbs about *nkiti* (silence) were carefully chosen. A careful analysis showed that the attitude to speech among the Igbo is decidedly positive. Out of 86 proverbs about speech, the highest number (20, 23.25%) established the primacy of speech over non-speech while

only (5) 5.8% delineated speech as a negative phenomenon. (18) 20.91% of proverbs focused on the power of speech to produce positive and negative results. Only (7) 8.1% warned against excessive speech, and 10 (11.62%) proverbs identified that the actual performance was given an edge over a vocal performance. The main reasons for the interpretation of speech as positive in Igbo proverbs would rest on the importance of speech art and the democratic nature of indigenous Igbo societies.

Chong (2001) attempted to classify and analyze proverbs about speech and silence from 16 languages collected through the World Wide Web. This paper explored some of the pragmatic motivations behind the use of proverbs in communication. It, in particular, explored the proverbs about the speech from a cross-linguistic perspective. Such proverbs are used to achieve a range of communicative purposes, from urging others to speak to exhorting them to caution. Proverbs encouraging caution in discourse were the most all-inclusive kind of the communicative functions and appeared to be the critical segment of the speech proverb type. The more metaphorical a proverb was, the more ethnographical it is. She also saw that there might be a connection between population and speech attitude. Considering these three cases, the more densely populated regions the speech proverbs are from, the more negatively they evaluated and presented speech. She also perceived that proverbs on speech provided a new source of data on ethnographic attitudes toward language in general and culture-specific attitudes toward the language use of a particular group in society. She concluded from her analysis that proverbs related to speech and silence could also be categorized into multiple subcategories. An added category is ‘woman and talk’ to investigate whether a woman should speak or relate to silence.

### **2.6.2 Other Speech Focused Paremiological Studies**

Seitel (1974) analyzed speech-related figurative expressions to encapsulate certain indigenously named semantic aspects of Hayas, who utilized these aspects to think about and assess their very own discursive conduct. These dimensions were indicated first through strict indigenous proclamations about speech, furthermore through single word representations connected to discourse, lastly through ten proverbs about speech that connected a named classification of speech act figuratively with the wholesome demonstration of ousting a flatus. The connection between examples of language use and linguistic metaphors revealed two perspectives: first, the utilization of figurative elements in

the discourse and the utilization of metaphors to depict discourse. In breaking down the aspects communicated by different speech-related metaphors, the researcher noted that no single measurement was significant to all. The most inescapable one was demonstrated by 'tobacco' - the component of significance. 'Tobacco' speech had all the earmarks of being generous or successful yet was not. Different speech aspects included 'wet' words (unessential or useless) and words like 'water' (lacking quality). 'Fire' was unmistakably significant; it went to the point and revealed what had been covered up. 'Dry' words were likewise significant that made successful correspondence happen.

Owomoyela (1981) applied the African philosophy of communication implied in proverbs and described how applying such a philosophy to the problem of a more sophisticated modern Africa might aid in resolving the crisis of communication that exists therein. The author used Yoruba as a prime example, but also cited other practices by other African peoples. The researcher confirmed while talking about the African philosophy of social communication that all adult members of the society were expected to participate fully in the affairs of the society and the debate of those affairs. Though he focused on the Yoruba language, the underlying beliefs, assumptions, and conclusions were intended to be uniformly applicable to all sub-Saharan Africa. The Yoruba being conscious about *Asiri* (usually translated as secrets, but meaning secrets that would cause embarrassment or disgrace if revealed) sensitive advice must be given only in private. Another vital protocol was that one must studiously avoid proverb more than was necessary and, of course, make sure that whatever little was said was well considered. The dangers of misspeaking were so grievous that many proverbs called attention to them, often suggesting that it was best to bridle one's mouth unless one must speak. The advisability of brevity was justifiable, especially for the recipient of the advice or correction. As sensitive to extremely delicate nuances of speech, the Yoruba considered it was mostly trying to be subjected to lectures. The advisor must take care to say only enough to remind the recipient of the advice on what is required of him and leave it to him to effect self-correction.

In a study on the Korean attitude toward language, 92 proverbs were divided into three groups: positive, negative, and neutral disposition toward speaking (Chong-Ho, 1985). The number of proverbs categorizing the negative aspects of speech became dominant. It

included proverbs about making excuses, chatting, loquaciousness, lack of restraint in speaking, speaking without logic, unclear speech, irresponsible response, swearing, speaking ambiguously, self-assertive talk, little talk, fault finding and words of criticism. ‘Gravity’ and ‘constancy’ were the essential elements in the make-up of the Koreans’ linguistic concept. In short, then, what the Korean proverbs as a whole were saying was that one must speak when one must. However, one must not speak carelessly, that one quickly made mistakes, that words were to be feared, that, therefore, one must refrain from speaking too often, know how to keep silent, and remember speaking is never better than not speaking. He, finally, called it a “repressionist, negativist, and passivist” concept of language (p. 21). However, a more significant part of the proverbs directly advised to simply shut up, emphasizing the dangers and trouble inherent in the words themselves. Fear and distrust for language laid the foundation of the traditional Korean concept of language. Talkativeness was continuously the object of low moral evaluation and contempt. It revealed an “economist, precautionist, and prohibitionist philosophy of language” (p. 34). The author did not cite the earlier Japanese and Indian studies and did not tie his findings with demographics (he sees the attitude stemming from Confucian ideas and the primacy of written language in Korean culture). However, his findings could be interpreted as obliquely supporting the idea that the most populous national cultures would have negative attitudes toward speech.

The Turkish proverbs about speech, gathered from four sources in Turkish, were examined by Gokhan (1992). Their prominence was established through interviews with 16 Native Turks. For analysis, twenty-two commonly used proverbs were selected from the interviews. However, the focus of the analysis was the employment of proverbs in conversation instead of the attitude toward speech. He established that proverbs could be categorized along with several dimensions, including “[quality, and quantity] which were related to ‘How much should be said?’ and the appropriateness” (p. 45) of a topic, particularly in terms of discretion issues. The levels of familiarity between interlocutors and their social status played an important role in invoking proverbs. Rarely were proverbs directed toward superiors.

The speech and silence related proverbs from nine different speech communities were analyzed by Chateris-Black (1995), who considered the capacity and motivation behind them and how they showed increasingly broad and conceivably overall aims in human

communication. In another study, Chateris-Black (2010) analyzed English, Malay and Arabic proverbs from the perspective of the Speech Act theory to communicate a message in such a way as to evade face-threatening implications. Furthermore, conversational management was explored using English proverbs as topic closures and organizing turn-taking during the interactions. He also claimed that this diversified capacity of proverbs made them an authentic source of data for the researchers of language pedagogy and cross-cultural communication.

Hausa proverbs were analyzed by Abubakar (2013) in his study about moral conduct. The study analyzed the significance of silence and reinforced that if people have nothing good to say, they should keep quiet and avoid unnecessary talk as careless utterances can lead one to danger. Agyekum (2002) outlined the different communicative circumstances in Akan culture in which quietness is utilized, featuring linguistic, social, and religious viewpoints. Consideration was paid to indigenous discourses to portray quietness. The paper finally examined talk versus silence, gender and silence, and the silence related acquisition as a type of communicative competence and socialization. Furthermore, this paper discussed that silence deals with behavioral, rhetorical, and performative nature of intentions.

A comparative analysis of Sudanese and English proverbs while employing ethnographic techniques proposed by Hymes (1962) was conducted by Ahmed (2005). Among many other themes, speech, talk, and silence related proverbs were also given substantial coverage in the data analysis and discussion. The findings had remarkable similarities with the thematic tendencies found in the Punjabi proverbs about the importance of speech, irreversibility, longevity, potential threat of being careless about words, the importance laid on silence and sweet talk as primary determinants of peace and harmony, advice on the use of listening carefully and to avoid believing without verifying, abstaining from the useless talk, back-biting, making tall claims, and false promises. Contrary to their Punjabi and similar to their Nigerian counterparts, Sudanese proverbs emphasized straight talk instead of relying on indirect versions. The (use of) tongue was given extreme significance as it's correct or the wrong usage might make the speaker a king or a beggar. However, no discussion was generated about the overall positive or negative attitude toward speech in this investigation.

Like Chateris-Black, Kvaratskhelia (2011) presented a paper at a conference and claimed that the arrangement of the Georgian proverbs fortified each of the Maxims recognized by Grice: Quantity, Quality, Way, and Relevance. The paremias, which pointed to the heaviness of words or portrayed the talking standards, gave us extraordinary knowledge in the Georgian way of talking, which was shaped as the centuries progressed. Besides, a particular sort of proverb communicating a particular Georgian manner of address was also recognized. Bekiroglu (2014) also examined the Turkish proverbs for pieces of information, clarifying the nature of communication and socially endorsed and proposed communicative practices. Beginning from this presupposition, the fundamental point of the investigation was the nature of communication in Turkish proverbs and to investigate unequivocal and concealed messaging related to communicative acts. In this sense, this investigation was a substantial commitment to developing a guide of communication semantics of Turkish society. In this regard, the writer perused the axioms and maxims lexicon of the Turkish Language Association for specific words and led a thematic examination of the 77 proverbs found in this connection. He found that while numerous sayings applied the significance of verbal correspondence in connection to the expression's characteristics and suggestions, numerous different precepts displayed a talk that avowed nonverbal correspondence acts like quietness, tuning in and hesitance. Then again, the proverb on visual communication included messages that suggested that individuals ought not to be judged over their appearance and dressing.

Larina (2015) compared the prominent aspects of the communicative patterns preferred by the Russian and British speakers by employing the theory of Cultural Scripts. The investigation depended on real-life conversational data accessed through observations, surveys, and interviews and pursued pragmatic and contextual discourse analysis. The analysis revealed that the terms 'politeness' and 'polite' had different interpretations of Russian and English speakers. Russians inclined to helpful and instructive conduct as opposed to the habits, manners, and civility.

The review of the available literature revealed that no significant and methodologically systematic work could be found on speech-related Punjabi or Yoruba proverbs individually or comparatively. Hence, the present investigation will attempt to conduct a preliminary research to fill this gap. In the next section, a brief review of the

existing studies about gender and talk has been provided. This review will help us to situate our findings among the existing insights revealed by the previous researchers.

### **2.6.3 Studies on Gender and Talk**

In contrast to Owomoyela's (1981) use of Yoruba proverbs about speech in general to articulate an African philosophy of social communication, the paper by Yusuf (1994) set out to examine the ethical value placed by the Yoruba proverbs on women's speech in particular and the standards of verbal behavior as a whole that the proverbs may be said to set. The Yoruba proverbs about women's speech included proverbs that quoted specific utterances by women and placed them within specific contexts. In other words, the utterances and the contexts in which they were produced were both expressly stated in these proverbs. According to Yoruba proverbs, women's speech violated the ethics of proportion and was an unreliable index of their capabilities or intentions. Their talk was a problematic product of the extreme urge to react to situations by speaking. A woman's speech was seen as an expression of extreme (suicidal) foolhardiness, which violated the ethics of self-preservation. Her speech was literalized to portray her as insincere since her words became inconsistent with her deeds. There was incongruence between the woman's intention and her speech. In other words, it delineated that the speech-related proverbs portrayed women as engaging in self-deception. The proverbs, therefore, placed a low ethical value on their speech. The implication was that much premium should not be placed on women's speech since it violated the ethics of sincerity. The overall attitude of the Yoruba proverbs toward women's speech was that it was immodest. In other words, the standards for judging women's speech seemed to be higher (and less fair) than those with which other classes of speech were evaluated.

Kreschen (1998), in her reference guide on American proverbs about women, dedicated a chapter to 'Woman and Talk' and concluded after analyzing proverbs that, "We are told that a woman's tongue is long and sharp as well as active, and as such it can be a potent weapon" (p. 135). To prevent such a turn of events, men developed the philosophy that "A woman has never spoiled anything with silence" (p. 134). The researcher claimed that all this complaining about a woman's talkativeness is a way of trying to silence them all together: "Create a myth that women talk too much, and you have a perfect right to tell them to shut up. It was a neat trick to proclaim that women talk a lot while denying them to be

heard” (p. 137). Furthermore, women’s chattering was claimed to lead to gossip, and women did indeed have a reputation for being terrible gossips and resultantly unable to keep any secret. Kreschen argued that underlying the lack of respect for women’s speech is, in actuality, a fear that women indeed might have something important to say. In that case, men would have to share leadership.

In her book, Schipper (1991) analyzed African proverbs on women from multiple perspectives starting from birth till death. African proverbs could be roughly divided into (a) clear, direct statements, i.e., moral sayings or mottoes, and (b) proverbs in a metaphorical form. She quoted a pot-lid correspondence custom, which shows that ladies proposed sensitive subjects concerning their spouses in a circuitous and an inconspicuous manner, if by any means. Women utilized pot-covers to show their concerns they would not express verbally to their spouses. Each picture, sculpted on the top side, communicated a proverb or saying. Customarily, spouse and husband did not eat together; the group’s men ate together under the tribe penthouse rooftop. The wives put the food for their husbands in an earthen pot, spread it with a bit of banana leaf, and called a youngster to carry it to the men’s place. The intended man inferred from the images and proverbs through their background knowledge that the message was for him. African proverbs delineated similar notions about women’s talk, as Schipper (2010) and Kerschen (1998) discovered in the world proverbs.

In another book, Schipper (2010) also dedicated a chapter to ‘Women and Talk’ and a parallel chapter, ‘Men and Talk’ could not be identified in any of her books on proverbs. She collected proverbial data from more than 240 languages (excluding Punjabi and Yoruba for unknown reasons) and all continents to arrange thematically as a corpus of comparable texts. In her analysis, she discovered that women have been globally perceived and represented as loquacious persons in contemptuous terms. Their chattering nature was equated with their problematic and under-developed brains/intellect. Men were delineated as persons of deeds and women as persons of words. Metaphors of dangerous weapons and poisonous insects were employed to publicize the negative connotations attached to a woman’s tongue. Silence in women was appreciated, but they were simultaneously believed to be unable to keep quiet and control themselves. Men were advised neither to listen nor to believe in a woman’s word.



Sharing confidential information with women and consulting them for a suggestion was also discouraged for fear of lethal consequences.

In her comparative study Rasool (2015) demonstrated that both English and Urdu proverbs delineated females as powerless, mediocre, and auxiliary. Rasool also discussed the theme of talk as one of the four major categories. However, her primary focus seemed to be on English proverbs more than their Urdu counterparts as she quoted 14 English proverbs in this theme, while only three phrases were quoted from the Urdu data. Even these three entries might be termed more as ‘phrases’ than ‘proverbs.’ The analysis of the ‘Gender and talk’ theme did not appear to be wholesome as many proverbs were missing in the analysis of Urdu proverbs. The writer’s conclusion that two disconnected ideas emerged from the Urdu proverbs that considering herself very intellectual, a young girl speaks incessantly, seemed to be based on insufficient Urdu data.

In his study of gender in Pakhtu proverbs, Sanauddin (2015) presented a comprehensive discussion on the theme of women's talk in proverbs. Men were advised to be independent in their decision making and not to listen or obey women as “*the man who listens to the advice of women is ruined*” (p. 83). Even conversing with ladies and getting frank with them was viewed as un-masculine. For instance, it was said that “*The more you talk to women, the more you lose your authority over them*” (p. 84)—the perfect femininity comprised of quietness and submission. Countless proverbs presented the stereotypical picture of women as garrulous and gossip lovers. The perfect Pashtun ladies, in any case, were displayed as quiet sufferers. These proverbs reverberated the general public’s view that women did not have (or should not have) agency. The researcher also quoted an English expression that summarized the rule governing masculine and feminine speech ethics: “*Maidens must be mild and meek, swift to hear and slow to speak*” (p. 85). Subsequently, to be an acceptable Pashtun lady, proverbs demonstrated (men’s desire) that ladies should talk less and in a slow tone. A proverb primarily used in the pretext of home-based violence related to a woman’s tongue was “When the tongue goes on talking, the forehead goes on beaten up” (p. 86). The further proverbial analysis revealed that women and men of young age in Pashtun culture should not contend with older men. Indeed, even to talk in a loud voice before senior men was viewed as an affront.

In a conference paper, Khan (2019), taking insights from Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis (Lazar, 2005), focused on the Punjabi and Urdu proverbs, mentioning the theme of ‘talk,’ ‘speech,’ ‘silence,’ and ‘politeness’ concerning male or female speakers. The cultrematic analysis revealed that the Punjabi proverbs, like their counterparts from around the world as quoted by Kreschen (1998) and Schipper (1991, 2010), also designated women as loquacious in contemptuous terms and this volubleness was associated with their ‘empty brains.’ Their argument was assumed to be worthless and meaningless compared to the one offered by some male speakers. Silence in women was appreciated as a dominant trait of a socially acceptable role delineated as highly avoided by females in general. After constructing an unfavorable mental and social schema for women talk, men were explicitly advised neither to believe in their women’s point of view nor to act upon their piece of advice. Furthermore, men were advised not to trust their women with any confidential information as they were incapable of holding themselves and keeping a secret intact.

## **2.7 Research Gap**

The above review of existing literature on the paremiological research in general and on the attitude toward speech and its different aspects in specific revealed that no significant study had been conducted about the Punjabi and Yoruba proverbs either separately or comparatively. This study is essential linguistically, culturally, cross-culturally, theoretically, and methodologically. The domain of communication ethics and speech norms will provide the speakers and outsiders ‘Cultural Scripts’ that are translatable into their languages and applications to real-life situations in both cultures. Being consciously aware of certain speech-related beliefs and ideas will improve the quality of communication, culminating in improved quality of services and intercultural trade, to mention only a few. Hence, this study will attempt to bridge this gap by taking data from comprehensive collections of the Yoruba and Punjabi proverbs and taking insights from the Linguo-Cultural Approach and the Theory of Cultural Scripts that proposed the Natural Semantic Metalanguage for the explication of norms and values encoded in the selected proverbs. The next chapter will discuss the theoretical frameworks and methodologies that helped to categorize and analyze the data thematically and meaningfully.

## CHAPTER 3

### CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

Being of an interdisciplinary nature and taking general insights from the theories of language and culture, and paremiology, this study has taken theoretical support from two main theories: Linguo-Cultural Approach proposed and practiced by Petrova (1998, 2014, 2016, 2019) and the theory of Cultural Scripts proposed and practiced by Wierzbicka (1998, 2010) and Goddard (1994, 1998, 2000, 2010, 2019). A comprehensive explanation of both theories and how their propositions have been adapted follows as under:

#### 3.1 The Linguo-Cultural Approach

For the sake of the current study, the researcher has adapted the Linguo-Cultural approach proposed by Petrova (2003, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2019) for a cross-cultural and cross-linguistic investigation of proverbs from the Nigerian Yoruba and Punjabi languages. *Linguistic Culturology* (otherwise called *Linguo-Culturology and Linguo-Cultural Approach*), which is a contemporary academic discipline coordinating the study of culture and linguistics, showed up in the nineteenth century by German specialist Wilhelm von Humboldt and proceeded with its subsequent appearance and improvement in Europe, the USA and other regions of the world. The perspective on proverbs as indications of specific ethnic or national characters has been integral to linguistic-culturology – a contemporary discipline whose primary target is to investigate the common opinion shared by linguistics and the investigation of culture. The name Linguistic-Culturology (or Linguo-Culturology) has been picked as a practical option in contrast to collocations ‘linguistic anthropology,’ ‘cultural studies,’ and ‘cultural linguistics’ on the grounds of the significant contrasts between the implications of these terms (Petrova 2000, 2003). As a wholly developed interdisciplinary science, it pulls in the attention of numerous specialists from such fields as,

among others, semantics and semiotics, linguistic anthropology, cultural investigations, cognitive linguistics, and axiological phonetics.

A linguo-culture is a complex universe, a *semiosphere of signs* (in the wording of Juriy Lotman, 2000) with their specific semantics and evaluation (Petrova, 2019). From a linguo-cultural perspective, in the present study, culture as a social phenomenon and intrinsic human characteristic has been understood as the dynamic set of values and anti-values that corresponds to the specific way of a group of people who share the same language. This set of values is stored in the structures of this language across a period and is handed down from one generation to the next through its precedent texts. In this context, a linguo-culture is a highly specific language-cum-culture integral. Thus, a linguo-culture is a specific system of appraisal of a large body of ‘portions’ of verbalized or implied content at the center of which lies a specific set of values and anti-values. This core overlaps with its most highly pronounced *cultural constants* (Stepanov, 1997) and *keywords* (Wierzbicka 1997, 2010).

In contrast to the scientific discourse, which is mainly neutral, the general register of any natural language (which reflects the everyday life of the people and to a certain extent the literary works in this language as opposed to scientific discourse) is thus primarily evaluative. Evaluation is inherent to any language being its intrinsic quality. The axiological aspect (values) of culture seems to form an ‘invisible heart,’ which attaches a plus or a minus sign to practically every segment of the visible and invisible reality around us. Hofstede (1991), among many others, claimed that,

Values form the core of any culture and are broad tendencies to prefer certain states of affairs over others. Values are feelings with an arrow to them: they have a plus and a minus side. They deal with: evil versus good, ugly versus beautiful, abnormal versus regular, irrational versus rational, dirty versus clean, unnatural versus natural, paradoxical versus logical (p. 8).

Language reflects both aspects of culture – culture as knowledge and culture as evaluation. By evaluation is meant the act of applying to a given language content (meaning) the binary opposition of liking and disliking, praising or condemning, enjoying or ridiculing, accepting or rejecting, confirming or denying, or, in summary, a positive or a negative

attitude. The entire structure of a culture (its semiosphere) thus seems to encompass a core of evaluated concrete and abstract objects (its axiosphere) and a periphery of neutral ones. A linguo-culture is at once static and dynamic. It can be studied diachronically and synchronically, but although it is flexible and in a state of constant flux, a linguo-culture is also comparatively timeless. Over time, many of its linguistic signs may change their form and meaning, but there remains a stable core of elements that accounts for a certain degree of self-sufficiency, identity, and uniqueness.

The Linguo-Cultural Approach perceives the proverbial system and arrangement of a language as an honest portrayal of the particular lifestyle and set of norms and values of the individuals communicating through this language, i.e., of their linguo-culture. There is no uncertainty that there positively is, and has consistently been, a great deal of reciprocation among the linguo-cultures on this planet, including their proverb structures. Despite this, while contending that all share some basic view, linguistic-culturology argues that this shared view does not diminish the uniqueness of each language and the lifestyle it speaks to, as the proverb analyst Honeck (2018) puts that cultures develop their proverbs to express the intuitive forms of perfection.

While discussing the research methodology employed in linguistic culturology, Petrova (2015) has mentioned several fields from which methods and techniques have been drawn, which include “semiotics and structuralism, discourse analysis, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, ethnolinguistics, linguistic anthropology, pragmatics, cognitive linguistics, literary and cultural studies, and other branches of linguistics and philology, as well as from the study of history and culture” (p. 75).

### **3.1.1 Cultureme**

Various extra-linguistic cultural symbols motivate multiple expressions in a language called ‘culturtemes’ (Szerszunowicz, 2018, p. 226). From a linguistic point of view, the word structurally resembles the terms phoneme, morpheme, lexeme, and phraseme, which is indicative of its meaning. It functions as “an umbrella term covering various phenomena: cultural keywords, cultural scripts, stereotypes, and exotisms” (p. 227). It is a bit of the accumulative memory of a given discourse network. Consequently, they assume a significant role during the procedure of communication. The units roused by culturemes incorporate

single and multiword articulations, for example, confined collocations, phrases, proverbs, maxims, winged, and commonplace words that gather and store a lot of social and cultural information. Nadal (in Petrova, 2016) draws attention to the fact that culturemes perform three main functions: aesthetic, cognitive-hermeneutic, and persuasive. The researcher also enumerated the features of the cultureme: it is ‘alive’, i.e., it functions in the modern language, it is phraseologically productive, and has a robust connotative load. Culturemes comprise various phenomena and can be roughly divided into verbal, such as culture-bound lexemes, idioms, proverbs, and jokes; nonverbal: expressed by body language, for instance, gestures; para-verbal expressed by behavior resulting from somebody’s age, sex, social stand; extraverbal: proxemic rules, time and place. The proponents of linguistic culturology keep up that many of the adjustments in language continuously reflect not just the significant propensities and progressively evident changes in culture yet additionally its increasingly unpretentious and more subtle inclinations.

### **3.1.2 Semantic Density**

The Linguo-Cultural Approach places a great emphasis “on the job of semantic/semiotic density, comprehended as the recurrence of use and the level of semantic or social elaboration” (Petrova, 2016, p. 390) of either a specific linguistic expression or idea (thought), in one or – in contrastive examinations – in at least two languages. Considering the ‘semantic density,’ implied deciphering quantity regarding quality, or in other words, the semantic density served as an indication of cultural centrality and relative significance. Taking insights from the Linguo-Culturology Approach, the semantic density of different culturemes and messages has been noted. There have been numerous other proverbs that belonged to the same theme, which all built up its specific hierarchical structure, in which the sub-themes contributing to the central theme were arranged according to their order of priority, i.e., some appeared to be dominant, while others occupied the periphery of the thematic field. The most engaging trait of the culturematic method, which made it especially helpful for conducting this comparative cum contrastive research, is that the semantic density of any given cultureme has been discovered with a higher level of exactness whenever applied to such axiologically marked verbal units as proverbs. It is important to note that the broader the corpora compared, the more reliable and dependable the data and the findings and conclusions had been. A cultureme that exhibited higher weight in one linguo-culture

than the other entailed that it had been given more ethical and social preference in the first culture than the other. When the culturematic analysis had been conducted through the large corpora of the Punjabi and Yoruba paremias, the elicited quantitative evidence became genuinely authentic and reliable. This demonstrated very clearly, consistently, and convincingly the hierarchy of the values and anti-values of the Punjabi and Yoruba people among whom these proverbs had originated and are current.

The themes and culturemes of the hypertexts made up a structure where each element was related to the rest and impacted the whole system. Their hierarchical arrangement was a mirror of the linguo-cultures under study, an image of the axiosphere of the Punjabi and Yoruba people. The semantic density helped determine the position of the themes and culturemes in this hierarchical structure, i.e., the number of language signs that belonged to the same theme or denoted the same cultureme. The higher the semantic density, the more culturally prominent and significant, had been the theme or cultureme in the cultures under study. The dominant themes and culturemes represented the '*cultural constants*' of the linguo-cultures in question, while the peripheral ones had been incorporated as an essential addition to the main characteristics. The next stage of the Linguo-Cultural analysis was the application of a hermeneutical approach to the subgroups of proverbs (semantic units given under separate headings, i.e., Clarity in Speech, Silence, and Directness/Indirectness, etc.) that built up the larger thematic groups of proverbs and finally to the whole corpus under study. It combined a semantic and socio-cultural commentary of the proverb 'hypertext' as a whole.

A comparative study of the axiological aspect of culture (the values and the attitudes to them) then dealt with the culturemes only. They had been arranged along with a frequency plus/minus scale, and then the two scales compared. Theoretically, three groups of culturemes emerged: the 'overlapping' group and two 'asymmetrical' groups (whose members did not have counterparts in the other language). The frequency ranges demonstrated the ethical priorities, which then had been compared. Thus we learnt to what extent these two cultures shared a common respect for the same values. Theoretically, it turned out that the differences were minimal, which might be interpreted as 'cultural sameness' regardless of the stylistic and thematic 'clothing' of the cultureme (i.e., the actual

proverb). Conversely, it also turned out that what one of the cultures deemed excellent and noble, the other culture did not notice or even denied. Petrova has proposed to use percentages (%) instead of plain frequencies of culturemes as a solution to the problem of discrepancies, which emerged from the number of culturemes coming from different collections of proverbs. The outcomes of the culturamtic analysis have been used to shape and formulate the Yoruba and Punjabi Cultural Scripts of speech-related preferences, ethics, and norms.

### **3.2 Theory of Cultural Scripts**

Goddard (2010) and Wierzbicka's (1997) Cultural Scripts (CS henceforth) Approach has helped conduct a systematic inquiry into the proverbs of the Punjabi and Yoruba languages. "The phrase 'Cultural Scripts' has been used to refer to tacit (understood) norms, values, and practices widely shared and known (on an intuitive level) in a given society" (Wierzbicka, 1997, p. 2). Cultural Scripts portray social norms that are generally followed by a speech community and mirrored in its language. The thought of 'Cultural Scripts' has been viewed as an augmentation of the possibility of a naive picture of the world, set forward many years ago by the Russian semanticist Apresjan (1974). 'Speech etiquette' is not the only concern of cultural scripts, but they are also involved in explicating "speech ethics", including unsaid assumptions and rules administering human behavior that the speakers underestimate since they appear to them to be absolutely 'normal.' The capacity of cultural scripts to be explicated in 'lexical universal' made them efficient for cross-cultural analysis. Furthermore, this Cultural Script-based comparison has been embraced from a language-autonomous perspective and has been free of any ethnocentric prejudice. The translatability and accessibility of cultural scripts in any language guaranteed their all-inclusive and culture-autonomous character. NSM furnished us with a comprehensive arrangement of documentation for expressing and comparing inferred social norms regarding which Punjabi and Yoruba social orders work and through which we can comprehend and understand differential communicative behavior. Cultural Script Approach, just like the Linguo-Cultural approach, shares a significant number of the concerns of ethnography of communication, linguistic anthropology, and some parts of social psychology.



Wierzbicka (2017) entails that different cultures have distinctive culture-specific interactional norms and speech practices and that various methods for talking prevalent in various social orders are connected with diverse local cultural norms, social qualities, “or at least different cultural priorities as far as values are concerned” (p. 33). From the start, comprehending the speech practices, norms, and values from the native speaker’s viewpoint was the primary objective of this approach. The defenders of this methodology contend that, for this reason, it is essential to draw on the strategies of cross-cultural semantics. They call to attention that the speech practices should be comprehended in terms that sound suitable for the individuals concerned (Wierzbicka, 1997).

It is an approach that helped clarify shared values and assumptions implanted in different speech behaviors and can simultaneously be inherently valuable in intercultural instruction. In an increasingly specific sense, this term has also been used to insinuate a unique new technique for articulating social values, norms, and practices in words that are clear, definite, and open to cultural insiders as well as outsiders. This result was possible considering how Cultural Script expressions have been arranged in a solidly constrained yet expressively adaptable mini-language (NSM) containing basic words and syntactic models that have reciprocals in all languages.

In the words of Goddard (2010), nonetheless, the idea of ‘Yoruba Cultural Scripts’ or ‘Punjabi Cultural Scripts’ is much more helpful than that of ‘Yoruba Culture’ or ‘Punjabi Culture’: a script being tangible can be expressed unequivocally, can be educated, and can be upheld through real linguistic evidence. One might say the idea of ‘Cultural Scripts’ can be contrasted with the anthropological idea of “Cultural pattern” (Kim and Markus, 2002). However, it is progressively unequivocal, being grounded in entirely linguistic evidence. Cultural Script Approach enhanced descriptive accuracy, helped reduce ethnocentrism, and facilitated the integration of pragmatics and cultural semantics. NSM facilitated us to express and compare the inferred social norms through which we could comprehend and understand differential expectations regarding suitable communicative behavior.

### **3.2.1 Natural Semantic Metalanguage (NSM)**

“NSM based on lexical universals constitutes a language-independent ‘cultural notation,’ suitable for representing a society’s cultural unconscious; that the use of this metalanguage can clarify differences between cultures and it can facilitate cross-cultural

communication” (Goddard, 2010, p. 492). The utilization of NSM enabled us to depict and contrast culture-specific frames of mind, assumptions, and standards from an impartial, culture-free perspective and through straightforward formulae that are naturally obvious and simultaneously thorough and experimentally irrefutable. The Natural Semantic Metalanguage (NSM) has been used as an instrument for articulating Cultural Scripts. It has also been used as a strategy to examine ideas and meanings that depend on and are interpretable through any natural language. The focal thought on which this strategy is based is that despite their colossal assorted variety, every single natural language shares a typical core: a little jargon of 65 or so “conceptual primes” and a “universal grammar.” This core is language-like, with the same number of versions as the natural languages. As English language is the medium of communication for the current research, the inventory of semantic primes given below uses English exponents (equivalent lists have already been drawn up for many languages).

**Table 1: English Exponents of Language Primitives for Universal Human concepts**

**Adapted from Levisen and Waters (2017):**

<b>Substantives</b>	I, you, someone, people, something/thing, body
<b>Relational substantives</b>	Kind, part
<b>Determiners</b>	This, the same, other/else/another
<b>Quantifiers</b>	One, two, some, all, much/many, little/few
<b>Evaluators</b>	Good, bad
<b>Descriptors</b>	Big, small
<b>Mental predicates</b>	Think, know, want, feel, see, hear
<b>Speech</b>	Say, words, true
<b>Actions, events, movement</b>	Do, happen, move
<b>Existence, possession:</b>	Be (somewhere), there is, be (someone/something), (is) mine
<b>Life and death</b>	Live, die
<b>Time</b>	When/time, now, before, after, a long time, a short time, for some time, moment
<b>Space</b>	Where/place, here, above, below, far, near, side, inside, touch

	(contact)
<b>Logical concepts</b>	Not, maybe, can, because, if
<b>Intensifier, augmenter</b>	Very, more
<b>Similarity</b>	like/as/way

These elements have their own language-independent syntax. For example, nominal personal elements such as “I”, “you”, and “someone” are combined with verbs such as “think”, “know”, “say”, “feel” and “want”; the combinatorial syntactic properties of language primitives constitute a universal grammar, such as “I think”, “someone does not want this”, and “you did something bad”. As for the essence of NSM, according to Wierzbicka (2010), it rested on the principles that (i) the words used in the process of explication should be very simple and understandable to all speakers of that language, and (ii) the explication should contain no loss or addition of meaning from a specific language to any other language. Unlike complex English-explicit terms like “bluntness”, “criticism”, “apology”, “compliments”, “sincerity”, “hypocrisy”, or “directness”, the NSM has been utilized for talking about perspectives, feeling, living and acting in a unified structure, without linguistic or cultural inclinations, and without previously established hypothetical inclinations.

Four parts of its significance have been featured. It implies that the social contents are available to the Punjabi and Yoruba individuals whose discourse practices are being depicted. Native consultants can talk about, survey, and remark on them. It made for expanded unquestionable status and opened up new avenues for proof. Second, translatability is urgent to the commonsense estimation of cultural scripts in intercultural communication, instruction, and correspondence, i.e., in the actual circumstances of attempting to fill a cultural gap with workers, language-students, in the worldwide dealings, and so on. Third, the way that cultural scripts are expressible in the local language of speakers gives them an appearance of a preferable case to subjective reality over specialized formalisms, which are unrecognizable to them. The fourth and firmly related point is that portrayals of various discourse practices and informative styles which are defined in English (out and out English, instead of “NSM English”) are essentially Anglocentric (Goddard, 2010). Cultural scripts are framed not in all-out English; however, in a mini-English isomorphic with comparative

subsets of every other language (here Yoruba and Punjabi) liberated the depiction of discourse practices and cultural standards from an Anglocentric predisposition and permitted a culture-autonomous point of view.

### **3.2.2 Presence of Inter-Societal Similarities**

Even though much variation is found in individuals' conversational styles in many speech communities, there is also a significant degree of intra-cultural resemblance. Much more striking than the closeness in actual conduct is the comparability in expectancy, reflected in a vast extent of semantic as well as ethnographic 'normative patterns.' Linguistic evidence recommended that each speech community has a shared set of (intuitive) cultural norms, which are very specific and can be expressed as unequivocal cultural scripts (Wierzbicka, 1997).

### **3.2.3 Cultural Grammar**

Cultural scripts' primary concern is what one may/may not state, things that one can or cannot do, and things about which "it is good/fine" to do or state. They establish a general public's implicit "cultural grammar" (whose elements can be revealed, on occasion, in open conversations, as axioms, basic adages, folk wisdom, everyday socialization routines). The Cultural Script Approach has been employed to present a "naive axiology," that is, a "naive" set of suppositions about what is acceptable or unacceptable to say or do and what one may or may not do, mainly in communication. In the respective communicative cultures (Yoruba and Punjabi), it is broadly accepted that there are nice/correct ways for talking and wrong ways for talking, as there are bad methods for acting, and although not every person needs to concur with presumptions, yet everybody knows about them since they are mirrored in the languages themselves. As opposed to different Universalist approaches to the investigation of discourse practices, the perspective of a cultural insider is adopted by the Cultural Script model, which attempts to verbalize his point of view in a nontechnical manner, which is also sensibly meaningful. For intercultural communication, it was essential that distinctive social standards working in various social orders be unequivocally detailed to be analyzed easily and formulated impartially with no twists coming from the inflexibility of earlier approaches. They have been explicated in a nontechnical and commonly accessible language.

### 3.2.4 Merits of Cultural Script Approach

Unlike numerous other models, the Cultural Script approach is not gotten from one language or one culture as it relies on a lot of cross-cultural and cross-linguistic evidence that has been gathered for a long time by various researchers (Goddard and Wierzbicka, 2004). Second, it is imperative to recognize that, regardless of the potential meanings of ‘script,’ cultural scripts are not ‘binding’ on people. We need to bear in mind, then, that one of the characteristics of culture is that it is ‘*differentially distributed*’ and that not all the members of a given cultural group adopt, live or identically reflect their common culture in every moment and life circumstance, nor do all members of the same group demonstrate the same feeling of identification. This realization stopped us from adopting the most simplistic of cultural stereotypes phrased by Stanfield (1993, p. 21) as “the fallacy of the monolithic identity,” which consists in failing to recognize that ‘differential identities’ exist among the members of any group (Aneas and Sandin, 2009, p. 14). Thirdly, Cultural Scripts are not proposed as rules of conduct rather as rules of (standard) elucidation and evaluation. Unquestionably, as regularizing statements, they guide conduct, are available to people in real circumstances, whether, and to what degree, to pursue (or seem to pursue) socially supported principles; or whether to maneuver them, oppose them, subvert them, play imaginatively with them, and so on. Fourthly, regardless of whether these cultural scripts are being followed in conduct terms, notwithstanding, the case is that they established a sort of “shared interpretive background” (Aneas & Sandin, 2009, p. 16). Some people follow cultural norms all the time, some other people sometimes, but not all the people, always. However, these cultural norms of communication consistently work as an interpretive system against which individuals comprehend and evaluate their own and others’ practices.

### 3.2.5 Some Clarifications

Cultural Scripts are not planned to give a record of genuine social communications, not to mention an image of society (Aneas & Sandin, 2009). They are not proposed as depictions of social communication, however, as portrayals of regularly held expectations about what ‘individuals think’ about social communication-presumptions that social performers carry with them into day-to-day conversations. Such presumptions impact, however, do not decide the structure taken by specific verbal encounters. Finally, it ought to be referenced that, in contending that the different scripts are a piece of one culture, no case

is being made that they are exceptions to that culture. On the other hand, there are high chances that other related cultures may share a significant number of them. Besides, it is normal to expect that specific cultural scripts will repeat in different societies worldwide, besides any chronicled affinities. However, one could anticipate the general design of scripts in the specific cultures, in the entirety of its multifaceted nature, to be one of a kind in these specific cultures.

Wierzbicka (2017) entails that different cultures have distinctive culture-specific interactional norms and speech practices and that the various methods for talking prevalent in various social orders are connected with diverse local cultural norms, social qualities, “or at least different cultural priorities as far as values are concerned” (p. 33). From the start, comprehending the speech practices, norms, and values from the native speaker’s viewpoint was the primary objective of this approach. The defenders of this methodology contend that, for this reason, it is essential to draw on the strategies of cross-cultural semantics. They focus on comprehending discourse practices in terms that sound suitable for the individuals concerned. We should comprehend the implications of the numerous culturally significant words – words for social categories, local values, and speech acts. Significant words and expressions of this sort regularly meet all requirements for the status of cultural catchphrases or keywords (Wierzbicka, 1997). The ideas of ‘Yoruba cultural scripts’ and ‘Punjabi cultural scripts’ are much more helpful than those of the ‘Yoruba culture’ or ‘Punjabi culture.’ A script being tangible has been expressed unequivocally, can be taught, and can be upheld through real linguistic evidence. Moreover, cultural scripts are progressively unequivocal, being grounded in entirely linguistic evidence.

### **3.2.6 Linguistic Evidence**

The CS approach is proof-based, and keeping in mind that drawing proof from numerous different sources (ethnographic and sociological investigations and literary writing) places specific significance on linguistic evidence. Linguistic evidence is crucial for achieving reliability and intelligibility in ethno-pragmatics. Nonetheless, the accessibility to linguistic evidence regarding people’s thinking about their language use is challenging (Vo, 2020). Specifically, “cultural scripts can be part of the common lore, codified in common sayings, in proverbs, in set phrases, in clichés and so on” (Vo, 2020, p. 127). One of the credible sources of linguistic evidence to deploy in ethno-pragmatic research is the folk

sayings and proverbs of a speech community. Folk sayings and proverbs can capture the ancestral experience and wisdom through generations and best convey traditional values. Goddard (2009) argues that the social function of folk sayings and proverbs is to recapitulate and reproduce established cultural values. They are communicative vehicles that both enact traditional authority and are partially constitutive of it. They are small forms of authoritative discourse. By taking insights from the options mentioned above to collect data, linguistic evidence has been collected from the proverbs and sayings of Yoruba and Punjabi languages.

### **3.2.7 Domestication of the Linguo-Cultural and Cultural Scripts Approaches**

The concept of ‘cultureme’ is metalinguistic and applied both as a theoretical framework and a practical one. First of all, its implementation facilitated describing the shift from non-linguistic knowledge to language phenomena, so the concept proved helpful in detecting and analyzing the functions of the inherent messages of proverbs. The second critical area is paremiography: applying the concept contributed to a more comprehensive description of proverbs. The cultureme-oriented analysis of proverbs contributed to studying the linguistic picture of speech reflected in fixed expressions, allowing for analyzing the Yoruba and Punjabi linguo-cultures.

By adapting the methodological assumptions proposed by Zykova (2011), the study has been conducted at two levels: micro and macro. At the micro-level, the semantic complexes of the selected proverbs have been analyzed. Whereas, at the macro-level, given units from the studied field of ‘communication’ have been analyzed to infer generalizations and compare across languages. The macro-analysis involved three aspects: cross-linguistic, in which the linguistic manifestation of culture-bound features have been analyzed; cross-conceptual, to deal with the conceptual structures underlying the semantics of fixed expressions; and cross-cultural, whose aim was to infer and present the cultural information obtained at the two previous levels. However, the chief focus had been the cross-conceptual and cross-cultural investigation.

The level of uncertainty has been minimized because the proverbial items have been taken as hard data that can be checked and cross-checked. Interpretation is still required, but it is possible to check input and advice from speakers of the language in which the items exist. In this, the researcher relied upon members of the group of interest to judge which

proverbs should be considered and applied to the situations they experience. By their nature, proverbs are generally known to all members of their community of users. For this reason, the information about values, perceptions, and experience they contain have been taken as a kind of baseline about what constituted a shared culture in the groups of interest. This might be very difficult to determine through other means, but proverbs provided a kind of shorthand representation of this shared background and significant concepts all group members were aware of, even if they did not agree with them or acted in other ways.

The utilization of the cultureme liberated the analyst from any assumptions or desires, causing her to depend for her decisions about “the hierarchy of the cultural values (s)he is exploring entirely on the text or texts (s)he is studying” (Petrova, 2019, p. 189). It has been applied to the corpora of proverbs in the respective languages, realizing that the comprehensive corpora would help reach robust discoveries and conclusion. The culturematic analysis relied upon two separate positive and negative quantitative scales as per their ‘semantic destiny’ (frequency of occurrences and cultural elaborateness). We obtained a rigorous, data-driven, objective and legitimate representation of the hierarchy of the positively and negatively evaluating entities characterizing linguo-cultures under study. The phrase ‘semantic density’ denoted the frequency of occurrences of a particular text and the degree of its lexical, grammatical, and thematic elaborateness, including synonymy, variability, conversion, propensity to form derivatives and elements for intertextuality.

The Linguo-Cultural Approach has been used to combine an axiological analysis (value-related) of two proverb corpora with a linguo-cultural synthesis of the results obtained via analysis. The Punjabi and Yoruba proverbs are perceived as signs of respective ethnic and national cultures. As prescribed by this approach, the selected proverbs have been reduced to one single significant element, it remarks and assesses as positive (attractive) or negative (bothersome) and to relate this “cultural entity” to immediate and verifiable guidance given by the proverb (its message). This positive or negative cultural entity has been named ‘cultureme’, as proposed by Petrova, which “is axiologically marked, verbalized content, explicated through a semantic transformation of the question-answer kind and represented by a noun or noun phrase” (Petrova, 2019, p. 147). The cultureme has been given a verbal name and a numerical positive (+) or negative (-) sign connected to it. This name has been elicited by an inquiry, ‘What does this proverb show as positive or negative?’



The obtained cultureme is a sign coordinating a part of the Punjabi or Yoruba cultures, whose substance is signified verbally by its name, and a positive or negative assessment appended to it by these cultures, indicated by the plus or minus (+ or -) signs. The positive or negative indication of the cultureme has been checked utilizing the proverb message because the same revealed the setting of its major cultureme. To discover what the message would have been, the researcher has put another inquiry to the proverb sentence “What does this proverb advise us to do /to be, or not to do/ not to be?” Clarifying the non-literal proverbs by giving their definition, for example, deciphering the surface structure of the figurative sentence into its deep structure, is the fundamental starter step that has been taken to explain the proverb cultureme and message. The positive or negative indication of the cultureme has been confirmed through the propensity of the proverbial message. The role of cultural informants to help identify the cultureme, positive or negative evaluation, and the intended messages or advice has been discussed under a separate heading in the ‘Methodology’ section, below.

The subsequent phase of the application of the Linguo-Cultural Approach was the ‘culturematic analysis.’ It comprised in further breaking down the content (hypertext, groups of texts) into the entirety of its culturemes, after having explained the significant ones, the resultant culturemes worked as ‘components’ of the major cultureme, in this manner giving further and considerably more detailed information of its subject substance. In this way, the total number of culturemes got from the collections of proverbs had been grouped around topics and arranged progressively along with two quantitative scales as indicated by their ‘semantic density.’

To outline, the culturemes in the selected proverbial sentences formed a set with one main cultureme making up its core and a limited set of constituent culturemes, among which there were literal, implicit (including the figurative), and explanatory culturemes. On account of proverbs with certain implications, the latter are consolidated into the explanatory culturemes. The explanatory cultureme is the nominalized definition of the proverb, i.e., its true meaning and axiological characteristic. Clarifying the non-literal proverbs by giving their definition, for example, translating the surface structure of the figurative proverb into its profound structure, was the immediate fundamental step that the analyst took to elucidate the proverb cultureme and its intended message. The figurative paremias (like all other figurative texts such as fables, riddles, tales, myths, legends, and poems) have a surface and a deep

structure, while in those which state their message directly, these two structures merge. Similarly, when some stylistic devices (e.g., hyperboles, litotes, understatement, simile, irony, and sarcasm) were used, the deep structure of the text, i.e., its definition/explanation, was explicated via the same process of semantic transformation. This has been done by rendering the meaning of the text in neutral and factual language, i.e., by stripping the text of its imagery and expressiveness and reducing it to a neutral, expressionless, impersonal statement. The question we need to put in such cases was, “What does this proverb actually mean?” The linguo-cultural synthesis involved an explanatory commentary of the proverb texts that are not fully transparent. Its main objective was to get as close to the truth they expressed, which was closely related to the dynamics of their reception. Finally, let it also be noted that the name of the major proverb cultureme did not necessarily have to be the same as the word or phrase denoting the theme to which the proverb belonged (Petrova, 2019), like ‘think first’ ‘clarity’ and ‘directness’ are the names of a few culturemes in the theme of Speech or Communication.

In the next step, the culturematic Semantic Density is deduced by the frequency of culturemes taking into account the variability, intertextuality, and the variety of linguistic clothing of similar ideas. For analysis, these culturemes are arranged in hierarchical management in descending order. Yoruba proverbs have been set as a reference, and the highest semantic density has been discussed first (Speech is Encouraged). The Punjabi proverbs about the same cultureme have been placed and analyzed just with their Yoruba counterparts to avoid confusion. This step was essential because of the inherent nature of cross-cultural research. Distancing them may have caused a discontinuity for the readers. Just at the end of each culturematic discussion, the Cultural Scripts are formulated for both linguo-cultures. These scripts are the real take away for the native and non-native speakers and can be consulted to be aware of the tacit communication norms and patterns and applied to achieve communicative competence.

### **3.3 Methodology**

This section presents and discusses the research design and data collection methods, sampling, organizing, and interpreting techniques employed to achieve the objectives and answer the research questions mentioned in Chapter One. A multi-method approach is

adopted to do so. The following segments delineate the particular procedure and strategies of data collection, the help sought from cultural informants in data organization/translation/interpretation, and individual cum contrastive linguo-cultural analysis. This postulation has two points: to expose and explore a rich and already un-examined cultural legacy of the Punjabi and Yoruba cultures through their languages and compare and contrast the proverbial wisdom in two regionally distant oral cultures about the attitude toward speech and silence and the preferred communication ethics.

### **3.3.1 The Researcher's Standpoint**

Being a native Punjabi speaker, the researcher shares the context and comprehends top to bottom the cultural set up of her society, knowing practically how and when individuals of Punjab utilize their proverbs and what they perceive when a proverb is used. Along these lines, firstly, where she has referred to proverbs in the Punjabi culture, though she has hinted at the possible natural situations and contexts of use, she avoids, for the sake of economy, a comprehensive account of the setting in which proverbs occurred. However, after collecting proverbs of the languages, their meanings and interpretations have been discussed with the research informants (including the Punjabi paremiographer Ehsan Bajwa) to classify the data under thematic domains and sub-categories more meaningfully. All through the procedure, an ongoing discussion unfurled between what the researcher was seeing and finding and what Nigerian Yoruba and the Punjabi speakers were stating. This discussion put her in an ideal situation to have the option to process and observe their perspective with them. She turned into an informed outsider for the Yoruba proverbs and an objective insider for the Punjabi ones.

### **3.3.2 Qualitative cum Quantitative Methods**

As recommended by the Linguo-Cultural Approach, a qualitative cum quantitative analysis (through descriptive statistics) has been conducted to respond to some scathing criticism against the holistic qualitative approach. Ellis and Levy (2008) are of the view that since the feasibility of an issue as a beginning stage for academic research cannot be built up through a single technique for examination, there is the requirement for analysts to “weave together” the snippets of data assembled from various sources. Findings of an investigation might be viewed as increasingly tenable if data are interpreted through various techniques.

Hence, this research has employed the tool kits provided by the Linguo-Cultural Approach (culturematic cum evaluative analysis and semantic density) and the Cultural Scripts Approach for coming up with more authentic, valid, verifiable and dependable outcomes.

### **3.3.3 Data Collection**

The primary concern of this study was to access authentic, reliable, and usable data. Of all the genres of folklore, the natural discourse of the proverb is among the most inaccessible ones. People speak them in informal private conversations, out of a folklorist's earshot. For a study's sake, it is necessary to retrieve them through interviews and deliberate solicitation. Alternatively, folklorists turn to authors, journalists, poets, and even philosophers who, for the sake of folklore study, become proverb catchers, documenting or imagining the occurrence of proverbs in society. This predicament, analyzing proverbs in orality only through the mirror of literacy, has hampered the discipline from its inception and preceded the consolidation of systematic proverb research. Like Mieder and his predecessors, the researcher had to turn to the dictionaries of proverbs in her attempts to retrieve them from oral tradition. To study the actual use of a proverb, the researcher has to wait for the proverb to happen, which is beyond the focus of the present research.

### **3.3.4 Selection of the Proverb Corpora**

As put by Sharifian (2017), "dictionaries are considered culture mines...whose word-gems encapsulate centuries of language history and cultural traditions; they are storehouses of meanings and uses, 'lamp genies' to be set free at the very moment readers set their eyes on their entries" (p. 45). Hence, dictionaries of the Punjabi (Bajwa, 2011) and Yoruba (Owomoyela, 2005) proverbs have been used to elicit proverbs about the semantic domain of communication, speech, and silence, taking into account the sub-types identified by Kussi (1972) and later his daughter Louhakangus (2015). In both of these dictionaries, proverbs have been enlisted in alphabetical order without any indication of their sources/origins except a few of them. The dialectical identification has not been considered because the Linguo-Cultural Approach takes one language as a sole unit to represent a speech community. Going into dialectic details would have demanded segregating the data into categories other than the thematic and semantic ones, which did not align with the research objectives and questions of the current research. Moreover, the Yoruba dictionary is accompanied by a word index (pp.

281-444), making this collection a valuable tool for paremiologists and paremiographers. Furthermore, Owomoyela has also established a website for the Yoruba proverbs (Owomoyela, n.d.), which has also been consulted to check any new entries other than those mentioned in the published dictionary (2005). For the proverbs mentioning women or men's talk and the implicit or explicit pieces of advice in this domain, the proverb studies from the perspective of gender have also been consulted (Yusuf, 1994; Akinmade, 2011; Asiyabola, 2007; Familusi, 2012; Balogun, 2010; Schipper, 1991; Sobers and Hodari, 2009).

As Petrova (2016) has stressed the availability of sufficiently large proverb corpora to conduct a valid comparative study, the present study exhausted the whole thematic field of '*communication, talk and speech*' in the corpus of approximately 22353 proverbs in the Punjabi and 13271 Yoruba proverbs contained in all the sources. The hypertexts of the Punjabi and African (Yoruba) proverbs about 'speech and silence' are a total of 186 proverbs in the Punjabi and 144 in the Yoruba collection/sources. Petrova (2019) has argued that ideally, all proverbs existing in the language ought 'to participate,' as each of them has been, or still is, a 'living cell' in the organism of culture. All the variants of Punjabi or Yoruba proverbs having similar messages or contents have been made part of data analysis. Further, she has also raised a valid question, 'What do we compare when we study proverbs in two (or more) languages?' We compare the culturematic semantic density in terms of percentages instead of plain numbers or frequencies. If there is a discrepancy in the numbers, then a ratio or a percentage should be checked and used when comparing the ratings (Petrova, 2019).

### **3.3.5 Organizing Data according to Matti Kussi's Typology**

A major lexicographical challenge was to organize proverbs in a significant order. After Kuusi (1973), Lauhakangas (2015) has developed a global categorization system that consists of 13 main thematic domains, which generally speak to fundamental parts of human life. As the focus of the present research is the attitude toward speech, talk and silence in the Punjabi and Nigerian (Yoruba) proverbs, along with the peripheral semantic clusters of speech, the following sub-categories in the theme of communication have been adapted according to the nature of the available and collected data to classify and arrange it meaningfully and systematically. However, sometimes, a proverb contains two or more culturemes, so it is mentioned under multiple relevant headings. Like the Punjabi proverb, "*Bud kerdar ruch jandi ay, bud zabaan nhi ruchdi*" (p. 78) (An immoral lady can make a

happy marriage, but not the one who talks bitterly) has been mentioned under the thematic categories ‘Gender and Talk’ as well as ‘Negative Power of Talk’ simultaneously.

**Table 2: Matti Kussi’s Typology of Communication**

<b>a.</b>	<b>The power of the word; good and bad words</b>
<b>b.</b>	<b>Taciturnity, reflection, consideration of every word</b>
<b>c.</b>	<b>The talkativeness/Loquacity</b>
<b>d.</b>	<b>Open heartedness, the need to talk, concealment</b>
<b>e.</b>	<b>The rapid spread and exaggeration of messages and rumors</b>
<b>f.</b>	<b>The irrevocability of words and its effects</b>
<b>g.</b>	<b>Silence or secrecy pays &gt; talk is risky</b>
<b>h.</b>	<b>Actions &gt; words</b>
<b>i.</b>	<b>Sweet words</b>
<b>j.</b>	<b>Bitter words</b>
<b>k.</b>	<b>Direct versus indirect words</b>
<b>l.</b>	<b>Manners of communication</b>
<b>m.</b>	<b>Gender and talk</b>

Thorough research has been carried out to check the meanings (definitions) of the texts that were not transparent, but let it be evident that sometimes meanings can be very dynamic and often changeable over time. In some unclear cases (implicit culturemes), the meanings were inferred from the explanation provided with the proverb by the authors/editors of the dictionary or the insights gained from the cultural insiders. The precise wording of the proverb definition, given in the dictionary, was essential for verbalising the explanatory cultureme, which helped place a proverb in a specific thematic subgroup. The total number of the explanatory cultureme(s) contained in the thematic group ‘Speech Proverbs’ helped determine the relative position of the theme ‘Speech’ in the axiosphere of the Nigerian and Punjabi cultures. Similarly, the semantic density of the subgroups within the Speech group has been reflected in the number of explanatory culturemes contained in their

constituent proverbs. As we saw, the comparison of the total number of positive and negative explanatory culturemes of the hypertext pointed to a predominantly positive/negative attitude to ‘talk’ and specific sub-themes as such.

The culturematic analysis has yielded fourteen thematic subgroups in the Yoruba and thirteen in the Punjabi hypertexts. Petrova (2002) contends that the number of proverbs containing the same message indicates the degree to which a particular theme, subject, or value is highlighted in the system of proverbs in a given language. Alternatively, the higher the number of proverbs containing one message, the higher the degree of cultural attention to the theme in this message. Therefore, the sub-themes have been arranged progressively along a line according to the semantic density of their explanatory culturemes in the individual tables developed to showcase the culturematic semantic density. According to the theory of the cultureme, those with the highest semantic density (occupy the leading positions) characterized the most dominant values within the thematic field of speech as a part of the Punjabi and Nigerian (Yoruba) axiospheres. They are followed progressively by the less obvious ones. Some of the sub-themes occupied the same position (represented in the same percentage (%) of culturemes), which indicated their identical cultural significance.

### **3.3.6 Analyzing Data**

In the analysis section, the sentence next to the original proverb text presents the translational meaning (definition, explanation). Next to it has been placed its explanatory cultureme. The number of culturemes given in front of each subtitle is the total sum of the positive and the negative culturemes constituting the thematic subgroup. The analysis in the subsequent chapter shows all the proverbs about communication/speech and sub-themes found in the sources together with their variants and synonyms. If the wording of the variant is different from that of the proverb from which it derives, the variant has been counted as a separate text. Synonyms and variants have been seen as additional contributions to the semantic density of a particular proverb since their very existence shows that the idea put across by the first proverb has caught the attention of the public so that it went on using the proverb more often and created more similar texts in the process (Petrova, 2019).

It also needs to be added that some of the analyzed proverbial texts in both languages carried a distinct sense and thus did not require any explanation. In such cases, only the

general central proverbial concept has been highlighted. Meanwhile, the cases of proverbs with ambiguous, unclear, or metaphorical culturemes are provided with adequate clarification of meaning. Their underlying messages have been inferred from the information provided in their explanations by the native paremiographers (Bajwa, 2011 and Owomoyela, 2005) and verified by the interpretation offered by the native speakers of both languages. The researcher has contacted the paremiographer Ahsan Bajwa (the writer of '*Akhan lok Syaney*') and Dr Kehinde Yusuf (Nigerian paremiologist) to authenticate the interpretations of Punjabi and Yoruba proverbs. Moreover, the Punjabi proverbs have been equipped by the researcher with a communicative translation in English, hoping that this will help the reader come closer to their definitions. On the other hand, proverbs from the Yoruba dictionary have been elicited with the given English translation, and an explanation put within inverted commas in the analysis section of this manuscript. Each proverb has been provided with its individual cultureme with a plus (+) or minus (-) sign followed by the advice or intended message. Most of the proverbs have been explained to define their stylistic features, literary devices and the context of use. Although the quantitative assessment of cultural significance can be neither final nor absolute, quantity as an indication of particular qualities or trends offered reliable addition and guidelines for conducting this cross-cultural research.

### **3.3.6 Translation, Transliteration, and Explication**

Paremiographers and paremiologists, who often have to compare proverbs in diverse languages, sometimes provide literal translations of the foreign proverbs in their native languages, hoping that this will help the reader come closer to their definitions. Another good strategy is the provision of explanations. When this is not possible, some authors will provide relevant excerpts from literature with the proverb used in specific contexts. However, most often, the proverb texts are left unexplained. This practice may cause considerable difficulties for the readers who are not familiar with the meaning behind the proverb sentence or come up with their incorrect interpretations based on their literal translations. To avoid such errors, for almost all the proverbs in the present study, a definition/explanation is provided, which is inferred from the corresponding information mentioned in the dictionaries and verified by comparing them with the information/interpretation provided by the native speakers (cultural informants) regarding the specific usage of the proverbs in context, their variants/counterparts in other languages, and interpretations.



The following strategies proposed by Baker (2011) have been adapted to translate the Punjabi proverbs:

- a) Using a proverb of similar meaning and form
- b) Using a proverb of similar meaning, but dissimilar form
- c) Translation by paraphrases

While paraphrasing, Newmark's (1988) 'semantic approach' to conceptual translation has been employed to give the proximal logical meaning while translating the message and interpreting each proverb. Riazi (2002, p. 2) says that "... proverbs cannot be translated word for word; rather, they should be translated into equivalent concepts in TL (Target Language) to convey the same meaning and produce the same effect." The precepts' usage is also depicted in passing, utilizing the accompanying classifications: guidance or training; social control through judgment or exhortation; articulation of values; commentary on life's occasions by criticism or support; and to comfort or counsel.

A website (*Urdu to Roman transliteration*, n.d.) has provided help to transliterate Punjabi proverbs, written in *Shahmukhi* (شاه مکھی) script which is a modified Perso-Arabic alphabet, used by Punjabi Muslims (primarily in Punjab, Pakistan) to write the Punjabi language. On the other hand, Yoruba orthography employs the Latin alphabet, modified by the use of the digraph (gb) and certain diacritics, including the under-dots under the letters ⟨ẹ⟩, ⟨ọ⟩, and ⟨s⟩. The Yoruba speakers were consulted for the transliteration of Yoruba proverbs, and they transliterated them by removing the superscripts and diacritics.

### 3.3.7 Cultural Informants

It must be remembered that folklore typifies a blend of the 'folk' and the 'lore.' Owomoyela (2005), in the introduction to his dictionary of the Yoruba proverbs, has pointed out rightfully:

A scholar lacking the requisite language tool should collaborate with another who is adequately equipped. Adherence to such a requirement would reduce the incidence of such texts as Ryszard Pachocinski's *Proverbs of Africa*, which suffers from the author's lack of knowledge of the languages concerned and therefore constitutes a disservice both to the cultures and to any non-

speaker of the language(s) who might take the book as a reliable resource (p. 30).

Crowd-sourcing methods have been used to contact Yoruba native speakers having linguistic competence and communicative proficiency in English. Facebook (Groups for PhD support), Couchsurfing, and WhatsApp groups have been used to connect and for frequent contact with different linguists from the Yoruba speech community, including Dr Joseph Osobo (professor of linguistics), Dr Yisa Kehinde Yusuf (professor of linguistics), Dr Abdul Hakeem (professor of folklore), Oluwatosin Sunday (a scholar in linguistics), OmoNike (a PhD scholar in indigenous languages), and Dr Adeyemi (professor of Cultural studies). These cultural informants/insiders/consultants helped at every stage of this research, including data collection, categorization, transliteration, explication, interpretation and discussion, and reaching conclusions by verifying the authenticity and validity of the identified trends and norms as per their actual contexts. The contextual information provided by these consultants aided our comprehension of the selected ‘sapient nuggets’ along with their semantic nuances. These generous scholars helped a lot in getting access to authentic translations, orthographic representation, and contextual cum cultural explanation of individual proverbs. Furthermore, they also helped uncover the intertextual references used in the proverbs otherwise missed in the dictionary explanations.

### **3.3.8 Ensuring Vitality and Validity**

Since the researcher is an outsider for the Yoruba culture and language, the Nigerian Yoruba speakers were requested to explain the proverbs they had at least used or heard once to connect their understanding with a context. Initially, two key informants (consultants) offered their understanding of particular proverbs and their contextual use. The researcher has used the consultants’ explanations from both cultures coupled with the meaning and explanation given by the paremiographers Bajwa (2011) and Owomoyela (2005) to come up with a possibly maximal semantic and conceptual interpretation.

The consultants gave the proverbs the following rankings for popularity:

- a) regularly used: you have used or heard it used once a month
- b) frequently used: you have used or heard it used once every three months
- c) often used: you have used or heard it used once a year

- d) occasionally used: you have used or heard it used maybe five times in your life
- e) rarely used: you have used or heard it used only once or twice in your life

While constructing a semantic cluster about speech and silence, if none of the respondents had ever used/heard a proverb, it is not included. Sometimes a proverb has minor changes in the wording, so both versions are shown. Hiebert's (1987) model for contextualization has outsider and insider working together. This approach has been the current researcher's choice and recommended to others—a process that had continual reciprocal collaboration. For the current situation, the researcher's observations are validated by listening to the insiders speaking about their culture's worldview. Since they have used proverbs to explain their cultures, the researcher took a more in-depth look at the Punjabi and Yoruba proverbs and found consistency with what they have said.

### **3.3.9 Delimitation**

The researcher had to list the semantic clusters and the relevant culturemes that emerged from the textual survey of the collections of proverbs which revealed a lot of significant semantic areas, perspectives, and angles. These could be used to investigate and conduct interesting and significant studies, but she had to narrow down the analysis to a single theme for an in-depth cross-cultural analysis by taking analytical support from the Linguo-Cultural Approach and Cultural Script Approach. Furthermore, a great deal of information is indeed needed to analyze the whole contextual meaning, function, and effect of each proverb, its original or acquired figurative sense; the speakers and listeners involved (gender, age group, position in society); proverbial currency, acceptance, and impact. A comparative intercultural approach does not allow for a proverb's "interactional elegance, the multiple semantic relations it contracts with the surrounding discourse, and the skills embodied in its spontaneous deployment" in the words of Yankah (1998, p. 332). For the scope and objectives of the present study, the researcher has to curtail this analysis to Culturematic analysis and construct Cultural Scripts for the respective linguo-cultures. Keeping in view the proposed objectives and research questions about the attitude toward speech, possible similarities and differences in the communication-related norms, and the perception of talk concerning gender, a detailed textual and historical/diachronic analysis could not be conducted as it was not feasible in the scope of the current study.

## CHAPTER 4

### DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter provides a detailed culturematic analysis of literal, metaphorical, and explanatory culturemes found in the proverbs of Yoruba and Punjabi languages. It will synthesize the analysis of individual proverbs falling under their culturematic headings with the help of evaluative questions proposed by Petrova (2016). Individual culturematic analysis is followed by an accumulative analysis of the significant patterns developing from the languages' proverbs. A comparative discussion further follows this step by placing the current findings among the previous studies of a similar nature and the geographical context (population density) of the respective linguo-cultures. According to the Linguo-Cultural Approach, the number of culturemes in a particular theme is directly proportional to the relative significance and concern attached in its representative linguo-culture (Petrova, 2019). Subsequently, the themes are arranged according to the highest number of proverbs found about any cultureme in one corpus. Here, the Yoruba corpus is set as standard numerically starting from the highest number of culturemes in descending order, and parallel Punjabi proverbs are analyzed and discussed compared to their counterparts. However, a quantitative analysis has been provided with the hierarchical categorization to bring out the culturematic semantic density in different themes. After getting at culturematic analysis (Petrova, 2016, 2019), the Cultural Scripts are developed by applying Natural Semantic Metalanguage (Goddard, 2010; Wierzbicka, 2016). Furthermore, as a significant number of proverbs from both corpora have targeted gender and talk, a separate section of the analysis has been attributed to its in-depth interpretation and discussion. Following is a theme-wise culturematic analysis of the Yoruba (in descending order) and parallel Punjabi proverbs:

## 4.1 Positive Evaluation of Talk

### The Yoruba Proverbs about Talk (19 +), Silence (11 -)

#### i. “*òrò`là`nǹí`ńjẹ`omito`oro`òrò`.*”

“It is with words that one resolves all problems” (Owomoyela, 2005, p. 155).

**Cultureme:** Power of words (+) **Advice:** Speak to resolve problems.

This proverb means that the power of words is so massive that no matter how complex a problem is, we use words to settle all matters through discussion. An informant translated this proverb as ‘We use words to describe words,’ means a person can only convey his/her message by talking. The Yoruba speakers believe that it is crucial to iron out the situation amicably by having a peaceful talk rather than using violence to solve any problem when words would have been of help. The Yorubas use this proverb to indicate the importance of dialogue, discussion, or chatting. Hence, the proverb means that words are used to savour the stew of words. The application implies that peaceful use of words with people will draw out peaceful words seasoned with salt.

#### ii. “*Ài-sòrò`ní`nmú`ẹnu`rùn`.*”

“It is abstention from speaking that makes the mouth smell” (p. 114).

**Cultureme:** Talk (+) Silence (-) **Advice:** “One should always say one's piece in a discussion.”

Inability to talk when necessary makes the mouth stink, so one should not abstain from talking when necessary. The Yoruba people use this proverb to tell people not to be silent when they need to talk. Keeping silent where one needs to talk is dangerous or can make things worse. It encourages people to gain boldness to talk about whatever seems right at any point in time. They believe that if someone keeps quiet for a long time, his/her mouth will emit an unpleasant odor. So, it implies that unnecessary silence makes things worse. The stinking mouth is symbolic in using this proverb as no one will like a person with a foul-smelling mouth. They think the stinking mouth results from keeping silent, negatively affecting the person’s physical and social hygiene. Being mute might eventually turn unbearable. Someone needs to know when to speak up for his/her rights. Being quiet, in some cases, might lead to unnecessary suffering for the person. The Yorubas believe that it will allow harmful stinking bacteria to get out of the speaker’s oral cavity when he/she exercises his/her articulation organ and utilizes the airstream mechanism. This activity, in a

way, seems to them like ventilation of the nasal, oral and pulmonic channels. Contrastingly, if a speaker just shut his/her mouth for too long, it will not be well ventilated, and it will smell. That is why they say that abstention from speaking makes the mouth stink. This proverb is applied in both literal and symbolic senses. The symbolic part could mean that when a person shuts his/her mouth for too long when the speech is required, he/she may get into problems.

**iii. “Àìlèfòhùn ní ñ nṣáájú ori burúkú.”**

“Inability to speak out precedes misfortunes.”

(“A person who will not speak on his or her behalf suffers from the consequences”) (p. 162).

**Cultureme:** Talk (+) Silence (-) **Advice:** The necessary speaking must be done.

Keeping unnecessary silence is the beginning of bad luck that leads to downfall eventually. The Yoruba people use this proverb when someone cannot express one’s heart on a matter. ‘Àìlèfòhùn’ (unnecessary silence) is the critical factor here; the Yoruba believe that unnecessary silence is not good. The inability to participate in crucial discussions can undermine the social status of an individual. So keeping unnecessary silence is considered as a sign of fear or cowardice or lousy occurrence. Only elders can use this proverb for a young person, and reversibly it becomes offensive. However, people use it among their peers. Being quiet in front of confrontation or cheating leads to nothing but misfortune. Therefore, people should know the appropriate time to speak up. Not speaking at the right time can bring misfortunes, and speaking right at the right time can earn good luck. Some people are too shy or scared to talk. Even when complications require them to speak up, they prefer to be punished than to talk and escape calamities. The Yorubas believe that silence is the first step to immense misfortunes. So, when needed, one must speak up. One should not observe things with sealed lips until things get bad.

**iv. “A kì í fì itijú kárùn.”**

“One does because of shyness expose oneself to a disease.”

(“Never be too shy to speak out on your behalf”) (p. 103).

**Cultureme:** Talk (+) silence (-) **Advice:** The necessary speaking must be done.

The Yoruba believe that knowledge of everything is unachievable, so ask another person for what one lacks. This proverb can be used by anybody irrespective of age to advise doing the needful and avoid pretense to fight for their rights than pretending that all is well, whereas all is not well. A person cannot afford to be shy, expose himself to disease and accept unpalatable situations because of shyness. It can be applied in a variety of ways. Some people who are too shy or do not want to offend people stay quiet or do things they should just have taken excuse from and avoid dire consequences. The application of this is to be expressive and practice when and how to decline or accept something (which includes but not limited to requesting help by verbal expression) without fear, shyness, or favor.

v. *“Èní gbé àrùn pamo kojá ọ̀rẹ́ oníṣẹ̀gùn” online*

“A person who conceals a disease is beyond help from a doctor.”

**Cultureme:** Talk (+) silence (-) **Advice:** The necessary speaking must be done.

Let people know your flawed areas to get help. This proverb is a variant of the previous proverb which discourages a person who conceals a disease by not telling the doctor to get appropriate treatment. Some ailments can cause untold stigmatization and shame. Even minor and dismissible illnesses can fall into this category among the Yorubas. As a result, some people choose to hide these ailments as much as possible and treat them undercover. This proverb comes in handy for such people. The application of this is that one who hides areas of their life that needs correction will be setting him or herself against others. People in need of help should not camouflage the fact as it may turn into a physical or social loss for them. Speaking up for a cause is encouraged and keeping quiet to avoid shame and embarrassment is discouraged by the use of this proverb.

vi. *“Àpẹ̀júwe alalágbèdẹ́ ńrọ̀.”*

“The blacksmith manufactures from a description.”

**Cultureme:** Talk (+) **Advice:** The necessary talk must be done.

(“Unless a person speaks his or her mind, others cannot know what the person wants”) (p. 253).

Among the Yorubas, blacksmithing is an essential industrial and occupational art. A blacksmith needs a sample or a description of his client to make any material. The clients, too, are always ready to describe what they need as vividly as possible. That is the literal definition of the above proverb. It is applicable when one intends to call his listeners' attention because there is a need to follow a particular pattern, set principle, or operation mode. It simply means that clear verbal instructions are the first step if you want some project to be completed as per your wish. The metaphor of a blacksmith has been used to encourage talk as he designs whatever is described. This proverb is used to educate parents sometimes to let them know that their children emulate them. So, children always become what they see their parents do and what they are told as instruction. Also, native speakers use this proverb in schools for the teachers to refer to the same thing. It is important to know someone's values if a person has to live according to them, so telling them in explicit terms will ease the task.

**vii. “Orivwin si isiesii”**

“The dead never put up an argument” (Ohwovoriola, 2009, p. 133).

**Cultureme:** Talk (+) Silence (-) **Advice:** The necessary speaking must be done.

This proverb delineates silence as an attribute of the dead and speech as a sign of life and existence. This proverb presents a hypothetical situation to advise a person present in some interactive context, but not participating accordingly by putting forward some argument. He is rebuked mildly by mentioning that only dead people are unable to argue, so he must give his piece of mind by speaking up. It is universally known that dead people lose their ability to talk. The above proverb is a variant of a similar Igbo proverb. This proverb comes to mind when people try to take advantage of a deceased person's demise because he/she cannot defend themselves. Necessary speaking will ensure one's presence in an argument.

**viii. “Ó kù díe kí nwí’: ojo ní nsoni da”**

“I was just on the verge of speaking my mind’: it only makes one into a coward” (p. 223).



**Cultureme:** Talk (+) Silence (-) **Advice:** One should either engage in an argument or refrain from making excuses.

Among the Yorubas, being vocal is a sign of strength. There is no need to delay or take the back seat when they need to show their strength and assert their presence. There could be instances when people speak up late or after someone has taken the lead to speak up. In such instances, the one who says ‘he was on the verge of speaking up before the other person(s) do so,’ is seen as a coward. Such a person is not fit as a spokesperson for a group. His leadership skill and expression of wisdom and authority through words are in want. This proverb advises implicitly to must speak when one has to do so. Do not seal your lips when you are required to voice your verdict. It is usually employed to criticize a person who is unable to share his part of the story or argument. Making excuses later will bring nothing but regrets and remorse.

**ix. “A kì í sinni ká má nù àpèjúwe”**

“One does not escort a traveler and lack a description.”

(“The helper must be knowledgeable and speech-maker”) (p. 452).

**Cultureme:** Talk (+) Silence (-) **Advice:** The necessary speaking must be done.

A person cannot escort someone without having direction. The direction is very germane in this life to avoid unnecessary delays or problems. One does not accompany a traveler without a perfect description. The Yorubas believe that a helper must be equipped with the relevant knowledge and enunciate to be rewarded and appreciated. If one refuses to appreciate one’s helper today, they believe such a person would not help anyone next time.

**x. “Òrò kì í gbórín ká fì òbẹ̀ bù ú, ẹnu la fì ñwí i”**

“A problem is not so formidable that one attacks it with a knife: one tackles it with the mouth” (p. 142).

**Cultureme:** Talk (+) **Advice:** The necessary speaking must be done.

This proverb indicates that an issue is not as big as requiring a knife to attack it. Meaning no matter how severe or big an issue is, it will take only mouth to discuss/resolve it.

This proverb is applied when people avoid talking about a severe issue that can escalate. Instead of mulching it, brave ones will break the silence or break the avoided news. The weightiest of the problems is resolvable through discussion and negotiation. The Yorubas believe that no matter how hard a problem is, discussion can settle it. Dialogue can resolve the matter, and conflicts can be settled through discussion.

**xi. “*Kí á gà, kí á gò, èdè ni ò yédè*”**

“Sitting and refusing to budge from one’s position results from the lack of communication” (p. 125).

**Cultureme:** Talk (+) Silence (-) **Advice:** The necessary speaking must be done.

This proverb comes to mind when two or more people say different things or come from different angles of a particular issue. The difference in their positions can cause confusion and misunderstanding as they are not communicating well for mutual understanding. The proverb’s first two clauses are ideophones (using sounds to convey imagery), a cacophony of contrasting speeches. It is when people fail to communicate and compromise that problems defy the solution. The Yoruba people use this proverb to warn a junior/younger person in age or authority about the consequences of not speaking up.

**xii. “*erù ogun kì í ba jagun-jagun*”**

“Fear of battle never afflicts a warrior.”

(“One should be bold in pursuing one’s goals”) (p. 225).

**Cultureme:** Talk (+) **Advice:** The necessary speaking must be done.

It is used to encourage people to fight and speak for their rights. A warrior does not fear battles. They use this proverb to persuade someone to be courageous and take bold steps. This proverb can be used by anyone to advise another person to take the initiative. Mostly, hunters, fighters, and sports people use this proverb. So, life challenges should not scare people away; they should be embraced wholeheartedly to succeed. Boldness will impart a significant share in the success.

**xiii. “Ebí ñpa mí” ò sèé fífé wí” online**

“‘I am hungry’ is not a message that whistling can convey.”

A person in need of help must not be coy or cryptic in asking. (p. 175).

**Cultureme:** Talk (+) Silence (-) **Advice:** The necessary speaking must be done.

This proverb brings to mind the subject of drumming, among the Yorubas. The Yoruba drums talk. They are made to mimic human speech productions. The same goes with fluting, whistling, and coded speech making, which are speech extensions or speech surrogates. People communicate at great length using alternative speech production mediums such as whistling. However, unless there is a mutual understanding of what is said or a deep shared cultural background, the information may not be adequately conveyed. The listener may struggle to decode what the whistling means, and if you are whistling to announce your hunger, you may never get help because nobody understands what you are saying. A person in need of help must not be shy or ambiguous in asking for it. The Yoruba believe that when you need help, you should not be reserved in asking for it. The law of nature is to be rewarded for asking.

**xiv. “Bí ojù bá sé ojù; kí ohùn má yẹ ohùn”**

“If the eyes no longer see eyes, let the voice not miss the voice.”

(“Though separated by distances, people should keep the communication going and the agreements they made”) (p. 242).

**Cultureme:** Talk (+) Silence (-) **Advice:** The necessary speaking must be done.

This proverb is used when the Yorubas want to appeal to a person or a group of people not to fail their promise or desert an agreement or a convention. This proverb is calling to mind that out of sight should not be out of communication. Even if the presence is missed, the verbal communication and the agreement should not be violated. It is used to hold trust, especially when people meet together and conclude something or make promises. So they would not go behind and break the promise or violate the agreement. This proverb advises staying connected through verbal communication.

**xv. “À-rí-ì-gbòdo-wí, à-rí-ì-gbòdò fò ni ikú awo”**

“Something-seen-but-unmentionable, something-seen-but-unspeakable is the death of a guardian of the mysteries.”

(“Sometimes the eyes see things that are too sacred for the mouth to mention”) (p. 165).

**Cultureme:** Talk (+) Silence (-) **Advice:** Be courageous while mentioning mysteries.

This proverb means a sealed mouth is the death of an *awo*; (*awo* is a sacred secret person or group). It could also mean the death of an *awo* is in a sealed mouth. Not being able to speak up can cause the death of a chief priest. The Yoruba believe that there is a need for every adult to train himself or herself in the face of arguments, especially ones that will likely result in a fight. Something you witness, but must not talk about is the death of an initiative. Put differently; some experiences you do not just share with others, and not talking about them may become a cause of death of the person in a position to reveal.

**xvi. “Omode gbon agba gbon lafi da Ile-ife”**

“Youths are wise, and the elders are wise; that is the principle by which people found Ife” (Ademowo & Balugun, 2014, p. 10).

**Cultureme:** Talk (+) **Advice:** The necessary speaking must be done.

In the ancient *Ife*, (the origin of the founder of the Yoruba race, Oduduwa), the land’s affairs were solely administered by the elderly. No young ones could contribute. However, during the reign of Ogunjemiluyi as the Ooni of Ife and Oba Adedigbolu as the Alaafin of Oyo Empire, Alaafin planned to wage war on Ife unless they could solve a riddle. He sent them a male cow and requested them to send it back to Oyo in one month with its calf after being pregnant and giving birth. The Ife were puzzled and could not solve the problem among the very best wise men of Ife. The king sought help from the youth; they solved it one day by asking the city to send a male child to the Alaafin with the message that the bull and its calf would be sent when the boy is returned pregnant. This strategy made the Oyo empire respected Ife. It also confused Oyo and its army, which led to the loss of the battle. This proverb’s application is that all hands must be on deck when there is a need to proffer a solution to a severe problem, and no one must be looked down on as a solution can come from unexpected places. It means that the counsel given by a young person is worth considering as the counsel of an elder. The exposure and experience of elders are always more profound than those of youngsters by their age. Their perceptions about life are more authentic and reliable, so guidance is sought from elders when needed.

**xvii. “Owo omode o to pepe, t’agbalagba owo kengbe”**

“No person has the final answer, but everyone has something to contribute” (ibid, p. 11).

**Cultureme:** Talk (+) **Advice:** The necessary speaking must be done.

‘Pepe’ is an altar or a raised platform above the ground. ‘kengbe’ is a gourd, a sort of calabash bottle with a wide mouth, narrow neck, and a bulging body. When things are kept in it, older ones need very young ones with small hands to take items out of the gourd. At the same time, young ones need older ones to reach the raised platform; Pepe. An informant translated it in these words, “the youth’s hand cannot reach the rafter, and the elder’s hand cannot enter the gourd,” which means that the youth should not refuse to run an errand for elders because they may require their help someday and the same advice is imparted to the elders. This proverb is used to underscore the belief in the communalistic and kinship spirit, which is at the heart of dispute resolution for the Yorubas. No one should refrain from sharing his/her ideas based on his young age or less experience. Communication is the key to solve all the problems.

**xviii. “Bí èyàn-án bá ṣeun ká sọpé ó ṣeun; bí èyàn-án bá ṣèyàn ká sọ pé ó ṣèyàn; nítórípé, ohun tí a ṣe, ó yẹ kó gbeni”**

“If a person deserves gratitude, we should say that he deserves gratitude; if a person is kind, we should say that he is kind because one should reap the rewards of one’s actions” (p. 342).

**Cultureme:** Talk (+) **Advice:** The necessary speaking must be done.

A person’s goodness should be publicly acknowledged as a good deed that merits a good return. This proverb spotlights the value of acknowledgment as gratitude toward good deeds done. A reasonable person deserves an excellent verbal repayment in explicit terms. They can still say, “if you do not properly appreciate a one-time good, you can deprive yourself of a better one tomorrow” (p. 56). Talking to appreciate something positive is eulogized. This proverb simply means a person should be appraised and commended when doing the right thing or being good. The Yorubas do this to emphasize and appreciate good people for a record. Positive verbal reinforcements are advised in this proverb.

**xix. “Àgùntàn ò jí ní kùtù kùyù ṣe ẹnu bọbọ”**

“A sheep does not wake in the morning and droop its mouth” online

**Cultureme:** Talk (+) **Advice:** The necessary speaking must be done.

(One should not dawdle in the morning.)

An animal metaphor has been used in this proverb to boost the participants' communication skills when the moment demands to communicate actively. It communicates that when a person wakes up in the morning, he should be fresh and talk in a vigorous manner instead of being quiet and reticent.

### **Punjabi Proverbs about Positive Evaluation of Talk (5+)**

#### **i. *Jibh chalay 100 bla taly* (Bajwa, 2011, 1, p. 218).**

A sensible tongue can avert hundreds of misfortunes.

**Cultureme:** Power of tongue (+) **Advice:** Use the tongue wisely.

Your words can save you from many troubles. The wise man speaks according to the occasion. In some contexts, a wise man succeeds in doing many jobs because of his efficient verbal behavior.

#### **ii. *Jihdi jibh chaldi ae, osday hul chalday nei'n* (p. 66).**

A man who speaks (wisely) can make his work done through words.

**Cultureme:** Power of tongue (+) **Advice:** Use the tongue wisely.

The above-mentioned culturemes (i and ii) have focused on the tongue's positive aspect if used correctly/wisely. It can help perform the tasks by convincing other people that a person cannot do them single-handedly. The wise man becomes famous because of his excellent speech behavior and morals because people believe in his words and act upon his advice.

#### **iii. *Dastaar guftaar ee kam aundi ae* (1, p. 230).**

The turban and talk assist well.

**Cultureme:** Power of talk (+) **Advice:** Be cautious about the words.

The turban is considered the symbol of respect, prestige, and high social status in the Punjabi linguo-culture. Here the talk of a person is equated with his social repute to make the importance of speech clear. If a person has a position as well as good verbal behavior, his targets become achievable.

**iv. *Mu'nh ich zaban te turat maidan (4, 228).***

Having a tongue in the mouth, you can win in any field.

**Cultureme:** Power of tongue (+) **Advice:** Use your words wisely.

If a person has a tongue in his mouth, he will not die of hunger. He can use his tongue to ask for help. This proverb is used when a person has come out of a difficult time with the help of his/her tongue. The proper verbal behavior can do everything. Another aspect is that man can conquer every field of the world with his speech.

**v. *Mai'n faqeer gula'n da, roti lay k hilla'n ga (p. 353).***

I am a talker and will leave after taking the piece of bread.

**Cultureme:** Power of tongue (+) **Advice:** Use your words wisely.

This proverb mentions earning some financial gains by one's words/speech/argument. This proverb is used for people who talk smoothly, and their only purpose is to benefit from other people and earn their bread.

**Explanation and Discussion of Positive Evaluation of Talk**

These Yoruba and Punjabi proverbs underscore the significance of speaking your heart out at appropriate moments as zipping the lips in those situations may result in an unfavorable outcome; hence speaking where it is necessary is strongly encouraged. These Yoruba proverbs have presented a contrastive theme from the Punjabi corpus by encouraging conversation, dialogue, and discussion in the highest number of proverbs (19). On the other hand, only a few Punjabi proverbs (5) have yielded culturemes where speech is encouraged. Furthermore, the speech is encouraged in these Punjabi proverbs in its own right to achieve some purposes, but not as a contrast to discourage silence. These Punjabi proverbs have delineated some positive aspects of speech, but the semantic density is significantly lower than the Yoruba corpus. There is a special mention of the tasks accomplished with the help of the correct use of the tongue. These proverbs denote the preference given to performance and getting things done with the employment of words. Words are valued only when they help the speaker gain some advantages which could not be attained by maintaining silence.

On the other hand, the Yoruba corpus has yielded a significant number of culturemes, which has reinforced the notion that speech is encouraged while silence is discouraged. Several images have been brought forward to reiterate this idea that essential speaking must

be done, and avoiding speech or feeling shy on particular occasions may cause physical and social losses for the persons involved. A Kenyan proverb quoted by Hodari and Sobers (2009) also reinforced the Nigerian notion of speech as a symbol of life and existence, “We should talk as we are still alive” (p. 73). Traditional African societies rely on their traditional conflict resolution institutions. They believe in discussion, as the Batswana people say, “*The good of the conflict is a discussion*” (Gebregeorgis, 2015 p. 234). Similarly, the Kenyans understand that “*having a good discussion is like having riches.*” Wise mediators and community leaders are responsible for settling disputes through mediation. The Yoruba people say, “*One never hears ‘beat him up’ from the mouth of an elder*” (p. 234). In the Yoruba corpus, talking/communicating has been encouraged as a means of making things done, just as a Mexican proverb “*By talking people understand each other*” (Stone, 2006, p. 421) reinforced the importance of interaction as a means to enhance understanding. In the Yoruba corpus, speech has been eulogized through multiple metaphors, including but not limited to a silent mouth compared with a stinking object, the image of a carpenter who is unable to perform his duty for want of a clear description by the customer.

Oyata (1992) also verified the presence of a positive attitude toward speech in the Nigerian linguo-cultures through an Igbo proverb, “*One who does not have his say when a charm is being prepared, will have his mouth tied up in the charm*” (p. 190). The import of this proverb is that one should do the right thing at the right time because the opportunity once lost is never regained. However, a remarkable pragmatic fact is that it has been used to convey the need to speak out one’s mind when the occasion demands. The above-mentioned Igbo (another important Nigerian language) proverb is reminiscent of the proverbial fowl in an Igbo etymological tale. The fowl had excused itself from a general meeting of the animals with an additional pledge that it would abide by whatever decisions arrived at by the animals. Incidentally, the animals decided that the fowl should be a sacrificial animal for man, which, as the story goes, explains why the fowl is the most sacrificial animal/bird used by man. What is interesting about this story is that it not only brings out the importance of one being present in a communal deliberation to make his contribution, but it has also given birth to the wellerism, “*The fowl said that its absence from a meeting of the animals is what made it meat for the entertainment of visitors*” (p. 193). Other proverbs quoted by Oyata (1992) about the



optimistic view of speech include; *“To speak out is life, taciturnity is death”*; *“A dumb person has been led away past his father’s compound and sold”*; *“If the feet do not go, the feet will be guilty; and if one does not speak, the mouth will be guilty”* (p. 202). These proverbs purely dwell on the necessity of speaking out both as a virtue in itself and as a situational demand. In contrast to De Caro’s findings that *“Not speaking or speaking very little are associated with wisdom,”* Opatá (1992) quoted these Igbo proverbs from the same country (Nigeria), which have emphasized the need of being vocal and appeared to extol speech as an index of wisdom: *“A child’s wisdom is revealed in his speeches”* (p. 196); *“He knows not when to be silent who knows not when to speak”*; *“He who knows not what to say, says that others have already said what he had in mind to say”* (p. 198).

The Yoruba proverbs seem to join Igbo (Opatá, 1992) proverbs in eulogizing speech over silence through positive connotations. Contrary to the Punjabi proverbs, McNeil (1971) quoted some Indian proverbs (the author has not specified any language) with the implied message that one should not refrain from talking. Like the Yoruba proverbs, the Indian proverbs have raised similar doubts for those who are too quiet to be regarded with suspicion: *“Silent cows are experts at eating refuse.”* Undue silence is a sign of evil design, so one should try to avoid it. On the other hand, a straightforward speaker is presented positively to be a less of a swindler in another proverb. Just like Yoruba’s appreciation for a frank speaker, the Indian counterpart *“An open talker is not generally deceitful”* (McNeil, p. 5) contains the implication that one who is silent is mysterious and deceitful.

The Yoruba corpus’ insights to eulogize and encourage speech seem to share the tendencies identified by Norrick (1997) in the American proverbs. Of the eighty-eight Anglo-American proverbs, nineteen were judged to do so. Several, for example, extol the value of speech in interpersonal relations: *“Words cost little and sometimes lead to friendship”* (p. 279). Words are also a vehicle for proper expression, *“Words are the wings of the heart”* (p. 281); *“A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver”* (p. 281). Moreover, speech is necessary to get things done: *“Many things are lost for want of speaking”* and *“Nothing ask, nothing have”* (p. 283). Furthermore, like Norrick (1997), who unmasked the negative connotations in a few Anglo-Americans proverbs about silence like, *“Silence gives consent”* and *“Silence is equivalent to confession”*, the present study has explored that the

Yoruba proverbs also suggest that one may remain silent to his/her detriment. “*Speak now or forever hold your peace*” (p. 280) also reminds the speakers that some situations require decisive speech, and the conclusive proverb is “*Talk is not always cheap, and silence not always golden*” (p. 281).

### **Cultural Scripts about Positive Evaluation of Talk**

Anthropological linguists and ethnographers of communication have long recognized that different speech communities have different ‘ways of speaking,’ not just in the narrowly linguistic sense but also in the norms or conventions of linguistic interaction. ‘Cultural Scripts’ spell out different ‘local’ conventions of discourse using the metalanguage of universal semantic primes. Cultural norms have been spelled out by using this approach, with much greater precision than possible with technical labels such as ‘direct,’ ‘polite,’ ‘formal,’ etc. Because they are phrased in simple, translatable, and straightforward terms, the danger of ethnocentric bias creeping into the very terms of the description is minimized.

Cultural scripts are not intended to provide an account of real-life social interactions. Instead, they are intended as descriptions of commonly held assumptions about how ‘people think’ about social interaction. Because people bring these assumptions with them into everyday interactions, cultural scripts influence the form taken by particular verbal encounters, but they do not in any sense determine individual interactions. It probably bears repeating that despite the possible connotations of the word ‘script,’ these cultural scripts are not ‘binding’ on Punjabi or Yoruba individuals. They are not proposed as rules of behavior, but as rules of interpretation and evaluation. Individuals can and do vary in their speech behavior. The claim of the Cultural Scripts Approach is merely that these scripts form a kind of interpretive background against which individuals position their own acts and others.

For example, the scripts below are intended to capture a speech-related norm in the Nigerian Yoruba and Punjabi linguo-cultures:

#### **The Yoruba Cultural Script about Positive Evaluation of Talk**

many times it happens when

it is good to talk

it is not good not to talk

it may be bad not to talk

### **The Punjabi Cultural Script about Positive Evaluation of Talk**

sometimes it happens when

it is good to talk

it is not good not to talk

it may be bad not to talk

## **4.2 Clarity in Speech**

### **The Yoruba Proverbs about Clarity in Speech (13+)**

#### **i. “Àwíyé nIfẹ̀ ńfọ̀; gba-n-gba lorò ńpẹ̀ran”**

“Explicitly is the way Ifẹ̀ speaks; it is openly that Orò kills animals” (p. 241).

(Whatever one has to say, one should say without mincing words.)

**Cultureme:** Clear talk (+) **Advice:** A speaker should make clear his/her point.

*Ifẹ̀* speaks clearly, *Oro* kills openly. Ifẹ̀ is the ancestral origin of the Yoruba. The King of Ifẹ̀ is the traditional head of other kings in the Yorubaland, while Orò is the deity that does not see women. The informant explicated that ‘plainly’ is the way Ife people (the forefathers of the Yorubas) speak, without any disguise, just like a poisoned arrow kills an animal in the sight of all. It is used to warn a prevaricator to speak the truth. Among the Yoruba people, this proverb is used, especially when there is time for discussions, where the parties are compelled to say it as it is without any hidden truth or fear of intimidation.

#### **ii. “Àsoro àládí ló pa Elempe ịsáájú tó ní igbá wúwo ju àwo”**

“Saying words without proper explanation killed the first Elempe when he said the Calabash is heavier than a clay pot.”

(“Speaking with clarity will save a person from trouble or danger”) (p. 241).

**Cultureme:** Clear Talk (+) **Advice:** A speaker should make clear his/her point.

A good explanation of words may have an impact on saving someone from crises. Speaking clearly to avoid unpleasant situations is advised and encouraged through this proverb as it is believed that excessive economy in speech leads to obscurity.

iii. “*Egbètàlá: bí a ò bálà á, kì í yéni*”

“Egbètàlá: if one does not explain it, no one understands what it means” (p. 244).

**Cultureme:** Clear Talk (+) **Advice:** A speaker should make clear his/her point.

Ambiguous statements confuse. *Egbètàlá* is 2600 in the Yoruba numeral system, which is derived from *egbaà’* (200) multiplied by *mẹ́tálá’* (13). If no one explains it, nobody knows what it means. This proverb implies that enigmatic statements or words should be clarified.

iv. “*Àwíyé ní ímú oràn yéni; oodúnrún okùn la fí ñsin egeba; bí a ò bálà á, kì í yéni*”

“Vivid explanation of someone will bring honor” (p. 241).

(Too much economy in speech leads to confusion.)

**Cultureme:** Clear talk (+) **Advice:** A speaker should make clear his/her point.

The proverb is used to advise to present an argument in a coherent, unclouded, and logical way that will make people respect the speaker. The definition of the proverb provided by the informant goes like, clarity makes words simple. Speaking unequivocally brings clear understanding because unless one explains it, no one understands.

v. “*Òrò bọ́tí-bọ́tí ò yẹ àgbàlagbà*”

“Speech like drunken babble does not befit a venerable person” (p. 85).

**Cultureme:** Clear talk (+) **Advice:** A speaker should make clear his/her point.

Responsible adults should be cautious about how they speak. To ‘babble’ is to talk rapidly and continuously in a nonsensical, excited, or incomprehensible way. Speech etiquettes for an elderly and respected member are decided and communicated through this proverb.

vi. “*Mo kò ó’ kì í se àìní àpẹ̀júwe*”

“‘I met him’ is an incomplete statement without further elaboration.”

(“One should say enough to make one’s message understood”) (p. 262).

**Cultureme:** Clear talk (+) **Advice:** A speaker should make clear his/her point.

This proverb is used when a person does not clearly express the intended meaning through words. Incomplete expressions leave a place for miscommunication and confusion, which the Yorubas do not like.

**vii. “*Èlà lẹ̀rọ̀; bi á bọ̀ bá là á rírú ní ñrú*”**

“Statements must be clarified; if they are not, they become muddy” (p. 244).

**Cultureme:** Clear Talk (+) **Advice:** A speaker should make clear his/her point.

Statements must be clarified; otherwise they become opaque, and this opacity will initiate misconceptions and misunderstandings, culminating in serious conflicts. The clear message conveyed will clear the situation.

**viii. “*Èlà lẹ̀rọ̀; bóbînrín bá jókó a laşọ bobo*”**

“Statements must always be clarified; when a woman sits, she covers her genitals with her wrapper.”

(“One must always be clear in one’s speech or intentions”) (p. 244).

**Cultureme:** Clear talk (+) **Advice:** A speaker should make clear his/her point.

“The second part about a woman’s genitals is gratuitous flippancy; it takes advantage of the syllable là (in Èlà), which means ‘clarify’ and also denotes the action of passing one’s loincloth between one’s thighs to cover the genitalia” (p. 244). The message of the proverb entails that one must always be clear in one’s speech or intentions. This expression is used metaphorically, relating how women sit with how the speech should be made.

**ix. “*Àjànàkú kúro ni “A rí nkan fîrî”; bí a bá rérin ká wí*”**

“The elephant is more than something of which one says, ‘I caught a fleeting glimpse of something’; if one saw an elephant, one should say so” (p. 239).

**Cultureme:** Clear talk (+) **Advice:** A speaker should make clear his/her point.

The proverb is used to advise not to hedge and prevaricate when discussing the obvious and to say something as it has happened. The animal imagery has been used by mentioning ‘elephant,’ which shows the cultural significance of this wild animal in African Nigeria.

**x. “*Ibi tí a tí na ọmọ ọba là nbèrè, a kì íbèrè ibi tí ọmọ ọbá tí pọ̀n lẹ̀gbẹ̀.*”**

“What one should ask is where the prince was attacked and flogged; one does not ask where the prince got the welts on his side” (p. 260).

**Cultureme:** Clear Talk (+) **Advice:** A speaker should make clear his/her point.

(“When matters require urgent attention, one should not speak in riddles or prevaricate”).

It means that one should ask the right question or say the right thing, sensing the situation's criticality. The Yorubas use it when someone is trying to divert the obvious of the conversation by saying or talking about some irrelevant subject. Unnecessary details before a real talk can irritate the listener/addressee and create complications.

**xi. “A kí í pè é lerú, ká pè é ló bí”**

“One does not call it a slave and also calls it a child of the house” (p. 237).

**Cultureme:** Clear Talk (+) **Advice:** A speaker should make clear his/her point.

One must be clear about one’s attitude toward a thing or person; ambivalence causes trouble. Two descriptions for a single object/incident will only lead to misunderstanding and miscommunication. The proverb is used to warn the speaker to be clear in his/her verdict or position about the object under discussion.

**xii. “A kí í pè é lerù ká pè é loṣoo”**

“One does not call it a burden and also call it an adornment” (p. 237).

**Cultureme:** Clear Talk (+) **Advice:** A speaker should make clear his/her point.

An event is either a boon or a disaster, never both. Two descriptions for a single object/incident will only lead to misunderstanding and miscommunication. The proverb is used to warn the speaker to be clear in his/her verdict or position about the object under discussion.

**xiii. “Pátá-pátá leégún ñfaṣo borí”**

“It is completely that the masquerader covers his head with his shroud” (p. 253).

**Cultureme:** Clear talk **Advice:** Be clear in your talk.

One must be thoroughgoing in whatever one does. The proverbs mentioned above emphasize the need to be clear, straightforward, and unambiguous in one's statements and articulations.

### **Explanation and Discussion of Clarity in Speech**

These Yoruba proverbs are singularly giving expression to the need to make one’s speech unambiguous. Clarity should be the ultimate aim in any conversation, and its absence may create confusion and conflict. Speaking in riddles when matters require urgent attention may lead to annoyance and complications. This cultureme discourages speaking less or maintaining brevity at the toll of clarification of the intended point. The Gricean Maxim of Quantity and Manner are fortified here (Grice, 1975), especially the Maxim of Manner,

“when one tries to be as clear, as brief, and as orderly as one can in what one says, and where one avoids obscurity and ambiguity” (p. 159). Two other Yoruba proverbs also reinforce the preference given to absolute clarity, unambiguity, and consistency by the Yoruba people, “*On’s blindness should be absolute, and one’s leprosy should pervade the whole body; half-blindness only brings dissensions*” (p. 251); “*One’s condition should be definite, not ambiguous or undetermined*” (p. 253).

In this second most frequent contrasting theme from the Yoruba corpus, a significant number of culturemes verified the presence of a firm belief of the Yoruba people in the explicability and overtones of speech as essential characteristics expected from a proficient speaker. It is unambiguously proclaimed that “*Explicitly is the way Ifẹ speaks*” (p. 241), with several subsequent culturemes reinforcing the same notion of certainty and precision. Speaking in an ambiguous manner and babbling are believed to lead to confusion and conflict, which does not suit a venerable person. On the other hand, unequivocal talk is believed to bestow prestige and dignity for the speaker. The extra economy in speech and imprecise cum illegible talk leads to bewilderment and antagonism, so it is strongly dispirited in these multiple proverbs. Speakers are indirectly advised to be transparent in their thoughts so that this precision may also reflect in their argument and contention. Speakers are recommended not to hedge while discussing something obvious. If they have to talk about something that challenges the listener’s comprehensibility, the description must be provided transparently to ensure the exactitude. Speaking without legibility causes the death (of the purpose of communication) of the speaker or listener or both.

For the reasons mentioned above, Owomoyela (2005) has contended in his study of communication patterns that the Yoruba speaker strives to ensure that the idea he or she wishes to communicate reaches its target ungarbled and in as unmistakable a form as possible. If an explanation for such care is necessary, one needs only to remember the importance of relationality in living in traditional communalism, especially when speech also happens to be the most available and, therefore, most common communication medium. In such a context, to paraphrase another proverb, the judicious—not only correct—application of speech causes the kola nut to emerge from the pocket. In contrast, the careless use of words brings out the sword from its scabbard. The following proverbs from Swahili origins

have also stated clearly and reinforced the African wish to promote clarity, “*When you tell the news, do not speak in riddles*”; “*Do not slander by allusion*” (Hodari and Sobers, 2009, p. 45). The final reiterating proverb is taken from Opata (1992), quoted from the Igbo language, “*They may listen to all the speakers, but applause [only] the few who make sense*” (p. 193).

The absence of a Punjabi proverb about this cultureme entails that Punjabi linguo-culture does not propagate this aspect as a preferable norm. According to Petrova (2019), the absence of a proverb on any aspect does not entail the absence of idea from that linguo-culture. It simply implies that the linguo-culture under investigation does not deal with this idea as a preferred notion.

### **The Yoruba Cultural Script about Clarity in Speech**

The below-mentioned Cultural Script is formulated to capture a speech-related norm of 'being clear' in the Nigerian Yoruba linguo-culture only because no Punjabi proverbs could be identified endorsing this cultureme:

many times it happens when

it is good to talk about what I want to say

it is not good to talk about what I do not want to say

someone will think good of me if I say what I want to say as it is

### **4.3 Directness/Indirectness**

#### **The Yoruba Proverbs about Directness/Indirectness (11) (8+, 3-)**

##### **i. “*Àwìyẹ́n Ifẹ̀ nǹọ̀ gba-n-gba loro`nǹẹ̀ran*”**

“Explicitly is the way *Ifẹ̀* speaks; it is openly that Orò kills animals” (p. 254).

(Whatever one has to say, one should say without mincing words)

**Cultureme:** Directness (+) Clarity (+) **Advice:** Do not be discreet.

This proverb is counted in ‘clarity’ and ‘directness’ both because of the polysemic semantic capacity. Ifẹ̀ is the ancestral origin of the Yoruba. The King of Ifẹ̀ is the traditional head of other kings in the Yorubaland, while Orò is the deity that does not see women. The



informant has explicated that ‘plainly’ is the way Ife people (the forefathers of the Yorubas) speak, without any disguise, just like a poisoned arrow kills an animal in the sight of all. It is used to warn a prevaricator to speak the truth. Among the Yoruba people, this proverb is used, especially when there is time for discussions where the parties are compelled to say it without any hidden truth or fear of intimidation.

**ii. “Ó pé tíí ni “A-benu-bí-enu-òbò”; ká sá sọ pé, “Ìwọ Lámọnrín, òbò ni ó.”**

“It is mere circumlocution to say, ‘A person has a mouth like a fool’s;’ one should rather say, ‘You, so-and-so, you are a fool’” (p. 263).

**Cultureme:** Directness (+) **Advice:** Be confident enough to speak without hedging.

This proverb is used to advise that one should be bold enough to speak his mind and tell the truth. An informant from the Yorubaland reports another variant of the same proverb, “It is a mere circumlocution to say ‘A person has a mouth like a monkey’s; one should rather say, ‘You, so-and-so, you are a monkey.’ The proverb is used for people trying to be discreet while pointing to some fault that one should be confident enough to speak without hedging. Hence, it is germane to avoid indirect speech.

**iii. “Àbàtá pani; àbàtá pani; ká sá sọ pé odò-ó gbéni lọ”**

“He died in the mire; he died in the mire; let us simply say that the person drowned” (p. 250).

**Cultureme:** Directness (+) **Advice:** One should prefer plain talk to euphemisms.

The same notion of having the courage to call a spade a spade has been reinforced in this proverb. The proverb is used for people trying to be discreet while pointing some fault in someone that one should be confident enough to speak without hedging. Hence, it is germane to avoid indirect speech.

**iv. “Àdàpè ọ̀rọ̀ ò jẹ́ ká mọ̀ ìtumọ̀ orúkọ”**

“Riddling makes it impossible for one to know the meanings of names” (p. 251).

**Cultureme:** Directness (+) **Advice:** Do not be overtly shy.

Indirect talk can lead to misunderstanding. The Yorubas use this proverb for people trying to be discreet while talking about some fault in someone. One should be confident enough to speak without hedging. Hence, it is germane to avoid indirect speech.

v. *“Àì-fẹ̀-àlejòó-ṣe là ńwí pé “Òrẹ̀ ọ̀rẹ̀-ẹ̀ mí dé”; ká Ẹ̀sáà tí wí pé, “Òrẹ̀-ẹ̀ mí dé.” Online*  
 “Reluctance to extend hospitality makes one say, ‘My friend’s friend has arrived’; one should simply say, ‘My friend has arrived’”

**Cultureme:** Directness (+) **Advice:** Do not be discreet and overtly shy. One should avoid the double talk.

If one believes that one’s friend’s friend is one’s friend, then one should not stress that the friend is once removed; one should avoid the double talk.

vi. *“Ebí ńpa mí” ò ẹ́é fife wí” online*

“To say ‘I am hungry,’ one cannot whistle!”

**Cultureme:** Directness (+) **Advice:** Do not be discreet and overtly shy.

You have to describe your needs through appropriate verbal means instead of relying upon alternative clues that can communicate an unintended meaning. There is no need to hide one’s needs and feelings in pretense by keeping quiet. The relationship of talk to action has been emphasized as an agent to get things done.

vii. *“Àjànàkú kúro ni ‘A rí nkan firí’; bí a bá rérin ká wí”*

“The elephant is more than something of which one says, ‘I caught a fleeting glimpse of something’; if one saw an elephant, one should say so” (p. 239).

**Cultureme:** Directness (+) **Advice:** Do not be discreet. Do not hedge when discussing the obvious.

The elephant is big enough to deny its existence. When you are impressed or amazed by any action or something, you should acknowledge it and give a frank appraisal.

viii. *“Ojú gba-n-gba là ńta awọ gbà-ń-gbà”*

“It is out in the open that one spreads a huge skin” (p. 251).

**Cultureme:** Directness (+) **Advice:** Do not be discreet.

A matter that is of great consequence to all should be discussed in the presence of all. Regarding speech (that is, metaphorical), if an issue has grown beyond a point, you talk about it in public. At times, matter spins out of control and can no longer be concealed under

the carpet. A related Yoruba proverb is, “*The issue you are hiding from the father of the house would eventually be resolved by the father*” (Owomoyela, 2005, p. 35). That is, it is imprudent to keep certain issues secret. People are advised to keep their views and argument open and fair, especially when the matter is of public concern. People should be taken into confidence by sharing all the aspects and keeping the discussion open.

**ix. “*Bí òwe bí òwe nIfá ñsòrò*”**

“Like proverbs, like proverbs, are the pronouncements of *Ifá*” (p. 112).

(The most profound speech of priests is indirect and subtle.)

**Cultureme:** Indirectness (-) **Advice:** Be direct and subtle.

The *Ife* believe that only an oracle talks in parables because a priest or priestess acts as a medium. The Yoruba people seek advice or prophecy by these priests or priestesses from the gods since classical antiquity. This proverb is used when someone makes a statement figuratively, which could be a piece of advice or vital information. The people should keep their talk as explicit as possible.

**x. “*A kì í tìojú on-íka-mesàn-ánkà á*”**

“One does not count the fingers of a person who has only nine, in his or her presence” (p. 107).

(One must be discreet in speaking about other people’s physical flaws and deformities)

Do not talk about physical deformities in front of a person.

**Cultureme:** Indirectness (+) **Advice:** Avoid straight talk about physical deformities.

The Yoruba use this proverb when they do not want the people around know what they say. When the person about whom they are talking is present, and they do not want the person to know. It means that one should not discuss a person when he is there. At times they use it to tell people not to say something about a physical deformity that will make another person feel awful. People are advised not to speak about physical deformities in the presence of the concerned person. Discretion should be a guide because it is wrong to speak about the person's physical inability, especially when he/she is around. It is considered unethical to hurt any person for his/her physical deformity. It may hurt the self-esteem of that miserable person by making him feel petty by highlighting his physical sufferings.

**xi. “A kì í bú ọba onígégè`lójú àwọn èyàn-án rẹ”**

“One does not insult a king with goiter in the presence of his people” (p. 157).

**Cultureme:** Indirectness (+) **Advice:** Implicit expression of displeasure is good

Never expose yourself to repercussions with careless speech or indiscreet behavior. If you abuse a goiter king in his people’s presence, it may cause conflict and rancor. So, do not expose yourself in order to avoid its consequences. This proverb is used to warn the speakers to be cautious about their words when talking to people in power as misspeaking may entrap them in severe backlash. Another piece of advice is never to disrespect a man in the presence of his family. Nobody would like his/her family to be disgraced irrespective of their offense. Therefore, discretion will be essential to know an appropriate word to utter in any given situation.

**xii. “Èni tí yóyàáni lówó, tí kò ní sinni, ohùnenu-u rẹ la ti n’mmo”**

“The person who will lend money and will not keep pestering one for repayment, one can tell from the tone of his or her voice.”

(“The way people talk is a good indication of their mood and character”) (p. 131).

**Cultureme:** Indirectness (+) **Advice:** Implicit expression of displeasure is good

The people are advised to take the tone and expressions of the speaker into consideration along with their words, especially in financial matters. The way a person talks is taken as a good indication of his/her character. It means that people's character marries their speech. From the tone, it is easier to know whom you can help out. Listen to what people are saying around you before trusting or seeking their help.

**Punjabi Proverbs about Indirectness (7 +)**

**i. *Aaqil noo’n ishara, jahil noo’n phatkara* (p. 24).**

A nod to the wise, a rod to the otherwise

**Cultureme:** Indirectness (+) **Advice:** Use indirect gestures instead of direct verbal castigation.

This borrowed proverb from the Persian origin in form and content, with rhymed parallel structures, is used when someone is not ready or capable of comprehending the unsaid words and getting the intended meanings of non-verbal gestures. In the Punjabi

linguo-culture, a listener is considered wise when he/she can catch the meaning of gestures and does not need a verbal explication. The person who depends on explicit interpretation is considered a dupe or an ignorant fellow. A word to the wise is enough. The wise corrects him by listening to a hint or hushed words and understands the matter, while polite things do not affect an ignorant person, and we have to explain it in the language of punishment and rebuke.

**ii. *Akha'n dhi nu, sunawa'n noo'nh nu* (p. 35).**

To ask the daughter, to make the daughter-in-law listen

***Cultureme:*** Indirectness (+) ***Advice:*** Be indirect while criticizing and imparting an unpleasant message.

This proverb uses a domestic setting where the mother-in-law wants to criticize her daughter-in-law. To avoid any direct scuffle or argument with her, she opts for a circuitous manner by saying something to her daughter in the presence of her daughter-in-law so she may mend her ways accordingly. This proverb is also used to indirectly describe a person's faults and prove oneself smart.

**iii. *Dhiye gul sun, noo'nhe'n kun kar* (p. 87).**

O daughter listen to me, O daughter-in-law be attentive.

***Cultureme:*** Indirectness (+) ***Advice:*** Be indirect while criticizing and imparting an unpleasant message.

This is another proverb with gender partiality spoken about a mother-in-law who communicates something unpleasant to her daughter-in-law through an oblique verbal strategy to avoid controversy and altercation. When you feel wrong about something and cannot tell about it, you indirectly tell someone else to say the same thing.

**iv. *Burey nu vi mu'nh te bura nai akhi da* (p. 81).**

Do not call a rascal with the same name on his face. Do not call a spade a spade.

***Cultureme:*** Indirectness (+) ***Advice:*** Do not threaten the face through direct criticism. Be indirect while criticizing and imparting an unpleasant message.

Do not get involved in bald criticism. Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory to save face while interacting by avoiding bald criticism has been fortified in this Punjabi

proverb. Do not call someone by an improper name; do not speak frankly about something unpleasant.

**v. *Bharrolay nu vi mu'nh te bharrola nai akhi da* (p. 85).**

Do not call a wheat drum, 'drum' on its face.

***Cultureme:*** Indirectness (+) ***Advice:*** Do not threaten the face through direct criticism.

This is a metaphorical proverb in which a 'drum' has been personified by giving some emotions which may be hurt if called 'drum' means unattractive/fat on its face. Do not involve in bald criticism. Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory to save face while interacting by avoiding bald criticism has been fortified in this Punjabi proverb.

**vi. *Kanay nu vee mu'nh te kaana nai akhi da* (p. 167).**

It is not pleasant to call a one-eyed person, 'You are one-eyed.'

***Cultureme:*** Indirectness (+) ***Advice:*** Do not threaten the face through direct criticism.

These two proverbs recommend to be indirect while criticizing and imparting an unpleasant message. Stone (2006) also reported a Honduran proverb denouncing such name-calling, "*Do not call the alligator a bigmouth till you have crossed the river*" (p. 11). It also implies that when you see something bad in someone, do not call it wrong in the presence of other people. Do not involve in bald criticism. Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory to save face while interacting by avoiding bald criticism has been fortified in this Punjabi proverb.

**vii. *Akhan kutti nu, sunawa'n parohnay nu* (p. 36).**

I am talking to the calf, intending for the guest.

***Cultureme:*** Indirectness (+) ***Advice:*** Be indirect while imparting an unpleasant message.

A message communicated to a calf is meant for the guest to ensure an indirect way of communication. The Punjabi linguo-culture has a much-defined hospitality institution, which is evident from several proverbs commenting on different aspects of guest-hood and the services rendered by the hosts. This proverb is also describing a strategy used by hosts when they want to disclose some unpleasant message to the guests, but at the same time, do not want a squabble or clash. This proverb is also used when you vent your frustration or anger to someone else, even if he/she is not the concerned or relevant person.

### **Explanation and Discussion of Directness/Indirectness**

The culturematic analysis of these Yoruba proverbs has revealed a high semantic density (8 out of 11, 73% culturemes) in looking at ‘directness’ positively compared to the much smaller ratio (3 out of 11, 27%), which has stressed indirectness. While accentuating ‘directness,’ multiple examples have been noticed which have urged the speakers to call someone monkey, dead, fool without circumlocution as riddling makes it impossible to grasp the real intended meanings, and there remains a chance of misunderstanding. The difference between culturematic semantic density in the evaluation of directness as positive (73%) and negative (27%) uncovers the preference found in the Yoruba speech community for openness, frankness, and straightforwardness. It is noteworthy that among the culturemes supporting indirectness, the subjects include physical deformities (nine fingers and goiter) of an ordinary person as well as a person in power. The third context where indirectness is appreciated consists of a financial situation when a lender does not ask explicitly. However, his tone indicates his concern for his money, so the debtor should infer from the tone, gestures, and facial expressions instead of waiting for an explicit verbal demand. Interestingly, the indigenous professors and scholars have verified this straightforwardness and frankness observed in the students’ verbal behavior from Nigeria studying in Pakistani universities.

On the other hand, the above-mentioned (7) Punjabi cultural texts lay consistent emphasis on the circuitous and oblique style of communication when it comes to transmitting some unfavorable and abrogating remarks. Saving face and avoiding threats come forward as dominant verbal traits advised by these culturemes originating from diversified cultural contexts and settings. A layman is urged to avoid direct commentary and elucidation of something abominable while using the domestic, social, and hospitality institutions as examples of practice. These proverbs also hint at the possible reprehensible objects, including physical deformities, moral conduct, domestic behaviors, and the treatment of guests by the hosts. Whenever there is a situation that demands some condemnation, it is better to reckon on a circumlocutory speech style to avoid any possible conflict.

Though Owomoyela (1981) asserted while talking about the African philosophy of social communication, “People who insist on ‘calling a spade a spade’ therefore are

perceived as graceless and boorish” (p. 9). The Yoruba proverbs have shown an overt preference for straight talk (8) over discretion (3). Even a proverb has stated this openness as the hallmark of Ife (Yoruba) people, “*Explicitly is the way Ife speaks; it is openly that Orò kills animals.*” As a reiterative instance of this metaphorical style, we find amongst the catalog of Sisuto (African) proverbs, “*Be discreet in your discourse, avoid disguising the truth by evasive words*” (Hodari and Sobers, 2009, p. 77). Straightforwardness is propagated in a significantly higher number of culturemes in the Yoruba corpus. According to Petrova (2016, 2019), it is a clear indication of the social attitudes; as the more a notion is dressed in multiple verbal expressions, the deeper is the community’s concern about it.

In the Yoruba corpus, despite the notion that explicit expression of displeasure or mentioning a person’s faults in front of his face may become a conflict-raising factor, instead, people are advised to adopt straight talk and be honest in expressing their opinions. Whereas, the proverbs which discourage direct talk are falling in the power dynamics and financial matters where one must avoid any conflict caused by one’s openness and unrestrained commentary. On the other hand, the Punjabi data has revealed a preference for ‘indirect’ expression of displeasure or disliking for maintaining and sustaining social solidarity. Each Punjabi proverb lay reliable accentuation on winding and angled style of correspondence regarding transmitting some troublesome and revealing comments. Saving face and abstaining from the aggressive approach as verbal manners are exhorted by these Punjabi culturemes beginning from generally social to more focused domestic settings. An ordinary person is asked to keep away from ‘bald criticism’ and clarify something odious while utilizing the domestic, social, and hospitality settings as training instances. These precepts likewise allude to the conceivable abominable objects/acts, including physical disfigurements, moral preferences, domestic practices, and the treatment of visitors by the hosts. A Sindhi proverb has also reinforced the presence of this preference in the Pakistani linguo-culture: “*Do not call a one-eyed man, one-eyed*” (Roma, 1997, p. 33). If a situation requires some judgment; it is wiser to resort to a circumlocutory discourse style to maintain a strategic distance from any potential clash.

Indirectness in speech has been promoted in the Punjabi proverbs. In contrast, several Yoruba proverbs stress clarity and directness in one’s communicative strategies, which Adebija (1989) asserted as another potent and subtle marker of negative politeness. He



further notes that indirectness, which implies that a speaker does not make all his beliefs or desires explicit, is motivated by a desire to be polite. The ‘linguistic evidence’ (Wierzbicka, 2017) has suggested certain cultural scripts in the Yoruba and Punjabi linguo-cultures. The considerable value is placed in the Yoruba culture, like Russian culture (Wierzbicka, 1997), on speaking plainly and telling the addressee what one thinks about him and her. On the other hand, the Punjabi linguistic evidence has suggested that such plain and straightforward talk may often seem unkind and inconsiderate like the Anglo point of view. The same notion is reinforced when a significant number of culturemes appear under ‘think before you speak’ to promote a careful conversational minuet.

Like the Korean concept of indirectness indicated by Kim (2003), the Punjabi concept of face-saving has been a collectivist rather than the West’s individualistic concept. It extends to the reputation of the group, the speakers and addressees belong to, and concern is expected to maintain a good reputation within and outside the group. As a practical demonstration, the Punjabi speakers are generally observed looking toward non-verbal cues and speaking figuratively to make a point. This has the purpose of avoiding embarrassment or offense and respecting the other person in the conversation. If you need clarification on what is said, you can check several times and ask open-ended questions. It is common for the conversation to be drawn out as people take time to reach a complete understanding.

The Punjabi preference for ‘silence’ and negative evaluation of ‘talk’ is similar to the Japanese preferred norms of speech reported by Kim and Markus (2002) that listening and not talking are highly valued to demonstrate sympathy trying to understand what others are feeling. When these types of ideas about talking prevail, words are less likely to be taken at face value, and meaning is to be inferred rather than conveyed. While straight-talking is an excellent way to convey one’s meaning in many Western contexts, indirectness is a dominant theme of the Punjabi and Japanese life, and silence facilitates this indirectness. When silence is appreciated and valued with this perspective on talking, other forms of communication become critical.

### **The Yoruba Cultural Script about ‘Personal remarks’ and Speaking ‘straight’**

Hoffman’s examples of what she calls “direct criticisms of the person one is with” refer to two areas given special attention in cultural pragmatics: personal appearance and

differences of opinion. (Wierzbicka 2017, p. 206). The Yoruba proverbs, like their Russian counterparts (Wierzbicka, 1997), have delineated linguistic evidence which suggests that it is seen as better, rather than bad, to speak to another person ‘without padding’ or ‘wrapping’ around an unpleasant or painful message; it is good to speak ‘straight.’

[many people think like this:]

at many times if I think something bad about someone

when I am with this someone

it can be good if I say this to this someone

This script does not imply that in the Yorubaland, people always feel free to criticize the people they are with if they happen to think something bad about them at the time. Instead, it states that many Yoruba speakers think that it is not only natural but also good to speak ‘straight,’ – particularly if one knows the addressee well.

it is good to say to other people what I think

### **The Punjabi Cultural Script about Indirectness**

These Punjabi norms can be captured in the following Cultural Script. Notice that it is framed in the 'first-person' as a set of guidelines about how I should speak. It enjoins a kind of consideration for others and a concern for one's standing in other people's eyes.

before I say something to someone, it is good to think:

I do not want this person to feel something bad because of this

I do not want this person to think something bad about me

I have to think about what I say

One of the main dimensions of cultural variation in speaking is concerned with the expression of personal feelings. In general, it can be said that the Punjabi culture, like its Malay counterpart (Goddard, 1997), discourages people from verbally expressing how they feel, the ideal demeanor being one of a good-natured calm person. On the other hand,

everyone is expected to be sensitive to other people's facial expressions and actions. People who do not show the expected sensitivity are deemed to be 'thick and stupid.' The following script effectively discourages verbal explicitness about one's feelings while expressing confidence in the effectiveness of non-verbal signals.

when I feel something

it is not good to say something like this to another person:

'I feel like this'

if the other person can see me, they will know how I feel

### **The Punjabi Script of "softening/cushioning the blow"**

[many people think like this:]

at many times when I want to say something to someone

if I think that this someone can feel something bad because of this

it will be good if I say something good to this someone

### **The Punjabi Cultural Script about Avoiding Verbal Expression of Displeasure**

when I want someone to know what I think/feel

I do not have to say it to this person

I can say/do something else

## **4.4 Bilateral Powers of Tongue**

### **The Yoruba Proverbs about Bilateral Power of Tongue (2 +, -)**

#### **i. "Gbólóhùn kan-án ba ọ̀rọ̀ je; gbólóhùn kan-án tún ọ̀rọ̀ ẹ̀."**

"One solitary statement muddies an entire affair; one solitary statement clears all the confusion."

("A single sentence can cause irreparable damage; a single sentence can also repair the greatest relational damage") (p. 183).

**Cultureme:** Power of words (+, -) **Advice:** Be cautious about the words you speak.

One sentence may spoil a man's case; one sentence may improve it. One statement destroys a matter, and another statement settles it. The Yoruba use this statement when they try to describe the power contained in words. It means that a statement can change or mar someone's life. This proverb is like a pun. No matter how small a statement is, it can either make or mar other things said. The power of the word cannot be underestimated; it can either make or mar any situation if it is employed appropriately or otherwise.

ii. ***“Enu tí ìgbín fì bú òrìṣà ní ñfì-í lọle lọbá a”***

“The same mouth with which the snail insults the god is the one on which it crawls to the god” (“The person who insults a powerful person will in time eat his or her words before the person insulted”) (p. 40).

**Cultureme:** The capacity of the tongue (+, -) **Advice:** Be cautious about the words you speak.

The mouth that a snail uses to abuse an idol, the same it will use to worship him. When the word's power is employed wrongfully, the speaker might have reason to look for ways to amend the mistake. In the same manner, you abuse your superior, you praise him by eating your words, so be aware of your words' adverse effects.

**The Punjabi Proverbs about Bilateral Powers of Tongue (11, +, -)**

i. ***zabaan e raaj bethavy, te zabaan e bheek mangaway (p. 342)***

One's tongue may make him sit on the throne or make him a beggar.

**Cultureme:** Power of tongue (+, -) **Advice:** Be cautious about your words.

ii. ***Gul e takhat bethandi ae te gul e bheek mangandi ae (2, p. 39).***

Words make you sit on the throne or make you a beggar.

**Cultureme:** Power of words (+, -) **Advice:** Be cautious about your words.

Your tongue is the source of your sweet or sore words. You can be a sweet pill to all or a sour taste by using your words. This notion is a universal concept, but usually used in Indo-Pak cultural and social context. It can make you a king or even a beggar. So, one must be very careful when using his words.

iii. ***Zabaan e takhat bethandi ae, zabaan e khote te bethandi ae (3, p. 342).***

The tongue makes you sit on the throne or ride a donkey.

**Cultureme:** Power of tongue. (+, -) **Advice:** Be cautious about your words.

One's tongue may make him sit on a throne or be disgraced like riding a donkey. For ages, in the cultural context of Indo-Pak, a defamed person is forced to sit on the back of a donkey, painted black face, and walk through the high street of the town. These parallels reinforce the idea of the bilateral power of tongue in the Punjabi linguo-culture.

**iv. *zabaan e ghorray charhaway te zabaan e litter pawaway* (3, p. 342)**

The tongue makes you ride a horse, and the same can become a cause of being beaten up.

**Cultureme:** Power of tongue. (+, -) **Advice:** Be cautious about your words.

One's tongue may make ride him on a horse with pride or fall into disgrace as if beaten up by the mob. Your words are responsible for your respect and honor. In the Punjabi society, an honored person and only the nobles use to ride a horse. Only the rightful and honored person can ride a horse, and a liar can only be beaten by the mobs. These parallels reinforce the idea of the bilateral power of tongue in the Punjabi linguo-culture.

**v. *jibh e hathi charhaway, jibh e sir katavay* (p. 218).**

The tongue can make you ride the elephant, and the same can hang you on the gallows.

**Cultureme:** Power of tongue. (+, -) **Advice:** Be cautious about your words.

Your words are responsible for your fate. One's tongue may make him ride an elephant with pride or hang him on the gallows. Historically, the royal and elite of the sub-continent of Indo-Pak could afford to have an elephant to ride and travel. On the other hand, criminals and liars used to be crushed under their heavy feet. McNeil (1971) reported an Indian proverb that seems a variant of the same idea proposed by this proverb, "Words will secure you an elephant, and words will also bring you to the feet of an elephant" (p. 10). It implies that you will be trampled to death by an elephant—one of the many cruel ways of torturing a guilty man to death. These parallels reinforce the idea of the bilateral power of tongue in the Punjabi linguo-culture.

**vi. *jibh e halal ae jibh e haraam ae* (p. 218).**

Only the tongue is fair or unfair.

**Cultureme:** Power of tongue. (+, -) **Advice:** Be cautious about your words.

Words are responsible for your good or bad. One's tongue may be truthful and untruthful. In the perspective of the dominant religions of Indo-Pak, some things are considered either lawful or unlawful. This communicates the belief that only the tongue of a person could make him earn honor or disgrace in various ways of life.

In those mentioned above six Punjabi proverbs, a strong emphasis has been put by a deep semantic density through the culturemes delineating the bilateral power of tongue and words. The tongue has been used metaphorically for speaking/talking and employed interchangeably with ‘words.’ Different animal images (horse, elephant, and donkey) have been employed to communicate the strong position a person’s communicative ability and behavior holds in administering and culminating into different life-changing events. It is claimed in many proverbs that the (proper use of) tongue can make the speaker sit on the throne as a king, while the wrong use of it can make one beg in the streets. One can get a dignified and respectable status or a debilitating one.

**vii. *Jibh e sajjan noo’n dushman te dushman noo’n sajan bhandi ae (p. 218).***

The tongue makes people friends or enemies.

**Cultureme:** Power of tongue. (+, -) **Advice:** Be cautious about your words.

The tongue makes enemies out of friends and friends out of enemies. This proverb has set the significance of the words/tongue in making or marring the relations. One’s tongue may make friends into enemies or vice versa.

**viii. *jehi baat tehi zaat (p. 167).***

Words reveal the class/caste.

**Cultureme:** Power of talk (+, -) **Advice:** Be cautious about the words.

Words are treated as indicators to make recognition of a person. The Punjabi people believe that tongue and communication patterns clearly indicate the social class or caste of a person.

**ix. *Jedi zabaan takheri, ohdi zaat ucheri (p. 380).***

A person with an oily tongue is socially upgraded.

**Cultureme:** Power of tongue (+) **Advice:** Be cautious about the words.

The culturemes in viii and ix associate the words/tongue of a person with his social class and caste. The proper use of the tongue can help a person even upgrade his ancestral class or caste. Words may either conceal character or reveal it. A person with an oily tongue is considered socially elite. Ironically, those who have an oily tongue tell lies and misguide

innocent people. Only they can obtain high places in the society and may rule in the world of politics.

**x. *Zaban thalle dukaan* (4, p. 78).**

The shop is under the tongue.

**Cultureme:** Power of tongue (+, -) **Advice:** Be cautious about the words.

A talkative salesperson can be a successful business person. A sharp shopkeeper sells his item to ignorant customers by telling tales in praise of his products to be a prosperous shopkeeper. The shop runs successfully with the proper use of the tongue, or it can go to the dogs if used otherwise.

**xi. *Nokari di jarr zabaan ute way* (p. 463).**

The root of one's job is under his/her tongue.

**Cultureme:** Words are powerful (+, -) **Advice:** Be cautious about the words.

A servant has her roots on his/her tongue. If a maid can speak gently to the lords, she can get many benefits from them, so it is believed that that her politeness springs from the way she speaks. Success in a job is based more on the employee's verbal behavior than the professional skill or actual performance.

The culturemes (x and xi) link the financial success and prospects of any person with the proper use of his/her tongue. Stone (2006) also reported a Roman proverb with a similar association but inclined toward the detrimental use, "*The tongue is the worst part of a bad servant*" (p. 383).

### **Explanation and Discussion of Bilateral Power of Tongue**

Within this category are proverbs from both languages, characterized by their portrayal of speech as either good or bad, depending on whether the power of the speech/tongue/words is acknowledged to be positive, negative, or both. In the Punjabi corpus, 11 culturemes have signified the bilateral (both positive and negative) power of the tongue, while only five have recognized the constructive effects. In this frequent Punjabi cultureme, mainly the 'tongue' metaphor, has been used to communicate the dynamism and competency of speech attached to it's usage in the Punjabi culture. The 'tongue' has been

given the agency to make the speaker a king or a beggar, to make him sit on the elephant/horse or to recline on the ground, to make people friends or enemies, to have your work done and targets achieved, and to attain elevated and respectable social status or to lose the acquired one. The power of the tongue to strengthen or tarnish the relationships has also been mentioned in a Sudanese proverb, “*Your tongue is your guard if you preserve it, it preserves you, and if you humiliate it, it will humiliate you*” (Ahmed, 2005, p. 629). A successful financial career has also been associated with the correct use of the tongue. On the other hand, the Yoruba corpus has yielded two culturemes, identifying the bilateral power of speech/words. The words in the Yoruba proverbs have been given extreme power to construct and demolish, convince or confuse, make friends, or turn them against the speaker. The wise use of words can be extremely helpful in bringing happiness and success, and the misuse or careless use may bring contrary effects. Hence, care must be taken while utilizing one's verbal faculty.

The comparative analysis of both linguo-cultures in the thematic domain ‘the bilateral power of the tongue’ has yielded that both languages have proverbs signifying the strength of communicative abilities and nature of a person in making or marring a person’s life. However, on the quantitative plane, the Punjabi corpus has generated a much higher frequency of culturemes in the said theme. However, the focus is on the bilateral power of the tongue to construct and devastate the life or event of the speaker or listener, or both. The Punjabi proverbs have brought to light the role of language in managing a person’s life ranging from social class, financial success, political scenario, domestic, familial, and social relationships, and the performance of huge tasks. On the other hand, though the Yoruba corpus has yielded a fewer number of culturemes, yet the focus is on the bilateral capacity of the words to solve and mar the affairs, to worship, and to insult a person.

The proverbs from both linguo-cultures seem to impart the crucial significance attached to the sagacious or reckless employment of speech, which calls for more careful thought to its usage. Both cultures seem to propagate the message given in the proverb from Libya, quoted by (Hodari and Sobers, 2009), “*Your tongue is your power. If you preserve it, it will preserve you. If you betray it, it will betray you*” (p. 78). This research shares Raymond's (2012) findings of the Mongolian worldview and their belief in the power of the



spoken word. As a result, people need to be careful about what they say because saying good or bad things about the future increases their possibility. The realization of the gloomy prospects is heightened in the Punjabi linguo-culture, which has germinated a higher number of culturemes about the negative or bilateral power of words than the Yoruba counterpart. Indian proverb, quoted by McNeil (1971) in his study of the nature of speech, has also recognized this bilateral power, “Tongue -- source of honor and shame” (p. 4). The presence of proverbs about this cultureme in other languages reinforces the shared universal understanding about the potential capacity of words.

A biblical proverb has also established the bilateral power of the mouth (speech), *“The mouth of the righteous is a fountain of life, but the mouth of the wicked conceals violence”* (Prov. p. 10). Starting on a positive note, the first part of this saying reminds us that good words are not idle, but can be truly life-giving, well beyond what we can understand. The image for the verbal source of life is a spring of water. Note also that the proverb contrasts the “mouth of the righteous” with the “mouth of the wicked” and not, for instance, the “mouth of the ignorant.” This is a moral difference, not one of knowledge. While knowledge is essential and instrumental, the upright and moral use makes the difference between manufacturing tractors that help farmers grow food or tanks that kill enemies to ensure that the food reaches only one’s friends and allies. Righteousness guides the physician to remove life-threatening cancer rather than take the infant’s life in the womb. On the other hand, words that needlessly tear others down or spread falsehoods have incited violence throughout history. Another Biblical proverb has reinforced the same notion, *“The lips of the righteous feed many, but fools die for lack of sense. The words of the wicked lie in wait for blood, but the mouth of the upright delivers men”* (Prov. 10:21; 12:6). On the other hand, the ‘fool’ speaks and acts without knowing much or understanding why some knowledge is essential, good, and true, while other is unhelpful. For instance, gossip, whether from Hollywood or the neighborhood, is generally useless information. People who speak without knowledge of the facts tend to speak too much and too loudly as a way to cover up their ignorance. This is more than annoying when the babbling fool is in a position of authority, as in politics, punditry, or teaching. The wise person seeks to know much, organize that knowledge wisely, and speak with truth and moral righteousness. These proverbs teach about the power of good speech versus the power of wicked speech — specifically, the

power of speech in the hands of the good versus that power in evil hands. It can be safely settled that if there is one lesson that both Punjabi and Nigerian (Yoruba) proverbs want us to take away about speech, words never lack power.

## 4.5 Negative Powers of Speech

### The Yoruba Proverbs about Negative power of Speech (8 -)

**i. “*Pẹ̀pẹ̀tẹ̀ ọ̀rọ̀, a-ta-síni-lára-má-wọ̀n-ọ̀n.*”**

“The soiling caused by speech stains a person and cannot be removed.”

(‘Injury by words cannot be healed’) (p. 207).

**Cultureme:** Power of words (-) **Advice:** Avoid speech that hurts.

Words are powerful and can hurt or inflict pain. When one hurts another person by words, the pain stays forever because it cannot be evacuated. A bitter word hurts deeper than anything else. A Zulu proverb reinforces the universal belief about the injurious effects of the tongue, “*What stabbed the heart was a tongue*” (Hodari and Sobers, 2005, p. 45).

**ii. “*Ipa ọgbé ní ńsàn; ipa ohùn kì í sà̀n*”**

“The wound left by a cutlass may heal, but the wound left by speech does not heal” (p. 134).

(Injury inflicted through speech is impossible to heal)

**Cultureme:** Power of words (-) **Advice:** Be careful in speech.

Uttering words indiscreetly causes great havoc and the listener might not be able to recover from it. Obscure words splash on the speaker without restriction.

**iii. “*Ọ̀rọ̀ lọ̀mọ̀ etí ńjẹ̀.*”**

“Words are what the child of the ear eats.”

(“People who misbehave must endure tongue-lashes”) (p. 94).

**Cultureme:** Power of words (-) **Advice:** Be cautious about your actions to avoid abuse.

‘*Ọ̀mọ̀etí*’, literally “the child of the ear,” refers here to the inner ear. This Yoruba proverb presupposes that one should be careful about what one says about others negatively. The Yoruba people forbid one from tarnishing others’ images, for if done, it might be difficult to redeem the image of that person. The culture of these people goes against assassinating others’ character. The Yoruba people believe that saying something good about

others is a step in the right direction. So, hypocrisy is a forbidden phenomenon within the Yoruba cultural milieu. In Yoruba land, anybody who damages the image of others is seen as a wrong person.

iv. ***“Eṣnu àìmḗnu, ètè àìmètè, ní mmú òrànbá èrèkẹ́”***

“A mouth that will not stay shut; lips that will not stay closed are what brings trouble to the cheeks” (p. 134).

**Cultureme:** Power of words (-) **Advice:** Be careful in speech.

The adverse effects of speaking have been restated in the above-mentioned three proverbs. The words that the mouth and lips allow escaping, usually bring the slap to the cheek; a person who cannot keep his or her mouth shut often lands in trouble. Opatá (1992) has referred to another Nigerian (Igbo) proverb, reinforcing the similar notion, “*When the mouth is guilty, the jaw collapses (falls)*” (p. 203). The inability to hold the mouth and lips puts a talkative person into trouble.

v. ***“Ènu iná ní ñpa iná; ẹnu èrò ní ñpa èrò”***

“The mouth of the louse is its death; the mouth of the nit is its death” (p. 180).

**Cultureme:** Power of words (-) **Advice:** Be cautious about the words.

The mouth of fire kills fire; the mouth of a person kills the people. Whatever you say with your mouth affects you. Reckless persons bring disaster on their heads by their own words.

vi. ***“Ì-dún-kídùn-ún òyo ní wn fì ñsọ òyonígi; ì-fkúf ògbìgbì ní wn fì ñta ògbìgbìlókò; ì-je-kúje àdán ní ñfì-í tẹnu p fẹnu ẹnu”***

“It is the incessant chattering of the Pataguenon monkey that causes people to belabor it with sticks; it is the annoying sounds of the ògbìgbì bird that causes people to throw stones at it; it is indiscriminate feeding that causes the bat to ingest food and excrete with the same mouth” (p. 184).

**Cultureme:** Power of words (-) **Advice:** Be careful in speech.

A person’s mouth may be his or her death. Sounding unnecessary of Oyo makes them throw a stick at Oyo, sounding unnecessary, making them throw an arrow at Ogbigbi, excessive eating makes the bat mix palm oil with yam. The proverb highlights the deadly effects of careless speech, causing even the death of the speaker.

vii. ***“Èlejo kú sílé, aláròyé kú síta gbangba”***

“The person involved in an affair dies at home; the spokesperson dies out in the open” (p. 176).

**Cultureme:** Power of talk (-) **Advice:** Do not talk too much.

A busybody will kill himself on another person’s account. The busybody’s fate is worse than that of the person involved in the affair.

**viii. “Kpro owo yovwi ure ta cho”**

“A slip of the tongue is worse than a slip of the foot” (Ohwovoriola, 2009, p. 132).

**Cultureme:** Power of talk (-) **Advice:** Do not talk too much.

With the tongue, we can build, and with the same tongue, we can destroy. Chong (2001) has reported a similar equation from American paremia, “*Better the foot slip than the tongue*” (p. 185). In usage, the elder speaking persons want to educate the wives on the effect of an unruly tongue.

**The Punjabi Proverbs about Negative Power of Speech (19 -)**

**i. *Jay ik bol Shah Mansoor nah bolda te sulhi kyu’n charrhdah?* (p. 157).**

If Shah Mansoor has not uttered the word, why would he be hanged?

**Cultureme:** Power of words (-) **Advice:** Be cautious about your words.

This proverb is used to make the speaker realize the deadly consequences of spoken words by giving an inter-textual reference to the legend of Shah Mansoor, who claimed in his ecstatic state, “*ana-l-Haq*”, which meant “I am the ultimate Truth” or “I am God.” The people of his age took these words as blasphemous, and he got hanged for being insolent to God. This proverb is used as a warning or comment that the (wrong) words can ruin the speaker’s life.

**ii. *Zabaan naal dhi putter vi bagane ho jandy nein’n* (p. 249).**

The unwise use of the tongue may avert one's daughters and sons.

**Cultureme:** Power of tongue (-) **Advice:** Be cautious about your words.

This proverb highlights the significance of words in maintaining parental relationships with the children. Despite all the effort, sacrifices, and love, if the parents are used to employing abusive or harsh words with their children, it may cause emotional and, ultimately, physical distancing. An unwise usage of the tongue may avert one’s children. If

some parents verbally abuse their kids constantly, the children feel insulted and stop liking their parents. In some cases, they also leave homes.

**iii. *Jehrra bolda ae, oho marda ae* (p. 164).**

The one who speaks, dies!

***Cultureme:*** Power of tongue (-) ***Advice:*** Be cautious about your words.

The one who speaks the truth may suffer the consequences. It refers to the previous proverb that the nobles may not like a truthful person, and the speaker can be punished with death. A similar cause and effect scenario is communicated by a Haya proverb quoted by Chatteris-Black (1995, p. 4) “*The talker talks and causes death in his family.*” Again death metaphor has been used to communicate the dire consequences of the mere act of speaking.

**iv. *Gul daa thirrkya bunda te taahni daa thirrkya bandar faer nai’n sambhal da* (1, p. 281).**

A slipped tongue and the monkey tumbled from a tree cannot recover.

***Cultureme:*** Power of tongue (-) ***Advice:*** Be cautious about your words.

The words, once spoken, can never be altered. A monkey slipped from a tree will surely fall to earth. Animal imagery has intensified the message to maintain the balance before slipping. This proverb is used to warn about the irreparable loss done by the abuse of the tongue, which can never be recaptured.

**v. *Mu’ngo’n kaddi gul, te pay gya wall* (p. 349).**

I just uttered some words and got entangled.

***Cultureme:*** Power of tongue (-) ***Advice:*** Be cautious about your words.

Again, the negative consequences of words have been put forward through an explicit metaphor ‘got knotted’ to communicate the ensnaring effects of talking carelessly. It is reinforced that the destructive power of words can alter the whole course of the speaker’s or the listener’s lives, or of both. Once the words are out of a mouth, these can be interpreted differently. No matter what you speak, your words are interpreted differently by different people.

**vi. *Gul akhdi ae to’n mainu mu’ngo’n kadh, mei’n tenu pindo’n kadhni aa’n* (2, p. 36).**

The talk says, ‘You utter me from your mouth, and I will expel you from your village.’

***Cultureme:*** Power of tongue (-) ***Advice:*** Be cautious about your words.

The talk has been personified in this proverb and given an active role of the speaker as an agent. The authoritative tone of the statement implies that the stronghold of talk in a person's life should never be taken for granted. Leaving one's native place as a punishment is one of the gloomiest experiences, which is not difficult to happen if one does not care for one's words. Wrong words may force a person to exile.

**vii. *Jehrra bolay ohi kunddi khole* (p. 164).**

One who speaks has to open the lock of the door.

**Cultureme:** Power of tongue (-) **Advice:** Be cautious about your words.

This proverb is used in such a context when out of a few individuals, someone answers a call. The same person is assigned some unwanted duty in response to this answer or held responsible for some explanatory act. The implied meaning is that being an active speaker will impose extra duties on him/her, which would have been avoided by keeping one's mouth shut.

**viii. *Mu'nho'n niklee gul, te pay gaya tar thal* (4, p. 229).**

The talk uttered by the mouth causes severe disruption/upheaval.

**Cultureme:** Power of tongue (-) **Advice:** Be cautious about your words.

In this proverb, speaking has been associated with causing an earthquake, which entails a total disruption of harmony and peace. This proverb is most commonly used for speaking some truth, which may cause a severe disruption among the concerned people.

**ix. *Talwar da phatt mil janda ae, zabaan da phatt nahi milda* (3, p. 525).**

The wound of a sword can heal, but not that of a tongue.

**Cultureme:** Power of tongue (-) **Advice:** Be cautious about your words.

Another negative connotation associated with talk in this oft-quoted proverb has been brought to light to communicate the un-healing wound of emotional hurt caused by words. This proverb is used to warn the speaker to think before he/she speaks as the wound made by the improper use of the tongue is not curable. Some taunts are remembered forever, while a wound-mark caused by a sword can disappear from the body.

**x. *Gul da zakhām talwar day zakhām nalo'n doonga hunda ay* (p. 307).**

Wounds given by words are more deep-seated than those given by a sword.

**Cultureme:** Bitter talk. (-) **Advice:** Be cautious about your words.

These proverbs (ix and x) are variants of a similar metaphorical comparison where the emotional hurt caused by bitter words has been embodied as a ‘physical wound’ and then compared with a hurt caused by a sword and intensified through its trait of being incurable.

**xi. *Is jibh da kih ja si? Gul akh kay ander warr ja si* (p. 168).**

What will be the damage of the tongue, which will recoil inside after uttering any words?

***Cultureme:*** Power of tongue (-) ***Advice:*** Be cautious about your words.

Another belief is mentioned through this question proverb that talk is easy, but facing its consequences is difficult. The tongue will hide between the teeth after speaking. It costs nothing to say anything good or bad because the tongue sits in the mouth after saying anything. The tongue is personified through the given agency of coming out, saying something, and hiding back, but the tongue owner will face the damage caused by this act, so he must keep it under strict control.

**xii. *Gaalh kaddan to'n goonga vee bolay* (p. 304).**

Even a voiceless person would reply to abusive words.

***Cultureme:*** Abusive language (-) ***Advice:*** Be cautious about your words.

This proverb highlights the conflict creating the capacity of abusive words that a person with impaired speaking ability would also answer in the same coin to balance the score. It is used to console a complaint about the negative verbal response a person has to face in reaction to his vituperative verbal behavior. To avoid conflict, evading the verbal rant is the first step. An Indian proverb, “*He got a cut for the mouth,*” is used derogatorily to describe a man who always uses abusive language to offend others (McNeil, 1971, p. 7). A Swahili proverb has reinforced a similar idea, “*The poison of a word is a word*”, indicating abuse going from bad to worse (Hodari and Sobers, 2009, p. 45). The negative power of words seems a universal schema.

**xiii. *Chum di zaban jo hoi, dhoka kha ee jandi ae* (p. 466).**

The tongue is made of flesh, so it gets deceived.

***Cultureme:*** Power of tongue (-) ***Advice:*** Be cautious about your words.

The tongue is a small piece of flesh, so it can slip. This proverb is typically used when someone says something by accident and then makes a correction. People use this

proverb to blame their tongue instead of blaming themselves. It implies the lack of control over their impulsive talking.

**ix. *Jida'n di kehni odha'n di sun'ni* (p. 32).**

As you speak, so shall you listen.

***Cultureme:*** Bitter talk (-) ***Advice:*** Be cautious about your words.

Speak well, listen well. This proverb is an equivalent of tit for tat. Though the proverb has no direct mention of harmful or harsh talk, it is used to indicate the reciprocity of receiving bad words in response to impolite expressions; hence one should avoid initiating the use of hurtful language.

**x. *Jibh diwani apne kam koo'n sayani* (p. 219).**

A mad tongue becomes sane when it turns to itself.

***Cultureme:*** Bitter words. ***Advice:*** Avoid bad words.

Foolish talking can be sane for its own benefits. This proverb is used chiefly when a self-claimed foolish man knows his benefit in his crazy talks. Again, the tongue is personified and given an agentive role that feigns frenetic while committing dumb moves and assumes the cloak of sanity when it comes to its defense.

**xi. *Mu'ngo'n bolay te heins tolay* (3, p. 414).**

He/she does not talk usually, but when he/she does, it is some abominable talk.

***Cultureme:*** Bad words. (-) ***Advice:*** Be cautious about your words.

A quiet person can speak intolerable words. It is used when a person remains silent most of the time and is considered a gentleman, but when he/she speaks, it is unacceptable.

**xii. *Murda bolay ga te kafan pharry ga* (3, p. 414).**

The cadaverous will talk, tearing its coffin.

***Cultureme:*** Bitter talk (-) ***Advice:*** Be cautious about your words.

This oft-quoted proverb has used the metaphor of a 'dead body tearing its coffin' delineating the displeasure created by raunchy words. As mentioned above, the proverbs are used to admonish and condemn a person who utters some negative, harsh, or ominous words. The Punjabi people have a strong belief in the power of words to actualize in some real-life



happening, so a speaker uttering some foreboding words is severely castigated through such aggressive proverbs.

**xiii. *Chundri jibho'n sada chandri gul e nikaldi ae* (p. 225).**

A hexed tongue utters an unfortunate word ever.

**Cultureme:** Bad words. (-) **Advice:** Be cautious about your words.

A bad tongue will speak bad words. The word '*chandri*' is used when a hexed person is meant to be mentioned. This proverb is used for a low-grade expression about something or a person. The proverb also gives agency to 'tongue' as an independent entity, which is in self-control instead of managed by its owner.

**xiv. *Mu'nh icho'n chandri gul nai kadhi di, Koi wella qabuliyat da hunda ae* (p. 284).**

Cursed words should not be uttered; there can be any moment for divine acceptance.

**Cultureme:** Power of tongue (-) **Advice:** Be cautious about your words.

Bad words should not be used because God listens to them. This proverb teaches children to speak well and be gentle to all. One should always speak gently and utter good words from mouth. This proverb also communicates the belief that every time God is listening, and He can make it happen whatever we utter.

**Explanation and Discussion of the Negative Power of Words**

These Yoruba proverbs restore the catastrophe and destruction brought about by the thoughtless use of words that can even cause the demise of an individual. In this way, these axioms indeed show an admonition that pertains to thinking before talking so that one might not need to confront conflicting results. Not watching verbal restriction may turn into a reason for physical trouble and reprimand for the speaker. From the African context, a Malawi proverb has also perpetuated the same negative power of words in, "*Lips break the village*" (Hodari and Sobers, 2009, p. 81).

There are two issues regarding the spoken word in these Punjabi proverbs: "bad" that is hurtful; and "bad" that is a bad omen. These proverbs indicate the belief in ominous words and the superstition about the power of making it real when someone utters good or bad words for the future. Extreme power is ascribed to speech in these proverbs. Raymond (2012) quotes a Mongolian belief about the prospective power of words. "*Future happiness comes through the mouth proclaiming good words; Future gift comes through the mouth proclaiming good words*" (p. 27). Such proverbs remind people to control their mouths, talk

about good things, and not be pessimistic. Spoken words can influence luck and good and bad fortune. The Punjabi people, like Mongols, believe that if you speak about death as a hypothetical situation, or even just as an example, it will become a real possibility. Therefore, only speak about good omens or good possibilities for the future. For example, if a person has to speak about something that is not good, he/she should use an imaginary name, not someone known's. This proverb might be used to advise someone on the words to use or not to use.

One of the highest semantic densities is identified in this cultureme about the negative potency of words and talk. The intertextual inference to Shah Mansoor's case 'I am God' has been utilized to determine the significance of words expressed without taking results into account. A Sudanese proverb has also highlighted the importance of speaking sense by criticizing the illogical talk, "*Paused for a year and then spoke nonsense*" (Ahmed, 2005, p. 409) and "*They gave him a span, and he made it a cubit*" (p. 330). The devastation, brought about by a slip of the tongue, is challenging to set things aright. Moreover, once uttered, the words get free of the speaker and be amplified and overstated to be abused for the harmful intentions of spectators and listeners. Moreover, the excited speaker is accused and considered liable for specific mishappenings rather than the silent ones.

Furthermore, these proverbs highlight the adverse effects of bitter words on the listener and the speaker. Bitter words have been entitled as the chief cause of conflict among relations and especially marital relations. Hence, reciprocity is also a trait communicated through a proverb that pronounces that the speaker should be ready to receive the answers in the same coin. The hurt and resultant anger provoked by bad words are incurable and unmanageable. The bruises afflicted by words are presented as deeper than the injury caused by a sword hit. Contrary to sweet and soft talk, bitter talk and hurtful words have been discouraged and negatively reinforced. Another oft-quoted cultureme is about the notion of an unfortunate tongue, bound to produce some malefic speech resulting in an actual catastrophe through the negative power of words. The tongue's uncontrollability has been delineated as a symptom of a feeble personality accused and cursed for causing emotional, moral, physical, and social damage.

These Yoruba and Punjabi proverbs share the 'wound' image used for the emotional

damage caused by words, which seems a universal metaphor for the abstract phenomenon. These proverbs are reinstating the disaster and havoc caused by the careless employment of words that can cause severe damage to the listener and the speaker. A Malawi proverb reported by Hodari and Sobers (2009) in their Black book of proverbs from Africa also perpetuates the same negative power of words in “*Lips break the village*” (p. 81). Speake (2015), in his collection of world proverbs, has quoted proverbs from multiple origins implying a similar idea about the hurt caused by words, “*The good speech of an ass is better than the bad word of a prophet*” (Irish) (p. 406); “*The smart of a blow subsides, the sting of a word abides*” (Yiddish) (p. 482); “*Ill words are bellows to a slackening fire*” (Roman) (p. 483). A lousy word wounds the heart, which does not heal quickly and is not soon forgotten. Evil words build a lasting hatred, so, implicitly these proverbs indicate a warning to think before you speak so that the speaker may not have to face adverse consequences. Not observing verbal restraint may become a cause of physical trouble and chastisement for the speaker.

Owomoyela (1981), talking about the African philosophy of social communication, argued that another necessary protocol is to avoid speaking any more than is necessary and, of course, make sure that whatever little is said is well considered. The dangers of misspeaking are so grievous that many proverbs call attention to them, often suggesting that unless one must speak is best to bridle one’s mouth. For example, “*the mouth that will not keep still and lips that will not close always mean trouble for the cheeks which often receive slaps in consequence*” (p. 10), and “*the louse’s mouth is its death; the gossip’s mouth is his death*”; the louse might have lived longer in a person’s clothing, but it must bite and reveal its presence and get crushed; the gossip eventually tells the wrong tale and comes to grief. As for limiting, what one says, when one must speak, a proverb advises, “*whoever says a lot will say the wrong thing*” (p. 11).

Owomoyela (1981) also commented that the advisability of brevity is justifiable, especially for the recipient of the advice or correction. As sensitive they are about highly delicate nuances of speech, the Yorubas consider it is primarily trying to be subjected to lectures. Indeed the word of speech ‘oro’ is an example about thick-skinned people, “*oro ki i dun un*” (p. 11) (“he never feels the pangs of speech”) or in the threats, “*Ma a fi oro gba a*

*nikun*” (p. 11) (“I will scourge his stomach with speech”) and “*Ma a so oro fun un*” (p. 11) (“I will inflict speech on him”). The well-bred person is not expected to be infallible. When he slips, the common assumption (until and unless the person’s subsequent behavior proves otherwise) is that he has suffered a natural lapse, not that his upbringing has been negligent in the particular respect. Put differently, in the event of a slip, the traditional presumption is of forgetfulness rather than of ignorance. To subject the errant person to an elaborate lecture would suggest that his upbringing in that respect was not full (an unacceptable insult to the person’s parents) or that the person has been impervious to training (an unacceptable attack on his character).

Both Punjabi and Yoruba corpora have yielded a significant number of culturemes to denote the negative power of words. Talking may also bring unnecessary obligations to the speaker. Multiple dire consequences have been associated with words, tongue, mouth, and talk to communicate the hazards, including wounds, death, beat up, embarrassment, and even exile from one’s place. Hodari and Sobers (2009) have reported a Zulu proverb with similar connotations, “*What stabbed the heart was a tongue*” (p. 67). We all know the childhood saying, ‘Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words can never hurt me.’ Although this may reassure young people subjected to name-calling, it does not mean that our words cannot hurt others.

Raymond (2010), in his study of Mongolian proverbs, has also quoted many proverbs reinforcing the idea that people die as a result of what they have said. The metaphor of ‘wound’ used for the hurt caused by words has been used in many cultures, including Punjabi, Yoruba, and Mongolian, “*The wound of the body, gets healed. The wound from words, does not heal*” (p. 148). This metaphor compares the severity of physical wounds with wounds that come from the words of a person. The harm that comes from words is much more significant. This notion might be used as a caution for people to be careful of what they say. Alternatively, it might be used when referring to someone whom the words of another person have harmed. Just as a “*Snake curls around a tree, bad word curls around the body*” (p. 145). Just as a snake will curl around a tree, the wrong words will curl around the speakers and eventually choke them. It might be used to warn people that bad words will get them in trouble. Another metaphor is the hurt to the bone to denote the more profound effects “*When hit with wood, the flesh will hurt, when hit with words, the bone will hurt*” (p. 149);

the hurt will go deeper than just the surface. Words can be more hurtful than physical harm because they hurt us inside.

Stone (2006) quoted a Korean proverb indicating a similar idea of a deadly weapon present within the mouth, "*There is an ax hidden under the tongue*" (p. 437). Speake (2015) reported African proverbs with a similar emphasis, "*In the tongue, there lurks a dragon; no blood is seen, and yet it murders many*" (9). On the other hand, Capponi (2015), in his study of threat in Italian proverbs, discussed that closing of the mouth is respectively involved in the conceptualization of reticence, stupidity, and refusal to engage in social interactions. Besides, in English, shutting one's mouth underwrites the conceptualizations of lack of courage, integrity, and unity between words and actions. (p. 436). Furthermore, Opata (1992) also reported proverbs from Igbo linguo-culture, recognizing the negative power of speech/words despite acknowledging the overall positive demeanor toward speech, "*Not to shut the mouth brings about headache*" (p. 202); "*It is the tongue that says the things that cause the heart pain*" (p. 201). The tongue endangers the body by provoking fights.

Chong (2001), who has analyzed speech and silence related proverbs from cross-linguistic cum cross-cultural perspectives, has contended that proverbs' urging of caution in speech is the universal type of communicative purposes. They are a vital component of the speech proverb type. The use of a proverb - as opposed to an imperative - is rooted in the desire to avoid negative feelings on the hearer's part. He quoted certain proverbs which are speaker oriented in their perception of the adverse effects of speech, "*Had the pheasant not screamed, it would not have been shot*" (Japanese); "*If the bird had not sung, it would not have been shot*" (Japanese); "*A word even makes up a thousand pennies debt*" (Korean) (p. 180).

Norrick (1997), in his study of Anglo-American proverbs, quoted American proverbs about the reciprocation of bad words, "*One hard word brings another*" and "*if you cannot say something good about someone, do not say anything at all*" (p. 279). He also reported a particular case of the admonition to speak only good of people applies specifically to those no longer with us, namely "*Speak well of the dead*" (p. 279) and its several variants. The Punjabi proverbs about the negative power of words have accentuated Malay culture's findings that whenever people criticize, they are accused of (using) words that are shallow, demeaning, and sneering to avoid saying negative things about each other (Goddard, 2009).

Critics can also be told that they have acted in a ‘rude, ill-bred’ or ‘coarse’ fashion and have “hurt people’s feelings” (p. 190). It is vital to ‘show respect’ for others, especially for one’s parents, old people, and those who have a higher rank in society. It is not surprising that these proverbs portray the evil consequences of harmful speech. The proverbs seek not to discourage speaking, but to warn against speaking in a way that hurts people's feelings. It is to be expected that going by this same convention, gentle words would give rise to good sentiments or positive effects.

### **The Punjabi and Yoruba Cultural Scripts of ‘Be Cautious’**

The upshot of all this, for communicative style, is that one is well-advised to be careful about saying anything publicly that could lower another person's morale. This is especially so if that person can retaliate (or has supporters who are likely to do so). This suggests a script as in the following Cultural Script for both cultures.

#### **Yoruba and Punjabi Cultural Script about Avoiding Bitter Words**

People think:

it is not good to say something about someone

if other people might think something bad about that person because of it;

if I do this, something bad might happen to me because of it

Both Punjabi and African cultures seem to share the following Cultural Scripts with Malay culture (Goddard, 2010).

#### **Listener centered Cultural Script**

People think:

it is not good if, when I say something to someone, this person feels something bad;

because of this, when I want to say something to someone,

it is good to think about it for some time before I say it

#### **Speaker centered Cultural Script**

People also think:

it is not good if, when I say something to someone, this person may feel something bad;

because of this, I may also feel something bad

so it is good to think about it for some time before I say it

## 4.6 Action versus Talk

### The Yoruba Proverbs about Action versus Talk (8 +)

**i. “A kì í gbé odò jiyàn-an oşş hó tàbí kò hó.”**

“One does not sit by a river and argue whether the soap will foam or will not foam” (p. 104).

**Cultureme:** Action (+) **Advice:** Focus on actual performance

Where the claim can be put to the test, the verbal argument is foolish. The Yoruba believe that the verbal argument is unnecessary where a claim can be put in place. It means that one does not just make an argument without the fact. Seeing is believing; stop doubting. Whatever you experience becomes real, which means partaking in the actual activity will erase any element of doubt. We do not argue unnecessarily in the phase of convincing evidence. You do not stay in the river to argue whether the soap bubbles or not. It is used to address pointless or vain situations, mainly when someone acts with a noticeable reaction.

**ii. “Ó jọ gàtè, kò jọ gàtè, ó fẹşş`méjèjèjì tìrorìn”**

“It may seem like staggering, and it may not seem like staggering, but he is tipping forward on tiptoes” (“A euphemism does not make an action anything other than what it is”) (p. 262).

**Cultureme:** Action (+) **Advice:** Focus on actual performance

An understatement does not make an action anything other than what it is. No matter how you play something down, it does not make it less. The Yorubas use it when they know the reality of a thing, but there is a counter-argument against what is known. This proverb can be used in a situation where someone denies what he or she does.

**iii. “Tábà tí ò dùn, ęnu ò tà á”**

“Snuff that is not pleasant, the mouth cannot sell.”

“No amount of talk will make something unpleasant, pleasant”) (p. 157).

**Cultureme:** Action (+) **Advice:** Focus on actual performance

The Yorubas use this proverb when people are trying to justify the unjustifiable. No amount of talk can make an unpleasant thing pleasant. Taste buds determine the sweetness of a meal. It is essential to partake in the activity around it and to know the value of a thing. When tobacco is not sweet, the mouth will not feel it. When the word is not backed up with

the appropriate action, it amounts to a waste of time. No amount of advertisement can sell tobacco that is not sweet as it is challenging to sell a lousy product.

**iv. “A kì í rí bàtá nìlẹ́ ká fẹnu sín-in jẹ”**

“One does not see a *bàtá* drum on the ground and use one’s mouth to mimic its sound” (p. 106).

**Cultureme:** Action (+) **Advice:** Focus on actual performance

One should not make a person’s case for him or her when that person is present. Too much talk about a problem is useless when a practical solution has been presented. The ‘bata’ is a drum in the Yorubaland which speaks as they beat it. Using the appropriate tools to carry out a task will make the task easier and efficient than employing the wrong tool. You cannot have the right instrument to carry out a task and prefer the wrong one. We cannot use our mouth to beat when the ‘bata’ drum is available. We cannot improvise when we have the original materials to do the job.

**v. “Èbìtì ẹnu ò tàsé.”**

“The mouth-trap never misses” (p. 65).

**Cultureme:** Action (+) **Advice:** Focus on actual performance.

The mouth easily accomplishes even impossible feats. This is used to communicate that making a plan is one thing and being successful in its execution is another thing.

**vi. “Ènú dùn-ún ròfọ́; agada ọwọ́ dùn-ún sánko.”**

“The mouth cooks vegetable stew most expertly; the hand, emulating a machete, cuts a field most effortlessly” (p. 212).

**Cultureme:** Action (+) **Advice:** Focus on actual performance

A person’s mouth may boast of anything, and his hand may claim to be able to do anything until he is put to the test. It means that things are easier said than done.

**vii. “Oro p po kòkún agbon.”**

“Many words do not fill a basket” (p. 10).

**Cultureme:** Action (+) **Advice:** Be a person of thought and action, not of words.

The above proverb shows that action speaks louder than voice. This type of proverb is often applied to people making empty boasts. In the Yoruba society, those who are not



organized or are with aimless endeavors are often called back to their senses to be up and doing. Experience has shown that people without concrete aims and plans can hardly achieve much in life. This philosophical thought inherent in this kind of proverb accounts for its acceptability in traditional education in the Yoruba society. In other words, one should not boast of anything until one has positioned himself or herself in an environment conducive to success.

**viii. “Àgbàlagbàá ṣenú kẹrẹdẹ; èyí tó máa ẹ ńbẹ níkùn-un rẹ”**

“An elder shows a smooth belly to the world, but what he will do is known to him” (p. 99).

**Cultureme:** Action (+) **Advice:** Be a person of thought and action, not of words.

The proverb derives from the fact that *inú* (or *ikùn*) means both ‘mind’ and ‘stomach.’ The expression *mọinú* means ‘to know (someone’s) mind,’ but to see a person’s stomach is not to know the person’s mind. An older person with a round-shaped tummy; what he will do is hidden in his round tummy. It is used to address most elders who love to keep their intentions until they figure them out after taking action.

**The Punjabi Proverbs about Action Versus Talk (Action 11+, Talk 11-)**

**i. *kehna sokha, kerna okha* (p. 295).**

Easy to utter, challenging to act

**Cultureme:** Action (+) Talk (-) **Advice:** Focus on performance

This proverb acknowledges that it takes little effort to claim, but it is hard to perform and prove. In the case of someone boasting up and making stories, this proverb is used to communicate that, ‘easy to talk, hard to rock!’

**ii. *khund khund akhya’n mu’nh mitha nai hunda* (p. 30).**

Saying ‘sugar, sugar’, does not sweeten the mouth.

**Cultureme:** Action (+) Talk (-) **Advice:** Focus on performance as words without actions are useless.

Talking about sugar does not sweeten the speaker’s mouth. Mere talk is not sufficient, and action is essential. The slogan of the ruling party of Finland is “Action, not words!” The great Muslim scholar Dr Alama Iqbal also said, ‘*amal say zindagi banti hy, jannat bhi jahanum bhi*’, “One’s life can be like paradise or hell, by his acts.”

**iii. *Kurr kurr vaddi te anday thorry* (p. 205).**

Loud clucking and small eggs.

**Cultureme:** Action (+) Talk (-) **Advice:** Focus on performance as words without actions are useless.

More talking, less rocking! It means that a talkative person is of no use, like a hen that clucks a lot but lays fewer eggs. This proverb is used to taunt a talkative person who performs/earns less. He is criticized in this proverb, and his inefficient performance is ascribed to his loquacious nature.

**iv. *Amal bina ilam azar te khaloos bina amal bekar* (4, p. 442).**

Without performance, mere knowledge is a boon; without candor, the efficacy is meaningless.

**Cultureme:** Action (+) Talk (-) **Advice:** Focus on performance as words without actions are useless.

No words but action! Actions without sincerity are useless. The knowledge is useless without any use. Without practicality, it may be a distraction. Actions speak louder than words. Moreover, without devotion, all the efforts are in vain and do not have any effects.

**v. *Zor thorra te shor dhair* (p. 233).**

Less compression and much noise.

**Cultureme:** Action (+) Talk (-) **Advice:** Focus on performance as words without actions are useless.

More words and lesser performance is the theme of this proverb. It means beating a drum with the right hand and do something with the left hand. Do less and seek more praise and attention. It is used for an attention seeker or little doer who magnifies his little doings through his loquacity.

**vi. *Gula'n karun noo'n ouliya, kertooti'n kheh* (p. 308).**

Talks like a savant, performance ashes.

**Cultureme:** Action (+) Talk (-) **Advice:** Focus on performance and do not advise others on what you do not practice yourself.

This proverb is used for a person who suggests more and talks like a master, but has an idle mind in reality. His performance contradicts and deviates from what he says.

**vii. *Jo gajdy nei'n oh wasde nai* (p. 156).**

Barking dogs seldom bite. Thundering clouds do not pour rain.

**Cultureme:** Action (+) Talk (-) **Advice:** Focus on performance as words without actions are useless.

Talkative people do not perform well. This proverb is used for a person who threatens or shows his/her false anger to other people by speaking aloud. Punjabi people believe that he never usually carries his words out and rarely causes any harm.

**viii. *Aa baho bastii, dende ghinday kujh nah, jibh nai ghisdi* (p. 21).**

Let us sit together; they do not offer anything, but their tongue does not stop.

**Cultureme:** Action (+) Talk (-) **Advice:** Focus on performance as words without actions are useless.

It costs nothing to pay lip service, but they give nothing to the visitors. Mere lip service is not enough. This proverb is used when a person pretends that he has solutions to all problems. He/she argues and talks a lot, but does nothing feasible and only beats about the bush.

**ix. *Kum di kohrri, mu'nh di sajjar* (p. 444).**

Inefficient in performance, proficient in talk

**Cultureme:** Action (+) Talk (-) **Advice:** Focus on performance as words without actions are useless.

It is used for a person who shirks work, beats his gum, and is not interested in real-life chores. He is frequently involved in talk and gossip. Actual performance should be preferred over talk, is the message of the proverb.

**x. *Guli'n gula'n te damee'n ghorrey* (p. 308).**

With talk, only talk is attained; one needs money to buy a horse.

**Cultureme:** Action (+) Talk (-) **Advice:** Focus on performance as words without actions are useless.

It means that nothing is achievable by talking alone because success is no accident. You must have to do something practical to achieve your goals. In business dealings, mere talks do not work; you have to get some money to buy the required item. The preference for actual credit/financial resources is communicated instead of negotiations.

**xi. *Gula'n nal dhidh nai bherda* (p. 308).**

The talk does not fill the stomach.

**Cultureme:** Action (+) Talk (-) **Advice:** Focus on performance as words without actions are useless.

The preference of actual effort involved in earning money and preparing food to satisfy hunger is communicated in this proverb. A person needs bread and butter to live. Only talking about success is not sufficient. You must have put some muscle into it. To accomplish something, you must roll up your sleeves.

**Explanation and Discussion of Action versus Talk**

These Yoruba proverbs have constructed a case in favor of action and against empty slogans. The importance of genuine efforts cannot be compensated by any amount of words or tall claims. Hence, practical measures and efforts should be assured to achieve specific targets; mere talking will bring only humiliation and failure. Additionally, a negative aspect cannot be made positive by just lip service one has to invest real and strenuous effort to make it happen. A Namibian proverb also perpetuates this word versus action debate, “*He who argues builds no roads*” (Hodari and Sobers, 2009, p. 84). Opata (1992) has also reported the preference given to action and performance in proverbs, which berate empty or ineffectual speech or contrast the concrete action, with, of course, an apparent preference for the substantial. The following proverbs illustrate this preference of action to mere ineffectual speech: “*The mouth that speaks good words would be neglected and the hands continue to receive handshakes*” (p. 192); “*He who gives you fair words and nothing more feeds you with an empty spoon*” (p. 202); “*Talking well is not behaving well*” (p. 203); “*If the hands do not touch the drum, it will not talk*” (p. 204).

Similarly, these Punjabi proverbs have characterized the preference given to actual performance over verbal efficiency. Images and metaphors from different domains have been

employed to express the deep-rooted belief of the Punjabi linguo-culture to elevate action over speech/words. The metaphor of 'sugar' is once again employed to stress that only uttering its name would not sweeten the mouth. The animal imagery of the hen metaphor whose cluck is louder than its eggs has been applied to a person who talks more but performs inappropriately. The 'horse' is believed to be a prestigious animal and perceived as a symbol of integrity and nobility. It is mentioned to reinforce the idea that only talk does not make the speaker own a horse. The metaphor of a thundering cloud has been used to restate the notion of negative talk. Even a scholarly person is despised, who does not act according to his preaching.

Additionally, the Punjabi proverbs showcasing domestic settings include the image of hunger, hospitality, and gender with an even greater force to aggrandize actual performance over verbosity. A Sudanese proverb also reinforces the idea of talk and action in favor of the latter, "*Much noise and no flour*" (p. 417), and "*A doer is never a great talker*" (Ahmed, 2005, p. 341). These proverbs have established a contrastive and indirect relationship between talk and action, in which the former's increase may decrease the latter's efficiency and vice versa. The proverbs mentioned above explicitly develop a case against talk in favor of action where the action is deemed preferable to false and tall claims, and no amount of verbosity can compensate for the actual performance.

The Punjabi view of action versus speech seems to join Lebra (1987), who has worked on Japanese silence and contended that distrust of speech is further reinforced by the idea that it is associated with inactivity, that action can start when speech stops. Thus talking is denigrated as an excuse for procrastinating in taking action, and decisive action is characterized as silent. Hence the proverbial admonition, "Action before talking" (p. 33). On the other hand, the Igbo proverb quoted by Opata (1992) has summed up the Yoruba notion of action and talk, "*Words are sweet, but they never take the place of food*" (p. 197). Chateris-Black (1995) has mentioned a Maltese proverb about the inhibition of action by talking through a baking metaphor "*An oven whose door does not shut does not bake its loaves*" (p. 360). We see the proverbs are showcasing a view of life, which can be summarized by the concept of the work ethic; that mere talks can never be more productive than actions. There is also the same perception of talk as implied by the folk saying: "*Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me,*" which implies that it is

ultimately action, not the words, which changes the world. When action is compared with speech, it is worth noticing that it is a particular type of aimless speaking, which is negatively evaluated.

The proverbs under this theme, just in alignment with Seital (1974), reinforce that the effectiveness or substantiality in speech is the power to alter the course of events or effect a new alignment of social forces. In other words, powerful speech is proven to stir social actions. Judged by this criterion, deeds are more substantial than words. Words do not in themselves affect a realignment in the social order, as do the deeds. The general evaluation of speech as insubstantial, when compared with action, is modified because a speech act itself has social consequences. The speech is as substantial as action in interactive situations in which it affects relationships among people. Speech is even equally substantial in communicating intent. Norrick (1997) argues that there seems to be a significant cultural factor at work beyond this possibility. Many American proverbs oppose speech to action, suggesting that talk impedes action, substitutes empty words for accomplishment, or prevents things from getting done. Talk does not buy whiskey or fill bushel baskets full of produce. “*Talk brings on talk*” implies that speech leads only to more of the same, not action. “*All talk and no cider*” connects speech with non-results (p. 284).

In alignment with Norrick (1997), we see here a deep suspicion of speech because it may conflict with firmly held values of the Punjabi and Yoruba cultures, the desire to get things done. The doer and the builder are character types much admired in the Punjabi and Yoruba societies, just like American society (De Caro, 1987). We like to think of ourselves as men and women of action. We know how to get the job done through ingenuity and be among achievers and go-getters. Our children play with action toys; our students take achievement tests and are told to do something with their lives.

Indeed, most Punjabi and Yoruba people would agree that there is an emphasis on deeds and doing - getting a job done - an emphasis certainly bound up with our boundless faith in progress. Speech is a poor substitute for the drive to perform, perhaps at worst an undermine of accomplishment. The proverbs are an older, public assertion of the same attitude. The Punjabi speakers engage in plenty of speeches, and surely no one would deny the need for speech, but there is an underlying distrust of the spoken word as ‘mere talk.’ Of course, not all Punjabi proverbs, which construe speech negatively, make the explicit

connection between speech and action. However, a significant number do, and the researcher ventures to suggest that ‘words undermine deeds’ is the most fundamental attitude underlying any cultural negativity about spoken words. Even some of the proverbs, which construe speech positively, make the connection between speech and accomplishment. “*Many things are lost for want of speaking,*” “*Nothing asks, nothing have,*” “*He will never get a good thing cheap, that is afraid to ask the price*” (Norrick 1997, p. 88). Parallel examples such as “*Talk is cheap*” and “*Sayings go cheap*” address only speech directly, implying that material goods or hard cash are needed to get the job done. Explicit statements like talk gets in the way of action belong to this group and, for instance, proverbs like “*Less talk, more speed, and much talk, little work.*” The conventional metaphorical interpretation of ‘*Barking dogs do not bite*’ similarly disparages talk as compared with action or states that loud talkers present no imminent danger.

De Caro (1987) also contented that speech may be seen as an impediment to action or as being offered as a poor substitute for accomplishments or as being ineffective. Overall, an issue in part may be a cautious attitude toward speech, not unlike that found in the Japanese and Indian cases. Indeed, in general, many proverbs stress moderation and prudence and the need to avoid extremes. Indeed, such an American proverb as “*There is a time to speak and a time to be silent*” stresses that speech can be either appropriate or inappropriate according to context, and “*Courteous speech is worth much and costs little*” directs one to use a certain kind of speech which is seen as having positive value (even if, by implication, other kinds might not).

### **The Punjabi and Yoruba Cultural Script about Action versus Talk**

many people think like that

many times it happens

it is good to do something

it is not good to say something

## 4.7 Silence

### The Yoruba Proverbs about Silence (8) (4 -, 4 +)

#### i. “*Òkùnrin jẹ́jẹ́ bìwà-kunkun*”

“An easygoing man's gentle mien hides a strong disposition” (p. 151).

**Cultureme:** Silence (-) **Advice:** Be careful; the quiet type is often a tough customer.

This proverb is an oxymoron. ‘*Jẹ́jẹ́*’ means gentle while ‘*kunkun*’ means tough. The Yoruba people use this proverb to express the fact that quiet people are always hard to convince. They believe that it is challenging to satisfy them since you do not know what their hearts keep.

#### ii. “*Òbẹ̀ şìlò-ó ñbáni şeré a ní kò mú; bí eré bí eré ó ñpani lówó*”

“The şìlò knife is playing with one and one says it is not sharp; just as in play it has slashed one's hand” (online)

Silence is dreadful, so one should be careful not to underestimate people who do not advertise themselves. Otherwise, they will have one prostrate before one knows what is happening.

**Cultureme:** Silence (-) **Advice:** Be careful of the silent people.

#### iii. “*Ìdákẹ̀ rórọ̀ ní tí òkú, aláàyè ló ñ fòhùn*”

“Silence is an attribute of the dead: he who is alive, speaks” (Stone, 2006, p. 390)

**Cultureme:** Silence (-) **Advice:** Essential speaking must be done.

This proverb encourages people to speak because staying silent may result in some deprivation or social damage.

#### iv. “*Èrù máa dákẹ̀ rórọ̀ şùgbón òní ẹnu bí ìlù*”

“Fear a silent man. He has lips like a drum” (Chong, 2001, p. 145).

**Cultureme:** Silence (-) **Advice:** Be careful of the silent people.

The Yoruba people consider a silent man to be dreadful because of his profound observation. He might have noticed things that may cause havoc if he decides to voice them.

#### v. “*Èeldee ní ojo tí òún tí jágbon-ọn hùn, ojo náà ní oro ò tí niun lára mo*”

“The pig says since the day it learned to reply to every statement with a grunt it has not got into any trouble” (p. 129)

**Cultureme:** Silence (+) **Advice:** Choosing silence is the best reply.



A person who says nothing seldom gets in trouble. The Yorubas metaphorically use this proverb, using the grunt of a pig as a metaphor for a non-verbal response to everything. So it is believed that if you want to avoid trouble, just keep quiet. They use this proverb to advise two people who always fight, e.g. husbands and wives, that each of them can avoid making trouble once they learn how to be silent in every instance of offense.

**vi. “*A kì í dákkáṣìwí; a kì í wòsùn-ùnkádàràn*”**

“One does not keep quiet and yet misspeak; one does not silently contemplate the world and yet get into trouble” (p. 55).

**Cultureme:** Silence (+) **Advice:** Maintain silence and do not misspeak.

It is a general belief of the Yoruba, as the Punjabi fellows, that people run into trouble for their careless talk. So if you want to avoid trouble as a wise person, then you need to learn to keep quiet at most times. At least if you do not say anything, nobody will take you for a wrong notion.

**vii. “*Àdán sọ orí kodò, ó ñwòṣe ẹyẹ gbogbo*”**

“The bat hangs its head and contemplates the doings of birds” (p. 407)

**Cultureme:** Silence (+) **Advice:** Keep quiet to think.

The bats naturally are not lousy, and the Yoruba believe that is not a weakness, but rather a strength that denotes that bats are wise and watchful. So do the Yoruba believe that a silent person, or someone who thinks before he talks, has more facts and deep knowledge. The quiet person sees more than the loudmouth. Sometimes, smart people use this strategy while settling a matter; they allow different people to talk and stay observant and watchful to sense the situation before voicing their opinions. A proverb from Uganda has also reinforced the increased contemplative capacity of a silent person, “*One who talks thinks, one who keeps silent thinks more*” (Hodari and Sobers, 2009, p. 29). People can use this proverb to inform others that they just remain silent, not because they are not aware of the situation around them, but because they are more courteous to comment and observe where the account of that issue is going.

**viii. “*Fhìntì kí o rí ìṣe èké; farapamo kí o gbo bí aṣeni-í tí ñsọ*”**

“Sit back, and you will see how a devious person operates; conceal yourself, and you will hear how those who seek others’ destruction speak.”

(“One must be cagey in order to learn the truth about unreliable people”) (p. 181).

**Cultureme:** Silence (+) **Advice:** Be contemplative.

The Yoruba believe that if you want to know the truth, you have to retreat and hide. It is a time taking process but authentic to affirm the unsettled notions. The Yoruba also believe that people who speak evil of other people speak considering the people concerned unaware, they may still come and pretend or praise the same people they witch-hunt. So, they are tactical about it. The only way to know about them is to be patient enough and stay observant. What they are doing cannot last; it will indeed be exposed with time.

### **The Punjabi Proverbs about Silence (12) (11 +, 1 -)**

#### **i. *Ik chup 100 sukh* (p. 47).**

(A single moment of) silence guarantees hundreds (moments) of comfort.

**Cultureme:** Silence (+) **Advice:** Keep quiet.

If you are silent in one moment of anger, you may avoid a hundred years of sorrow. This proverb indicates the positive power of silence to promote and maintain peace because talk has been believed to be the root cause of conflict and squabbles. An Indian proverb, quoted by McNeil (1971), also reiterates the same pragmatic benefit of silence, “*One silence defeats a hundred*” (p. 4). In the provoking moments of a heated argument, this proverb is used to pacify the parties to avoid adding fuel to the fire by discontinuing the flow of argument alive through consistent replies.

#### **ii. *Sau so jo chup* (p. 250).**

The quiet one is the wise one.

**Cultureme:** Silence (+) **Advice:** Keep quiet.

‘*Sau*’ is used for a sage or a person near to God, and it is believed that if you want to recognize the pious and righteous person, look for the silent ones. A Jordanian proverb also asserts the practice of silence by a sensible and well-informed person “*If the knowledgeable man keeps silent, he will be a master*” (Al-Harasheh, 2012, p. 35). A similar capacity of silence for camouflaging foolishness is revealed in an Egyptian proverb, “*Silence conceals foolishness*” (Hodari and Sobers, 2009, p. 29). A quiet chap is a wise chap. A timely silence gives hundreds of ease. This proverb is a piece of wisdom that speaking less or a single timely silence can save you from many problems and provide you with a hundred comforts.

**iii. *Bherya bhandā nai bolda* (p. 138).**

A filled vessel does not make a noise.

***Cultureme:*** Silence (+) ***Advice:*** Keep quiet.

In this proverb, the silence of a person is attributed to his wisdom. In the Punjabi linguo-culture, the emptiness of a pot has been used metaphorically to denote the lack of maturity and wisdom. The Wolof also believe that the lower-ranking person travels more and talks more than the person of the higher status (Agyekum, 2002). The metaphor of a filled pot is used to denote the mind filled with discerning ability and wisdom. Here the filled pot may also refer to a noble and wealthy person who, out of his financial satiation, who prefers to remain calm and peaceful while depravity makes people talk more. Communicative silence indicating the person's status is manifested here.

**iv. *Gaala gul karey, syana qias karey* (4, p. 208).**

A talkative person talks and the wise man infers silently.

***Cultureme:*** Silence (+) ***Advice:*** Keep quiet.

**v. *Ayana gul karey, syana qayas karey* (p. 33).**

The foolish person talks, the wise one infers.

***Cultureme:*** Silence (+) ***Advice:*** Keep quiet.

In the above mentioned two proverbs, again, a talkative/foolish person is set against a reserved cum silent person who will make informed conclusions while listening to the former's verbosity. The Punjabi people, like Arabs, consider the tongue as housing the spirit of wisdom. Hence, they connect silence with wisdom, knowledge, prudence, and stability (Elmubarak, 2017). A Hindi proverb reported by Chateris-Black (1995) has also expressed a similar idea "*The fool speaks but the wise thinks*" (p. 7). A talkative person says whatever comes to his/her mouth, but a wise person decides not to speak unnecessarily. A wise person thinks before speaking, and an ignorant one speaks before thinking.

**vi. *Chup adhi marzi* (1, p. 221).**

Silence is half the consent.

**Cultureme:** Silence (+) **Advice:** Consider the silence as half consent.

Culturally, keeping quiet in answer to a query has been interpreted as consent. This notion is specifically applied when a girl is formally asked about her consent for a proposal, to which she replies through her silence in the affirmative. Silence is considered as her consent. In our culture of sub-continent, matrimonial decisions are taken by the parents. When parents select a groom for their daughter, they ask her if he is okay for her, and she says nothing but remains silent. So parents take this gesture as her consent.

**vii. *Gajdi gaja'n marey, chupati kam sa'nwarey* (p. 304).**

The talkative person (woman) wastes time; the silent one works efficiently.

**Cultureme:** Silence (+) **Advice:** Keep quiet.

**For explanation, please see under viii.**

**viii. *Wajdi da waja'n marey, chup chupati kum sa'nwarey* (p. 372).**

The talkative woman talks; the wise one works silently.

**Cultureme:** Silence (+) **Advice:** Keep quiet.

The entries at vii and viii are two variants of a single proverb and are employed by the Punjabi people to accentuate a silent person's potential to yield results that a talkative person cannot achieve. An Indian proverb has also expressed the poor performer as a talkative person, "*The little doer is a big talker*" (McNeil, 1971, p. 9). When the loquacious person is busy in a talk, the wise one will be completing some tasks in the meanwhile. A talking lady wastes her working hours by boasting up and gossip, while a wise and quiet lady works with efficiency and earn more. The latter makes things work, while the former can make things worse.

**ix. *Jithay jitt k harna, othay changee chup* (4, p. 22).**

Where you lose after winning, it is better to keep quiet.

**Cultureme:** Silence (+) **Advice:** Be silent in times of conflict.

This proverb refers to a verbal fight and winning an argument through talk but losing the friend/relative as a consequence. This proverb echoes a Jordanian proverb quoted by Al-Harasheh (2012), "*If a silly man talks to you, do not answer him; the best answer for him is silence*" (p. 35). The speaker who has the vocal talent to overpower his opponent is advised

to recourse to silence to save the relationship. Better being quiet than feeling defeated even after a win. In some situations, where you are crowded by illiterate and ignorant, or the ill-mannered opponents, it would be better not to win them through verbal argument as it makes no difference to them.

**x. *Agla bolda howay te ap chup ho rahiye* (p. 55).**

Keep quiet when someone is talking.

***Cultureme:*** Silence (+) ***Advice:*** Wait for your turn silently. Do not interrupt.

This proverb is used as a piece of advice to guide the interlocutors about the etiquettes of conversation. An elderly family member is usually employed to train a young member to listen patiently and not to interrupt the speaker. In the Punjabi community, like Jordanian, silence in most cases is socially and culturally required, especially when speaking to a person who is superior or older, because it is a mark of respect to wait for this man or woman to complete his/her speech (Al-Harashah, 2012). Quan (2015) has also noted that the social relationships manifested through silence can mark the solidarity or hierarchical relationship between interlocutors. In the Chinese family, the elders have the right to speak more. So, when an elder says something, the youngsters have to listen instead of interrupting the former.

**xi. *Chup keete aadmi te banhay hoey pani to'n darna chahida ae* (p. 22).**

Be alarmed with a silent person and the forcefully stopped water.

***Cultureme:*** Silence (-) ***Advice:*** Keep quiet.

Silence is mysterious and equated with the flowing water stopped forcefully and may go on the rampage once loosened. You cannot guess what power they may keep in. It imparts power and fear in the audience due to uncertainty and lack of clarity. It would also hamper the audience from making an informed decision and adopting a workable strategy to handle the above-referred person. Chong (2001) has noted that the metaphor of silent waters is perceived negatively in speech communities with higher population densities. Hence the silence contributes to constructing an image of an influential person.

**xii. *Kehn noo'n te assi vi jibh rakhnay aa'n* (p. 44).**

To tell, we also have a tongue.

**Cultureme:** Silence (+) **Advice:** Keep quiet.

This expression is typically used when no one is ready to listen to you. Then a person can say, ‘I also have a tongue in my mouth, so listen to me. Do not consider that I cannot speak.’ This proverbial phrase is used as a warning when someone prefers to keep silent rather than engaging in a verbal argument to make the listener realize that the silence of one party should not be deciphered as their weakness.

### **Explanation and Discussion of Silence**

Out of eight Yoruba proverbs on ‘*silence*’, four depict positive aspects of silence, while four focus on its negative attributes. The positive proverbs highlight the benefits of being quiet and note that a silent observer can contemplate and notice some crucial aspects that a person indulged in talking might miss. Silence as a face-saving strategy may be interpreted as significant because the recipient is selecting his or her words carefully to not to discomfit the current speaker (Al-Harahsheh, 2012). Additionally, to reach the reality of unfaithful and manipulative people, silent observation is believed to be a prerequisite. The person, who remains quiet, is free from the chance of misspeaking; hence it saves him/her from the ill consequences.

Furthermore, the reticent person seems to create the impression of a challenging target successfully; hence he is dreadful. Chong (2001, p. 185) and Stone (2006, p. 145) have quoted a Yoruba proverb which we could not find in the dictionary by Owomoyela (2005), which advised us to be afraid of a silent person as he can use his lips to announce like a drum whatever is stored in his heart. A piece of implicit advice in the Yoruba proverbs is not to underestimate a person because of his reserved nature. While another proverb has associated extreme silence with the dead, “*Silence is an attribute of the dead: he who is alive speaks*” (Speake, 2015, p. 390). This proverb indicates the discouraging attitude toward extreme silence as speaking on essential occasions is propagated and encouraged in multiple Yoruba proverbs. It is the excessive talk, which is discouraged as in a proverb quoted by Finnegan (1970) in her book *Oral Literature in Africa* “*One must talk little, and listen much*” (p. 176). The understanding imparted through this set of proverbs from the Yoruba includes the

importance of contemplation (while observing silently) to achieve an in-depth understanding of people and situations to respond appropriately and the need to speak up when the situation requires. A balanced approach to speech and silence has been advocated according to the contextual demands.

These Punjabi proverbs have substantiated the preference given to silence in the Punjabi culture. Quietness has also been affiliated with peace, success, high performance, wisdom, and achievability. Being reticent has been coupled with being wise as silence has been denoted as a pearl of great wisdom. A silent individual can carry the image of a powerful and mysterious person and attain his aims through the fear created by his taciturn nature. If the talk makes you win an argument through verbal aggression, it may cause losing a friend. Here again, silence is preferred even over winning an argument. The Sudanese proverbs have also yielded similar notions about silence, *“If you see a sedate, silent believer, approach him as he teaches wisdom”* (Ahmed, 2005, p. 615); *“Regret what you said, but do not regret what you did not say”* (p. 616); *“Silence is a sign of consent”* (p. 620). When a talkative person is busy in his talk, the wise and silent listener will infer the profound truth revealed through the verbal hints in the careless talk. When asked for an opinion, if the listener keeps quiet, it would be translated as half consent or approval. The silence of a person can be attributed to his/her wisdom and enlightenment.

Both Punjabi and Yoruba proverbs delineate the shared cultural schema of silence as a peace-promoting and conflict-avoiding characteristic and practice. Keeping quiet is a prudent practice to avoid any trouble. Al-Harashseh (2012) asserts that *“it is the best way to confront shameless people”* and has quotes a proverb, *“silence is better not only for people but also for birds because if the bird sings, it will be hunted and jailed”* (p. 47). *“Silence is the best answer to the stupid”* Egypt *“He who does not speak does not argue”* Namibia (Ovambo) (Hodari and Sobers, 2009). In the Theory of Politeness, remaining silent is the most proper strategy for handling face-threatening acts (Agyekum, 2002). If the speaker remains silent, the potentially threatening act is not just mitigated but avoided altogether. It may be appropriate to remain silent in a particular context instead of saying something negative, which might hurt the interlocutor and might be very difficult to retract. Ahmed (2005) reports a Sudanese proverb, *“If you want to put an end to talk, ignore it”* (p. 121),

which urges that to end unnecessary conversations, you should not respond to the person who is speaking with you. It encourages people not to indulge in fruitless arguments. Among the Akan, silence is also deemed compelling and eloquent. It is used in place of a disharmonious utterance that can provoke anger, confusion, or lead to a disaster or even an arrest or killing (Agyekum, 2002).

The Punjabi proverbs also explicitly relate silence with higher wisdom and foresight of noble people, just reinforced by a metaphorical Akan proverb “*precious beads do not jingle*” (Agyekum, 2002, p. 67). It implies that any reasonable, honorable, and dignified person neither talk nor brag too much. Ahmed (2005), in his study of Sudanese proverbs, quotes a proverb verifying the presence of a similar belief, “*If you see a sedate, silent believer, approach him as he teaches wisdom*” (p. 215). The Punjabi preference for silence can be reinforced by Gundlach (2013). He has compared Japanese and Anglo-culture concerning silence and concluded that “Eastern societies such as India, China, and Japan have valued silence more than Western societies” (p. 116) because the latter defines it as a “sign of interpersonal sensitivity, mutual respect, personal dignity, affirmation, and wisdom” (p. 116). At the same time, he claims that Western societies like the US interpret silence as a “lack of attention and initiative” (p. 117).

Moreover, both languages reveal that silence helps the practitioner observe profoundly and contemplate analytically tackling tricky persons and situations. When an individual remains silent and is thinking, this is not silence, according to Bruneau (2008, p. 78), who has also argued that it refers to “contemplation and meditative, psychic fugues, nostalgic raptures, fantasies, day-dreaming, mind-wandering, and unconscious journey.” As Johannesen (1974, p. 29) asserts that “human silence is pregnant with meaning because of its assumption”, the silent people have also been presented as stringent targets being reserved and mysterious who remain unpredictable, and this trait keeps the opponents on alert. They do not take them as easy targets. No Yoruba proverb has any indication or advice for women to remain silent specifically, but the Punjabi proverbs explicitly mention that a silent woman is a better performer in the household. Another difference is observed when the Punjabi proverbs equate silence with the positive attributes of sanity, righteousness, and discernment compared to talk, which seems to be assimilated with foolishness, empty-headedness, and



indiscretion. In the words of Agyekum (2002), the dominant attitude toward silence in the Punjabi proverbs entails that a person “derives from silence the cornerstone of character, the virtues of self-control, courage, patience, and dignity” (p. 37). In this association, the Punjabi proverbs have equivalence with Jordanian proverb quoted by (Al-Harashseh, 2012, p. 76) “*A still tongue makes a wise head*”; and African proverb “*A wise head makes a closed mouth*” (Hodari and Sobers, 2009, p. 33)

Another indication given by the Punjabi proverb, but not by the Yoruba, to silence as consent is reiterating the Indonesian “*Silence is a sign of consent*” (Ahmed, 2005, p. 155); the proverb from Libya “*Silence is the door of consent*” (Hodari and Sobers, 2009, p. 33); and last but not least, Igbo proverb quoted by Opata (1992), “*One who remains silent (in a discussion) has consented to the issue that is being discussed*” (p. 204). Furthermore, Punjabi proverbs emphasize the preference given to improved performance by a silent worker, where talk has been perceived as an intruding element. The Punjabi proverb also demonstrate that silence can be used to serve several politeness functions. Silence has a denotative meaning, as it is polite to be silent while the other speaker is talking. Interruption is also not preferable because it seizes the other speaker’s right to complete his or her turn. The Punjabi speakers, like their Jordanian counterparts, may express their annoyance about verbal interruptions, especially between friends (Al-Harashseh, 2012).

The proverbs’ analysis of silence reveals an integrative part of the communication process in the Punjabi and Yoruba speech communities. The notion of failure in communication (Coulthard, 1992) has also been negated in these proverbs by emphasizing the practical benefits of maintaining silence. In particular, silence in Nigeria and Punjab appears to be iconic of specific behavioral responses conveying some cultural norms aimed at ensuring the sanctity of the individual as well as the community’s well-being. The situation is a little more complicated in the Yorubaland as there appear to be more communally and individually driven instances. Reactions through silence, which are communal, can also be attributed to respect for the community’s well-being, as most people seek to preserve the order of the community. In the Igbo community of Nigeria, silence is employed to show fellow-feeling among the people, especially in trouble. Though Medubi has referred to the asymmetrical gender relations and the relative significance of silence in Nigeria in his study, no proverb could be found about the notion that a man has the option of

expressing his anger through silence. At the same time, the woman is almost always compelled to use silence when angry as a sign of respect. In traditional oral cultures, like the Punjabi and Yoruba ones, silence has sometimes been used as a communicative strategy to confer respect (Medubi, 2010).

Just as Wierzbicka (1994) observes that societies differ considerably in the value they place on silence, and on nonverbal communication, as opposed to speech, the Punjabi and Yoruba corpora yield different patterns of accentuation concerning silence. Just like the Punjabi speech community, Japan is often said to differ enormously in this respect from Anglo-American culture. Befu (1971, p. 176) speaks in this connection of the “suppression of verbalism” in Japanese culture. He points to the Zen Buddhist emphasis on “the inutility of linguistic communication” and its emphatic rejection of verbal instruction. Like the Confucian tradition, which has made Korean culture cherish ‘thrift on words’ as the prime virtue, it discourages the people from being outspoken. Looking at the Punjabi and Yoruba proverbs from the perspective of inter-textuality reveals that being the Muslim majority speech communities, the importance attached with silence may have its traces in the religious discourses, i.e., Ahadees of Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) as quoted by Al-Harashah (2012): *“Worship is ten parts, nine of them are in silence”*; *“My God ordered me to do nine things...my silence to be thoughtfulness”*; *“glorify yourself by keeping silent”*; *“When you encounter someone who is angry and reviles you, ignore him since if you reply, he may hurt you by words or deeds”*; *“silence is the best worship”*; *“if you keep silent, you will be safe”*; *“God sympathizes with one who keeps silent”* (p. 35) Additionally, Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) said to Abu Dhar (one of the prophet's companion) *“shall I teach you something lighter on the body, but heavier in the scale of your good deeds... silence, good behavior, and do not interfere with what is not your business”* (p. 35). Furthermore, Agyekum (2002), in his study of silence in the Akan speech community, argues that the essence of silence as recorded in the Bible may also be a reason behind the promoting attitude toward silence: *“He who guards his lips guards his life, but he who speaks rashly will come to ruin”*; *“When words are many, sin is not absent, he who holds his tongue is wise”* (p. 47).

Chong (2001) has argued that silence-related positive proverbs’ communicative function is to urge the hearer (or topical subject) to respect those who are, by nature, taciturn.

He has discerned that the qualities allied to silence include: “psychological depth, wisdom, wealth and knowledge” (p. 187). The dominating positive attitude toward silence in the Punjabi proverbs can be summarized in an Arab wise man’s words, “there are 7,000 types of silence, which are summarized in seven words: silence is worship without effort, an embellishment without jewelry, a prestige without sovereignty, a fort without walls, getting away without apologizing, the convenience of the two angles (who writes the man's good and bad deeds), a mantle of faults” (Al-Harashseh, 2012, p. 36).

The negative attitude toward silence in the Yoruba proverbs is reinforced by the presence of negative connotations in the Swahili proverb, “*Silence is not necessarily foolishness, it could be spying*”; “*A too-long silence has harmful consequences*” (Hodari and Sobers, 2009, p. 127). A person who remains silent and does not contribute to the daily conversation is considered very dangerous. Often, such a person does dreadful things. It can be imagined that the communicative context would be concerned with defending the topical subject from any false motive that may be imputed to a person’s silence. The proverbs advise against being silent through a negative evaluation of silence. The qualities associated with silence are death, danger, fear, deception, cowardice, and evil. In several of these proverbs, there is the notion of depth, but the difference is that depth is considered to be feared as it may conceal a hidden danger. The Igbo proverb also reinforces the presence of negative connotations for silence in Nigerian society at large, “*The stagnant water is the one that drowns a person*” (Opata, 1992, p. 204); “*It is the calm and silent water that drowns a man*” (Ghana) (p. 117); “*Silent men are deep and dangerous*” (Japanese) (Chateris-Black, 1995, p. 278).

Like Yoruba, out of sixteen Nigerian (Igbo) proverbs on silence (Opata, 1992), ten portray silence in the negative, three in the positive, whereas the remaining three are mere observation statements. A close examination of these proverbs would reveal the depth to which the image of silence looms large in people’s consciousness. Silence is construed chiefly negatively in Igbo thought and life. In these Nigerian cases, silence is not cast in the positive, but as a strategic device with which a problematic phenomenon could be overcome. Like their Igbo thematic equivalents, the Yoruba proverbs’ findings verify the presence of a bilateral attitude toward silence in Nigerian speakers.

The Yoruba proverbs also share Capponi's (2015) Italian proverbial analysis, which also reinforces that while words are disparaged and seen as an indication of vacuity, unreliability, and emptiness, the complementary notion is the weight that should be attributed to silence. Proverbs point to silence, what is not said, as a severe indication of real danger. When one is unaware of impending danger, an enemy can take revenge as there is no sign that there is a need to defend oneself. Thus we find proverbs such as "*Someone who wishes to act, is usually a person of few words*"; "*One who speaks little, bites much*"; "*Beware the man who does not speak*" (p. 340). Silence is instead a sign of real, imminent, likely danger. Apparently, in the absence of words, the real danger lies; empty words give way to the space of silence that accommodates deeds and encompasses reality. Thus, silence becomes a more severe form of threat, a more reliable indication of danger, therefore generating the dread essential for obtaining the desired reaction. The interlocutor is obliged to envision the future scenario to complete the picture.

The Punjabi concept of silence, just like the Korean notion, is in contrast to that of the Northern European or North American societies where silence is regarded as "dark, negative and full of nothing" (Kim, 2003, p. 99). The Western interpretations of silence are sorrow, critique, obligation, regret, and embarrassment. Kim and Markus (2002) report that for the California educators, silence connotes passivity, slowness, confusion, mental inactivity, or perhaps a type of social loafing, while talking is the very signature of engagement, mental life, and power. However, from some non-Western perspectives, silence connotes truthfulness, attentiveness, and sincerity, while talking can connote a lack of respect or lack of thoughtfulness. Thus, the act of talking is associated with a lack of wisdom and immaturity and not with intelligence and better thinking as it is in the American cultural context.

### **The Punjabi Cultural Scripts for 'Be Quiet'**

As far as the cultural scripts are concerned, linguistic evidence provided in the paremia on Punjabi linguo-culture and society suggests the following cultural scripts referring to speech (among many others):

many times

it is good not to say to other people all that I think

it is not good to say to other people what I feel

often it is good not to say anything to other people

it is good to know what the other person thinks

it is good to know what the other person feels

Scripts of this kind are recognizable to all the speakers of Punjabi culture, even if they have never seen them stated in this form; and they capture, in a concise and straightforward form, generalizations alluded to in nearly all studies of the Punjabi ethnography of communication (Goddard, 2010).

### **The Yoruba Cultural Script about ‘Being Quiet’**

On the other hand, for the Yoruba proverbs, the Cultural Scripts may have a slightly different orientation:

sometimes, it is not good to say what I think

sometimes, it is not good to say what I feel

it is good to think than to say anything

sometimes, it is not good if someone does not say anything

## **4.8 Loquacity**

### **The Yoruba Proverbs about Loquacity (7 -)**

#### **i. “*ení bá sọ púpo á òsìsọ*”**

“Whoever talks a lot will misspeak.”

(“It is better to be a person of few words”) (p. 177).

**Cultureme:** Loquacity (-) **Advice:** Do not talk much.

Loquacity has been presented negatively in this Yoruba proverb because the Yorubas believe that too many words lead to sin. Controlling one’s mouth will save the person from unnecessary blunder or sin. When you talk too much, you say rubbish, so it is better to talk moderately. A Chinese proverb has also mentioned a similar concern, “*In a multitude of*

words, there will certainly be a mistake” (Speake, 2015, p. 483). It means that one should not talk much. Talking a lot increases the instances of saying nonsense.

**ii. “Oro púpo ò kún agbon; iro ní mmú wá”**

“Many words will not fill a basket; they will only lead to lies” (p. 206).

**Cultureme:** Loquacity (-) **Advice:** Do not talk much.

Brevity is wise in discussions; wordiness leads to fabrication. A porous basket can never be filled with water; it is only an illusion or deceit. One should be a man or woman of few words because too much talk has no value or worth. Gokhan (1990) quotes a Turkish proverb accentuating the same notion, “*the abundance of property cannot be acquired, but by illegal means, the abundance of talk cannot be without lies*” (122). Brevity is wise in a discussion; wordiness can bring inventions.

**iii. “Kò sí ohun tó yára pa ẹni bí r àsojù”**

“There is nothing that kills faster than talking too much” (p. 191).

**Cultureme:** Loquacity (-) **Advice:** Do not talk much.

One should govern one’s mouth. An open mouth kills faster than any weapon. When a man or woman cannot bridle his/her mouth, such a person will die quickly than expected. The Yorubas use this proverb to warn people to govern their tongue and control their speech.

**iv. “Eni t’o so pupo a si so”**

“Whoever says a lot will say the wrong thing” (p. 11).

**Cultureme:** Loquacity (-) **Advice:** Do not talk much.

The Yorubas use this proverb to warn people to govern their tongue and control their speech. A French proverb also establishes the link of talkativeness with lying, “*A great talker is a great liar*” (Stone, 2006, p. 257). One should govern one’s mouth. An open mouth kills faster than any weapon.

**v. “O dájú dánu, o ò mọ ẹsán mèsàn-án”**

“Your eyes flinch not, and your mouth is unstoppable, but you do not know nine times nine” (p. 91).

**Cultureme:** Loquacity (-) **Advice:** Avoid too much talk.

Too much mouth often indicates too little substance. Speak less, yet understand the revenge for the situation. Study the situation well and plan very well to tackle the situation; however, speak less. The wicked person does not know the nine rewards and repercussions.

**vi. “Ilorino lóoşà;enu looşà Ilorin”**

“The Ilorin person has no god; his or her mouth is his or her god” (p. 212).

**Cultureme:** Loquacity (-) **Advice:** Avoid too much talk.

An informant shared that Ilorin is an emirate city in Kwara State, Nigeria, comprising Yorubas and Fulanis. The history revealed that it was a pure Yoruba city before the Fulanis capture it during Afonja's war. The usage of the word ‘Ilorin’ refers to people from that city who are believed to be talkative. The person under reference is all mouth and no substance. ‘Ilorin’ is an idol, with its ability to over exaggerate. This proverb is used when someone is taken to be dominant or idolized based on what he/she says, not what he/she can do. Empty and useless talk is discouraged in favor of actual contribution.

**vii. “Ahon ni ipinnle enu.”**

“The tongue is the border of the mouth.”

(“There is a limit to everything”) (p. 52).

**Cultureme:** Brevity (+) **Advice:** Do not cross limits while talking.

The tongue is the foundation of the mouth. The tongue’s immense power is acknowledged because it occupies a great place in the mouth’s structure. The mouth’s power lies in the tongue, but the tongue should observe the limits as crossing limits entails dangers for the mouth owner.

**The Punjabi Proverbs about Loquacity (23 -)**

**i. Oona’n hoyā kharr kharr bolay, bherya kadi nah bolay (p. 309).**

Only a partially-filled vessel makes much noise; the filled one will never do so.

**Cultureme:** Loquacity (-) **Advice:** Do not talk much.

This proverb is a Punjabi equivalent to ‘empty vessels make more noise.’ It is used when mentioning a talkative person and his empty character, low personality, and lack of manners.

**ii. *Jehrra bhanda sukhna huvay ohi kharrakda ae* (p. 165).**

Only an empty vessel makes a noise.

***Cultureme:*** Loquacity (-) ***Advice:*** Do not talk much.

It means a person with less or inadequate knowledge will speak more and louder, in his/her wish to prove that he/she knows a lot. On the other hand, a person with knowledge will only speak a meaningful sentence to merit the Urdu phrase, “*derya koozay main bund kerna*” “*putting a river in a cup.*”

**iii. *Thotha chuna bajay ghana* (p. 134).**

Empty vessels make loud sounds.

***Cultureme:*** Loquacity (-) ***Advice:*** Do not talk much.

**iv. *Khali bhaanda bohta kharrke* (1, p. 229).**

Empty vessels make loud sounds.

***Cultureme:*** Loquacity (-) ***Advice:*** Do not talk much.

All the four above-mentioned proverbs (i, ii, iii, and, iv) use the metaphors of ‘empty pot’ and ‘filled pot’ where the former denotes the shallowness of the brain and character while the latter connotes prudence and foresight. Hence, talk has been associated with shallowness and silence with depth. Ahmed (2005), in his analysis of Sudanese proverbs, quotes a similar metaphorical delineation of talk in Arabic culture, “*A leather bag with a little water in it shakes frequently*” (p. 101). Norrick (1997) reports an Anglo-American proverb signifying the displeasure attached with loquacity “*Great talkers are like leaky pitchers, everything runs out of them*” (p. 279). Emptiness has been associated with talk and worthiness with silence in these oft-quoted Punjabi variants.

**v. *Jhallay kitho’n japan, gula’n karun ta’n sanjapan* (3, p. 543).**

How to recognize a dupe? His talk will lead to this conclusion.

***Cultureme:*** Talk (-) ***Advice:*** Do not talk much.

This proverb communicates that in the Punjabi linguo-culture, silence is believed to



be a cover for a person; it is only his/her talk, which reveals the low intellect levels. Speake (2015) reports a Roman proverb advocating a partially similar relationship “*Silence is not always a sign of wisdom, but babbling is ever a mark of folly*” (p. 391). An Indian proverb also endorses the idea, “*Where there is a surfeit of words, there is a famine of intelligence*” (McNeil, 1971, p. 10). “*When he brayed, the jackass showed he was not a lion*” (Egypt) (Charteris-Black, 1995 p. 4). Thus, the Punjabi proverb seems to join the widespread notion that talking reveals the foolishness of a person.

**vi. *Lammi zaban deharrey thorey* (4, p. 466).**

The long tongue shortens the days in this world.

***Cultureme:*** Loquacity (-) ***Advice:*** Do not talk much. (-)

A talkative person cannot speak for long. It means a person who is speaking meaningless, too much or senseless, will soon be known by the people, and the people will stop listening to him. They will stop paying attention to his words, and soon he will be left alone. In other words, his words and his tongue will die.

**vii. *Lami jibh te cheti mout* (4. P. 466).**

A long tongue (being too talkative) causes an earlier death of the speaker.

***Cultureme:*** Loquacity (-) ***Advice:*** Do not talk much.

In the proverbs mentioned above, the metaphor of 'long tongue' has been used for a person who talks incessantly and without making any sense. Such excessive and aggressive talk can cause an earlier demise of the speaker as a consequence. Norrick (1997) reports an Anglo-American proverb associating talkativeness with less mannerism, “*Large mouth, small manners*” (p. 281), while Stone (2006) reports the same link in a Chinese proverb, “*A long tongue is a staircase by which misfortunes ascend*” (p. 435). A long tongue has also been used to refer to loose and careless talk, which is believed to result in dire circumstances for the speaker. These proverbs testify to the universal and shared schema of shallowness and meaningless attached to ‘loquacity.’

**viii. *Jinha'n khout, onha'n mu'nh mokla* (4, p. 250).**

The more the alloy, the more opened the mouth.

***Cultureme:*** Loquacity (-) ***Advice:*** Do not talk much.

This proverb implies through creating a parallel that the insincere nature of a person can be noted through excessive talk. The allusion to the domain of a goldsmith by mentioning ‘alloy’ and the metaphors of ‘open’ and ‘loose’ mouth denote the excessive talkative nature of a person. Ignorance makes people’s mouths wide open. An ignorant person tries to make his point by speaking a lot, while a wise person will speak a few meaningful words, and people will understand. It implies that a deceptive person has much to talk about, and a sincere person does not need to recourse to verbosity to prove his/her point. A proverb from Ghana has also restated the same relation, “*He who is guilty has much to say*” (Hodari and Sobers, 2009, p. 33).

**ix. *itni koo’n jaan 100 gaz di zabaan* (p. 370).**

A tiny person who has a 100-meter long tongue (speaks a lot)

***Cultureme:*** Loquacity (-) ***Advice:*** Do not talk much.

This proverb is a sarcastic comment for a thin person of short height to criticize his/her volubility.

**x. *Kaa’n da jhoota khada ae* (4, p. 389).**

He has eaten the leftover by the crow.

***Cultureme:*** Loquacity (-) ***Advice:*** Do not talk much.

This proverb is a sarcastic comment for a thin person of short height to criticize his/her volubility.

**xi. *Kaa’n khadi betha ei’n* (4, p. 390).**

He has eaten the crow.

***Cultureme:*** Loquacity (-) ***Advice:*** Do not talk much.

A talkative person is like a crow, who always caws unnecessarily. This proverb is a sarcastic comment for a thin person of short height to criticize his/her volubility.

**xii. *Kute da bheja khadi betha ei’n* (4, p. 391).**

He has eaten the brain of a dog.

***Cultureme:*** Loquacity (-) ***Advice:*** Do not talk much.

A talkative person is like a dog, continuously barking. In the x, xi, xii proverbs, the animal imagery of 'crow' and 'dog' has been employed to communicate the displeasure created by the talk of a long-winded person. A person who is shouting and speaking aloud is considered barking like a dog.

**xiii. *Meri jibh hey be ikhtiyari* (p. 353).**

My tongue is out of my control.

**Cultureme:** Loquacity (-) **Advice:** Do not talk much.

It is also used as a sarcastic comment for a talkative person who has no verbal restraint. It can also be used by a talkative person himself/herself as an excuse for his/her useless/careless talk as if it is something intractable due to weak skills.

**xiv. *Chambrray di zaban ae chook jandi ae* (p. 174).**

The tongue is made of leather, and it slips.

**Cultureme:** Loquacity (-) **Advice:** Do not talk much.

The tongue is made of leather so, it can mend in any direction and slip. This proverb is typically used when someone says something by accident and then makes a correction. This is used mostly in rural areas of both Punjab for a person who has no control over his/her tongue.

**xv. *Mei'n te bechari, meri jibh hay bey ikhtiyari* (p. 419).**

I am innocent; my tongue is not in my control.

**Cultureme:** Loquacity (-) **Advice:** Do not talk much.

It is also used for a person who does not exercise any control over his verbal ability. It can also be used by a talkative person himself/herself as an excuse for his/her useless/careless talk as if it is something intractable due to weak skills.

**xvi. *Maarde day huth pharry jande nei'n, kehnde di zaban nai pharri jandi.* (p. 320).**

You can stop a physical fight, but not the tongue of an aggressive person.

**Cultureme:** Loquacity (-) **Advice:** Do not talk much.

To stop a physical fight is more manageable than stopping a verbal scuffle. This proverb is used when in a physical fight, one person is stronger than the other, so he is beating, but the poor and weak victim can only abuse and speak the foul language. So you can not stop an abuser's tongue but the hands of a powerful fighter.

The proverbs xiii, xiv, xv, and xvi have delineated the reason of a talkative person to the intractability of their tongue.

**xvii. *Nuk kupyā'n mu'nh khulda ae* (5, p. 345).**

Cupping one's nose opens the mouth.

***Cultureme:*** Loquacity (-) ***Advice:*** Do not talk much.

It means if you make someone suffer and do not let him breathe, he will have to shout or abuse. This proverb is used to warn people not to tease anyone till his/her limits. It can also mean that a shameless person does not bother about the damage to his image due to unlimited thoughtless talk. To become talkative, one has to shed shyness and any sense of shame.

**xviii. *Mu'nh to'n lathi loi, kih kare ga koi* (5, p. 344).**

When a person's mouth is uncovered (when he becomes shameless), what can anyone do in this regard?

***Cultureme:*** Loquacity (-) ***Advice:*** Do not talk much.

A shameless person has no fear. When someone does not take care of the moral values of society, he/she becomes shameless. Then nobody can make any difference in his/her doings. 'Loi' is a veil on one's face, indicating the value of 'shame.' This proverb is commonly used in rural areas of Punjab, and talking without restraint has been associated with being unabashed.

**xix. *Bolat bolat budhay bakari* (2, p. 232).**

The older adult is talking like a dog.

***Cultureme:*** Loquacity (-) ***Advice:*** Do not talk much.

Too much and clueless talking in old age due to hysteria is criticized in this proverb as old age is considered the age of wisdom and foresight in the Punjabi society. A Sudanese proverb has also mentioned a similar notion, "*Much talking is unbecoming in an elder*" (Ahmed, 2005). In comparison, loquacity is associated with indiscretion.

**xx. *Jutta'n da mu'nh koharrey parrya* (3, p. 233).**

The mouth of the *Jutt's* is cut with an ax.

**Cultureme:** Loquacity (-) **Advice:** Do not talk much.

Though a specific caste is being targeted in the proverb, it is used for a person who does not follow restraint in talk. An ignorant or unlearned man speaks unwisely and bad words, so he will end up with an ax that will fill his mouth.

**xxi. Chota mu'nh te vadi gul (p. 427).**

Small mouth, big talk

**Cultureme:** Loquacity/proud talk (-) **Advice:** Do not talk proudly.

An infamous or an ordinary person can also speak wisely. In the rural areas, people have their courts where wise and older adults or the landlords perform as judges. In case of a dispute in villages, they set a court, listen to both parties and give their verdict. Sometimes, in these kinds of courts, an ordinary person who happened to be the witness of the incident says, 'listen to me, though I have a small mouth I can tell a big talk!' The speaker uses it to show his humble capacity while discussing or suggesting some point of grave concern. It can also be used by the listener/audience to mention the speaker's social class and challenge his ability to discuss a topic expected to be discussed in socially high class or knowledgeable people.

**xxii. Dund khandya'n ghis gaye nei'n, jibh gilay kar deya'n nai ghissi (p. 327).**

The teeth are grated due to eating, but the tongue is not grated by talking/complaining.

**Cultureme:** Loquacity (-) **Advice:** Do not talk much.

This proverb means that a complaining tongue will keep complaining all its life. This proverb is used when an older adult keeps complaining. For example, some people complain all their lives against their spouse. It is used as a sarcastic comment for people who take full benefit of a person, but their tongue does not shy from complaining.

**xxiii. Rogi di jibh te waid day kunn Rub sababi wadday (p. 481).**

A patient's tongue and a healer's ear are by default long.

**Cultureme:** Loquacity (-) **Advice:** Do not talk much.

This proverb has a more neutral attitude toward a patient's long-windedness and the patience of the doctor. It means a sick and ill person will talk all the time about his sickness (using long tongue, long words) while the healer will listen to his long talks. They both have the features of talking and listening by nature.

### **Explanation and Discussion of the Yoruba and Punjabi Proverbs about Loquacity**

Though with a medium level semantic density of culturemes about 'loquacity', the Yoruba proverbs warn against the pitfalls because of loquacity, verbosity, and advise not being involved in long-windedness. The Gricean maxim of quantity to avoid too much verbosity has been emphasized (Grice, 1975). In this category, the proverbs show some distrust of the phenomenon of talking too much, just like an Igbo counterpart, "*The child who talks too much must one day talk about the day his father and mother made love*" (Opata, 1992). Furthermore, Hunter and Oumarou (1998) also identified another Nigerian (Hausa) proverb with a similar affirmation, "*More dangerously, idle chatter can turn into gossip or even lies, both of which are frowned upon*" (p. 165). Although speech is encouraged amongst the Nigerian Igbo and Yoruba, there is explicit warning against a tendency to talkativeness. It appears that moderation in speech has been counseled.

'Loquacity' contains one of the highest semantic densities (23 culturemes) in the Punjabi corpus. Many debilitating metaphors have come up-front from the analysis of proverbs in this cultureme. Almost all the proverbs have reinforced the negative connotations attached to verbiage by employing different negative images. The images of 'crow,' 'dog,' 'alloy,' 'cut with an ax,' and 'empty vessel' have reinforced that the Punjabi linguo-culture is highly discouraging of loquacious people. Proverbs have criticized talkativeness as an intractable trait of the speakers, which becomes a cause of early death and many worries. It is also mentioned as an unveiling habit to reveal the low intellect levels of the speaker. Speake (2015) has also reported a German proverb reinforcing the same relationship, "*Fools and apes have their mouths agape*" (p. 160). The Sudanese counterpart has also reinstated a similar notion with a different metaphor, "*A leather bag with a little water in it shakes frequently*" (Ahmed, 2005, p. 512). Being uproarious and big-mouthed is related to the characteristics of being silly and obtuse in this one of the most noteworthy culturemes, which is indirectly encouraging to maintain a strategic distance from chattiness and inefficient discourse indulgences. Furthermore, animal images of 'dog' and 'crow' have been employed to rebuke and stop a long-winded person through negative reinforcement. These proverbs reinforce the Gricean Maxim of Quantity (Grice, 1975). The English proverb '*Empty vessels make louder sounds,*' reported by Norrick (1997), has multiple counterparts in the Punjabi

language too, where the metaphorical depiction has displayed the negative connotations attached to volubility.

The Punjabi corpus yields a significant number of culturemes regarding the theme of loquacity compared to the Yoruba corpus, which produces only four culturemes in this semantic domain. Hence ‘Semantic Density’ of loquacity as a negative trait is much more rooted in the Punjabi proverbs than the Yoruba counterparts. As suggested by Petrova (2016, 2019), the higher density of a cultureme denotes the higher significance attached to a concept in a linguo-culture; the Punjabi proverbs have delineated a noticeable dispiriting attitude toward talkativeness which can be summarized in the proverb reported by Speake (2015), “*Length begets loathing*” (p. 142).

Seitel (1974), in his study of Haya metaphors, also reports that Haya people say, “*A talkative person does not know he is verbally abusing his mother-in-law*”, a relative to whom one owes the utmost respect (p. 57). The danger of an uncontrolled speaker is that he tells what one should not. The Hayas also say, “*A talkative person eventually tells the secrets of his house*” (p. 62). This proverb also implies that the speaker has failed to suit the topic of his speech to its proper setting. The secrets of one’s house are discussed privately within one’s family members, but not outside that context. Though both Punjabi and Yoruba linguo-cultures associate talkativeness with death as a consequence, there are more general and unconditional repressive elements in the Punjabi than Yoruba proverbs, which associate the negative connotations with the tendency to ‘misspeak’ and telling ‘lies’ while talking much.

### **The Punjabi and Yoruba Cultural Scripts about Loquacity**

i) when I say something to someone

it is not good to say many things in a short time

if I do, this person might think something bad about me

ii) if I say many things to people

people may think something bad about me

I may feel something bad because of this

## 4.9 Sweet Talk

### The Yoruba Proverbs about Sweet Talk (6, 5+, 1-)

**i. “*òrọ̀ rere ní òyọ̀ obì lápò; oro búburú ní òyọ̀ ofà lápó*”**

“Good talk brings the kola nut out of the pouch; provocative talk draws the arrow out of the quiver”) (p. 155).

**Cultureme:** Sweet language (+) **Advice:** Say good words.

Judicious language defuses problems, whereas thoughtless talk aggravates them.

**ii. “*òrọ̀ pẹ̀lẹ́ yí ibińu’pada*”**

“A good word takes kola nut out from the pocket” (p. 214).

**Cultureme:** Sweet language (+) **Advice:** Say good words.

The above-mentioned proverb entries (i and ii) delineate that soft words win hard hearts, and a soft answer turns away wrath. The implied message is that words are capable of making or marring a relationship. If kind words are spoken, they are capable of resolving a supposed tension and conflict. The importance of this idea is that words hold the key to an amicable conflict resolution. It is also used as a warning to the parties to be mindful of their utterances during conflicts. This proverb is figuratively used to explain that sweet words can douse the fire of wrath. These metaphorical proverbs communicate that no matter how tense a situation might be, an appropriate word will calm down the wrath’s fire. Owomoyela (2005) reports the cultural significance of *kola-nut* in these words, “Kola nuts are considered such a valuable commodity that no other tree can compare to the kola-nut tree because *Ifá* divination is done with kola-nut pieces” (p. 411). Another Yoruba proverb explicitly mentions this significance of kola-nut, “*Money, kola nut; kola nut, money*” (p. 497) means money and kola nuts are equal in importance.

**iii. “*Ohun pele, o yo obi n’ apo; ohun lile yo uda n’ako*”**

“A gentle voice brings kola from the pocket while a harsh voice brings out a sword from its sheath” (p. 115).

**Cultureme:** Sweet language (+) **Advice:** Say good words. Be cautious about your words.

Kind words bring fortune, while bad words bring doom. The Yorubas, especially elders, use this proverb to advise that one should be conscious of what he/she will be saying.



Word can either make or mar the situation. For instance, a calm situation can result in a hostile situation if the wrong words are spoken, whereas a tense situation can become calm if soft words are spoken. What one says can bring either fortune or doom to one. This proverb also belongs to the metaphorical category. They use kola-nut ‘*obi*’ to represent a fortune, while the arrow ‘*ofa*’ represents doom. If someone talks to another person and gives Kola-nut, it is a sign of peace, while an arrow signifies war or doom. This proverb advises that harshness or bitterness is not an effective policy. Whether you are of higher status or lower status, you cannot gain others’ trust by strength or force. Therefore, leniency and kindness are required in dealing with some matters.

iv. **“Tútù ní òtenu ẹja wá”**

“Only coolness comes out of the fish’s mouth” (p. 276)

**Cultureme:** Sweet language (+) **Advice:** Say good words.

The Yorubas use this proverb to infer that meekness pays. It is advised to permit your mouth to say only soothing things. The Yorubas use this metaphorical proverb mostly to convince people about the benefits of remaining calm. Mostly, it comes out in the Yoruba chants or incantations to offer prayers. The Yorubas believe that anything that comes out of fish is cold, which they use as a symbol of meekness and peace. It is believed that soft words only come out of decent people’s mouths.

v. **“Yí mi sébè, kí nǹí ọ sí póró oko”**

“Throw me on the heaps, and I will throw you into the furrows.”

(“To whatever attack you mount against me, I will respond in kind”) (p. 249)

**Cultureme:** Sweet language (+) **Advice:** It is good to say something good.

If you turn me on the ridges, I will turn you on the furrows. The Yorubas use this proverb metaphorically when two persons do not want to settle in an argument. The proverb advises not to respond bitterly to someone speaking harshly to avoid conflict. When the words are involved, it can destroy or make someone’s life better or worse. Answering the same coin can further worsen the already conflicting situation.

vi. **“Eégún pẹ́ lóde, ó fètè òkè dáhùn; won ní, “Baba kú àbo” ó ní, “Hì ì ì”**

“The masquerader stayed too long on parade and was reduced to speaking with his upper lip. They said, ‘Welcome, father,’ and he responded, ‘He-e-e-e.’” (p. 76).

(“A person who has disgraced himself speaks softly”)

**Cultureme:** Sweet language (-) **Advice:** Don’t get impressed by the soft speech always.

The Yorubas use it for a person who has disgraced himself and now speaks softly or apologetically. Masquerade stays long at an event, then he uses the upper lip to respond, saying 'welcome father' and says 'Hi i i'. When you cannot justify your movement, it is difficult to respond to questions. A masquerade comes back late from the outing and answers with only a greeting. When someone betrays the trust reposed in him/her, finding words to speak will be difficult.

### **The Punjabi Proverbs about Sweet Talk (15 +)**

#### **i. *Gurr nah daiye, gurr jehe gul te kariye* (p. 306).**

Do not offer jaggary, but do speak sweetly.

**Cultureme:** Sweet language (+) **Advice:** Say only kind words.

Talking sweet is better than offering chocolates. ‘*Gurr*’ (Jaggary) is a locally made traditional sweetener extracted from sugar cane juice through evaporation and consumed raw to sweeten traditional desserts. An Arabian proverb, quoted by Stone (2006), reinforces a similar notion, “*A kind word is better than alms*” (p. 482). Do not offer sugar, but speak sweetly. If you cannot offer sugar, food, money, or clothing to others, at least you can speak sweetly and gently, and it costs nothing. By speaking gently, you can win the heart of people.

#### **ii. *Sherbet ghol na ghol, bol mithay bol* (5, p. 411).**

Do not shake sweet drinks, but speak sweet words.

**Cultureme:** Sweet language (+) **Advice:** Say only kind words.

In the proverbs mentioned above (i and ii), the food metaphors have been used to indicate the positive effects of sweet words. Speaking sweet words is better than offering sweet drinks. The sacchariferous effects of kind words have been emphasized and advised in these proverbs. Hodari and Sobers (2009) report an Egyptian proverb about amplifying the effects of a present accompanied by the right words, “*Give your words with your goods, and it will make two gifts*” (p. 67). These proverbs reinforcing the positive effects of the sweet

words indicate the presence of the universal schema that sweet words equate to and even exceed the material gifts offered by someone.

**iii. *Mithey bol te beiha reh kol* (4, p. 220).**

Use sweet words and be seated beside me.

***Cultureme:*** Sweet language (+) ***Advice:*** Say only kind words.

The increased social and emotional acceptance of a polite person has been stressed in this proverb because everyone loves polite people. Relationships get stronger when people use sweet talk to interact. The more sweet spoken a person is, the higher will be his/her social acceptance, popularity, and success.

**iv. *Jehrra gurr dityo'n marey ohnu zeher kyu'n dena?* (p. 166).**

If he dies with jaggary, why give him poison?

***Cultureme:*** Sweet language (+) ***Advice:*** Say only kind words.

Winning a battle with sweet words is better than killing an enemy with poison. Here the image of 'death' has been used to communicate the meaning of conquering a battle. The advice is to use sweet language to avoid and resolve conflicts. Stone (2006) reiterates the pragmatic functions of a sweet tongue from Poor Richard, "*A soft tongue may strike hard*" (p. 435). The metaphor of war field has been used to mention the power of sweet words in these proverbs.

**v. *Jibh rasili aapni, very mitt karey* (p. 159).**

A dripping tongue converts enemies into friends.

***Cultureme:*** Sweet language (+) ***Advice:*** Say only kind words.

A sweet tongue helps the speaker in winning the hearts of even adversaries. Being polite makes no enemies. It explains that you can win the love of people with your sweet tongue, so they will not be your enemies or will not harm you.

**vi. *Zubaan shiri'n mulak geeri'n* (p. 231).**

With a sweet tongue, the whole country can be subdued.

***Cultureme:*** Sweet language (+) ***Advice:*** Say only kind words.

In the previous three entries (iv, v, and vi), the cause and effect association of winsome speech with relationship management has been emphasized by mentioning the result of succulent talk in making friends out of previous enemies and gaining victories over

countries. The hyperbolic image of ‘country’ has been used to employ the far-reaching positive effects of persuasive speech. Speake (2015) reports a similar proverb from Danish, “*Keep your mouth and keep your friend* (p. 300) and “*Kind words conquer*” (Tamil) (p. 242). It proves the widespread presence of the idea that sweet words have the power to win people and even nations.

**vii. *Mithey bola’n vich jadu hunda ae* (p. 220).**

There is magic in honeyed words.

***Cultureme:*** Sweet language (+) ***Advice:*** Say only kind words.

There is an Urdu translation of Dale Carnegie’s book with the title, “Sweet words are magical.” The firm belief of Punjabi people needs no explanation that sweet words work like magic and one can win the hearts of people and rule them.

**viii. *Narmi naal sunday vi pasma lai day nei’n* (p. 360).**

With softness, even a bull may be milked.

***Cultureme:*** Sweet language (+) ***Advice:*** Say only kind words.

The endless potential of sweet words has been declared, in vii and viii, to have magical effects to achieve the intended targets. In viii, animal imagery has been employed to underscore the competence of the sweet language to subdue a male bull to behave like a tamed buffalo milked by the milkman. It implies the dexterity of soft speech to execute even unattainable objectives. Schipper (2010) also quotes a Georgian proverb with a similar metaphor, “*With sweet words, you can milk a mountain goat*” (p. 122). Furthermore, Stone (2006) brings forward a Persian proverb using animal imagery to emphasize sugared talk, “*By a sweet tongue and kindness, you can drag an elephant with a hair*” (p. 124). The presence of similar culturemes in several cultures denotes the presence of a shared schema by the majority of linguo-cultures.

**ix. *Mitha bol ta’n moti rol* (p. 336).**

Sweet talk can make the speaker play with precious pearls.

***Cultureme:*** Sweet language (+) ***Advice:*** Say only kind words.

This proverb communicates the financial prospects of having a gentle speech behavior by adopting the metaphor of ‘rolling the pearls’. The fiscal benefits are also

mentioned in a Korean proverb, “A *thousand gold pieces in debt may be settled with a silver tongue*” (Speake, 2015, p. 435). It says that a person who learns to speak well can be so rich that he would play with valuable pearls and will be able to obtain wealth. The material gains one can achieve through the sweet words are implied by the mention of ‘pearls’ here.

**x. *Moo’nh changa na hoey te gul chungi karni chahi di ay* (p. 132).**

Even if one has an ugly face, one must use kind words.

***Cultureme:*** Sweet language (+) ***Advice:*** Say only kind words.

Speak well, even if your face does not attract people. It has been seen that people usually do not like to get closer to ugly or unattractive people. However, if someone with an ugly face speaks politely and gently, he can also win respect and love. This proverb is used to criticize and warn a person who is in the habit of speaking harsh and ominous words. Such a person is advised to converse politely and utter positive words.

**xi. *Tail tama jaa’n koo’n miley, turat naram ho ja* (p. 132).**

As oil makes the working of machines smooth, so do sweet words by solving challenging situations.

***Cultureme:*** Sweet language (+) ***Advice:*** Say only kind words.

It is an advising proverb that uses an analogy to make the point persuasive by stressing another function of soft speech. Just like oiling can make the machines work smoothly, so does a sweet talk that can help perform arduous tasks complaisantly.

**xii. *Mitha bol, te kih lagda ae mol?* (p. 336).**

Sweet words, do they cost anything?

***Cultureme:*** Sweet language (+) ***Advice:*** Say only kind words.

In this interrogative proverb, the effort involved in being a sweet-spoken person has been communicated through a financial metaphor that it costs nothing and yields unimaginable amelioration. Speake (2015) adds an American proverb prescribing a piece of similar advice, “*civility costs nothing*” (p. 53). No money is needed to speak gently or politely. A person can be a sweet pill for everyone only by being polite to them.

**xiii. *Naram mudai ta’n fazal e Khuda, sakhat mudai ta’n qehar e Khuda* (p. 360).**

Soft talk brings blessings from God, while the harshness invites His wrath.

**Cultureme:** Sweet language (+) **Advice:** Speak softly.

The religious connotations are attached with sweet and bitter talk in this proverb to encourage gentle verbal behavior and discourage harshness. A soft and gentle behavior can win the blessings of God, while a proud and harsh attitude can invite His anger and wrath. So why be among them who make God angry?

**xiv. *Jidha sur mitha, ohdi sardari vi mithi* (4, p. 16).**

He whose tone is sweet, his captaincy is sweet too.

**Cultureme:** Sweet language (+) **Advice:** Speak softly

The prerequisite to becoming a successful leader of the Punjabi people is to have a gentle tone and sweet verbal behavior. Sweet words help the chief to become the favorite of his people.

**xv. *Mu'nh da mitha shah ae* (3, p. 314).**

The sweet spoken is the king.

**Cultureme:** Sweet language (+) **Advice:** Say only kind words.

A person who does not hurt other people with his bitter words and uses his tongue to utter sweet words is the ultimate winner and becomes king in people's hearts. Stone (2006) quotes Poor Richard to present an agricultural metaphor to reinforce a similar idea, “*If you would reap praise, you must sow the seeds, gentle words, and useful deeds*” (p. 339). The proverb entries at xiv and xv are used to reinforce the belief that a sweet-toned man can rule with sweetness. It voiced a popular belief held dear by the Punjabi linguo-culture that many people can love a person with a sweet tongue, and he can rule the whole area in his captaincy. So the simple rule is to be good to others by speaking softly.

### **Explanation and Discussion of Sweet Talk**

These Yoruba proverbs show the importance of the soft words and the magically positive effects of employing them that even an impossible task can be performed with their assistance. These can help you make new friends and turning your foes into your supporters. So if a person permits his/her mouth to utter words, these should necessarily be soft and sweet, which may simultaneously have soothing and healing effects. Opata (1992), in his study of speech proverbs in another Nigerian language, reports two Igbo proverbs about the

pleasant talk, “*The husband of a wife with a gentle voice never rejects her food*” and “*A snail takes a good tongue to pass over a splinter*” (p. 192). Similarly, the Oromo of Ethiopia promotes non-violent communication by saying, “*Good words are better than good bedrooms*” (Gebregeorgis, 2015 p. 234). To cushion this tendency to employ the sweet word, Igbo proverbs (of another Nigerian language), as investigated by Opata (1992), also yield several culturemes reinforcing the sweet talk, “*He who gives you fair words and nothing more feeds you with an empty spoon*” (p. 202); “*A bad word provokes anger, but a sweet word is an oil that lubricates provocation*” (p. 202); “*A debtor with a gentle voice gets his debt canceled*” (p. 202). In these Yoruba proverbs, two difficulties - that of a wife having her food rejected (an act which traditional Igbo and Yoruba men use to penalize their wives) and that of a snail having to pass over a pointed stick or object that can pierce its body are seen to be surmountable through the employment of gentle words (peaceful actions).

Being soft-spoken has been identified as one of the most stressed themes in the Punjabi proverbs as a significant number of culturemes are discovered in this domain. Sweet talk has been explicitly associated with continued success and happiness both in financial and social matters. The keys to building a sound and healthy relationship (including marital ones) and achieving higher social status are tied with the correct and positive use of the tongue. Magical properties have been ascribed to the sweet words and politeness to make the speaker socially and morally so acceptable and welcomed that he can accomplish even impossible tasks and win the hearts of difficult persons. Many proverbs attach the metaphor of sweet eatables and drinks to soft speech to stress the importance given to sweet items and soft speech in the Punjabi culture. Even the leaders have been advised to use soft and sweet language to win and keep their followers' sincerity and faithfulness intact forever. The same notion of politeness has been reinforced in the Sudanese counterparts, “*Sweet talk is incense for one's inside*” (Ahmed, 2005, p. 625), and “*Soft words get the snake out of its hole*” (p. 622).

In the semantic domain of ‘sweet talk,’ this theme delineates deep ‘Semantic Density’ in the Punjabi linguo-culture, where every aspect of positivity has been associated with using sweet words, having a succulent tongue, and being sweet-tempered. These advantages include, but are not limited to: winning financial success, becoming king of the hearts,

avoiding conflict, resolving antagonistic occurrences, upgrading the speaker's social status, reciprocating positive discourses, and a key to eternal happiness. Fadumiye (2017), while discussing the politeness strategies used in the Yoruba proverbs, argues about the benefits of politeness. It is always best to apply politeness strategies so that "offenses, disagreements, unfriendliness will be less likely. The hearts of many people can be won through polite talk. A word of politeness can do wonders as it can help avoid unproductive arguments and disagreements that may damage personal relationships" (p. 155). Though the corpus from the Yoruba linguo-culture delineates a shallow density in this theme and much less variety of positive benefits attached with pleasant talk, the themes yield the effect of sugared talk in conflict avoidance resolution.

A proverb from the Yoruba also presents the sweet talk as the last resort of a sinful person to conceal his embarrassment. Such representation of sugared talk could not be found in the Punjabi corpus. Furthermore, plentiful employment of sweet food and drink metaphors has been employed in the Punjabi data to characterize the euphonic effects of having a silver-tongue; no such images could be found in Yoruba, which may be an indication of the love of sweet food and especially (*gurr*) jaggary in the Punjabi people especially living in the rural areas. Contrastively, Speake (2015) reports proverbs from other linguo-cultures presenting sweet words with an element of doubt, "*Things sweet to the mouth do not always nourish the belly*" (Japanese) (p. 418); "*The sweeter the mouth, the more venomous the heart*" (Chinese) (p. 301); "*A sweet song has betrayed many*" (German) (p. 401). These proverbs depicting sweet words in a negative light are strong linguistic evidence that even sweet words are not perceived positively in all the linguo-cultures. Another contrast between the linguo-cultures is depicted in the proverbs where the Yoruba people are advised to ignore if someone uses foul or harsh language. In contrast, the Punjabi people are advised in more than one instance to expect similar responses and reciprocate in whatever tone they are talked to in a given context.

Japanese Fischer and Yoshida (1968) have also contended about the Japanese notion of "be cautious about your words,...suspiciousness about speech and the need to speak carefully are influenced by the importance of polite and respectful behavior in established social relationships in Japanese society" (p. 39). Returning now to the subject matter of the present study, it is regarded as culturally significant in the Punjabi and Yoruba, just like



Malay tradition, not to induce bad feelings in one's interlocutors, and primarily to ensure that others do not feel bad toward one (Goddard, 2004). There are multiple motivations for this emphasis, not all of them altruistic. One powerful inducement to avoid incurring bad feelings in others is to avoid possible retaliation (Goddard, 1997). Another is that sensitivity to other people's feelings can help us with managing those other people. Many Punjabi and some Yoruba proverbs suggest that by skilled use of words, we can soften a person's attitude to end up doing as we wish. Conversely, a Yoruba proverb cautions against the dangers of being misled by 'sweet words' or a 'sweet mouth.'

Politeness, a pragmatic concept used in communication, literally means speaking or behaving to show respect for other people. In other words, to be polite means to be socially acceptable in conversation, but does not always mean sincere. It means courteousness. "Politeness is the expression of the speaker's intention to mitigate face threats caused by certain face-threatening acts toward another. It is a battery of social skills whose goal is to ensure everyone feels affirmed in social interaction" (Mills, 2011, p. 6). Just as another Anglo script of 'pleasant interaction' can be linked with expressions like "*to soften the blow*", "*to cushion the blow*", "*to wrap up (bad news)*", "*to take the sting out of (something)*", "*to take the edge off (something)*", "*to sweeten the pill*", and so on (Wierzbicka, 1997, p. 44), the Punjabi cultural scripts can be reinforced by the presence of such phrases '*Jeebh da russ pya chonda ay*' (Malik, 2005, p. 12) (The dripping sweet juice from the tongue); '*Zabaan da russ choonda ay*' (p. 231) (The sweet juice is dripping from the tongue); '*Chungi gul gurrtoun vee mithee lagdee aey*' (p. 67) (Good words taste sweeter than jaggery/sugar); "*Moonhon change bhakiya kud'ni chahi di ay*" (p. 229) (Always speak good words to others). There is a slight difference in the Punjabi and Yoruba cultural scripts of pleasant interaction, coming from the presence of a proverb depicting sweet words as a symbol of embarrassment in a Yoruba proverb.

Taking into account Wierzbicka's (1997) argument in her study of request cultural scripts in Chinese versus English cultures, it is not other people's thoughts about me that are likely to hurt me, but their words; and even the words can only hurt me if they are spoken to my face. It is an insult to confront a person who chooses to say something 'bad,' critical or disrespectful about me on my face. By choosing to reveal such thoughts "to my face", in front of a real or imaginary audience, the speaker publicly shows something like contempt

(lack of respect) for me, which is the ultimate plight. What matters is not people's hidden thoughts and desires (including my hidden thoughts and desires) but their public behavior vis-a-vis other people. Appearances matter more than hidden thoughts. Therefore, the Punjabi and Yoruba proverbs emphasize using sweet words, though with a significant difference in culturematic semantic density displayed by the Punjabi proverbs from their counterparts. The Punjabi and Yoruba proverbs seem to share the Anglo cultural script of 'pleasant interaction' against 'rudeness,' which is related to the family of scripts, including "direct criticism of the person you are with" or "personal remarks" which are considered violating the script of 'pleasant interaction' (Goddard and Wierzbicka, 2004, p. 160). This script is formulated as follows:

### **The Punjabi Cultural Script of "Pleasant interaction"**

[many people think like this:]

at many times, when I am with someone for some time

it is good if I say something good to this someone about something during this time

if I do this, this someone can feel good because of this during this time

at the same time, I can feel something good because of this

### **The Yoruba Cultural Script of "Pleasant interaction"**

[some people think like this:]

at some times, when I am with someone for some time

it is good if I say something good to this someone about something during this time

if I do this, this someone can feel good because of this during this time

at the same time, I can feel something good because of this

### **The Punjabi and Yoruba Cultural Script about Bitter talk**

I want this person to know that I think good things about this person

I want this person to know that I feel something good toward this person

I do not want this person to think anything bad about me

because of this, when I am with this person I cannot do some things

at the same time, I cannot say some things

### **The Punjabi and Yoruba Cultural Script about Sweet talk/Politeness**

when someone says some good words to someone

that someone will feel good

because of this, it is good for someone

if he/she says something good to someone else

#### 4.10 Miscellaneous Verbal Etiquettes

##### The Yoruba Proverbs about Miscellaneous Verbal Etiquettes (7)

###### i. “*Ojú lẹ̀r ọ̀wà*”

“Discourse is in the eyes.”

**Cultureme:** Looking in the eyes (+) **Advice:** “Look the person with whom one is holding a dialogue in the eyes”) (p. 264).

The Yorubas use it sometimes to demand the attention of the person with whom one is holding a dialogue. Being face to face makes the word have an impact. It is always essential to give undivided attention to people because it will help make the conversation potential and impactful. Communication is better understood when we discuss it in person.

###### ii. “*ọ̀mọ̀ràn bèèrè oràn wò; Àjàpá ní, “Ènití won pa lánàá, kàà kú tán?”*”

“The sage asks for information; Àjàpá, the trickster, asks, “About the person who was killed yesterday, is he already dead?”

(“If you know the answer to a question already, do not ask it”) (p. 265).

**Cultureme:** Asking a useless question (-) **Advice:** A useless argument should be avoided

You do not ask a question for which you already have an answer. This proverb can be perceived as offensive if one uses it for elders—no need to ask more questions after knowing the truth of the matter. After knowing the truth, too many questions about the issue will weary people quickly since nobody is ready to talk about it. The Maxim of Relevance is reinforced here (Grice, 1975).

###### iii. “*Ìyàwó ò fọ̀hùn ó fọ̀jú.*”

“The bride does not speak, but she is not blind” (p. 188).

**Cultureme:** Keeping your mouth shut (-) and eyes open in a new place (+) **Advice:** Do not just speak without knowing the culture or traditions of the place.

Persons newly arrived in a place, or a company should shut their mouths and open their eyes to learn the customs before speaking. A wife should observe to understand body language; it will save much stress.

iv. *“À-jókòó-àì-dìde, à-soro-àì-gbèsì, ká sinni tíí ká má padà sílé: àì-sunwon ní ñgbehìn-in re”*

“Sitting without getting up, speaking without waiting for responses, walking people on their way and not turning back: unpleasantness is what they breed” (p. 67).

**Cultureme:** Excess and Self Forgetfulness (-) **Advice:** Do not indulge in excess and self-forgetfulness in anything as these will bring unpleasant results.

Sitting without standing, speaking without listening, bring nothing other than a disgrace. Always give room for others to speak their minds instead of speaking for everyone all the time. Nothing good can come out from whatever is done in excess.

v. *“Òràn yí ò dùn mí”: èkànsoşo là ñwí I”*

“‘This matter does not hurt me,’ stating it only once suffices” (p. 252).

**Cultureme:** Reiteration (-) **Advice:** Do not repeat unnecessarily

The Yorubas use this proverb to advise that it should not dominate one’s conversations if one is indifferent to something.

vi. *“Ilé kan-án wàl Oyoo nígbà àtíjo tí à ñpè ní Àkije; oyinbó kú níbe”*

“There was a house in Oyo in ancient times called One-that-does-not-acknowledge greetings; a white man died there” (p. 269).

**Cultureme:** Greetings (+) **Advice:** Acknowledge greetings

This proverb is used to taunt ill-mannered people who do not respond to greetings. The proverb associates this lousy habit with Europeans and suggests that those who do not greet others are like dead people.

vii. *“Ènu oníhin ni ihin-ín ti ñdùn”*

“It is in the mouth of the person who has the news that the news is interesting” (p. 480).

**Cultureme:** Interruption (-) **Advice:** One should not take the news out of the mouth of the bearer.

This proverb is used when an unrelated person tries to describe an event or verify its authenticity that it does not suit him/her to take the lead.

### **The Punjabi Proverbs about Miscellaneous Verbal Etiquettes**

#### **i. *Agla bolda howay te ap chup ho rahiye* (p. 55).**

Keep quiet when someone is talking.

**Cultureme:** Interruption (-) **Advice:** Wait for your turn.

This proverb means that when someone is talking, one should listen quietly so that the meaning is clear and not interrupt. These are the culture-specific rules of communication.

#### **ii. *Phulla'n te ai na torriye wull nu, preh vich beh kay nah tokiye gul nu* (2, p. 40).**

Do not harvest raw fruits, and do not interrupt court proceedings.

**Cultureme:** Interruption (-) **Advice:** Do not interrupt

Interruption is not believed to be preferable because it seizes the other speaker's right to complete his or her turn (Al-Harahsheh, 2012). The findings of the study demonstrate that silence can be used to serve several politeness functions. Silence has a denotative meaning, as it is polite to be silent while the other speaker is talking. Like their Jordanian counterparts, the Punjabi speakers may express their annoyance about verbal interruptions, especially between friends, saying '*hajay meri gull nai mukki*' (I have not completed my point).

#### **iii. *Kha laiye ya bol laiye* (p. 297).**

Choose between eating or speaking.

**Cultureme:** Talk (-) **Advice:** Do not talk while eating.

This proverb is said on an occasion where only one thing could be done, or it is better to focus on the most important thing, or it is better not to do both simultaneously. The Maxim of Manner has been bolstered (Grice, 1975).

#### **iv. *Kisay day dairay jaiye, huqqah piye muth naal, majlis vich beh ke gul kariye thukk naal* (1, p. 274).**

When in a public place, eat with table manners and speak with evidence and integrity.

**Cultureme:** Confident talk (+) **Advice:** Be confident in public meetings to express your argument.

A *hookah* is a single or multi-stemmed instrument for vaporizing and smoking flavored cannabis or tobacco. It is an essential part of the Punjabi social gathering in open places, especially in rural areas. In this rhyming couplet, the participants are advised to smoke *hookah* with manners and talk with courage and credence. Realizing that there are moments in a person's life when there can be no escape from speaking, the proverb encourages poise and talk with fortitude.

**v. *Bin bulae bolna ehmaq'a'n da kum* (p. 85).**

Uninvited speech is an act of a stupid person.

**Cultureme:** Uninvited talk (-) **Advice:** Speak when you are invited to express your opinion.

This proverb is used to admonish a person who starts talking when he is not asked to do so. Usually, elder and senior people use this for the younger family members and children in the posterity.

**vi. *Thanda thanda kha na pavi phookna, kolo'n kolo'n sudd na pavi kookna* (p. 26).**

Eat cold, so your mouth may not burn, call when you are physically close, so you do not have to shout.

**Cultureme:** Shout (-) **Advice:** Do not shout or talk aloud.

Do not be in a hurry because haste is the work of the devil. What is written in your destiny will happen and meet you. Do not let hurry ruin your work and use whatever is available to work too hard in the lure of more. This proverb is used to stop people from talking in a loud voice.

**Explanation and Discussion of Proverbs about Miscellaneous Verbal Etiquettes**

These Yoruba culturemes have focused on multiple verbal etiquettes and manners held dear in the Yorubaland. These include, but are not limited to, looking in the eyes while talking to someone, not asking irrelevant and unnecessary questions, not to speak much and

observe more in a new place as a stranger, speaking without waiting for a response, unnecessary reiteration, and not acknowledging greetings by responding.

The Punjabi proverbs under this category accentuate different appropriate verbal etiquettes to be observed while interacting in social settings. These manners include not talking aloud, maintaining moderation, not speaking while eating, not interrupting when a person has not completed his/her point, and not hurting through bald criticism. Moreover, some other manners include keeping your own position/status in view before participating in a conversation, keeping appropriateness of time and topic in view while voicing your thoughts, and not giving an opinion unless asked or invited. A Maltese proverb also reinforces a similar norm through, "*When you are not asked, do not speak*" (Chateris-Black, 1995 p. 4). When in public meetings, the speaker is advised to talk with confidence and authenticity and not hide the truth. Like Mongols, the Punjabi people do not appreciate the people who speak loudly, as in "*A bad person speaks loudly*" (Raymond, 2012, p. 162). Loudness is perceived as an indication of pride and arrogance in the Punjabi linguo-culture.

The Punjabi proverb mentions explicit displeasure for loud talking, which is also reiterated in a Namibia proverb "*Noisy talk does not bring about a solution*" (Hodari and Sobers, 2009, p. 53). Interruption is disliked verbally in both cultures under study. Adegbija (1989), in a comparative study of politeness in English, Yoruba, and Ogori languages, reports that in the Yoruba speech community, a person is considered inherently uncouth if he has the habit of continually interrupting social superiors or elders. Opata (1992) reports an Igbo proverb discouraging interruptions, "*The trunk speaks before the head*" (p. 47), which is used for an officious person who speaks before the person concerned does. Wardhaugh and Fuller (2015) report about the Kunas who wait patiently to take their turns in speaking so that interruptions and overlaps in conversation are rare.

The Yoruba proverbs discourage in multiple cultures to ask irrelevant and repetitive questions about self-evident phenomena. A Sindhi proverb shows a similar concern, but regarding a different analogy, "*Inquire not the distance to a place where you have not to go*" (Gajumal, 2009, p. 73). Adegbija (1989) also reports that a child addressing his/her parents is expected culturally to speak in a low tone, at a slow pace, and look serious. A child is not expected to shout at his parents, for instance, when making a request. On the other hand, a soft, gentle voice is often considered a marker of politeness in most pragmatic

contexts, as in the example of a child making a request to her mother given above. A Swahili proverb has also shown a hostile attitude about loud voicing, “*Do not speak loudly so that a passerby hear it*” (Hodari and Sobers, 2009, p. 122). In the Ogori and Yoruba, a soft and gentle tone of voice is almost considered synonymous with humility, which has politeness as its correlate. It does not appear that this is necessarily so in native English contexts. In Nigerian English, on the other hand, gentleness and softness in the tone of voice of a younger person to an elder, an employee with a boss, a subject to a chief, etc., even in a context where the latter is to blame for a particular event, have similar import to their connotations in the mother tongues.

Ameka and Breedveld (2004) investigated the cultural scripts of communication in African communities. They argue that there are good and bad ways of speaking in every society and every speech community, and there are good and bad ways of behaving. These ways of speaking and behaving form part of the norms and values of interaction in a community and serve as a frame for interpreting communicative conduct. They are often indicative of unconscious or semi-automatic schemas and models. They are transmitted from parents to children in socialization, and their violation may lead to punitive sanctions. Some pertain to things one should not do or say when with other people. Some pertain to things one should not do when in certain places, e.g., a kitchen or a bathroom or a bedroom. For instance, one everyday West African norm is that one should not talk while eating, i.e., that meal-time is a period when there should be silence. At the same time, talking while eating is discouraged in multiple cultures, including the Punjabi speech community. This is in sharp contrast to western cultures, such as Dutch, where meal times (especially the evening meal time) are a time for discussing family matters. Some linguistic groups in West Africa, such as the Gbe speaking communities, have proverbs reflecting this banal norm of behavior (cf. Gyekye 1996 in Ameka and Beedveld, 2004). In Ewe (a Gbe lect spoken in south-eastern Ghana across southern Togo and just across the Togo-Benin border), a proverb that parents employ to inculcate this value in children during socialization is given in “*When the chicken is digging for its food, it does not crow*” (p. 176). In other linguo-cultural groups, such as the Akan (Ghana), the norm of silence during meals is enforced by adding a threat that something terrible will happen to you if you do not conform. Members are threatened with losing one of their parents due to violating this norm (Agyekum 2002). The social and



psychological reality of a norm of behavior as simple as not speaking while eating should be evident.

Larina (2015), in her study of culture-specific communicative styles, has reported that in cultures with a high vertical distance, hierarchy and status are amongst the dominant values (Korean, Chinese, Japanese, India, and other East Asian cultures). For example, in Korean culture, children are encouraged not to look other people in the eye, especially when talking to adults, as it is considered impolite and rebellious. However, there are cultures in which eye contact is a sign of respect and attention. Such eye contact is encouraged in the Yoruba proverbs. On the other hand, Wardhaugh and Fuller (2015) report Antigua's speech behavior in which people speak because they must assert themselves through language. They do not consider it as interrupting behavior that we would consider either interruptive or even disruptive. Furthermore, in Antigua, to enter a conversation, one must assert one's presence rather than participate in something formalized as an exchange. In a restaurant or store: one says aloud what one wants, nobody asks you. Neither is any sign given that your request has been heard. If you feel your request is not getting the attention, you may repeat it (how often, depending on your character, how big a noise you like to make generally). However, one must not assume that one has not been heard the first time or one will be rebuked in the remarks one makes.

#### **The Yoruba Cultural Script about 'Looking in the Eyes'**

[many people think like this:]

when someone talks to someone

it is good to see in the eyes

#### **The Punjabi Cultural Script for 'Silence while Eating'**

[people think like this:]

there are times when people have to eat

when people are eating

at these times, it is good if they do not say any words

Another norm of ordinary Punjabi conversation is not to raise one's voice unnecessarily. To do so is viewed as a sign of some negative emotion. Punjabi speakers are also expected to be careful not to say too much (cf. the standard assurance "*boldi bohat ay par dill di marri nhi*" 'She talks a lot, but her heart is good'). These norms can be captured in

the following simple script:

### **The Punjabi Cultural Script about Speaking Loudly**

when I say something to someone

if this person is near me it is not good to say it loudly

if I say it loudly, this person might think I feel something bad

## **4.11 Appropriacy**

### **The Yoruba Proverbs about Appropriacy (6 +)**

#### **i. “*Ìgbà ara là ìbúrá*”**

“One swears when it is time to swear” (p. 136).

(‘Everything in its proper time’)

**Cultureme:** Talk at an appropriate time (+) **Advice:** Speak at the right time.

Take care of the appropriateness of the moment when talking. The Yoruba people make an oath while the body is young. The elders make use of this proverb to advise young ones to work hard. They believe that there is a time for everything. Taking an oath to accomplish something while young is much better than taking it when one is old. So, they believe that the younger ones have more potential and time to fulfill their promises. Making hay while the sun shines is like taking chances and opportunities, which is key to progress and success. One must not lose any chance at the right time.

#### **ii. “*Ibi tí a tí ñjẹun bí ikun bí ikun, a kì í sọ̀ọ̀ bú kẹ̀lẹ̀bẹ̀ bú kẹ̀lẹ̀bẹ̀ nibe*”**

“Where one is eating food which looks like mucus, one should not speak of matters like phlegm.”

“One must be careful not to bring up matters that are too sensitive for the present company” (p. 135).

**Cultureme:** Talk at an appropriate time (+) **Advice:** Take care of appropriacy when talking.

Where one eats something that looks like mucus, one does not discuss phlegm. The Yorubas use this proverb when people do not do the right thing at the right time. It means

one should do or say the right thing at the appropriate time. The Yorubas eat some soup (draw leaves) that looks like mucus. It is abominable to discuss mucus-related matters while eating any of these leaves. Where one eats without caution, it is not possible to have the final word there.

iii. *“Eégún ègbá, ègbá ní ñfo”*

“The *egbá* masquerader must need to speak *egbá*” (p. 127)

**Cultureme:** Talk in an appropriate language (+) **Advice:** Take care of appropriate manners when talking.

A masquerade from *ègbá'* (a speech community in Nigeria that speaks the *ègbá'* dialect of the Yoruba language) should speak *ègbá'*. The Yorubas use this proverb to counsel that one should fittingly speak to others, and that will facilitate one's business with them. Also, they use it sometimes to mean that people from a cultural background should keep their cultural heritage. Masquerades carry the identity of their origin, so a masquerade that comes from *ègbá* side should also speak the dialect. There is no room for a chameleonic lifestyle; people should always meet the same good character irrespective of the situation. A Yoruba informant has quoted an English proverb to explicate this **proverb**, “*When in Rome, do as the Romans do.*” Communicative competence requires talking while considering the level of the people you are addressing for better understanding.

iv. *“Èleefà kì í lọẹfà-a reká sọpé o di ijẹfàtí a ti jẹun”*

“When a person proclaims the loss of six articles, one does not respond by saying one has not eaten in six days” (p. 79).

**Cultureme:** Talk at an appropriate time (+) **Advice:** Take care of appropriate manners when talking.

If one can offer no help to a person in trouble, one should not complicate the person's plight. You do not complain about not having eaten for six days when someone is cooking *eefa*. It is not appropriate to complain of hunger when someone is cooking (Ohwovoriola, 2009, p. 132). One must not be an opportunist.

v. *“A kí í ẹẹlejo ní ‘Ngbo’?”*

“One does not ask the main litigant, ‘How about it?’” (p. 236).

**Cultureme:** Appropriate question (+) **Advice:** Do not ask irrelevant questions.

The Yorubas use the proverb to advise not to expect impartial witnessing from an interested party.

**vi. “Amorànbini Oyo, bí o bá gbé kete lérí, wọn a ní oko lo ñlọ tàbí od”**

“People who know the answer yet, ask the question, natives of Oyo: if they see you carrying a water pot, they ask whether you are on your way to the farm or the stream” (p. 240).

**Cultureme:** Appropriate question (+) **Advice:** Do not ask irrelevant questions.

If the answer is plain to see, one does not ask the question. A Swahili proverb has restated the same notion, “*When someone wears mourning clothes, you do not ask why*” (Hodari and Sobers, 2009, p. 35). This proverb Yoruba is used when someone is asking questions that do not require any response being self-evident.

### **The Punjabi Proverbs about Appropriacy in Talk (7)**

#### **Inappropriate talk (5 -), Appropriate talk (2 +)**

**i. *Aakhan wele na aakhna’n, te na aakhan weley aakhna’n, ehmaq’a’n da kum* (p. 27).**

To speak at the wrong moments and be silent on the occasions of speaking, are the traits of a dupe person.

**Cultureme:** Talk at inappropriate time (-) **Advice:** Speak at the right time. Seek appropriacy of the moment.

This proverb is used to make the speaker realize the importance of the befitting moment to be chosen to speak or to keep quiet. Gricean Maxim of Manner has been reiterated in this proverb (Levisnson, 1999). A Swahili proverb has emphasized the appropriate time concerning making fun, “*A joke needs its own time and place*” (Hodari and Sobers, 2009, p. 98). Any deviation from this principle will ultimately lead to a negative evaluation of the speaker’s intellect.

**ii. *Khasa’n di gul aama’n uggey nai manasib karni* (p. 190).**

It is not appropriate to talk about the noble people in front of the ordinary lot.

**Cultureme:** Inappropriate talk (-) **Advice:** Seek aptness of the subject of discussion, according to the audience, and observe restraint.

This proverb is used to warn a speaker to be cautious when and where the conversation is in process. The subject of discussion must be according to the social and intellectual level of the audience. The matters about noble people should not be discussed

with ordinary and senseless people. Here the image of ‘noble’ people has been used to delineate topics/subjects of great concern and significance. Every human being has a rational standard, and what a person says is understood according to the intellectual standard of the listener. We have to be careful about what, when, and where to speak; otherwise, the consequences can be dire.

**iii. *Chota mu’nh te vaddi gul* (p. 184).**

A petty mouth and the big talk

**Cultureme:** Inappropriate talk (-) **Advice:** A proper code of verbal ethics should be sought according to one's social status.

Think about your status first before commenting on noble topics. This proverb is used when the speaker wants to attest his/her humble and meager capacity and status to put forward a point of high significance. It is also used by senior and recognized people to comment on the argument raised by a socially insignificant or younger in age person. This proverb testifies that the Punjabi linguo-culture is class-based and takes social and kinship hierarchies into serious consideration.

**iv. *Sawal kanak, jawab cholay* (p. 253).**

Wheat is the question; Gram is the answer.

**Cultureme:** Inappropriate talk. (-) **Advice:** Be relevant and focused while answering.

This proverb is used when someone does not respond in a befitting manner to an inquiry. Do not talk about irrelevant/unrelated things. Gricean Maxim of Relevance is reinforced in this proverb (Levinson, 1999). Beating about the bush and deviating from the topic under discussion are not advisable behaviors. This proverb is used to denote the tedious and inappropriate response to something ridiculous and embarrassing when someone is trying to prove himself a scholar even without knowing.

**v. *Mujh day uggay veen wajana* (p. 45)**

To cast pearls before a swine.

**Cultureme:** Inappropriate talk (-) **Advice:** Be concerned with the caliber of your listeners.

To cast pearls before a swine means wasting time by offering something valuable to someone who does not appreciate or understand it. The phrase is often rendered as an admonition not to offer what you hold dear to someone who will not appreciate it.

**vi. *Gul kara'n gul naal, nuk wadhawa'n wull nal* (p. 307).**

One should talk appropriately; even to cut a nose, there should be some decorum.

**Cultureme:** Appropriate manner (+) **Advice:** A proper code of verbal ethics should be sought.

Gricean Maxim of Manner has been fortified in this proverb advising to ensure appropriate manners in verbal behavior. An ordinary man speaking about serious/dignified matters uses this proverb to endorse his humbleness. It would be nice to do everything within the bounds of etiquette because even if there is something you do not want to say, it should be said with these etiquettes so that the outcome proves to be effective without any regret.

**vii. *Baat kariye jug bhaondi, roti khaiye munn bhaondi* (p. 31).**

Speak what the world likes to hear, eat what your heart relishes.

**Cultureme:** Appropriate talk. (+) **Advice:** Talk according to the wish of the listener/audience.

Avoid corrosive and harsh words. Another proverb reinforcing the Punjabi Cultural Script of 'pleasant talk' that emphasizes that the right choice of words/speech takes the listener's approval and subsequent admiration into account. On the other hand, the parallel construction frees the speaker to eat according to his/her desires and requirements. This means that a speaker should adapt himself/herself to the surroundings. He/She should act so that it does not offend anyone and the aspect of truth is prominent in it.

**Explanation and Discussion of the Proverbs about Appropriacy**

These Yoruba proverbs add the element of 'appropriacy' of time, subject, and relatedness to the appreciated traits of a conversation. Explicit mention is present of the befitting time, manner, and topic when one considers voicing his/her opinions. There is a need for an individual to apply wisdom in any conversation by avoiding what is offensive and controversial. The Yoruba corpus lays a particular emphasis on appropriate questioning in several proverbs. Irrelevant and illogical questions have been put down as they are just a wastage of time and may irritate the listener. So to avoid conflict and irritation between the inquirer and the respondent, implicitly, only suitable and logical questions are promoted.

Gricean Maxims of Manner and Relation have been reinforced in this group of culturemes from the Yoruba linguo-culture (Grice, 1975).

These Punjabi proverbs implicitly reinforce the Maxims of Quantity, Quality, Manner, and Relevance by emphasizing the befitting time, setting, topic, manner, subject, audience, and the nature of the subject under discussion. Anyone who does not consider any of these notions is liable to deviate from the social norms of communication. The proper time to speak up or to maintain silence must be observed, failing which may reveal the speaker's dim-wittedness. Topics of grave concerns and significance, along with aristocratic people, should not be discussed in the presence of obtuse and unremarkable individuals. People should be self-aware about their social and mental caliber concerning the topic or argument raised by them. Coherence and conformity must be maintained among the questions, their answers, the topic under discussion, and the points contributed. Otherwise, their absence also damages the image of a sane person. The most reinforced notion in the Punjabi corpus has been once again restated when a proverb is imparting a piece of straightforward advice to take care of the listeners' and audience's pleasure and emotions before giving voice to one's thoughts and concerns. It is essential to keep a social communication in a continuous flow without causing confusion and resultant friction.

Both Yoruba and Punjabi proverbs stress the appropriate time to talk about certain topics, just like the Ethiopian proverb, "*Eat when the food is ready, speak when the time is right*" (Hodari and Sobers, 2009, p. 89). Another Punjabi proverb reinforces this notion of the appropriate moment through a taunt comment '*weley di nmaz, kawely diyān takran*' (*The prayer is on time. Otherwise, it is just hitting the head with the ground.*) Just like Haya metaphors about speech discussed by Seital (1974), we find the recognition that speech may be substantial or insubstantial (that is, effective or non-effective, obligating or non-obligating, dangerous or not dangerous) depending on certain features of the speech event. Given this, we can understand the high value placed upon what may be called control in speaking. The Punjabi and Yoruba proverbs likewise stress appropriacy, as does a Haya proverb, "*He who speaks in the spirit shrine is cursing*" (p. 53). The setting of the speech determines its evaluation: speaking equals cursing in the context of a spirit shrine. The Hayas denote an excellent speaker by his/her ability to finish a discussion on a given subject by

saying exactly the right thing at the right time. According to Hayas, the ability and inclination to say what should be said and avoid what should not be said is the mark of a controlled speaker. One knows the relevant features of a speech event and is able and willing to act upon it. In the Punjabi proverbs, to talk about noble people is prohibited in front of ordinary persons, as illustrated by Seitel (1974), while analyzing Haya metaphors: *“To be a knower is to possess valued knowledge and to be able to express oneself artfully”* (p. 61). This means, to some degree, having the capacity to perform and interpret metaphorical speech. By way of illustration, it is said that if a member of the retinue of the chief’s court would use a proverb to a conventional farmer, another member of the retinue might say to the first: *‘You are beating your drum underwater.’* This implies that using a metaphor to a farmer, who is defined as a non-knower, is like playing the drum for a fish. A fish cannot understand drumming, and a conventional farmer cannot understand figurative speech. Speake (2015) also reports a Spanish proverb about the suitability of words according to the setting, *“Do not talk about rope in a hanged man’s home”* (p. 368). The Punjabi proverb, *‘mujj day aggay been wajana’* (to blow a trumpet in front of a buffalo) is also imparting advice to take care of the audience’s caliber before selecting a topic, appropriate words for discussion, or sharing some information.

The notion of appropriateness emphasized in the Yoruba cultureemes delineate multiple aspects, including time, topic, style, and manner. Opata’s (1992) identification of an Igbo (Nigerian) proverb summarizes the notion of appropriate talk to be a productive talk only, which deserves the title of talk as in, *“Talking without stopping is not talk, it is what was said to end all trouble that is the talk”* (p. 262). According to the words, to adapt one’s mouth is also recommended in Igbo proverb, *“As a thing is so is the mouth shaped/placed to say it”* (p. 203). The analysis of the current theme from Yoruba verifies Opata’s (1992) contention about Nigerian (Igbo) proverbs that what is significant about the proverbs found under this group is that none of them casts speech in the negative light. Instead, each embodies within itself a directive statement, even if not explicit, of the need to acquire appropriate speech habits: knowing when to speak, knowing how to speak to the point of weighing the situation before speaking. Indeed, nothing can be more direct to the point in this regard than the proverb, which says: *“He who says let the head be beheaded when the head is*



*beheaded, the mouth follows it.*” Therefore, it follows that rash, rabid, and precipitate speaking is counseled against, “*It is the mouth that leads to trouble, and it is the mouth that leads to the settlement of the trouble*” (Opata, 1992, p. 203).

### **The Yoruba and Punjabi Cultural Scripts for Appropriacy**

[Many people think like that:]

it is good to talk about something/someone

it is not good to talk about something/someone

it is good for someone to talk about something/someone

it is good for someone not to talk about something/someone

it is good to talk at some time

it is good not to talk at any time

it is good to talk in some way

it is good not to talk in any way

## **4.12 Irreversibility**

### **The Yoruba Proverbs about Irreversibility (3 -)**

#### **i. “*Ẹyin lẹ̀rọ̀; bóbábalẹ̀ fífọ̀ níńfọ̀*”**

“Words are eggs; when they drop on the floor, they shatter into pieces” (p. 181).

**Cultureme:** Irreversible talk. (-) **Advice:** Be careful about your words.

Words are metaphorically presented as delicate eggs; once spoken/broken, they cannot be retrieved. Yoruba people use this proverb to communicate the irreversibility of words once spoken. So they use it to caution people to be conscious of what they say and how to say it. It is a metaphoric proverb. The Yorubas liken the word to eggs, which are fragile and break once they fall. Hence, one should weigh the outcome or repercussion of any statement before uttering it.

ii. *“Eghenoun e i, do ba a ti ja fo e du se e.”*

“Egg voice is if it falls and breaks, it cannot be gathered together” (Akinmade, 2005, p. 156).

**Cultureme:** Irreversible talk. (-) **Advice:** Be careful about your words.

This **proverb** is metaphorically used to communicate that utterances are eggs; if they drop (once spoken) and break, they cannot be put together again. It means that one should be discreet in using the tongue. This **proverb** is used to warn against the flippant use of the tongue. It cautions to be careful about what comes out of one’s mouth. Another function that *owe* Ondo, like many others, performs is to warn people against certain things, e.g., utterances, lack of foresight.

iii. *“Itó tí a tusílẹ̀ kì í túnpadà re ẹnu ẹni mọ́.”*

“The saliva one has spat out of one’s mouth does not return to one’s mouth” (p. 187).

**Cultureme:** Irreversible talk (-) **Advice:** Be careful about your words.

Once one has said something, one cannot take it back as spit can never go back to the mouth. The Yorubas use this proverb when a person talks relentlessly. They use this proverb metaphorically to warn the person that whatever he/she says cannot be reversed. It advises being careful of whatever word comes out of the mouth because the reverse would not be possible.

**The Punjabi Proverbs about Irreveresibility, Longevity, Uncontrollability (19 -)**

i. *Dilo’n uthi, sungh te aayi, jibh te aayi, hoi parai (1, p. 235)*

The (talk) rose from the heart, reached the throat, reached the tongue, and shifted to others.

**Cultureme:** Irreversible talk (-) **Advice:** Be cautious about your talk.

A talk is yours until it stays in your heart. Once it starts traveling to the throat, it does not stop its movement, and after being uttered, it becomes the listeners' property. It means your words are only safe when they are inside you. Once they are out of the mouth, they become the property of others.

ii. *Teer kamano’n gul zabano’n nai murrdi (1, p. 207).*

An arrow fired from an arch, and the talk from the tongue do not return.

**Cultureme:** Irreversible talk (-) **Advice:** Be careful about your talk.

This proverb delineates another equation with a weapon used in warfare to exemplify the lethal effects and the wreckage caused by the lackadaisical usage of tongue and words. Stone (2006) quotes a Yiddish proverb with a similar comparison, “*A word and an arrow in this are alike: they both quickly find their targets*” (p. 482). On the other hand, Chong-Ho (1985) has quoted a proverb with a similar equation, but slightly more stress on the irreversibility of spoken words, “*You can pick up an arrow after shooting, you cannot pick up a word after saying it*” (p. 30).

**iii. *Mu’nh wicho’n niklee, khudai tak uprri* (2, p. 37)**

Out of the mouth (the words) reached all the creations of God.

***Cultureme:*** Irreversible talk (-) ***Advice:*** Be careful about your talk.

Words, once out of the mouth, will reach the whole world.

The proverbs employ the traveling metaphor repeatedly to reinforce the idea that words, once spoken, get free from their speaker and reach the audience. They can manipulate them according to their understanding and will. Chateris-Black (1995) has also reported a Hindustani proverb on the same grounds, “Once out of the throat it spreads over the world” (p. 4). Your words, once out of your mouth, belong to others. It means one should think before speaking and choose the words very carefully. Once the words are out of your mouth, people can interpret or translate them as they want.

**iv. *Mu’ngo’n niklee parai hoi* (p. 37)**

(Words came) out of the mouth and became others property.

***Cultureme:*** Irreversible talk (-) ***Advice:*** Be careful about your talk.

**v. *Mu’ngo’n niklee tan turat parai* (p. 349)**

(Words come out) of the mouth, and instantly become others’ possession.

***Cultureme:*** Irreversible talk (-) ***Advice:*** Be careful about your talk.

These inferential proverbs have not mentioned talk, but have hinted at it through the metaphor of mouth to convey the same message that it becomes the listener’s property once it is uttered.

**vi. *Mu'ngo'n niklee, gul parai* (4, p. 229)**

Out of the mouth, the talk goes to others' custody.

***Cultureme:*** Irreversible talk (-) ***Advice:*** Be careful about your talk.

Words, once spoken, become instantly others' possession.

**vii. *Gul mu'ngo'n niklee te parai hoi* (3, p. 307)**

Words once spoken are not yours anymore.

***Cultureme:*** Irreversible talk (-) ***Advice:*** Be careful about your talk.

Variant entries at iv, v, vi, vii have reinforced that words reach the whole world once out of the mouth. The talk belongs to the listener as he/she is free to interpret it in his/her own manner and spread accordingly. The culturemes mentioned above emphasize the controllability of words once they are not uttered through different variants of a single idea. Spoken at any moment would instantly convert the speaker's ownership and control to the listener's and the audience's. McNeil (1971), in his study of Speech related Indian proverbs, reports a proverb with a similar message, "*Out of the lips is another's property*" (p. 8). This Indian variant validates the presence of this notion in the south Asian countries that words, once spoken, are out of control of the speaker.

**viii. *Jibh janay ikko waar* (p. 218)**

The tongue breeds only once.

***Cultureme:*** Irreversible talk (-) ***Advice:*** Think before you speak

The tongue cannot retreat its uttered words. The act of speaking has been equated with the act of giving birth in this metaphorical proverb. Just as a female cannot take the child back to her womb, the same is the case with the tongue. It gives birth to words only once, and this demands careful speculation.

**ix. *Zaban janay ikko waar, maa'n janay waar waar* (3, p. 342)**

The tongue breeds/generates only once; the mother breeds again and again.

***Cultureme:*** Irreversible talk (-) ***Advice:*** Be careful about your talk.

A mother can bear many kids, but the tongue does just once! The emphasis on the irreversibility of talk has been communicated through the metaphor of 'birth' and equating it with giving birth by a woman who can produce children once and again. However, the

tongue is deprived of this faculty. The talk created by the tongue can never be produced again with the same tone, stress, intensity, and environmental coloring. The stress is again at the irremediable effects of talk to warn the speakers to be careful.

**x. *Mu'nh vicho'n niklee, kothey charrhi* (p. 38).**

Out of the mouth, it reached the rooftop.

***Cultureme:*** Irreversible talk (-) ***Advice:*** Be careful about your talk.

Talk has been portrayed as an uncontrollable element once it is out of the speaker's mouth; it spreads like fire. The words, once out of the mouth, reach the rooftop. Things are more visible and apparent when they are set in high places. Your spoken words also reach high places where they are clearly visible and easily seen by others. So, one must be very careful when using words.

**xi. *Zaban to'n niklee kothey uprri* (3, p. 342).**

The talk leaves the tongue, reaches the rooftop.

***Cultureme:*** Irreversible talk (-) ***Advice:*** Be careful about your talk.

Words fly and reach the high points where everyone can behold them and comment accordingly. The agency has been given to talk in all these proverbs. Talk has been personified as a living agent that can leave one place and reach another. It is again a warning proverb to be cautious about one's words.

**xii. *Mu'nh vicho'n niklee gul nai parat di* (2, p. 39).**

Words, once uttered, cannot be restored.

***Cultureme:*** Irreversible talk (-) ***Advice:*** Be careful about your talk.

Through this proverb, speakers are warned to be cautious about their talk as it is fated to be permanently irremediable. Gunfire and the words once spoken are not reversible. So, one must be very careful when using words.

**xiii. *Bandoqo'n niklee goli, mu'nho'n niklee gul nai murrdi* (1, p. 180).**

Both a bullet fired from a gun and the talk out of the mouth are irreversible.

***Cultureme:*** Irreversible talk (-) ***Advice:*** Be careful about your talk.

Words have been equated with a bullet fired; both of them cannot be taken back. The

equation adds an extra force to the cultureme of this proverb that just like bullets which cause physical damage and casualties, so do words with their invincible but ever existent potential to cause havoc both physically and emotionally. Stone (2006) quotes a Japanese proverb too, “A word, once let loose, cannot be caught even by four galloping horses” (p. 482).

**Longevity: (4 -)**

**xiv. *Gaalee’n reh wehndiya’n nei’n, bunda nai rehnda* (4, p. 208).**

Words remain, and the speaker does not.

**Cultureme:** Lasting talk (-) **Advice:** Be careful about your talk.

Words stay alive, but people die. Once said, something will always be remembered. Words are not physical things that can die like a body; they stay alive. People die, but their words remain alive. Words live longer than the speaker, and it calls for extreme care and conscious effort on the speaker’s part.

**xv. *Bunda nai renda bunday di gul reh jandi ae* (p. 86).**

The speaker dies, but talk survives.

**Cultureme:** Lasting talk (-) **Advice:** Be careful about your talk.

Words stay alive, but people die. Once said, something will always be remembered. Words are not physical things that can die like a body; they stay alive. People die, but their words remain alive. Words live longer than the speaker, and it calls for extreme care and conscious effort on the speaker’s part.

**xvi. *Wela lungh janda ay per gul yaad reh jandi ae* (1, p. 301).**

Time passes, but the words stay forever.

**Cultureme:** Lasting talk (-) **Advice:** Be careful about your talk.

Proverb entries on xiv, xv, xvi are variants of a single proverb, and their presence implies the importance and semantic density of this cultureme in the Punjabi linguo-culture. Words live longer even after the moment elapses. These proverbs represent the Punjabi linguo-culture's belief about the lasting effect of talk that words live longer than the speaker. The proverbs are implicitly warning to be extremely cautious about the selection of words.

**xvii. *Hath vich pharri aa tasbi, mu’nh wich rakhi aa gaalh, maala eythe rehni te bol chalan ge naal* (p. 383).**

Holding prayer beads in hand and speaking an abusive language, the garland will remain here, and the words will go along to the hereafter.

**Cultureme:** Lasting talk (-) **Advice:** Be careful about your talk.

The proverb is used to taunt a hypocrite person who pretends to be God-fearing by holding prayer beads, while his talk contains only abusive terms. The everlasting companionship of one's uttered words has been reinforced in this proverb to make the speaker conscious about the consequences he/she would have to face after death. 'A wolf in sheep's clothing' partially shares the semantic content of this proverb. Some hypocrites pretend to be nobles, but are crooked inside. Their prayer beads will be transferred to their loved ones, but their words will go with them even after they die. It means words do not die, and their longevity demands extremely cautious behavior.

### Uncontrollable Talk (2 -)

**xviii. *Mu'nh ai hoi nai rukdi* (p. 37) .**

After reaching the mouth, it does not stop.

**Cultureme:** Uncontrollable talk (-) **Advice:** Be careful about your talk.

Words in the mouth do not stop. It means once some words come on the tongue, they come out and are hard to stop. It is one's thoughts that come to mouth in the shape of words. So one should try to think good, speak well and be gentle to others by his words. This proverb conveys the uncontrollable nature of talk for some people who do not bother to hurt themselves or their listeners.

**xix. *Mai'n te bichari, meri jibh nah rehndi* (p. 324).**

**Cultureme:** Uncontrollable talk (-) **Advice:** Be careful about your talk.

I am gutless, but my tongue is out of my control.

Poor me, but my tongue cannot stop. It means once some words come on the tongue, they come out and are hard to stop. Basically, it is one's thoughts that come to the mouth. So one should try to think good, speak well and be gentle to others by one's words. Speake (2015) quotes a Roman proverb with a similar message, "It is more difficult to bridle the tongue than to conquer an army" (p. 436). The presence of similar culturemes in distant linguo-cultures implies some universal or widespread notions about the talk beyond geographical, religious, or cultural ideologies.

### **Explanation and Discussion of the Proverbs about Irreversibility**

The Ife people compare words to eggs as expressed in the proverb: “*words are eggs when they strike the ground, they break.*” The literary significance of this proverb lies in the metaphor, “words are eggs”/eggs are fragile and should be handled with care because once they break, they cannot be made whole again. So are the words: The pitfalls of inaccurate statements are often escaped through apt usage of proverbs. In another proverb, words are compared with saliva, which cannot be retrieved once spoken. The message to the speakers is to be highly prudent and thoughtful about their words before speaking them. Opata (1992), in his study of Igbo proverbs on speech, reports a similar proverb, “*Quarrels end, but words spoken never die*” (p. 202); “*Words are like spears, once they leave your lips, they never come back*” (p. 201). Chateris-Black (1995) quotes another African proverb with the message of losing control after speaking them, “*The words that leave your mouth, leave your control*” (Somali) (p. 4). These proverbs from different African linguo-culture reinforce the presence of the shared cultural schema about the irreversibility of spoken words.

These Punjabi proverbs highlight another assertive trait of talk attached in the Punjabi culture as communicated through nineteen culturemes. The Punjabi linguo-culture lays substantial stress on the irreversibility, uncontrollability, and longevity of talk and the words in these proverbs to make the speakers conscious about selecting words and be aware of its negative consequences by taking precautionary measures of thinking and weighing their words before uttering them. The irreversibility and indelibility of spoken words are again implicitly calling for caution before uttering them. These proverbs also reinforce the significance of spoken words and bolstering the concept of longevity associated with them. These proverbs stress the durability and lastingness of the spoken words; hence one should be highly cautious before speaking.

Compared to the high ‘Semantic Density’ (19 culturemes) of the Punjabi culturemes centered around the theme of irreversibility, uncontrollability, and longevity, Yoruba corpus yields only three (3) culturemes, all presenting the aspect of irretrievability of spoken words in the negative light. According to Petrova (2016, 2019), the density variance indicates the particular concerns shown by the linguo-cultures under investigation. Furthermore, several figures of speech (simile, metaphors, and personification) have been employed in both



languages to communicate the negative connotations attached to the irrevocability of words. The Punjabi corpus equates words with bullets fired from a gun and an arrow thrown from a cross-bow. In contrast, Yoruba corpus compares spoken words to broken eggs, the saliva spat, and spears to characterize the immitigable abrogating effects on the speakers, listeners, and the subjects simultaneously.

Additionally, several culturemes reinforce the idea that words are irreversible, uncontrollable, and have lasting effects and impressions. Once spoken, they leave the speaker instantly and join the listener and audience to be manipulated according to their own will. Raymond (2012) quotes another Mangolian proverb where words have been compared with loosened horses, “*A horse released can be caught, a word released cannot be caught*” (p. 19). Here, it is understood that a horse that has been released can always be brought back; but words, once said, cannot be taken back. This cultureme warns the speakers to be cautious with their words. Ahmed (2005), in his comparative study of Sudanese and English proverbs, also reports an Indonesian proverb, “*One’s word lasts longer than one’s life*” (p. 226,) which reinforces the point raised in the present theme of the Punjabi and Yoruba proverb. Stone (2006) reports a Chinese proverb reinforcing the similar notion, “*Four things come not back: the spoken word, the spent arrow, the past life, and the neglected opportunity*” (p. 267); the Japanese proverb, “*A slip of the foot you may soon recover, but a slip of the tongue you may never get over*” (p. 435). The Punjabi people believe that when people praise the deceased after their death, God and His angels record and confirm it from the public opinion. The purpose of these proverbs is to remind people that memories of the good and bad things once said will remain after their death.

### **The Punjabi and Yoruba Cultural Scripts about the Irreversibility/Longevity of talk**

The following cultural script spells out this link in the chain of ‘cultural logic’ that leads to great care being called for concerning offenses against ‘*nam*’ (good repute). This script connects with the potent Punjabi concept of ‘revenge, pay-back’ (Goddard, 1996).

Everyone knows:

some people can think something like this about someone else for a long time:

this person said something bad about me;

other people can think something bad about me because of it;

I want to do something bad to this person because of this

### 4.13 Think First

#### The Yoruba Proverbs about ‘Thinking first’ (2 +)

i. *“Eyin loro Bó bá bale, fífo ní nfo”*

“Speech is an egg; when it drops on the floor, it shatters” (p. 168).

**Cultureme** and **Advice**: Think before you speak (+)

Words are delicate things; once spoken, they cannot be retrieved. In the Yoruba culture, a great deal of importance attaches to whatever utterance issues out of the mouth. Speech is the highest form of utterance and, the Yoruba approach it with deliberate care, taking great pains to avoid careless, casual, or thoughtless statements whose damage might outlast lifetimes.

ii. *“Àgbàlagbà ma nyájú ni, àgbàlagbà o kii yánu”*

(“An elderly person is quick to see, but not quick to speak.”) Online

**Cultureme** and **Advice**: Think before you speak (+)

An older person is fast in observing things, but not revealing or talking about them. This proverb indirectly refers to the impulsive talking by young people, which senior citizens avoid because they have learned the lesson of restraint with their experience and exposure.

#### The Punjabi Proverbs about Thinking First (7 +)

i. *Pehla’n toliye fair boliye* (p. 117).

(First weigh then utter)

**Cultureme** and **Advice**: Think before you speak (+)

Punjabi people use this self-directing proverb to encourage speculation before uttering some words instead of blurting out without taking its consequences into account. McNeil (1971) reports an Indian proverb with the same message, *“First weigh your words then speak openly”* (p. 9). The speech shapes the speaker’s life. Speaking without thinking get the speaker in trouble, and the outcome depends on what he/she says. So be careful about what one is saying because once one has said something, it can be only forgiven, but not forgotten.

**ii. *Soch kay alaway te chith kay khaway* (p. 253).**

To think before speaking and masticate before eating (are advisable acts).

***Cultureme*** and ***Advice***: Think before you speak (+)

Reflecting before speaking something has been equated with the physical phenomenon of chewing the food well before devouring. It will increase the benefits and decrease the troubles potentially caused by inverse strategies. It is often employed to express wisdom. A wise man chooses his words carefully and chews his food to digest easily.

**iii. *Chith ke khaiye, samajh alae, os nu khata kadi na aaye* (p. 22).**

A person, who thinks before speaking and chews before eating, has never repented.

***Cultureme*** and ***Advice***: Think before you speak (+)

Pondering on one's words before speaking them out is again equated in a more detailed variant of this proverb. An overt emphasis has been communicated through '*khata kade na aaye*' means the person who acts upon these pieces of advice will never have to deplore or lament. A wise person always thinks twice before speaking. As Ali Ibn Abi Talib said, "You are the master of what you say until you utter it; once you deliver it, you are its captive." Preserve your tongue as you do your gold and money. One word could bring disgrace and the termination of bliss.

**iv. *Murda bolay ga kaphan pharr ky* (p. 339).**

The defunct will speak, tearing the shroud.

***Cultureme*** and ***Advice***: Think before you speak (+)

Punjabi people use it as a taunt when a foolish person keeps talking senselessly in serious matters without thinking about the ramification and the contextual gravity. Additionally, it can also be used to hamper an insignificant person who intrudes pointlessly and brings to focus some irrelevant and annoying notion. This expression is used when a blockhead person does not think before speaking or utters something weird out of context.

**v. *Soch karey so sugharr naar, kar sochay so koorr* (p. 251).**

A girl who broods before saying anything is smart, while who thinks afterward is unsophisticated.

***Cultureme***: and ***Advice***: Think before you speak (+)

Unlike the previous gender-neutral entries, these gender-focused proverbs acknowledge a ruminative girl in favorable terms compared to an impulse-governed female. It means a wise woman understands and knows the power of her words. On the other hand, a foolish woman keeps talking and loses her fortune.

**vi. *Bhutt pave meri jibh* (p. 183).**

To hell with my tongue!

***Cultureme:*** Uncontrollability of the tongue (-) ***Advice:*** Think before you speak (+)

Wise people curse their tongue when it slips in the wrong way that their tongue deserves to be burnt in the earthen oven as it keeps making verbal mistakes impulsively. This proverb is spoken to express remorse. When a man speaks something without thinking, and later has to suffer the consequences. It also expresses that when some secret is revealed in haste followed by the regret.

**vii. *Mu'nh wich aya so buk dita* (4, p. 416).**

He/she vomits whatever comes to his/her mouth.

***Cultureme:*** Uncontrollability (-) ***Advice:*** Think before you speak (+)

It is an expression of regret over abruptly revealing some secret without thinking in the state of anger and not knowing how much damage and hurt it can do. A wise man thinks a hundred times before he speaks. This proverb is also used to taunt and discourage a person who speaks without restraint.

**Explanation and Discussion of Thinking First in the Punjabi and Yoruba Proverbs**

Though silence is encouraged and talking and usually excessive talking is discouraged in the Punjabi linguo-culture, there are occasions when talking is acceptable. The permission to speak, though, is not a license to free conversation. Instead, these proverbs insist that the wise person thinks before speaking (McNeil, 1971). A number of the Punjabi proverbs emphasize the importance of thinking before speaking. This deliberative process is again associated with being wise, just like being quiet. A person who does not weigh before vocalizing his thoughts is termed a 'dupe' in these proverbs. Multiple images and metaphors have been used to communicate the message of evaluating one's words before enunciating: chewing well before devouring and a dead body speaking while tearing its coffin (for foolish talk). An Indian proverb also reinforces the importance of contemplation before the speech,

“*The fool speaks, but the wise man thinks*”; “*When a utensil has slipped from the hands, and a word has been spoken out, then thinking is useless*” (McNeil, 1971, p. 6). *Kyon kahi aur kyon kahai? (Why speak to be spoken against?) Lath munh phat.* (Breaking the mouth with a club) (p. 9), said of those who speak without thinking. Stone (2006) reports similar advising proverbs from multiple speech communities, “*A fool’s answer is ever on the edge of his tongue*” (Egyptian) (p. 159); “*Turn your tongue seven times before speaking*” (French) (p. 437); “*Words should be weighed, not counted*” (Yiddish) (p. 484). When we look at Yoruba proverbs, fewer culturemes stress the act of thinking before speaking in an explicit term. However, some proverbs under the theme of ‘Silence’ have emphasized the benefits of contemplation when one keeps quiet. Opata (1992), however, has reported an Igbo proverb with a piece of similar advice, “*Speaking without deep thinking will not bring better results*” (p. 99). Another Nigerian (Hausa) proverb quoted in Chateris-Black (1995) has reinforced the act of contemplation by allowing your tongue to turn multiple times before uttering something, “*Before you speak turn your tongue, seven times in your mouth*” (p. 4). Yoruba informants, however, have stressed that speaking without pondering is considered harmful in their speech culture. The proverbs have attached thinking before speaking with older people as an indication of their wisdom. The metaphor of ‘eggs fallen on the floor and shattered’ has also been used to communicate that being reckless about words may cause irreparable loss.

The Punjabi proverbs seem to join Seitel’s (1974) analysis of Haya metaphors of speech has argued that control in speech is crucial in light of the emphasis Hayas place on reciprocity as a principle of social and linguistic interaction. Punjabi people perceive reciprocity in interactions involving non-kin that one gives what one receives; that is, good is returned for good, and bad for bad. Many proverbs give expression to this principle. Those literally about speech warn a speaker to be careful about what one says and to whom one says it; an offense given is likely to be repaid in the same kind. One should speak with control to someone who can aid him or harm him in the future. This sanction with its implied reciprocity is expressed in a proverb often quoted by the Hayas: “*(What is) forgotten by the speaker is remembered by the hearer*” (p. 54); “*One must also control his speech to those who have the resources to aid him*” (p. 55). Note that in all the Haya statements used to exemplify the dimension of reciprocity in speaking, the speech itself is taken to be as substantive as action. They are taken to be equivalent since speech is repaid reciprocally with

action. The Hayas say, “*Do not speak badly of the man who has a daughter*” because you may one day wish to arrange a marriage with the girl. Also, “*Do not bother the owner of many houses with noise*” because he is a rich man whose help may be needed someday. Almost anyone can be seen as a resource of some kind and should be treated well linguistically. The Hayas also say: “*He who does not speak with children brewed beer by himself*” (p. 62). Children's help is needed in beer-making to fetch the massive amounts of water required. A Swahili proverb from the African region has also advised being careful, “*Watch your tongue like a farmer (watches his crop)*” because farmers must constantly watch their crops lest birds, monkeys, or wild pigs eat them. In the same way, the words we have spoken may be misused by our enemies to harm us. Another proverb from the same language reiterates the idea to postpone speaking, “*A person starts breaking a piece of bread first, the mouth is not opened first*” (Hodari and Sobers, 2009, p. 55), which suggests thinking before speaking or doing things and wait for your time. The presence of proverbs about this cultureme in different linguo-cultures entails the shared cultural schema which appreciates ‘think first.’

### **The Punjabi and Yoruba Cultural Script about ‘Think First’**

Even in relaxed everyday interaction, it is a presumption of the Punjabi social interaction, just like the Malay speech culture (Goddard. 2010), that one should think before one speaks. There are many common sayings to this effect: ‘if you are going to speak, think a little first.’ However, think about what? Firstly, consistent with the social values, one should be mindful not to present oneself in a bad light; secondly, one should adopt a considerate attitude toward the interlocutor's feelings. These principles can be captured in the following cultural script. Notice that it is framed in the ‘first-person’ as a set of guidelines about how I should speak. It enjoins a kind of consideration for others and a concern for one’s standing in other people’s eyes.

before I say something to someone, it is good to think:

I do not want this person to feel something bad because of this

I do not want this person to think something bad about me

I have to think about what I say

The Punjabi people who do not show the appropriate care when they speak are described disparagingly as ‘*Moonh phatt*’ (one with a torn mouth). There are simultaneous Indonesian and Malay cultural scripts that encourage “a specific communicative strategy: namely, a period of consideration and premeditation before saying anything which could be potentially hurtful” (Goddard, 1997). Goddard formulates the relevant script (Malay and Indonesian), which is equally applicable in the current theme:

[many people think like this:]

when I say something to someone

it is not good if this someone feels something bad because of this

because of this, when I want to say something to someone

it will be good if I think about it for some time before I say it

In support of this script, we can cite Goddard (2010) for the common Malay proverbs: “*Mind your mouth*”; “*Speak minding one’s tongue*”; “*If you speak in the daytime, keep your eyes open; if you speak at night, keep your ears open*”; “*The body suffers because of the mouth*”; “*Be careful when you speak*”; “*If you are going to speak, think a little first*” (p. 99). The Punjabi cultural script of ‘verbal caution’ may be related to the Punjabi culture, just like the Malay practice, with “the need to protect people’s feelings,” a theme reflected in the proverbs under “Indirect speech” (p. 101).

### **The Yoruba Cultural Script against ‘*blurting out*’ what one thinks**

[many people think like this:]

at many times, if I think something when I am with someone else

it can be bad if I say it to this someone

if I have not thought about it for a short time before I say it

This script is much more general and less prescriptive in its scope than the Punjabi one: ‘at some times,’ ‘it can be bad,’ ‘for a short time,’ and it is not explicitly limited to

looking after other people's feelings. What matters here is the awareness that *sometimes* it can be helpful (for various reasons) to consider whether or not to say something under the circumstances.

What do such concepts have to do with characteristic Punjabi speech patterns? The observations suggest the answer by Goddard (1997), the social value system is predicated on the "dignity of the individual and ideally all social behavior is regulated in such a way as to preserve one's *'izzat'* and to avoid disturbing the same feelings of dignity and self-esteem in others" (p. 198). That is to say, in ordinary conversation, the Punjabi speakers cooperate to assist the safeguarding of each other's dignity and to steer away from the possibility of incurring or inducing 'shame.'

To forestall misunderstanding, I should say at once that the motivation behind this script is not entirely altruistic. As we will see in a moment, the importance attached to one's *'nam'* 'reputation' and *'izzat'* 'dignity, honor,' and the possibility of *'badla'* 'revenge, pay-back' means that there is often a dimension of self-protection involved as well. However, before moving to this, it is perhaps worth stressing that the script's content does not correspond precisely to the Anglo concern with 'not hurting people's feelings.' Anglo culture may also mandate against hurting other people's feeling unnecessarily. However, the present script goes beyond this to spell out a specific communicative strategy-namely, a period of consideration and premeditation before saying anything that could be potentially hurtful.

The Punjabi and Yoruba's stress on silence with a varying degree of accentuation may be explicated by Quan's (2015) identification of the function of silence in Chinese and American contexts as i) Discourse Organizing Mark. Silence cues affect interpersonal communication by providing an interval in an ongoing interaction during which the participants have time to think, check or suppress an emotion, encode a lengthy response, or inaugurate another line of thought; ii) Semantic Mark. Silence is a psycholinguistic behavior. The communicator needs enough time to organize his idea to express himself correctly and clearly to transmit enough information to the counterpart. Meanwhile, the communicator needs some time to infer the counterpart's meaning or intention, and he can make a response properly and understand the counterpart fully. In the Punjabi linguo-culture, just like its Japanese counterpart (Lebra, 1987), vocal hesitation may be understood as a sign of modesty,



unobtrusiveness, politeness, empathy, acquiescence, and avoidance of humiliation. Such discretion may be exercised either because the silent addressor is effectively attached to the addressee involving love or respect, or the addressor finds the silence strategy advantageous to his/her own social gain.

Cultural commentators invariably mention that Asian (in the present case, Punjabi) cultures greatly value the capacity of a person to be ‘sensitive,’ ‘considerate,’ and ‘understanding’ of others, and therefore to always speak with care lest the other person has his or her feelings hurt ‘*jazbyan nu thais pochana.*’ For example, Katrak’s list of Punjabi values includes the following: “showing consideration and concern, anticipating the other, and above all, being sensitive to the other person” (2002, p. 78). Arweck and Nesbitt (2010) stress “the great emphasis placed on harmonious personal relations” in the Punjabi culture (1993, p. 30). Australian insensitivity to Asians’ feelings has been identified by Malaysia’s Prime Minister, Dr Mahathir Mohamad, as one cause of the perennially strained relations between the two countries. “In Asian culture,” Mahathir explains, “people are reluctant to pass comment on others.... we have a way of making our views known, without hurting feelings” (1995). In the interview published in the *New Straits Times* of 12 June 1996 (p. 9), Khadijah Hashim mentioned concerning Asians, “You should be able to appreciate the feelings of your neighbors in this region” (in Goddard, 1997, p. 197).

#### **The Punjabi and Yoruba Cultural Scripts about Bitter Word Avoidance**

[Many people think like this]:

it is not good if, when I say something to someone, this person feels something bad  
because of this, when I want to say something to someone,  
it is good to think about it for some time before I say it

### **4.14 Gender and Talk**

#### **The Yoruba proverbs about Gender and Talk (34)**

##### **i. “*Obìnrin ko ni gògòngò*”**

“Women have no Adam’s apple” (i.e., they cannot keep secrets) (Yusuf, 2001, p. 3).

**Cultureme:** Women’s talk (-) **Advice:** Do not take a woman’s talk seriously.

Yusuf's (2013) study of some English and Yoruba proverbs notes that both contain various proverbs that show a spiritual denigration of women in different areas, the first being women's association with loquacity, i.e., the belief that women lack verbal restraint.

ii. *“Obinrin kì í ròhìn àjò tán”*

“A woman is never done telling about the trip she took” (p. 390).

**Cultureme:** Women are talkative (-) **Advice:** Do not take a woman's talk seriously.

Women do not finish the news about their journey. This proverb has some contextual meanings. It can be used for different things in another context. No woman can fully recount her experience of the journey through life so her talk should not deserve a serious listener.

iii. *“Ìyàwó ò fohùn ó fojú.”*

“The bride does not speak, and she is also blind” (p. 188).

**Cultureme:** Keeping your mouth shut (-) and eyes open in a new place (+) **Advice:** Do not speak without knowing the culture or traditions of the place.

Persons newly arrived in a place, or a company should shut their mouths and open their eyes to learn the customs before speaking. A wife should observe to understand the body language; it will save her from much stress.

iv. *“Adásínlùn, obinrin ọ̀dọ̀ọ̀: ẹ̀lẹ̀rú ñwáẹ̀rú , ó ní kí wọ̀n jẹ́ kí ọ̀kọ ọ̀un ti oko dé ná”*

“Person-who-involves-one-in-trouble, idiotic woman: a slave owner comes searching for his missing slave, and she says he should wait until her husband returns from the farm” (p. 325).

**Cultureme:** Women are talkative (-) **Advice:** Be careful about a woman's talk

The Yoruba believe that a wife who cannot control her mouth will someday put herself and her husband in trouble. A woman's loose mouth is a dangerous thing for the owner and her kins. Another explication by an informant goes like this, ‘Somebody was looking for a stupid woman's husband, and she said they should let her husband come back.’

v. *“Obinrin l'eke, obinrin l'odale”*

“The woman is a gossip; the woman is a traitor” (Olojede, 2012, p. 8).

**Cultureme:** Women's talk (-) **Advice:** Do not take women's talk seriously.

This proverb is used to reinforce the commonly believed notion that women talk a lot.

**vi. “A benu mimu bi obe”**

“Her lips are as sharp as the knives” (Olojede, 2012, p. 8).

**Cultureme:** Women’s talk (-) **Advice:** Do not take women’s talk seriously.

Nigerian people’s belief has found an expression that women do not have verbal control. Therefore, men should not trust or depend on them, resulting in double-crossing and foul play since women are believed to have free tongues and no self-control.

**vii. “Obinrín torí oro rodo”**

“Women go to the stream only in search of gossip” (p. 378)

**Cultureme:** Women’s talk (-) **Advice:** Do not take women's talk seriously.

Women will do anything for the opportunity to gossip. The Yorubas believe that women are naturally talkative and they spare no moment where they can indulge in gossip.

**viii. “Oro tí aboyún bá sọ, ẹni méjì ló sọ o”**

“Whatever a pregnant woman says is told by two people” (p. 283).

**Cultureme:** Women’s talk (-) **Advice:** Do not take a woman's talk seriously

An informant from Yoruba linguo-culture has explicated that this proverb is used to portray the talkative nature as well as the importance attached to procreation and childbearing in the Yoruba speech community. A pregnant woman’s word should not be taken lightly.

**ix. “Obinrin sée finú hàn.”**

“A woman is not suitable to expose one’s secrets to” (p. 377).

**Cultureme:** Women’s talk (-) **Advice:** Do not confide in women.

This proverb is used as a note of caution to men who tend to take their women’s words seriously.

**x. “Omùgo èyàn ní mēb óbinrin mule; ojo tóbinrín bá mawo lawó bàje”**

“Only a foolish person enters into a secret pact with a woman; the day a woman knows a mystery is the day it is exploded” (p. 135).

**Cultureme:** Women’s talk (-) **Advice:** Never trust a woman!

The man who believes in a woman and entrusts her with some confidential information is labeled here to be a ‘foolish’ person as women are believed to be ‘leaky pitchers’ by default in the Nigerian culture.

**xi. “*Ara ya ayaju obinrin ode ti o ni oko oun pa araba si idi okete*”**

“Over-excitement, the hunter’s wife, who said that her husband killed an Araba tree beneath a squirrel” (Yusuf, 1994 p. 285).

***Cultureme:*** Women’s talk ***Advice:*** Do not confide in women!

In the proverb, the hunter's wife’s speech, which should generally have been “My husband killed a squirrel beneath an Araba tree,” has been portrayed as the product of the tendency to be highly excitable. In this particular instance, she is over-excited by the killing of an ordinary squirrel and this excessive excitement distorts the structure of her speech. That is, she violates the ethics as well as Maxim of Quantity with unflattering repercussions (Grice, 1975). The proverb, in effect, evaluates her speech (and by implication the speech of women in general) as a problematic product of the extreme urge to react to situations by speaking rather than through other means.

**xii. “*Pa mi n ku’ se ori benbe si oko*”**

“‘Kill-me-and-let-me-die’ acts defiantly toward her husband” (p. 285).

***Cultureme:*** Women’s talk (-) ***Advice:*** Do not trust a woman.

The semantic and pragmatic structures of the Yoruba language allow a living person to say ‘I am dead’ as a rhetorical strategy for expressing extreme pain, fear, or excitement. Therefore, a wife can say ‘I’m dead o’ (where ‘o’ indicates intensity) when she is battered. In other words, a person can be ‘killed’ and for the person not to die. For the wife to be ready to die when she is ‘killed’ removes the expression from the metaphorical or idiomatic level to the literal. Her speech is, therefore, seen as an expression of extreme (suicidal) foolhardiness. It violates the ethics of self-preservation.

**xiii. “*Mo ku! Mo ku!*’, *obinrin si tun ibi ana re*”**

“‘I am dead! I am dead!,’ cried a woman (during sexual intercourse), yet she went again to the place at which she was ‘killed’ yesterday” (p. 265).

***Cultureme:*** Women’s talk (-) ***Advice:*** Do not believe in women's words.

Typically, death strikes with finality. Therefore, the woman cannot have gone back to where she was ‘killed’ yesterday if she had died then. The possibility for her to go back as

she did in this proverb is accounted for by the pragmatics of expressing excitement with the ‘death metaphor’ in the Yoruba language, as is mentioned in the proverb above. In this proverb, the woman’s speech is literalized to portray her as insincere since her words then become inconsistent with her deeds.

**xiv. “*Esin obìnrins oro gùn, o le gbéni subù.*”**

“It is not good for a man to climb on his wife’s horse because he can fall to his death” (Balogun 2010, p. 7).

**Cultureme:** Women’s talk (-) **Advice:** Do not believe in women's words.

This proverb utilizes ‘the horse’ to speak to the impulses of one’s better half. The proverb is a warning to the men who act upon their wives’ impulses that it will cause their destruction. The above proverb is gender-biased against women; since it has abandoned the steady and capable exhortation, women are fit for providing for their spouses, partners, companions, and relatives (regardless of whether male or female).

**xv. “*Awo burúkú lobìnrin lè şe, obìnrinlálè mefà, mefeḡfà ò mọra wọn.*”**

“Women are capable of only vicious secrecy: a woman has six lovers, (and) the six do not discern about each other” (Olojede 2012, p. 8).

**Cultureme:** Women’s talk (-) **Advice:** Do not believe in women's words

Another disparaging portrayal of women in Yorùbá proverbs involves the association of women with promiscuity. Women have been perpetuated to be so cunning and morally promiscuous that they will not let a lover know about others despite their co-existence. Another proverb quoted by Balogun (2010, p. 29) has expressed a similar notion about gender ideology in the Yoruba language, “Women are climber plants that overrun any available space.” The expression in this proverb is figurative. It compares the nature of women to that of a plant that has its roots in one place and its branches in another. The proverb pictures women as unpredictable characters with a natural propensity to be involved in multiple affairs simultaneously (Daramola 2007). The proverb implies that women by nature are unreliable, and under this, they ‘hook up’ with the best suitor in conjugal relationships. This proverb highlights the perceived unreliability of women, especially wives,

whose meeting point with their husbands was a social function such as a ball. The Yoruba society is patriarchal (it is the man that woos and marries the woman and not the other way round). The emphasis is placed on the woman's character, how she was dressed, and where her husband first met her.

**xvi. “Obinrin lodale, obinrin leke, Emo finu han obinrin.”**

“Women are disloyal and deceitful; Do not expose your inner thought to a woman” (p. 306).

**Cultureme:** Women’s talk **Advice:** A man should not share his secrets with any woman.

These lines ascribe deceitful behavior to women alone, whereas the act is an attribute of both men and women.

**xvii. “Eniyan ti ko gbon ni i bobiriin mule Ijo obinrin bo mawo lo baje.”**

“Only a stupid man takes an oath with a woman; the day a woman knows the secrets of a cult, that cult is destroyed” (p. 307).

**Cultureme:** Women’s talk **Advice:** A man should not share his secrets with any woman.

This proverb is wording the patriarchal tendencies of the Yoruba linguo-culture, which is clearly penalizing a man as ‘stupid’ who commits a mistake by taking an oath with a woman.

**xviii. “E ma je ka finu han f’obinrin; ibi ti oju re o to, enu re debe.”**

“We should desist from revealing our secrets to a woman; her mouth will speak more than her eyes can see”. (p. 308).

**Cultureme:** Women’s talk **Advice:** A man should not share his secrets with any woman.

This proverb communicates the belief held by the Yorubas that women cannot hold secrets as they lack verbal restraint, so men should not reveal any critical information to them. A similar Punjabi proverb advises men ‘*janani nu bhaid na dey*’ (Shahbaz, 2005, p. 73) (Do not disclose your confidential information to a woman).

**xix. “Etí lo bìnín fí ñgbo ohùn orò.”**

“It is only with the ears that a woman hears the voice of *Orò*.”

“One must not intrude into affairs that do not concern one; undesirable people should be kept in the dark about important or delicate matters” (Familusi 2012, p. 77).

**Cultureme:** Women’s talk **Advice:** A man should not share his secrets with any woman.

The Yoruba believe that a woman cannot see *Oro`* (a deity); she only hears the noise of *Oro`* (the deity). The Yorubas use this proverb to express a situation where people do not have an adequate report of an event or do not want people to know the complete account. Women are not usually allowed to know about secret matters.

**xx. “Orí jẹ kí mpé méjì” obìnrin kò dénú.”**

“‘May my head grant that I have a partner,’ a woman’s prayer is not sincere” (p. 265).

**Cultureme:** Women’s talk (-) **Advice:** Do not believe in their words.

The Yorubas believe that women often pay lip service to concepts they do not really mean. Men should not believe in their women’s claims.

**xxi. “Orisa, je n pe meji’ obinrin ko denu.”**

“When a woman says, ‘God, let my husband marry a second wife,’ the prayer is not whole-hearted” (Yusuf, 1994 p. 286).

**Cultureme:** Women’s talk (-) **Advice:** Do not believe in their words.

The Yoruba people believe women to be hypocritical. A woman cannot pray that her husband should marry another wife as no woman will ever genuinely desire to have a co-wife. If you see a woman who says that her husband should marry another wife, it is not from her mind. The Yoruba believe there will be rivalry and rift as no woman wants to share her private property with another woman. This proverb indicates that there is incongruence between a woman’s intention and her speech. In other words, it advises that feminine speech should not be believed. Her insincerity is portrayed as reaching divine proportions, as she attempts to hoodwink even the gods. They do not mean what they say.

**xxii. “Nwó lọ, nwó lọ’,lobìnrin fì nderù ba ọkọ.”**

“‘I’ll divorce you, I’ll divorce you,’ is the weapon with which a woman threatens her husband” (Olojede 2012, p. 8).

**Cultureme:** Women’s talk (-) **Advice:** Do not believe in their words.

This proverb evaluates the woman’s speech as insincere. If it had not been, the threat

would not have been recurrent. That is, she would have divorced him the first time she issued the threat. Therefore, the proverb portrays a woman's threat (especially to her husband) as something not seriously taken. This proverb delineates that Yoruba women use the word 'divorce' as a weapon to blackmail and control their husbands emotionally.

**xxiii. “*Ihale ebo iya egbe ti yoo pa oromodie, ti o lo ree ta asia, ti o tun npase pe ki gbogbo ilu ma lo si ibikankan*”**

“The braggadocio of the old woman's sacrifice: because she wanted to kill a chick, she hoisted a flag and ordered that everybody in the town remain indoors” (Yusuf, 1994, p. 284).

**Cultureme:** Women's talk (-) **Advice:** Do not believe in their words.

Hoisting a flag in the context of this proverb is the symbol of caution against extreme danger. Imposing a curfew is similarly the indication of the need to keep the people out of harm's way. Since the woman did both because she wanted to kill a feeble chick, the proverb judges her actions, especially the verbal one, to be out of proportion with her nonverbal gestures. In other words, the speech violates the ethics of proportion and is an unreliable index of her capabilities or intentions.

**xxiv. “*Obun riku oko tiran mo; o ni lati ojo ti oko oun ti ku ni oun o ti we mo.*”**

“The dirty woman uses her husband's death as an excuse for her filthiness: she said that she had stopped taking a bath right from the time he died” (Yusuf, 1994, p. 287).

**Cultureme:** Women's talk (-) **Advice:** Do not believe in their words.

The proverb regards a woman's speech as an insincere excuse for her filthiness. It reinforces the image of the deceptive or self-deceptive female that some of the preceding proverbs portray. The implication of this is that much premium should not be placed on women's speech since it violates the ethics of sincerity.

**xxv. “*Obinrin so iwa nu, o ni oun o ni ori oko.*”**

“A woman lacks character, and yet says that she is not lucky with marriage” (Yusuf, 1994, p. 287).

**Cultureme:** Women's talk (-) **Advice:** Do not believe in their words.

This proverb portrays a woman's speech as an expression of her poor sense of justice and lack of accurate self-assessment. There is a conflict between the quality of her input into the marriage and what she expects out of it. In effect, the speech is regarded as an undependable index of her circumstances.



**xxvi.** “*Òjòwú ò já gèlè; kooro ló lè já.*”

“Jealous women are all mouth and no action” (p. 145).

**Cultureme:** Women can only claim (-) **Advice:** Do not expect some productive action from women.

The jealous woman does not snatch her headgear off; all she can do is threatening a fight. Jealous women make false and tall claims to threaten their adversaries. It means some people just use their mouths without action.

**xxvii.** “*Obínrin-ín bímo fún ọ o ní o ò rínú e; ọǹf’kó o nífun ni?*”

“A woman has a child by you, and you still say you do not know her mind; would you have exposed her intestines?” (p. 273).

**Cultureme:** Women’s talk (-) **Advice:** Focus on her actions, which speak louder than her words!

Women’s actions are enough to prove the extent of their commitment, without accompanying words. They do not have to say a thing to show their loyalty; their actions say it all.

**xxviii.** “*Ọrọ ò dùn lénu iyá olè.*”

“Speech is not pleasant in the mouth of the mother of a thief” (p. 145).

**Cultureme:** Women’s talk (-) **Advice:** Do not believe in a woman’s word.

There is little a miscreant can say that will impress people. Some other proverbs quoted by Schipper (1991) from the Yoruba origin about women and talk are the following:

**xxix.** “If you have five wives, then you have five tongues” (Yoruba) (Schipper, 1991, p. 192).

**Cultureme:** Women’s talk (-) **Advice:** Women are talkative.

**xxx.** “He who is not smart in speech and argument should not take a talkative wife” (p. 193).

**Cultureme:** Women’s talk (-) **Advice:** Women are talkative

**xxxi.** “You can trust your brother, your father, your mother, but never your wife” (p. 193).

**Cultureme:** Women’s talk (-) **Advice:** Do not trust your wife's words.

**xxxii.** “Love your wife, but do not trust her” (p. 194).

**Cultureme:** Women’s talk (-) **Advice:** Do not trust your wife's words.

**xxxiii.** “The food of a woman who speaks sweetly will never be rejected by her husband” (p. 194).

**Cultureme:** Women’s sweet talk (+) **Advice:** Use sweet words

**xxxiv.** “Who follows a woman’s plan will drown himself” (p. 194).

**Cultureme:** Women’s talk (-) **Advice:** Do not consult and act upon her advice.

### **Explanation of the Yoruba Proverbs about Gender and Talk**

When it comes to gender and talk, several Yoruba proverbs target the insincere, hypocrite, jealous, and garrulous nature of women when they interact, and men are advised to keep an eye on their actions more than their words as their words are not reliable. Women have also been explicitly mentioned to be lackadaisical talkers. Talk concerning gender has been perceived differently in other African cultures, too, as a Barbados proverb has mentioned that “Man strength is in he hand, woman strength is in she mouth” (Hodari and Sobers, 2009, p. 47). In contrast, masculine talk has been referred to through animal imagery in “When the lion roars, all the animals are quiet” (p. 90). Yusuf (1994) agrees that while there may be agreement about the virtue of moderation, sincerity, and prudence in the Yoruba social communication, there is a problem with how women’s speech is evaluated with these qualities by the Yoruba proverbs. For example, while the practical or metaphorical use of language is allowed for communication in general, women's speech is literalized and consequently devalued as in proverbs. A proverb also does not seem to allow for the error of the hunter's wife’s speech to have been an excusable slip of the tongue.

The analysis of the Yoruba corpus also reveals that women express themselves more freely to the extent that their men’s security or social advantage seems threatened. In other words, the standards for judging women’s speech seem to be higher (and less fair) than those with which other classes of speech are evaluated. The proverbs studied thus seem to recommend that women talk more, not less. Some proverbs from other African contexts quoted by Schipper (1991) also reinforces the presence of gender bias when it comes to talking, “*The bearded mouth does not lie*” (Bemba, Zambia) and “*The words of men do not fall down*” (Shona, Zimbabwe) (p. 231). Likewise, Kreschen (1998, p. 57) reports an

American proverb with a piece of similar advice to focus on a woman's extra-linguistic gestures to infer the real meaning, "When a woman is speaking, listen to what she says with her eyes." Schipper (2003) reports that "All over the world, proverbs stress that women are verbally much too gifted and that too contemptuously. Women's speaking is simply disparaged, whereas men's talk is praised" (p. 126). He quotes specific examples from other speech communities which share this gender-biased ideology toward men and women's talk: "A woman's word is the wind in the wind, a man's word is the rock in the wall" (Arabic, Morocco); "The power of a woman is nothing but a plenitude of talk" (Hausa, Nigeria/Niger); "Men talk like books; women lose themselves in the details" (Chinese); "Man thinks and talks, while the woman talks and does not think" (Estonian) (p. 129). Likewise, the analysis of the Yoruba corpus also reveals that women express themselves more freely to the extent that their men's security or social advantage seems threatened.

### **The Punjabi Proverbs about Gender and Talk (44)**

#### **Females, 27, Males 17**

##### **i. *Kadi murghi di bang vi rawa hoi ay?* (p. 238).**

Can the hen's cluck ever be meaningful?

**Cultureme:** Women's talk (-) **Advice:** Do not take women's talk seriously.

A woman's discussion/contention does not have weight, and men should ignore it. This proverb shows a significant cultural predisposition against women. Unlike a chicken who crows to announce his region, a hen's judgment is regarded as undependable. A lady thus stays as a ghostly voice out of sight. The animal imagery of 'hen' has been used to communicate the lesser value ascribed to women's talk compared to a cock's (men) cluck, which is a symbol of the arrival of a new day. Siddiqui (2013) has also quoted an Urdu proverb mentioning a similar theme "*Murghiki bang kon suntan hay?*" "Whoever listens to a hen clucking? Whoever can rely on a woman's opinion?" (p. 83). Another Punjabi proverb has termed women's intellect of lower levels: *janani dee matt, gutt pichy*, ("A woman's wits rest in her ponytail") (Khan and Khan, 2019, p. 34). Thus, this subscription to lower intellectual levels allows the insignificance attached to the feminine talk, which is a byproduct of this distorted, under-developed, and imperfect vision.

**ii. *Gulee'n pai te wusno'n gai* (p. 308).**

The lady involved in gossip is deprived of the happy marriage

***Cultureme:*** Women's talk (-) ***Advice:*** Women should not involve in gossip.

This proverb expressly connects strained marital relationships and the wives' imprudent utilization of the tongue. This proverb cautions a woman who indulges in tattle with the dangerous consequences for her wedded life.

**iii. *Bud kardar ruch jandi ae, bud zuban nai ruchdi* (p. 45).**

The woman with moral laxity can be successful in marital life, however, not the one with a bad/bitter tongue

***Cultureme:*** Women's talk (-) ***Advice:*** A wife should not speak harshly with her husband.

This is yet another proverb that is unequivocally encouraging a lady to be mindful about the utilization of the tongue as it has an immediate outcome on her wedded life. A boisterous mouthed and harsh talking lady is detested more when contrasted with a whore. Another Punjabi proverb has stressed the importance of performance for a perfect wife, "*Bud shakli howay, bad amli na howay*" An ugly wife is acceptable but not a bad performer" (p. 32).

**iv. *Chupp chapiti kum sa'nwarey* (p. 55).**

The quiet woman performs effectively.

***Cultureme:*** Women's talk (-) silence (+) ***Advice:*** Women should remain quiet.

This proverb advises a woman by making a connection between quietness and efficient execution of domestic duties. It again demoralizes the garrulous one as this characteristic will hamper her efficacy in a negative sense.

**v. *Husni ghar wasni* (p. 386).**

A cheerful lady makes a happy marriage.

***Cultureme:*** Women's talk (-) Silence/smile (+) ***Advice:*** Be cheerful.

The cheerful nature of a girl will make her successful in her marriage. However, she should restrict her cheerfulness to the presence of her husband as any other male may take it as a sign of permission to flirt with her. Her silent but cheerfully pleasant nature would help her win the pleasure of her husband as well as his family, which is the ultimate goal set for her by the Punjabi speech community. Another Punjabi proverb has reinforced the idea '*Gher howey wassan nu, tay merd howey hassan nu*' (There should be a house to settle in and a husband to laugh with) (p. 122). The point is to note that the laughing of a girl with other men, especially outsiders, has been perceived as a sign of moral vulnerability as in '*hassi tay phassi*' (The laughing girl is trapped) (p. 222).

**vi. *Bohtyo'n hassyo'n noo'nh gayi, gher gher phir di dhi gayi* (p. 27).**

The excessive laugh ruined the bride/wife, the excessive socialization spoilt the daughter.

**Cultureme:** Women's talk (-) **Advice:** Avoid excessive wandering as well as smiling (in front of strangers)!

The proverb explicitly mentions two actions by women, which may cause their destruction. Overindulgence in the outing and ever-smiling face may become hazardous for them as they may get trapped by the ill-willed men.

**vii. *Chor nu marey khansi, naar nu marey hansi* (p. 77).**

A thief is caught due to his cough, a girl is trapped due to her smile.

**Cultureme:** Woman's smile (-) **Advice:** Avoid smiling in front of stranger males.

The context and the nature of her relationship with the listeners interpret the smile of a woman. A girl's soft and smiling image/demeanor would cause danger to her honor, so she should remain aloof and reserved in the presence of out of family males. Another Punjabi proverb equates two negatively perceived women, '*Noonh kehri jehri gher gher sutti, dheeh kehri jehri khirr khirr hassi*' (p. 363) (The bride who sleeps at others' places and the daughter who laughs too often, both are destroyed).

**viii. *Mu'nh di kooli gula'n patawey* (p. 234).**

A soft-spoken lady's cheeks will be pulled/pinched.

**Cultureme:** Woman's soft speech (-) **Advice:** Women should not speak softly with strangers.

A piece of indirect advice is imparted in this proverb to again warn women/girls about talking pleasantly with the stranger men. This soft speech would encourage them to take undue advantage and liberties with her and indulge in physical advancements. So it is better to remain reserved outside the home. A Sindhi proverb has reinforced a similar notion "A mild faced woman has her cheeks pulled" (Gajumal, 1985, p. 45). Two other Punjabi proverbs have discouraged women's smiling faces by 'hassi tay phassi' (p. 223) (She smiled, got trapped); 'gher gher phirdi noonh gai, bohtyon hassyon dheer gai' (p. 167) (The bride got spoiled due to her wandering nature; the daughter got spoiled due to her over-smiling nature).

**ix. Soch karey so sugharr naar, kar sochey so koorr (p. 251).**

A wise girl thinks before uttering words, while an artless lady would think afterward.

**Cultureme:** Women's talk (-) **Advice:** Women should think before they speak.

This caution to contemplate is not only present in general Punjabi proverbs targeting both men and women. However, it also reinforces women to be highly careful before they interact. A woman who practices thinking before giving voice to her thoughts is termed as 'sugharr,' which means an artful and talented lady who knows how to manage her home in an appreciable manner. On the other hand, a lady not thinking before uttering words is termed as 'koorr,' which means an artless lady who remains unable to manage herself and her home well. 'Think before you speak,' which is a piece of impartial advice in many linguo-cultures including Malay, Japanese, Chinese, Korea, has been used exclusively for a Punjabi female to lure her toward contemplation and to avoid spontaneous responses.

**x. Khasma'n nal brabari, mu'nh mu'nh chota'n khayiye (5, p. 173).**

(The wife who answers her husband in the same coin will have to face humiliation.)

**Cultureme:** Woman's talk (-) **Advice:** A woman should not answer back to her husband.

This proverb is used for a woman who refuses to pocket an insult silently and tries to combat through a verbal assault. Such a woman is warned through this proverb to avoid equating her husband as it will ultimately ruin her life. It is a sanctioning proverb for wives who answer back their husbands in the same tone and manner. It is used to make them realize

that they do not have equal status with their husbands, and their lower status demands submission and forbearance. *Khasmay ker kay brabri, phir gairan der pai* (p. 192) (The lady who considers herself equal to her husband would lose her honor). For this very reason, another Punjabi proverb advises a daughter about the verbal scuffles with her husband to be avoided. “*Dhiye sarey jug naal larreen, khasam naal na lareen*” (p. 207) (O daughter! Fight with the whole world but not with your husband). Another proverb has disapproved a garrulous woman: “*Bura roz da pundh (safar), bura jungle da wasa (rehna), buri kapatti naar, bura moorakh da haasa*” (p. 81) (It is terrible to travel daily, to live in the jungle, to have a quarrelsome wife and the laughing of a foolish person). “*Ithan Runn day sir te pug ay*” (p. 38) (Here the turban is on the head of a woman); “*Os pind day hudd na wassiye, jithay aurat howay muqadmani*” (p. 44) (Do not settle near a village where the leader is a woman).

**xi. *Run pai rahay oh vi gai, runn pai salahy oh vi gai* (p. 135).**

The wife who keeps wandering would be lost, the wife who keeps asking for suggestions would be lost too.

**Cultureme:** Women’s talk (-) **Advice:** A woman should not consult other women.

Generally, women are not confident about their own critical and rational ability, so they keep asking for suggestions from other women. It mostly leads to deviations from the norms and acceptable traits.

**xii. *Gulee’n lagi te aata kuttya’n khada* (p. 308).**

The wife indulged in gossip, the dog ate her flour.

**Cultureme:** Women’s talk (-) **Advice:** Women should not indulge in gossip.

A talkative wife is believed to be a wastage of food. A direct link is being created between the talkative nature of women and the successful completion of her tasks using this metaphorical proverb. The dog would eat the lady’s flour, who would be negligent of her duties due to overindulgence in gossip. Animal image of dog has been employed to

communicate the despicable connotations attached with women's talk in the Punjabi speech community.

**xiii. *Gula'n walo'n mai'n vaddi, aqlo'n vaddi jathani* (p. 308).**

I am elder in talking, while my sister-in-law is elder in her wisdom.

***Cultureme:*** Women's talk (-) ***Advice:*** Women should not talk much.

The concept of 'talk versus wisdom' has been delineated in this proverb with negative connotations for a talkative woman while positive connotations with the wise (silent) one. It is used to discourage much talking of the bride of one son and encourage the wise silence of the elder son's wife.

**xiv. *Gula'n walo'n mai'n vaddi, kurtoota'n vaddi jathani* (p. 308).**

In the talk, I excel; at work, my sister-in-law does.

***Cultureme:*** Women's talk (-) ***Advice:*** Women should not talk much.

This proverb is also reinforcing the preference given to actual performance over empty talk and gossip. It is used to criticize a talkative woman who does not take an interest in the household, and her sister-in-law (wife of the brother-in-law) has to do all the chores. The purpose is to make the chattering one realize her negligence and sanction her for this deviation. Another Punjabi proverb "*Runn wehli, choseli*" (p. 134) admonishes a woman who remains free and is fond of eating without being involved in the cooking.

**xv. *Mei'n kachajji, merey bol sachajay* (p. 353).**

I am not talented, but my talk is very efficient.

***Cultureme:*** Women's talk (-) ***Advice:*** A woman's action is preferable over talk.

**xvi. *Kum di kohrri, mun'h di sajjar* (p. 444).**

Inefficient in execution, dynamic in the talk.

***Cultureme:*** Women's talk (-) ***Advice:*** A woman's performance should be preferred over her talk.



These proverb entries at xv and xvi are utilized for a woman who does not check out the domestic chores; however, she indulges in talk and tattle as often as possible. It very well may be utilized to verbally authorize and censure a work-shirker woman/spouse/lady. “*Khan peen noo changi bhali, raam jappan noo goongi*” (p. 298) (To eat, she is fit but dumb to utter the name of Ram); “*Wehli run, prohnya ’n jogi*” (p. 377) (A free wife is to entertain guests); “*Wehli runn shetan da charkha*” (p. 78) (A free wife is a satanic machine). A wife should remain busy in the household. It is used to comment on a woman who does not take care of the household properly and gossip with every visitor, so the husband uses this proverb as a taunt.

**xvii. *Jey shoh akhey phitte mu’nh ta’n mai’n jivi* (p. 158).**

If my husband rebukes me, I get a new life.

***Cultureme:*** Men talk (+) ***Advice:*** A woman should pocket an insult from her husband with an open heart.

A demeaning image has been created in this proverb presenting the harsh words used by the husband as a tonic for his wife. It performs a double function: encouraging the husband to be rude to his wife to affirm his masculine control and neutralize such condemnation as something logical, rightful, and invigorating for the wife. It is utilized for a woman who has given up on her significant other’s verbal animosity by taking it as a symbol of his male power. Internalization of highly demeaning attitude is reinforced in this proverb, and it is a sign of patriarchal tendencies of the Punjabi culture. A Sindhi proverb has also delineated a similar notion with a bit different perspective “*A good wife is delighted with even an insulting gesture*” (Gajumal, 1985, p. 34). Another Punjabi proverb emphasizes the husband’s pleasure as the ultimate goal for a wife to achieve in her married life: “*jay shoh bhaway, khullay waal galay wich paway*” (If the husband likes it, the wife should keep her hair open hanging on her shoulders).

**xviii. *Kothey te charrh bhokdi, run saarey lok di* (p. 292).**

The lady who makes a noise on the roof is the wife of the whole world.

***Cultureme:*** Women’s talk (-) ***Advice:*** A woman should not talk loudly.

The women are expected to keep the domestic matters in their hearts and not to share with outsiders. This proverb is used to taunt a woman who does not practice this norm of keeping the insults to herself and instead keeps sharing it with the world. It is also used to rebuke a woman who speaks in a loud voice that even outsiders can listen to her.

**xix. *dhiyye gul sun, noonhe'n kunn kar* (p. 55).**

O daughter! Listen. O bride! Be attentive.

**Cultureme:** Direct talk (-) **Advice:** Talk indirectly if a mother-in-law has to criticize her daughter-in-law!

This proverb is used when the mother-in-law has to admonish her daughter-in-law to make her realize some negligence. She does not talk to her directly; instead talks to her daughter in the presence of her daughter-in-law. The bride is expected to understand that she is the actual audience of the message instead of her sister-in-law.

**xx. *Kehwa'n dhi nu, sunawa'n noo'nh nu* (p. 176).**

To ask daughter, to make daughter-in-law listen.

**Cultureme:** Direct talk (-) **Advice:** Talk indirectly if a mother-in-law has to criticize her daughter-in-law.

This proverb reinforces the Punjabi norm to talk indirectly instead of damaging the face of delicate relations and avoiding creating domestic conflict. A Sindhi proverb has mentioned this strategy of indirectness in “Strike the daughter, and the daughter-in-law will learn” (Gajumal, 1985, p. 45). The Chinese proverb has explicated the possible reason for this indirectness, “*One example sets many aright*” (Stone, 2006, p. 87).

**xxi. *Mar ager koot ager derti nai, meri niklee zaban barrey berrti nai* (p. 287).**

Regardless of your beating me, I would not be apprehensive; once my tongue is out, it cannot recover itself.

**Cultureme:** Talkative woman (-) **Advice:** A woman should not protest verbally in response to her husband's physical aggression.

It is utilized to censure when a lady does not quit contending with her better half even after confronting physical and verbal animosity. *Meri jeebh ay bey ikhtyari* (p. 352) (My

tongue is not in my control) is used for a woman who keeps talking instead of warnings to apply restraint. Violence and talk: This is the most frequent pretext and reason for domestic violence, such as wife-beating. A Pakhtu proverb, quoted by Sanauddin (2015), mainly used in this sense, delineates “*When the tongue goes on talking, the forehead goes on beaten up*” (p. 177), which means that when a woman argues with men, she is bound to be beaten up.

**xxii. *Jithay runn ikk, othay gulla’n di sikk***

Where there is one woman, there would be a lack of talk;

***Jithay runna’n do, they galla’n di khusbho***

Where there are two women, there will be a fragrance of conversation;

***Jithay ranna’n Trey, othay hai o hai***

Where there are three women, it’s time to worry;

***Jithay ranna’n char, othay galla’n dee ghumkar***

Where there are four women, there will be much talk;

***Jithay ranna’n punj othay sunwei’n sunj*** (p. 166)

Where there are five women, there would be no work done.

***Cultureme:*** Women’s talk (-) ***Advice:*** Women should not talk much.

The above-mentioned five-tier proverb connects the type of talk delivered and the number of ladies engaged within a conversation. As the number of female participants increases, so does the aimlessness, uproar, and laziness. The last segment of this five-tier proverb is once again reinforcing the importance of household chores and their affected quality when a woman indulges in gossip with other women.

**xxiii. *Jinhy laya gulee’n, ohdai naal tur challi*** (p. 169).

The woman is vulnerable to the gossiping person.

***Cultureme:*** Women’s talk (-) ***Advice:*** Do not involve in gossip

It is used for a woman who starts having faith in each discussion of a loquacious individual and performs as advised and even remains ready to go with that person. Blind followers among women have been targeted in this proverb who do not verify the gossip or words of mongering.

**xxiv. *Itni koo'n jaan, 100 gazz di zaban* (p. 248).**

Tiny in height, having 100-meter long tongue.

***Cultureme:*** Women's talk (-) ***Advice:*** A girl should avoid loquacity.

It is used for a woman of short height who uses her tongue loquaciously. Another proverb mentions the talkative nature of women, *Moon'h lai doomni, gaway aal pataaal* (p. 412) (When a low-class woman is given some attention, she beats about the bush). The man is advised not to give so much space to a woman as she would take advantage of this permission by misusing it according to her imperfect rationality.

**xxv. *Rundi di jibh derh gaz bhar di hundi ae* (p. 329).**

A widow's tongue is one and half meter long.

***Cultureme:*** Widows are talkative. (-) ***Advice:*** Do not talk much.

A woman, whose husband is no more alive, does not bother, and no one is there to castigate her for the improper use of the tongue. People are advised to take care of their self-esteem when they interact with a widow. '*Rundi*' is also used for a prostitute in the Punjabi language, but it denotes a widow in this proverb. Two proverbs from Uganda also convey a similar notion "*A widow never fails to praise her dead husband*"; "*In the presence of her new husband, she will say: "He gave me so many things, clothes and so on"* (Schipper, 1991, p. 33).

**xxvi. *Sokan noo'n sau (100) kun* (p. 255).**

The co-wife has 100 ears.

***Cultureme:*** Women's talk (-) ***Advice:*** Be vigilant in the presence of a co-wife while talking!

The wife is always curious to know and notes the bad points of her co-wife in extreme jealousy. This proverb advises a lady to be cautious in the presence of a co-wife and should not be careless about this matter as she will not let go of any chance to create a scene against her.

**xxvii. *Paen koka'n, mehnay apnay dewey loka'n* (p. 67).**

A lady blaming others with her own faults.

***Cultureme:*** Women's talk (-) ***Advice:*** Women should not blame others for their own shortcomings.

Women involve in backbiting and fault finding. This proverb is used to make a taunt on a woman who avoids taking responsibility for her misdoings and talks of others' faults frankly and open-heartedly.

### **Men and Talk**

**xxviii. *Marad da bolya te fajar da gerjya berth na jaey* (p. 245).**

The roaring cloud of the first light and the words uttered by a man do not go squandered.

***Cultureme:*** Men talk (+) ***Advice:*** Take men's talk seriously as men always talk sense.

The speech of a man has been given high value in this proverb by making a similarity with the morning cloud, which at last outcomes in a downpour so will the discussion of a man be productive ultimately.

**xxix. *Marad di gul te gaddi da pahiya agay noo'n jande nei'n* (1 p. 289).**

Men's words and the tire of a vehicle consistently move ahead.

***Cultureme:*** Men's talk (+) ***Advice:*** Men talk sense, so believe in them

This is another proverb strengthening the significance appended to a man's words in the Punjabi society and guaranteeing the positive results of a man's interpretation.

**xxx. *Mu'nh te kehway taan marad munno* (3, p. 415).**

Think of him as a genuine Man who speaks truth in front of an influential person.

**Cultureme:** Men's talk (+) **Advice:** Respect a man's straight talk

A genuine man will not avoid telling the reality before the guilty party. He does not indulge in manipulation through slandering. A point to be noted here is the stress on indirect talk in several Punjabi culturemes. However, when it comes to gender orientation, a real man is expected to be direct and straightforward, while women are believed to use indirectness as a strategy.

**xxxii. Runna'n nal matha laway taa'n kunna'n di khair manavay (5, p. 166).**

When a man indulges in a verbal fight with women, he should take care of his ears/listening.

**Cultureme:** Women's talk (-) **Advice:** Men should avoid arguing with women.

Men are exhorted in this proverb to abstain from involving in contention with ladies as they would, at last, drain him through their futile verbal shower.

**xxxiii. Zaal day mureed da dalcha kharaab (p. 124).**

The follower of his wife would face humiliation in the long run.

**Cultureme:** Following wife (-) **Advice:** Do not follow your wife.

**xxxiiii. Zaal day mureed da mu'nh sharminda (p. 124).**

The follower of his wife has a humiliated face.

**Cultureme:** Following wife (-) **Advice:** Do not follow your wife.

**xxxv. Jehrra run di munnay oh khawar honda ay (p. 169).**

The man who consents to his wife must be embarrassed.

**Cultureme:** Following wife (-) **Advice:** Do not follow your wife.

In the entries xxxii, xxxiii, and xxxiv, the man is unequivocally exhorted not to tune in to the exhortation offered by his lady as she is mentally unequipped for rendering some functional suggestion or advice. The man who listens to his wife will confront the negative results as a risk to his social eminence. The proverbs communicate similar messages that

refrain men from following the rationale and proposals offered by any woman, particularly their spouses.

**xxxv. *Runna vich baho te runno akhwaey* (p. 45).**

Sit among women and be called womanish.

***Cultureme:*** Men's talk with women (-) ***Advice:*** Do not mix up with women!

This proverb voices the Punjabi people's patriarchal mindset that men should maintain a distance from the women of their families. Otherwise, they may absorb and internalize womanish habits and characteristics.

**xxxvi. *Qoul harun jawana'n da kum nai* (p. 274).**

Real men do not back out.

***Cultureme:*** Men's talk (+) ***Advice:*** Take a man's word seriously as he fulfills his promises.

This proverb is utilized to remind men that their 'manhood' is legitimately connected with the consistency of their words. A man who does not respect his words is socially loathed and considered lacking some masculine quality.

**xxxvii. *janani nu bhait na dey* (p. 73).**

Do not reveal your secret data to a woman/wife.

***Cultureme:*** Women's talk ***Advice:*** Do not share your secret with your wife!

It is immediate guidance to men not to impart their classified data to any woman as she is naturally unequipped for guarding a mystery. She would eventually impart that to some other individuals as it keeps her stomach upset until she regurgitates it.

**xxxviii. *Sapahi nal yari na la, run noo'n bhait na day, te dar te beyri nah uga* (p. 233).**

Do not be friends with a policeman, do not share your secret with your wife, do not grow a berry tree in front of your door.

***Cultureme:*** Women's talk (-) ***Advice:*** Do not share your secret with your wife.

Women are discursively represented as weak-willed and dim-witted, so they are resultantly unable to keep a secret intact and would share with at least one other woman. The proverb forbids the husbands to take care of their confidential matters while disclosing them in front of their women/wives. Another Punjabi proverb has represented wives as selfish creatures to endorse this notion of unreliability, “*Apna kumm keeta tay khasam nu khaey jameeta*” (p. 33) (I have taken the benefit, now the husband may be eaten by the monster). The wife has been presented as a selfish person who keeps her relation intact, just for her personal gains and benefits.

**xxxix. *Chup chapeeta putt munda, chitte wali dhi, phirney wali noo’nh mandi, ehnu wala mee’nh* (p. 171).**

A silent son, a daughter with romantic aptitude, wandering bride, the hailing rain: all are not good to have.

***Cultureme:*** Men’s talk (+) ***Advice:*** Men should talk.

This is used to indicate the negative connotations attached to the silence of a male member and is bracketed with a flirtatious daughter, a wandering bride, and the hailing rain. The men are presented as the custodians of wisdom and communication, so the community does not easily digest a silent male member.

**xl. *Marad bate, kutta rate, ghorra sate* (p. 338).**

Man should value his words, the dog should be vigilant at night, and the horse should run fast.

***Cultureme:*** Men’s talk (+) ***Advice:*** Men should fulfill their promises.

The three appropriate functions attached to different figures have been mentioned in this proverb. Men are to talk and take challenges and give their verdict through fair words. Unlike women, they are expected to voice their opinions and perspectives in a loud and audible voice, which would affirm their manliness.



**xli. *Lai lag na hovay gher wala, te chandra gwandh na hovay (p. 212).***

The husband should not be a blind believer in everything told, and the neighbor should not be mean.

**Cultureme:** Believing in women's words (-) **Advice:** A husband should not believe in every word uttered to him.

Two conditions of an unhappy and disturbed life are mentioned in this proverb. When a husband is in the habit of believing in everything said to him without verifying, it ultimately goes against his wife. Likewise, the person living in the neighborhood should be generous and cheerful; otherwise, he would keep creating a nuisance on everyday matters.

**xlii. *Khasma'n diya'n sawariya'n, kadi na dendiya'n waariya'n (p. 189).***

A wife who rides her husband never let him speak.

**Cultureme:** Women's talk (-) Men talk (+) **Advice:** Do not interrupt a man.

The Punjabi culture strictly follows the hierarchy of high/low status, even between a married couple. The husband is given a superior status, so he enjoys the right of freedom of speech too. A wife who does not take care of this status is rebuked in this proverb. She is strictly advised not to equate her husband.

**xliii. *Chudd runa'n di dosti, khuree'n jinha'n di mutt, hass hass landiya'n yaria'n, ro ro dendiya'n dus***

(Do not be friends with women, they would befriend you through smiles and would disclose this to their family members with tears.)

**Cultureme:** Women's talk (-) **Advice:** Do not trust a woman.

This proverb is used to warn men about the presumed unreliable nature of women and the deleterious effects of having a friendship with them. They would become friends with strangers in a pleasant mood, but later on, being caught by some male family members would never stand by their commitment and would blame the men as some flirt.

### Explanation of Punjabi Proverbs about Gender and Talk

While taking into account gender and speech-based proverbs, a profoundly different attitude can be observed regarding male and female speakers. A woman's speech has been termed as useless and weightless, whereas a male's assertions are ascribed sense and logic. Additionally, the wives' careless use of the tongue has been mentioned as the chief cause of problems in their marital life. At the same time, her cheerfulness may help her make a successful marriage. Surprisingly, the serious and humorous discourses have constructed the Punjabi wives' image as some dangerous, selfish, and unreliable persons (Khan, Mustafa, and Ali, 2017; Khan, Aziz, and Hussain, 2018). Silence in women is appreciated as a positive trait as it ensures submission and reticence. A quiet lady is considered an efficient manager of the household as compared to the talkative one. As she talks most of the time, her brain does not work correctly, and she becomes easily vulnerable and trapped by the guiles of crooked women and coquettish men. The woman who thinks before doing or saying something is appreciated while the impulsive talker is depreciated. Women are explicitly advised to restrict their soft speech as well as their cheerfulness to their family members and especially husbands. Otherwise, their joviality may be misinterpreted by the males as a welcoming sign for dalliance.

On the other hand, men's talk has been eulogized and glorified to be an essential trait of their manliness. A male's talk is of a high value, meaningful, productive, and futuristic compared to a female's talk. Certain Punjabi proverbs centered on menfolk may be quoted here to understand the patriarchal tendencies behind such preference for male discourses and subjugating female voices, *Merd da waar khalis nhi janda* (A man's target is never missed: both verbal and physical); *Merdan diyan door baleen, tinwiyan noo khaen blaen* (May men be blessed and protected, may women be accrued); *Merdmitti da vee nhi maan* (A man of clay is also valuable) (Khan, Mustafa, & Ali, 2017, p. 92). Additionally, men are believed to be the owner of their words who knows how to honor them. Their straightforwardness is encouraged and attached to their being courageous and brave countenance. Men are explicitly advised not to follow the advice/suggestion offered by their wives as they cannot render any helpful advice. Any man who violates this forbidden act would have to face negative consequences and humiliation. Silence in men is considered a shameful act and

hence discouraged. They are expected to use their vocal ability to assert themselves and achieve high goals with the help of their strong communicative ability. Men are further advised not to share any confidential information with their wives as they are incapable of holding themselves from sharing with other women or men. Another instruction is imparted regarding making friends with women as they cannot keep anything to themselves. Confrontation with the softer gender is also dispirited as it would keep them engaged in a useless dispute without a meaningful outcome. Men should also not believe in every word proclaimed to them, but should verify and judge objectively instead of becoming partisan. Hence, men's talk has been delineated as rational, productive, futuristic, and a symbol of valor, while their silence is discouraged as a sign of timidity and diffidence.

### **Discussion on Talk and Gender in the Yoruba and Punjabi Proverbs**

Along with the Linguo-Cultural Approach, this sub-theme has taken additional theoretical support from Feminist Critical Discourse analysis (Lazar, 2005). The focal goal of FCD Analysts is evaluating texts and talk, which continue a patriarchal social set up – power relations that deliberately benefit men as a social group, and avoid, disadvantage, and undermine women as another social group. In CDA, where there is a comprehension of social practices as reflected in as well as established by discursive practices (Fairclough, 1992), a feminist viewpoint reminds us that many social practices, far from being unbiased, are in actuality gendered similarly. An FCDA is aimed ultimately at effecting social transformation. Discourse analysis shows up that the systematic sustenance of oppressive social relations is itself a type of ‘analytical resistance’ and adds to progressing battles of contestation and amendment. The struggle is against a status quo in favor of a just social setup where gender does not determine the sense of our identity and our relations with others (Grant, 1993; Hill-Collins, 1990). Mobilization of the theory is the main agenda of radical emancipatory FCDA to make essential mindfulness and create feminist systems for defiance and change. Viewed critically, ideologies portray practices shaped from specific points of view in light of a legitimate concern for keeping up inconsistent power relations and strength.

A significant objective for FCDA is to embrace unforeseen examinations of the persecution of females, as Rubin has put it, in its “endless variety and monotonous similarity” (Lazar, 2008, p. 35). From a feminist point of view, the overarching origination of

gender is comprehended as an ideological structure that partitions individuals into two classes, women and men, in light of a hierarchic connection of control and subjection. Gender ideology is domineering in that it frequently does not show up as control by any stretch of the imagination, showing up instead as, to a great extent, consensual and worthy to most in a speech community. The triumph of assent and the propagation of the generally dubious connection of strength (Gramsci, 1971) are achieved through desultory methods, particularly in the manners in which ideological presumptions are continually re-sanctioned and circled through the talk as commonsensical and natural. The taken-for-grantedness and regularity of such information is the thing that perplexes or darkens the power differential and disparity at work.

Such interminable assortment and tedious similitude about gender-biased ideology found in the linguo-cultures of the Punjabi and Yoruba speech communities have been analyzed through the culturematic analysis (Petrova, 2016, 2019) of each proverb found in the respective themes. Applying the Linguo-Cultural Approach to the Punjabi and African proverbs centered on gender and talk has revealed that both cultures have strong patriarchal tendencies in ascribing positive traits to men and negative stereotypes to women. The Punjabi data seemed to portray a strong inclination toward glorifying men's talk and depreciating women's talk. Women have been represented as having a low level of intellect. Their talk has been perceived as a product of their faulty intellect, which deserves no serious consideration from men. Women have been represented as extremely talkative beings whose tongues work more efficiently than their brains or hands. Their talk has been indirectly compared with the hen's clucking for which the researcher has noted an Urdu variant quoted by Siddiqui (2013) with a similar message "*Murghiki bang kon suntan hay?*" and "*Whoever listens to a hen clucking? Whoever can rely on a woman's opinion?*" (p. 83).

The use of her tongue by a woman is directly associated with the success or failure of her marriage. It is time and again mentioned in proverbs that a talkative woman neglects her household duties, so a silent one is preferred. She remains focused on her household instead of useless chit-chat. Furthermore, a bad-tongued woman is depreciated compared to a morally corrupt one for not making a happy marriage. Schipper (2010) also quotes a Chinese proverb delineating a parallel connection of wife's talk and misfortunes: "*A wife's long tongue is the flight of steps by which misfortune comes to the home*" ( p. 122). Another

proverb from Kashmiri origin reinforces a similar idea about a woman's talk "*It is better to eat food served by a woman with many lice on her head, rather than by a talkative woman*" (Stone, 2006, p. 89). A woman who will answer back her husband will pave the way toward being scorned by the husband, family, and the community. This is the most frequent pretext and reason for domestic violence, such as wife-beating. A Pashtu proverb is used in this sense, "*When the tongue goes on talking, the forehead goes on beaten up,*" which means that when a woman argues with her man, she is bound to be beaten up (Sanauddin, 2015, p. 134). A Swahili proverb also gives voice to a similar wish of African communities to keep their wives subjugated in the domains of communication as well as performance, "*The mouth of a wife should not overpower that of her husband*" (Schipper, 2010, p. 55). A woman is explicitly advised to remain quiet and smile as a gesture of cheerfulness and unconditional acceptance of all the environmental conditions imposed upon her by her husband and her in-laws. Additionally, women are encouraged to bear the verbal rebukes of their husbands with a pleasant countenance and discouraged from equating themselves with them while arguing.

Furthermore, the Punjabi corpus' culturematic analysis reveals that the Punjabi women are expected to keep their interactions limited to the in-family members. A woman, who is in the habit of talking cheerfully with strangers, will have to face emotional and physical advancements. There are high chances of her vulnerability in such situations, which can only be avoided if she remains reserved a priori. The contemplative woman is applauded while the precipitous one is despised. Vatuk (1982) has observed that "among Muslims of South Asia, women are expected to —observe avoidance of loud speech and laughter and the limitation of conversation with non-family males to necessary work topics" (p. 70). Sanauddin (2015) has contended that women and younger men in Pashtun culture (the same is true of the Punjabi culture) are not supposed to argue with men. Even to talk aloud in front of older men is considered an insult. "*The more you talk to women, the more you lose your authority over them*" (p. 142). Hence, to be a good Punjabi woman, proverbs indicate (men's wish) that women should talk slowly and talk less.

On the other hand, men's talk has been eulogized and men are encouraged to speak, and the silence of a man is perceived in suspicious terms. Men's talk is not only perceived and presented as productive but also futuristic. Men are explicitly presented as beings who value their 'words' as promises and would go to any length to abide by their commitments. A

similar notion about men's talk has been quoted by Stone (2006) "*A man's word is his bond*" (Spanish); "*Among men of honor, a word is a bond*" (Italian) (p. 482) "*A man's word is his honor*" (Danish) (p. 344). These proverbs indicate the presence of astoundingly similar thought patterns about men and women's talk in diverse cross-linguistic and cross-cultural contexts. When it comes to women, men are incessantly advised not to listen to their wives' opinions or act upon any of their suggestions. Schipper (2003) quotes a Bengali proverb rendering a piece of similar advice: "*Do not believe in the roots of yams, muddied water, and woman's word*" (p. 135). Additionally, men are advised in the Punjabi proverbs not to be involved in a verbal scuffle with women as it is below their dignity.

When it comes to the Yoruba proverbs focusing on gender and talk, some similar and more diverse insights have come to focus. Women have been represented as loquacious people who are unable to control their tongues. They simply lack an Adam's apple and can maintain only 'vicious secrecy' when it is the time to conceal some of their moral laxities. Therefore, men are advised, just like the Punjabi proverbs, not to share their secrets and confidential information with their wives. A Pashto proverb can be quoted to voice the idea behind every advice not to share any secret with a woman, "*When you tell your secrets to a woman, why not tell it to a drummer*" (Sanauddin, 2015, p. 129). Moreover, women's talk has been believed to be insincere, and their claims to be false. Women have imperfect intellect, so they should not be exposed to the full details of anything. Men are also advised not to listen to their words but to observe their actions and performance. Gasanova, Magomedova, and Gasanova (2016) also report negative evaluations about women's talk in proverbs from Dagestan languages, "*Woman's tongue is her enemy*" and "*A gossip woman's tongue is a stairway bringing misery in her home*" (p. 1178). Just like the Punjabi proverbs, the Yoruba proverbs are also proscribing the feminine consultation in serious matters.

The findings of the Punjabi and Yoruba proverbs have verified the presence of patriarchal tendencies and gender bias prevailing in the overall Pakistani and Nigerian cultures, which are also identified by Sanauddin (2015) in his study of Pashtu proverbs and Yusuf (2013) on Yoruba proverbs. Sanauddin argues that men's independence also means their ability to be independent in decision making. Men are advised against listening to women's advice, "*Ruined is the man who listens to the advice of women*" (p. 121). Acting on

women's advice would mean man's dependency on women whose "*vision does not travel beyond the end of the village*" (p. 122). Even talking to women and becoming frank with women is considered un-manly. These proverbs from the Pashto community communicated the exact Punjabi ideology about gender and talk. The ideal Punjabi women, just like Pashtun women, are expected to be silent observers with no agency of their own. These proverbs represent the virtue of ideal femininity; women must remain silent and quiet. Some feminist scholars have observed that "the historic absence of women's voices from public life indicates that —gender relations are created ...through different patterns of speaking and contrasting possibilities of expression for men and women" (Gal, 1991, p. 175). A Kashmiri proverb voices an equally cherished idea about a girl's silence when she is asked about a proposal, "A grown-up girl's silence means her willingness" (Stone, 2006, 138). According to Gal (1991, p. 175), "those who are denied speech cannot make their expression known and thus cannot influence the course of their lives." Most cultures have specified rules governing men and women's speech demeanor. The English expression summarizes this rule: "Maidens must be mild and meek, swift to hear and slow to speak" (Stoianova, 2001, p. 138).

An FCDA based investigation of covert and overt connections of gender, discrimination and control, critically explored the gender disparity as it is communicated, constructed, and legitimized. The proverbs from both languages have provided evidence of the prevalence of the image that women are 'talkative,' 'brainless,' 'gossipy,' 'unreliable,' and 'liars' while the Punjabi proverbs have yielded a significant number of culturemes eulogizing men's talk and unchallenged support to encourage them. Kreschen (1998), while quoting proverbs about the secret-keeping inability of women, discusses the possible reasons behind the surprisingly universal advice to stop sharing secrets to women and argued that the women's chattering is bound to lead to gossip. Women do indeed have a reputation for being terrible gossips ("*Wherever there is a woman, there is gossip*") (p. 127). Despite this proverb, modern research has shown men to be the worse gossips (One proverb concedes: "*Men gossip as much as women do, but not so meanly*") (Schipper, 2010, p. 146). Related to gossip is the inability to keep a secret. Furthermore, just like the Yoruba and Punjabi proverbs, a Luganda proverb reported by Kiyimba (2005) has also been exposed, "*Whoever confides in a beautiful one, tells many*" (p. 261). This proverb accuses all beautiful women of promiscuity. The warning is that if you tell your secret to a beautiful woman, you have told

many people because it is considered regular practice for such women to have several lovers, so the secrets told by one are shared with all.

Both Nigerian and Punjabi corpora reinforce the bias found globally about women's speech habits, while men have been presented as logical beings whose talk can never be untruthful or insignificant. Schipper (2010) has concluded about the volubility of women "Being physically the weaker sex, women have strongly developed their verbal talent, and proverbs warn against the dangers of this female quality" (p. 87). Another Yoruba proverb has encouraged men to decipher her non-verbal gestures to decide about the level of commitment instead of relying on her words. A Punjabi proverb explicitly termed women's talk as insignificant by employing the metaphor of 'hen' as its cluck can never be meaningful. On the other hand, the 'cock' metaphor is employed to denote the meaningfulness attached to the male discourse. Agyekum (2002) quotes an Akan proverb "*the hen knows that it is dawn, but it looks up to the mouth of the rooster to crow*" (p. 41). This proverb implies that talking should be done by the male (rooster). Reticence on the part of women is highly admired, and garrulous women usually are reproached. Schipper (2010) has quoted a Vietnamese proverb that has expressed the perceived difference between the female and the male mouth: "*A man with a big mouth is elegant; a woman with a big mouth is bad for the neighbors*" (p. 87). The same attribute of having a big mouth is perceived and represented in totally different terms in this proverb. It mainly represents the connotations attached to the female and the male talk in both Punjabi and Yoruba proverbs.

The most frequently mentioned stereotype of women's speech in the Yoruba proverbs is the inconsistency with their intentions or actions. A woman is portrayed as insincere since her words become inconsistent with her deed. A woman cannot pray that her husband should marry another wife. No woman will ever genuinely desire to have a co-wife. If you see a woman who says her husband should marry another wife, it is not from her mind. These proverbs indicate that there exists incongruence between a woman's intention and her speech. In other words, it advises that feminine speech is not trustworthy. Her insincerity is portrayed as reaching divine proportions, as she attempts to hoodwink even the gods. The proverbs portray a woman's threat (especially to her husband) as something not to be taken seriously. Women are represented using the word 'divorce' as a weapon to blackmail and control their husbands. These proverbs have created a strong case of the inconsistency found



in women's speech, intentions, and actions, which ultimately creates an atmosphere where women should not be relied upon, trusted, and believed in any case. Each word uttered by a woman and the act performed by her would be perceived as something with a grain of doubt.

Both Yoruba and Punjabi proverbs have worded a piece of straightforward advice not to follow a woman's advice if a man wants to avoid negative consequences. Schipper (1991) quotes a Tonga proverb describing the dangers involved in listening and following a woman's word, "*He who listened to women, suffered from famine at harvest time*" (p. 61). Women are also believed and thus represented to be hypocrites and shirkers from taking responsibility for their shortcomings. The Yoruba proverb goes like "*A woman lacks character, and yet says that she is not lucky with marriage*" (Yusuf, 1994), and the Punjabi proverb expresses it in general terms "*A lady does not acclaim her faults rather imposes them on other people*" (p. 287). In both examples, a woman's speech is portrayed as an expression of either her lack of accurate self-assessment or a lack of sense of justice. In the view of our culturematic analysis, the words of Yusuf (1994) have summarized the broader picture, "Women's speech, according to Yoruba proverbs, violates the ethics of proportion, and is an unreliable index of her capabilities or intentions" and (p. 286). "Their talk is a problematic product of the extreme urge to react to situations by speaking. Her speech is seen as an expression of extreme (suicidal) foolhardiness, which violates the ethics of self-preservation" (p. 287). Her speech is literalized to portray her as insincere since her words then become inconsistent with her deeds. There is incongruence between the woman's intention and her speech. The proverbs from both languages, therefore, place a low ethical value on their speech. This implies that much premium should not be placed on women's speech since it violates the ethics of sincerity. The speech is regarded as an undependable index of her circumstances. To quote Yusuf (1994) again, "Considering these cross-cultural recommendations of verbal discretion and the equally widespread stereotype of the loquacious woman, it would seem to be suggesting that women's speech would normally violate the ethics of responsible social communication" (p. 289). Proverbs and other literary genres, such as myth or poetry, reveal how the dominant group tries to maintain the status quo employing language (Schipper, 1991). In traditional Yoruba poetry, just like genres in the Punjabi language, women are singled out for attacks. The Yoruba traditional poets, as Oyesakin (1985, p. 38) explained, reflect the male-dominant society in blaming women for

all the ills in society, and this has two interrelated aims: The first aim is to cajole women into succumbing to the subservient role the society expects them to play. It is to curb the spurious women's excesses so that they can conform to societal norms.

While discussing the perception of silence in Nigerian culture, Medubi (2010) has pointed out that women must be silent in the family and social matters, which shows the male's supremacy over women. He also comments that relationships in traditional domestic situations in Nigeria are often asymmetrical, with the husband being regarded as the superior partner irrespective of either participant's status. Hence, a man can express his anger through silence while the woman is almost always compelled to use silence when angry as a sign of respect. One of the instances of silence, which is indicative of the social relationship between men and women, occurs in family gatherings across the country. According to Umoren (2004, p. 353), "*A woman must be silent in serious family and societal discussions.*" Adetunji (2010) also argues that Nigerian women are either silent or silenced within the dominance paradigm. In most Nigerian linguistic groups, wives are not expected to speak whenever their husbands participate in a multi-participant conversation (for example, family meetings). Among the Baatonu-Baruba people of Kwara State, the woman's voice is almost 'seized' by her in-laws once she gets married. Adetunji (2010) has also identified and interpreted the silencing and marginalization of women in the naming practices of the people of Nigeria, "This translates into a regime of silence and muteness foisted on the female whose language becomes silence. With silence comes an existence on the margins or peripheries of the society. With silence also come domination, exploitation, repression and lack of expression" (p. 15).

In addition to silence, Adegbija (1989) reports that it is culturally demanded that a great deal of politeness be shown to in-laws. Their data show that a wife makes a great deal of effort not to appear rude to her parents-in-law. When severely provoked, she would talk to them indirectly. Often, silence is a potent negative politeness strategy used by the wife dealing with her in-laws. Ssetuba (2002), in his pragmatic analysis of the Yoruba proverbs, contends that women, with only a few exceptions, are to be seen but not heard at traditional assemblies because women are only seen and not heard, especially in public. The Yoruba men in Nigeria are also scared of women's clever talk: "*He who is not smart in speech and argument should not take a talkative wife*" (p. 35). Other proverbs contemptuously qualify

women as talkative, suggesting that this is an inborn female characteristic. Primary bad qualities attributed to the Yoruba women in poetry are “loose tongue, avarice, and lasciviousness” (Schipper, 1991, p. 33). A clear warning against confiding and trusting women has been issued in several proverbs from the Punjabi and Yoruba languages.

Men are explicitly advised in both linguo-cultures not to succumb to the advice given by their wives as their advice is an outcome of their faulty and imperfect intellect and vision. A man must not put too much weight in the words of a woman. Doing so may lead him into trouble later on. A Punjabi proverb has associated calamity with a female owner of the house. Chatteris-Black quotes a Hindustani proverb advising men to “*Never listen to your wife’s advice: who takes her advice has no sense*” (1995, p. 10). The Yoruba proverbs reinforce the idea that a woman’s speech has a direct correlation with her acceptance by her husband. One good turn deserves another. Politeness is often rewarded with politeness. The Punjabi proverbs have emphasized the soft speech by a wife, but exclusively for her husband. Stone (2006) reports Danish proverbs with an emphasis on sweet, but few words by women to be appreciated, “*Kind words and few are a woman’s ornament*” and “*A cheerful lady makes a perfect marriage*” (p. 122). A woman’s smile is encouraged in her husband’s presence only, otherwise smiling with the non-family members has been discouraged for fear of insinuations. A unique and frequent mention found in the Yoruba proverbs is the ‘women as liars and hypocrites.’

The Yoruba proverbs tend to use obscene language, metaphors, and themes to denigrate women in different capacities. Another disparaging portrayal of women in Yorùbá proverbs involves the association of women with promiscuity. Suspiciousness has been created by many Yoruba proverbs about the moral stability of women by implying that they by nature are unreliable. By this, they “hook up” with the best suitor in conjugal relationships. Just like Punjabi proverbs, the Yoruba corpus advises men in general terms to avoid sharing their secrets with their wives for fear of negative consequences as women lack verbal restraint. The Yoruba proverbs also forbid sharing secrets with an additional reference to women’s unfaithful and deceptive characters.

The overall impression while agreeing with Yusuf (2013) about women and speech in the Yoruba proverbs is that “the attitude of the proverbs toward women’s speech is that it is immodest” (p. 288). The proverbs studied thus seem to reiterate that women talk more, not

less. From the traditional male-biased perspective, the proverbs indicate that women's speech has a low ethical value. The speech does not, as such, constitute an ethically elevating model for communication in general. While the practical or metaphorical use of language is allowed for communication in general, women's speech is devalued in these proverbs. In other words, the standards for judging women's speech seem to be higher (and less fair) than those with which other classes of speech are evaluated. Hallsworth and Young (2008) argue in this context that the power to forbid speech presupposes the primacy of power in social relations. It is the capacity to exercise power that provides some with the ability to silence others. Silencing constitutes a social practice that can take many forms and can be good or bad depending on the context. The kinds of silencing that are coded as bad are those that are exercised to prevent free and uncoerced communication. In this sense, silence may be produced through threats, intimidation, and violence, where the aim is to make people fear the consequences of talking. Negative silencing can also be accomplished by censoring what is said or only allowing certain things to be said. It can also be produced by making speakers feel worthless and their knowledge derided. Negative silencing, however, is about more than the ability to prevent speech alone.

Quan (2015) discusses the consequences of this silencing in a hierarchical society; the one who has more opportunities to speak out is the one who has a higher social place. The people in the subordinate or lower position are deprived of the right to speak out their verdicts. In most situations, they have to keep silent. That is why Chong-Ho while discussing the Korean view of speech, quotes Chiang Tai-Kung, the famous Chinese sage, who proclaims: "A well-taught woman should have a small voice" (1985, p. 29). Women's social position is lower than men's in many cultures. Men have the right to control women. Men always order women to do something with words. Instead, women do not say anything to perform the orders.

In the Punjabi proverbs, a strong emphasis is explicitly communicated by stressing a woman's silence as a positive trait to make her a successful wife. Lebra (1987) also quotes a Japanese proverb encouraging women to remain silent, "*A woman has never spoiled anything through silence*" (p. 133). Agyekum (2002) discusses the communicative role of silence in society and argues that formal and public speaking is usually the prerogative of men. In many traditional Punjabi communicative encounters, women scarcely talk; they are only expected

to listen but not talk. In the traditional vein, most decisions were taken by men, and they affect the entire society. Sometimes, at gatherings, women have to appeal to be allowed to talk. In this context, silence is observed on the part of the women as part of the enactment of their subordinate status. Along with these same gender roles in talking, wives in Punjabi linguo-culture are to keep mute before their husbands. The Punjabi society does not admire a loquacious woman and she is referred to as ‘a woman cock’ and sometimes a ‘witch.’

An Igbo proverb from the adjacent Nigerian linguo-culture emphasizes the maintenance of silence between the husband and wife, “*Seeing and keeping silent makes it possible for husband and wife to live in peace*” (Opata, 1992, p. 202). Whether at home or in the office, the diplomacy of relationship is best illustrated here with marriage. In every relationship, the wisdom to avoid making an issue out of everything that happens eventually makes the relationship prosper. This idea also applies to a business partnership, friendship, and diplomatic relationship between nations. Another proverb from Nigeria stamps the role of a wife’s speech habits in earning love or hatred of her spouse, “*When a woman’s bad tongue earns her husband’s hatred, she should not blame him*” (p. 203). The ideal is a perfect wife who looks up to her husband with admiring eyes: silently, or at most with a few soft, sweet words, she encourages him and makes him feel secure and self-confident in the tasks he has to perform outside the home. This idea is, for example, expressed in Japanese: ‘*Encouraged by the hen, the cock tells the hour.*’ Speaking in public is a means of power and influence, and as a metaphor known worldwide, the hen and the cock have frequently been used to express the assertion that women should leave the public space for men. Communication on an equal footing between men and women is a problem: “*Among women, there is female talk; between men, male talk, but what can a man and a woman talk of?*” a Sinhalese proverb exclaims with wonder. Whenever women’s verbal talent is associated with female intelligence, the message is that it is most intelligent for women not to speak.

Kreschen (1998), in her book on American proverbs on women, argues that underlying the lack of respect is, in actuality, a fear that women indeed might have something important to say. The conversation of a woman is worth all the libraries in the world. In that case, men would have to share leadership. To prevent such a turn of events, men developed the philosophy that “*A woman has never spoiled anything with silence*” (p. 221). All this complaining about a woman’s talkativeness is a way of trying to silence them

all together: Create a myth that women talk too much and have a perfect right to tell them to shut up. Real-life shows women being told to be quiet, having their voices silenced by omission from the dialogues of power, and ignoring their needs. It is a neat trick to claim that women talk a lot while refusing to be heard. Perhaps that is why they talk so much: Keep trying, and maybe one day you will get through. Perhaps, too, it should occur in the world that if women were allowed to join where it counts, there would not be a need to verbalize their frustrations at length. The problem with this behavior is that such speech, disguised as ‘the wisdom of many, the wit of one,’ buys its wit and retribution at the expense of others. Besides the moral, there is a consequence to consider. The quick repartee may not seem to matter much at first glance, but, as pointed out many times, folklore is much more than the recording of quaint customs— the attitudes and values are perpetuated by it. As a living organism permeating human life, folklore is accepted without thought, just as any other form of propaganda. Subliminal cuts are dangerous: so short and unobtrusive that they slip into our subconscious and program our thinking without knowing the source. How often can one hear “*Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned*” before one believes that women genuinely are vicious and vindictive? Like so many faith or status quo matters, one does not question, but simply accepts that just the way it is. Women are being silenced and encouraged to communicate through non-verbal gestures such as a smile. This study recommends that rather than considering folk proverbs as factual and valuable sources of cultural expression, scholars should also pay attention to their ‘performative,’ ‘derogatory,’ and ‘declaratory’ aspects as these often relegate women (and other weaker groups) to a lesser position in society.

### **The Punjabi Cultural Scripts about Men and Talk**

[many people think like this:]

it is good for some people (men) to talk

it is not good for some people (men) to be quiet

it is not good for some people (men) to hear what some people (women) tell

**The Yoruba and Punjabi Cultural Scripts about Women and Talk**

[many people think like this:]

it is not good for some people (women) to talk more

it is good for some people (women) to be quiet

it is good for some people (women) to think first

it is more good for some people (women) to say good words for some people (men)

it is good for some people (women) to hear more what some people (men) say

it is not good for some people (women) to say bad words about some people (men)

**The Yoruba and Punjabi Cultural Scripts about Men and Talk**

it is not good for some people (men) to hear what some people (women) say

it is not good for some people (men) to talk much to some people (women)

it is not good for some people (men) to tell something to someone (women)

it is good for some people (men) not to think all true what some people (women) tell

### 4.15 Culturematic Semantic Density

This section provides a frequency-based analysis of the semantic density revealed through culturematic analysis of core concepts in the semantic domain of communication. The analysis is arranged in descending order, starting from the cultureme showing the highest semantic density.

**Table 3. Culturematic Semantic Density of the Yoruba Speech Proverbs**

	<b>Explanatory Culturemes</b>	<b>Yoruba N=110+ 34= 144</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Gender and Talk</b>	<b>N=34</b>	<b>23.61%</b>	--	--	--	--
	Female talk	26	76.47%	--	--	26	76.47%
	Male	08	23.52%	08	23.52%	--	--
	<b>Talk in General</b>	<b>N=110</b>	<b>76.38%</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Speech is Positive</b>	19	17.27%	19	17.27%	--	--
<b>3</b>	<b>Clarity</b>	13	11.81%	13	11.81%	--	--
<b>4</b>	<b>In/Direct Speech</b>	11	10.00%	08	07.27%	03	2.72%
<b>5</b>	<b>Power of Speech</b>	<b>10</b>	9.09%	--	--	--	--
	Bilateral Power	02	1.08%	02	01.08%	02	1.08%
	Negative Power	08	07.27%	--	--	08	07.27%
<b>6</b>	<b>Speech vs Action</b>	08	07.27%	--	--	08	07.27%
<b>7</b>	<b>Speech vs Silence</b>	<b>08+(11) = 19</b>	17.27%	<b>04</b>	03.63%	<b>04+(11)= 15</b>	13.63%
<b>8</b>	<b>Loquacity</b>	07	06.36%	--	--	07	06.36%
<b>9</b>	<b>Appropriation</b>	06	05.45%	06	5.45%	--	--
<b>10</b>	<b>Verbal Etiquettes</b>	06	05.45%	06	5.45%	--	--
<b>11</b>	<b>Sweet talk</b>	06	05.45%	05	4.54%	01	00.90%
<b>12</b>	<b>Irreversible Talk</b>	03	02.72%	--	--	03	02.72%
<b>13</b>	<b>Think First</b>	02	01.81%	--	--	02	01.81%



### **Explanation of Yoruba Semantic Density**

The semantic density in different explanatory culturemes from the Yoruba linguo-culture has revealed the significance attached to several notions. The highest number of culturemes are identified about 'Gender and talk' (34, 23.61%), out of which 26 (76.47% of the total proverbs on gender and talk) are focused on women's talk while only 8 (23.52%) mentioned men as their subject. Even these 23.52% have maintained their focus to advise men not to trust their woman's words. Regarding general talk (110, 76.38%), the highest semantic density is found in the proverbs, which have depicted 'speech in a positive light' (19, 17.27%). The second-highest category consists of proverbs commented on 'silence' either overtly or covertly in negative terms (15, 13.63%). However, along with proverbs portraying silence in favorable terms, it jumps to 19 (17.27%), which is the highest. For the third most dense category, proverbs emphasizing 'be unambiguous' in one's speech have yielded 13 culturemes (11.81%). The notion of 'directness' has found the fourth position in the hierarchical arrangement (11, 10%) followed by 'power of talk' (10, 9.09%), 'action vs speech' (8, 7.27%), 'loquacity,' (7, 6.36%) at fifth, sixth, and seventh positions respectively. 'Sweet talk' (6, 5.45%), 'appropriacy' (6, 5.45%), and 'verbal etiquettes' (6, 5.45%) share the eighth number unanimously. Proverbs about 'think first' are at the last position (2, 1.81%), preceded by the 'irreversible' nature of talk (3, 2.72%).

### Culturematic Semantic Density of the Punjabi Proverbs

This table presents a descending order of semantic density based on the number of culturemes found in their respective themes, signifying the importance of different notions in the Punjabi linguo-culture.

**Table 4: Culturematic Semantic Density of the Punjabi Speech Proverbs**

	<b>Explanatory Culturemes</b>	<b>Punjabi N=142+ 44= 186</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>N=44</b>	<b>23.65%</b>	--	--	--	--
	Female	27	61.36%	--	--	27	61.36%
	Male	17	38.63%	17	38.63%	--	--
	<b>Speech in General</b>	<b>N=142</b>	<b>76.34%</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Power of Speech</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>21.12%</b>	--	--	--	--
	Bilateral (+, - both)	11	07.74%	11	07.74%	11	07.74%
	Negative	19	13.38%	--	--	19	13.38%
<b>3</b>	<b>Loquacity</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>16.19%</b>	--	--	<b>23</b>	<b>16.19%</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Irreversibility, longevity</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>13.38%</b>	--	--	<b>19</b>	<b>13.38%</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Sweet Talk</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>10.56%</b>	--	--	<b>15</b>	<b>10.56%</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Speech vs Silence</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>08.45%</b>	<b>01</b>	<b>00.70%</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>07.74%</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Speech vs Action</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>07.74%</b>	--	--	<b>11</b>	<b>07.74%</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Think First</b>	<b>07</b>	<b>04.92%</b>	--	--	<b>07</b>	<b>04.92%</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>Indirect speech</b>	<b>07</b>	<b>04.92%</b>	--	--	<b>07</b>	<b>04.92%</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>Appropriation</b>	<b>07</b>	<b>04.92%</b>	<b>07</b>	<b>04.92%</b>	--	--
<b>11</b>	<b>Verbal Etiquettes</b>	<b>06</b>	<b>04.22%</b>	<b>06</b>	<b>04.22%</b>	--	--
<b>12</b>	<b>Speech is Positive</b>	<b>05</b>	<b>3.52%</b>	<b>05</b>	<b>3.52%</b>	--	--

### **Explanation of Punjabi Semantic Density**

In contrast to the Yoruba proverbs, the Punjabi data has revealed a different pattern of the semantic density of explanatory culturemes about speech. The highest semantic density is attained by ‘Gender and talk’ here too (44, 23.65%), yet out of which 27 (61.36%) proverbs have targeted women’s talk. In comparison, 17 (38.63%) proverbs have talked about men’s talk or invited their attention to appropriate responses to their women’s speech practices. As Hunter and Oumarou (1998) have rightly pointed out, the “language keeps talking about itself and cannot seem to have enough of itself. It spends the large part of the time calling attention to what it can accomplish” (p. 44). When it comes to the general nature of speech proverbs (142, 76.34%), the highest semantic density is achieved by the proverbs talking about the ‘power of talk’ to accomplish or demolish (30, 21.21%), out of which the higher number (19, 13.38%) again goes to those proverbs depicting the negative consequences of talking. ‘Talkativeness’ (23, 16.19%) has been discussed in depreciative terms as the third-highest explanatory cultureme among the Punjabi proverbs, followed by ‘irreversibility, longevity, uncontrollability’ (19, 13.38%). ‘Sweet talk’ (15, 10.56%) is emphasized as the fifth most dense topic, followed by ‘silence’ (12, 8.45%), which has yielded 11 (7.74%) positive and 1 (0.7%) negative evaluations of the notion. Proverbs that have rejected talk in favor of ‘actual performance’ are seventh in this hierarchy (11, 7.74%). The proverbs mentioning ‘indirectness’ as a positive strategy, taking care of ‘appropriac,’ and ‘think first’ share the eighth position unanimously (7, 4.92%). While proverbs recognizing ‘speech in positive terms’ have been identified to be the least dense with only five proverbs (3.52%) in the culturematic semantic density, it is preceded by the proverbs discussing ‘verbal etiquettes’ in explicit terms (6, 4.22%). These proverbs have revealed that the attitude toward speech in the Punjabi linguo-culture is more negative and less positive. The proverbs realizing the power of speech, the irreversible, long-lasting and uncontrollable nature of speech, preferring action over talk and silence over speaking, advising to be highly cautious about one’s words have imparted a strong message that speech is perceived in dim terms in the Punjabi linguo-culture. The most dominant message is ‘Be cautious’ about your speech.

**Table 5. Comparative Semantic Density of Speech Proverbs in the Yoruba and Punjabi Languages**

S. #	Explanatory Cultuemes	Yoruba N= 110+34 =144	%	Punjabi N= 142+44 =186	%
<b>1</b>	<b>Gender and Talk</b>	<b>N=34</b>	<b>23.61%</b>	<b>N=44</b>	<b>23.65%</b>
	Female	26	76.47%	27	61.36%
	Male	08	23.52%	17	38.63%
	<b>Speech in General</b>	<b>N=110</b>	<b>76.38%</b>	<b>N=142</b>	<b>76.34%</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Speech is Positive</b>	19	17.27%	05	3.52%
<b>3</b>	<b>Clarity</b>	13	11.81%	00	0 %
<b>4</b>	<b>Direct Speech</b>	11	10%	07	04.92%
<b>5</b>	<b>Power of Speech</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>9.09%</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>21.21%</b>
	Bilateral	02		11	
	Negative Power	08		19	
<b>6</b>	<b>Speech vs Silence</b>	08+11= 19	17.27%	12	08.45%
<b>7</b>	<b>Speech vs Action</b>	08	7.27%	11	07.745
<b>8</b>	<b>Loquacity</b>	07	6.36%	23	16.19%
<b>9</b>	<b>Appropriation</b>	06	5.45%	07	04.92%
<b>10</b>	<b>Verbal Etiquettes</b>	06	5.45%	06	04.22%
<b>11</b>	<b>Sweet talk</b>	06	5.45%	15	10.56%
<b>12</b>	<b>Irreversible Speech</b>	03	2.72%	19	13.38%
<b>13</b>	<b>Think First</b>	02	1.81%	07	4.92%

#### **Comparative Explanation of Semantic Density**

The comparative culturematic analysis of the semantic density in different explanatory cultuemes has revealed the particular importance of different aspects of speech in both cultures. The Yoruba proverbs have discussed speech in favorable terms in the highest culturematic density and silence in the negative terms as the second-highest, followed by advice to be clear, direct, and straightforward in one's talk. On the other hand, the Punjabi data have depicted the highest number of cultuemes in the semantic category of 'power of

talk,' which is believed to be more frequently harmful than constructive. The second most frequent theme is 'loquacity' (23, 16.19%) in the Punjabi proverbs, followed by 'irreversibility' (19, 13.38%), which emphasized the adverse effects of speech. The latter theme has been perceived as falling in the least emphasized categories in the Yoruba corpus (03, 2.72%). 'Sweet talk' is depicted in a significantly higher percentage (15, 10.56%) in the Punjabi corpus compared to its counterpart data (6, 5.45%). Though a higher number of culturemes in the Yoruba data have discussed 'silence' overtly or covertly, the message is depreciative mainly (15, 13.63%). The proverbs from the Punjabi data have shown a dominantly positive depiction of silence (11, 7.74%). 'Action is preferred over (empty) talk' in both cultures with a slightly varying degree of emphasis (Yoruba, 8, 7.27% and Punjabi 11, 7.74%). Proverbs talking about 'direct talk' (8 out of 11, 7.27%) in favorable terms in the Yoruba corpus have found a converse reflection in the Punjabi data appreciating indirectness (7, 4.92%). 'Appropriacy' has been treated on equal terms with 'think before you speak' in the Punjabi corpus (7, 4.92%). In contrast, in the Yoruba corpus, these have been discussed, with a variance of emphasis inclined toward 'appropriation' (6, 5.45%) more than the latter idea (2, 1.81%). The Yoruba corpus' overall message is the positive attitude toward speech and making it unambiguous and direct. On the other hand, the dominant message of the Punjabi data is about the positive nature of silence and the adverse effects of speech from multiple angles. It imparts the advice to 'Be cautious.'

## CHAPTER 5

### FINDINGS, CONCLUSION, CONTRIBUTIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This paremiological research reveals that resorting to proverbs in daily communication is the most essential and effective strategy people in Yoruba and Punjabi oral cultures have devised to optimize the efficaciousness of speech as a Yoruba proverb asserts, “*The proverb is the horse of speech when speech is lost, the proverb is the means we use to hunt for it*” (Owomoyela, 2005, p. 12). The present study organized the paremiological data on different aspects of speech from the Yoruba and Punjabi proverb collections by applying Matti Kussi’s ‘Communication’ typology reported by Lauhakangas (2015). The Linguo-Cultural Approach has been used to elicit the culturemes of the individual proverbs, which are further grouped under relevant headings. These culturemes have been culturally evaluated as positive or negative (+ or -) based on the proverb messages. The propensities show the predominant trends coming from the proverbs of Yoruba and Punjabi languages. When arranged in descending order, the ‘semantic density’ continuum helped uncover the attitude to speech, talk, and silence in the respective linguo-cultures. The study uncovered the speech ethics and communication-related norms from both linguo-cultures. Perceptions about talk regarding the gender of the speaker also helped to reveal the patriarchal tendencies of the respective speech communities. In the end, the Natural Semantic Metalanguage has been used to formulate Cultural Scripts for communication-related norms in the Punjabi and Yoruba linguo-cultures. Both approaches have one point in common that they used cultural keywords/phrases/proverbs to reach generalizable inferences. However, they differed in the presentation of results in the form of generalized statements versus formulated Cultural Scripts. This study differed from the previous studies conducted on the theme of speech in its

methodological and theoretical rigor, systematicity, and the involvement of the cultural informants of both linguo-cultures.

## **5.1 Summaries of the Main Findings**

To share the findings of this research, I am structuring my response based on the answers to the research questions posed at the very beginning of the research. Each Research Question is answered individually below:

### **1. What is the attitude to speech as depicted in the Punjabi and Yoruba proverbs?**

The first question this research tries to answer is the nature of the attitude toward speech and silence in the Yoruba and Punjabi proverbs. To answer this, the Yoruba corpus analysis has yielded the highest semantic density in the themes where ‘speech is encouraged’ in eulogized terms, followed by the advice to ensure ‘clarity’ and ‘appropriacy’ in speech with a dominant emphasis on being ‘direct and straightforward.’ The Yoruba proverbs have shown a dominantly positive attitude toward speech in comparison with silence, which is presented negatively in more than 75% of proverbs talking of silence. Whereas, the Punjabi data reveal the negative perception of speech with the highest semantic density in the theme of ‘power of speech’ to affect the speaker and listener’s lives with a dominant presence of perilous effects. The ‘irreversibility, longevity, and uncontrollability’ of the talk are the next most dense culturemes in the Punjabi data, imparting a cautionary note to the speakers about the possible adverse outcomes of speech. Going by the same convention, gentle words are believed to give rise to favorable sentiments and positive effects for the speaker. ‘Sweet talk’ is encouraged in the next most culturally significant category, followed by the advice to maintain ‘silence’ as a symbol of wisdom. It is appreciated for its capacity to promote deep contemplation, peace, and harmony among human beings. Loquacity has been depicted in highly depreciative terms in both cultures, but with a different stress pattern (percentage).

In the Punjabi data, the analysis revealed a predominantly positive propensity towards silence and negative perception about speech/talk. The high population density of Punjab (536 per sq. km) (“Population Profile Punjab,” 2017) may be one of the determining factors of the negative view of speech and positive view of silence, restraint, and contemplation. On the contrary, the analysis of the Nigerian (Yoruba) proverbs revealed a bolstering and encouraging attitude toward speech, and this may also be accredited to the significantly lower

population density of the Yorubaland (387 persons per sq. km) (“National Bureau of Statistics,” 2019) than that of Punjab. More broadly speaking, it would appear that the suspiciousness about speech and the need to speak carefully are influenced by the importance of polite and respectful behavior in establishing social relationships in the Punjabi society, just like her Japanese counterpart (Fischer and Yoshida, 1968). Besides, Punjabi people live in tightly packed and tightly-knit communities, so open aggression is particularly threatening and must be carefully controlled. Even verbal aggression is dangerous, and hence speech must be used with considerable care.

## **2. What is the relationship between talk and gender in the Yoruba and Punjabi proverbs?**

While considering gender and talk-based proverbs, strikingly similar and less divergent attitudes have been observed in both Punjabi (44) and Nigerian (34) corpora. Reinforcing Schipper (2010), the analysis revealed that in contrast to the assumption that differences would mainly mark cultures, the researcher found fascinating resemblances in proverbs originating from countries worldwide and throughout history. There is much-shared meaning in all these proverbs: women’s speech violates the Gricean maxim of Quantity, which entails that the speaker is talking more without being informative than is required for communicating the message. Additionally, in the Punjabi corpus, the careless use of the tongue by a female has been mentioned as the chief cause of problems in her marital life. At the same time, her cheerfulness may help her make a successful marriage. On the other hand, several Yoruba proverbs target the insincere, hypocritical, jealous, and garrulous nature of a woman when she interacts. Men are advised to keep an eye on her actions more than her words as her words are not reliable. Furthermore, both cultures conform in advising their male members not to confide any confidential information in their women and not to consult them for any advice as they are considered incapable of suggesting something rational or beneficial.

## **3. What are the cultural similarities in speech-related norms, as revealed through the Yoruba and Punjabi proverbs?**

While the Punjabi paremiological conception of speech is slightly different from the Nigerian one, it is not diametrically opposed to its counterpart, and there are many



similarities too. The most striking similarity is found between the proverbs depicting the perception of talk regarding the gender of the speaker. Both linguo-cultures have shown strong traces of patriarchal ideologies actively followed to subjugate female speakers by portraying them in a highly face-threatening manner. When it comes to general perception about speech, there are occasions when talking is acceptable in the Punjabi proverbs, but with a much less semantic density (5, 3.52% in Punjabi versus 19, 17.27% in Yoruba). However, this permission to speak is not a license to free conversation. Furthermore, the Yoruba and Punjabi proverbs mutually construct a case in favor of action and against empty slogans. The importance of genuine efforts cannot be compensated by any amount of words or tall claims. Additionally, a negative aspect cannot be made positive by just lip service, and one has to invest real and strenuous effort to make it happen. Both linguo-cultures have established a contrastive and indirect relationship between talk and action, in which the former's increase may decrease the latter's efficiency and vice versa. There is also the same perception of talk as implied by the folk saying: 'Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me;' it is action rather than talking, which changes the world. Though extremity is discouraged in both linguo-cultures, the Punjabi proverbs have delineated a noticeable dispiriting attitude toward talkativeness, which can be summarized in the proverb reported by Speake (2015), "*Length begets loathing*" (p. 142). Talkativeness has been discouraged, while moderation has been appreciated with a slight difference of percentages, which in turn has shunned extremity. Action has a similar dominant preference over verbal claims. Contemplation has a strong presence and visibility in the Punjabi data as compared to the Yoruba counterpart. Irreversibility is also present as a strong trait of spoken words in both cultures with much lower semantic density in the Yoruba corpus. According to Petrova (2019), this density variance indicates the particular concerns shown by the linguo-cultures under investigation. The presence of similar culturemes entails the universal schemas present in cultures situated in regionally distant continents and areas. It also verifies Kussi's typology of proverbs about communication.

#### **4. What are the cultural differences in speech-related norms, as revealed through the Yoruba and Punjabi proverbs?**

Comparatively speaking, the Punjabi linguo-culture seems to support silence over speech, while the Yoruba culture has stressed speech over silence. Though both linguo-

cultures have associated talkativeness with death as a consequence, there are more general and unconditional repressive elements in Punjabi than the Yoruba proverbs, which have associated negative connotations with the tendency to ‘misspeak’ and telling lies’ while talking much. Furthermore, the proverbs advising to ‘be direct’/‘straightforward’ in the Yoruba proverbs are pretty high in their semantic density with a reasonable but contrastive accentuation on ‘being indirect’ in the Punjabi proverbs. The advice to ‘contemplate’/‘think first’ has delineated the highest semantic density in the Punjabi corpus when we take the proverbs mentioning the dangerous and deadly effects of speech, suggesting careful and explicit mention of ‘think first’ in highly eulogized terms. The same advice is present in the Yoruba corpus but with a much less semantic density in literal and implicit culturemes. Compared to the higher semantic density of the Punjabi culturemes centered on ‘irreversibility,’ the Yoruba corpus has yielded only a few culturemes.

Moreover, the Punjabi proverbs have delineated the shared cultural schema of silence as a peace-promoting and conflict-avoiding trait and practice. ‘Keeping quiet’ has been perceived as a prudent practice to avoid any trouble. On the other hand, the Yoruba proverbs have delineated that silence carries a high degree of ‘ambiguity,’ which causes difficulty for the listeners to discern what is going on in the interlocutor’s mind. Moreover, the Yoruba proverbs have contrasted silence against loquacity instead of setting it against speech. In contrast, the Punjabi proverbs have yielded almost unchallenged support for silence than the speech in neutral terms. A Punjabi proverb has also explicitly related silence with high levels of wisdom and foresight of noble people.

Additionally, the Punjabi proverbs insist that the wise person thinks before speaking. This deliberative process is again associated with being wise, just like being quiet. A person who does not weigh before vocalizing his thoughts is termed as a ‘dupe.’ On the other hand, in the Yoruba proverbs, fewer culturemes could be identified, stressing the act of thinking before speaking in explicit terms. The proverbs have attached thinking before speaking with older people as an indication of their wisdom. The Yoruba speakers have reinforced the idea of speaking one’s heart out instead of continuous thinking. The Yoruba proverbs about ‘direct talk’ also reiterate the same notion of straightforwardness as a positive and appreciable attribute.

The notion of appropriateness emphasized in the Yoruba cultureemes has delineated multiple aspects, including time, topic, style, and manner. According to the Yoruba proverb from Nigeria, only a productive talk deserves the title of the talk: “*talking without stopping is not talk; it is what was said to end all trouble that is the talk*” (Opata, 1992, p. 262). According to the words, to adapt one’s mouth is also recommended. On the other hand, just like Hayas, the Punjabi proverbs denote an excellent speaker by his/her ability to finish a discussion on a given subject by saying exactly the right thing at the right time. Despite showing a positive attitude toward speech, the Nigerian proverbs do limit it by prescribing the criteria of clarity and appropriacy and discouraging unproductive talk. There are times when caution in speech is advised, just like the Indian and Punjabi proverbs, but undoubtedly they recognize that speech can often be used wisely and efficiently. Besides, the Yoruba speakers strive to ensure that the idea they wish to communicate reaches its target ungarbled and in as unmistakable a form as possible. In such a context, to paraphrase another Yoruba proverb, the judicious—not only correct—application of speech causes the kola nut to emerge from the pocket.

Additionally, the ‘culturematic’ analysis of both corpora has also revealed, though with a peripheral semantic density (Petrova, 2014), certain speech norms to be adopted/avoided. The Punjabi data discourages interrupting, speaking while eating, talking uninvited, and shouting. Furthermore, some other norms appreciated in the Punjabi proverbs include taking care of appropriate manner and timing, observing restraint, avoiding extreme loquacity or silence, maintaining the relevance of the topic, physical context, and the social class of the listeners, and avoiding bald criticism. The verbal etiquettes emphasized in the Yoruba corpus include: looking the person in the eyes, not asking questions if the speaker knows the answer, and keeping their mouths shut when people reach a new place. These variations in cultural preferences in a single domain of activity have been identified by Chong-Ho (1985) and Ahmed (2005) who also conducted cross-cultural researches to investigate the speech related proverbs.

## **5.2 Conclusion**

This research investigated the attitude to speech as delineated through Yoruba and Punjabi proverbs. It also explored the relationship between talk and the gender of the speaker

as expressed in the paremiological data sets. After conducting an individual culturematic analysis of the proverbs, the researcher grouped the proverbs under different categories based on their messages. Generalizations are inferred after a systematic analysis of these thematic groups and the multiple ways a single message has been imparted. Afterward, the researcher juxtaposed the insights by comparing the preferred ways of speech and communication norms prescribed by the proverbs of both linguo-cultures. The author has also visited the findings from a contrastive angle to unearth if there are some significant similarities or differences between the viewpoints, belief systems, and conventions. Based on all these insights, the researcher applied the notion of Natural Semantic Metalanguage to construct Cultural Scripts of communication norms for Yoruba and Punjabi linguo-cultures. These Cultural scripts are translatable in the native languages of the Yoruba and Punjabi speakers to understand the predominant ideologies, beliefs, do's and don'ts. These are equally efficient to guide the foreigners who wish/need to understand the communication ethics of the cultures involved.

Following the Linguo-Culturology Approach, the answers to research questions are elicited by a systematic, data-driven, rigorous, objective, verifiable, and legitimate representation of the descending hierarchy of the positively and negatively evaluated culturemes. The notion of 'Semantic Density' denoted the frequency of occurrence and cultural elaborateness, which embraced the degree of its lexical, grammatical, and thematic richness, including synonymy, variability, conversion, propensity to form derivatives, and the elements of intertextuality. Following Petrova (2003, 2013, 2015, 2016, 2019), 'Semantic Density' has been interpreted in terms of the magnitude attached to a particular behavior or speech in the Punjabi and Yoruba cultures. The higher the semantic density, the more culturally prominent and salient is the cultureme in the linguo-culture under study. The dominant themes represent the 'cultural constants,' while the peripheral ones are an essential addition to the main characteristics.

The analysis of the Yoruba corpus yielded predominant support to 'talk' by the higher semantic density in appreciative terms, followed by the advice to ensure 'clarity' and 'appropriacy' in speech with a dominant emphasis on being 'direct and straightforward.' Silence has been presented negatively in more than 75% of Yoruba proverbs. However, this

positive outlook does not allow or encourage careless talk and loquacity as Zahan (1979) sums up the idea very well when he says, “the African people place the true basis for the human being’s dominion over his acts and his conduct in the power and control exercised over his speech” (p. 112). It can be said that loss of power over speech is regarded as almost like a speech disorder. Owomoyela (2005) recognizes that speech is approached by the Yoruba with deliberate care, taking great pains to avoid careless, casual, or thoughtless statements whose damage might outlast lifetimes. In the Yoruba linguo-culture, language is central to effective communication and dialogue, which is the veritable instrument of mediation and conflict management anywhere in the world. The Yoruba community believes, just like Igbo, that “*He that never talks is like a deity without a priest*” (Opata, 1992, p. 204). From the analysis of speech and silence-related Yoruba proverbs, it is evident that their overall attitude to speech is decidedly positive. Speech is explicitly recognized as an essential instrument of social life; eloquence is one of the central values of their cultural world-view, and their way of life affords a frequent opportunity for its exercise.

On the other hand, the Punjabi data have revealed the negative perception of speech with the highest semantic density in the theme of ‘Negative Power of Speech’ to affect the speaker and listener’s lives with a dominant presence of perilous effects. It is followed by ‘loquacity’ as a strongly discouraged notion. What Punjabi proverbs seek to achieve is not to discourage the act of speaking, but to warn against speaking in a way that may hurt the feelings of people. Proverbs about ‘irreversibility and longevity’ reveal that Punjabi linguo-culture does not imply that the hearers should avoid talking altogether; instead, they should avoid unguarded or excessive talk because of a possible negative outcome. The next cultureme is about the positive effects of sweet and gentle words. Silence-related Punjabi proverbs uncover the negative attitude to speech because ‘silence’ has been depicted as a symbol of wisdom and appreciated for its capacity to promote deep contemplation, peace, and harmony among human beings. Contrastingly, culturemes about ‘silence’ in the Yoruba corpus have displayed a mixed stress pattern, but with a solid inclination to connote it with death, loss, and verbal incapability (i.e., in negative terms).

The Punjabi preference for silence can be reinforced by Gundlach (2013), who has compared Japanese and Anglo-culture concerning silence. He concluded that “Eastern

societies such as India, China, and Japan have valued silence more than western societies” (p. 116) because the latter defined it as a “sign of interpersonal sensitivity, mutual respect, personal dignity, affirmation, and wisdom” (ibid.). At the same time, he claims that Western societies like the US interpret silence as a “lack of attention and initiative” (p. 117). Moreover, both languages have revealed that silence helps the practitioner observe profoundly and contemplate analytically while tackling tricky persons and situations. When an individual remains silent and is thinking, this is not silence, according to Bruneau (2008, p. 78), who has also argued that it refers to “contemplative, meditative, mind-wandering, and unconscious journey.” As Johannesen (1974, p. 29) asserts that “human silence is pregnant with meaning because of its assumption,” the silent people have also been presented as stringent targets being reserved, and mysterious who remain unpredictable, and this trait keeps the opponents on alert, and they do not take them as easy targets. Another difference is observed when the Punjabi proverbs have equated silence with the positive attributes of sanity, righteousness, and discernment compared to talk, which seems to be assimilated with foolishness, empty-headedness, and indiscretion. In the words of Agyekum (2002), the dominant attitude toward silence in the Punjabi proverbs entails that a person “derives from silence the cornerstone of character, the virtues of self-control, courage, patience, and dignity” (p. 37). Furthermore, the Punjabi proverbs emphasize the preference given to improved performance by a silent worker, where talk has been perceived as an intruding element. The Yoruba proverbs on silence seem to echo the Jordanian saying on the practical benefits of silence, “*Learn silence as you learn speech since speech provides you the right way, but silence makes you safe*” (Al-Harashah, 2012, p. 35). On the other hand, the Punjabi proverbs seem to reinforce the notion supported by the same author, “*The more you keep silent, the more prestigious you are*” (p. 35). Just like the California educators (Johannesen, 1974), for the Yoruba, silence connotes passivity, slowness, confusion, mental inactivity, or perhaps a type of social loafing, while talking is the very signature of engagement, mental life, and power. From the Punjabi perspective, like some non-Western ones (Lebra, 1987; Gundlach, 2013), silence connotes truthfulness, attentiveness, and sincerity while talking can connote a lack of respect or lack of thoughtfulness. Furthermore, the Yorubas often assume speech to reflect actual knowledge and true underlying meanings, thoughts, feelings, and intentions. People who do not speak their minds are at fault if they are misunderstood or

ignored. In the Yorubaland, just like American contexts (Bruneau, 2013), talking becomes interwoven with practices of freedom, with individual rights, and with expression and personhood, it becomes cemented as foundational and uncontested good.

Moreover, the Punjabi view of action versus speech seems to join Lebra (1987), who has worked on Japanese silence and contended that distrust of speech is further reinforced by the idea that it is associated with inactivity because the action starts when speech stops. Thus talking is denigrated as an excuse for procrastinating in taking action, and decisive action is characterized as silent. Hence, the proverbial admonition ‘action before talking’ seems to hold ground in the Punjabi linguo-culture. On the other hand, the Igbo proverb quoted by Opata (1992) sums up the Yoruba notion of action and talk, “*words are sweet, but they never take the place of food*” (p. 192). The Yoruba proverbs, just like their Indian counterparts, are suspicious of speech, but only when misused by speakers. Unlike the Punjabi and Japanese maxims, the Yoruba culture perceives the unduly silent person as suspicious compared to the overly talkative person. The Punjabi proverbs imply, like their Japanese counterparts, that talk itself interferes with work, but the general Nigerian attitude is that only excessive talk hinders work. The Nigerian belief that the talk of some people is incredibly worthwhile and deserves enunciation also differs from the Punjabi and Japanese concepts of speech. The exciting similarity of proverbial Indian tendencies to the Yoruba ones and their dissimilarity with the Punjabi proverbs reminds us of Wardhaugh and Fuller (2015). They contend that even communities located physically quite near each other can be pretty different in this respect. In his *Laws*, Plato described how the Athenians were great talkers, whereas the Spartans were known for their brevity, and the Cretans were reputed to have more wit than words.

The present finding of Punjabi linguo-culture does not, like the Japanese analysis, calls for ‘shut up’ (Fischer and Yoshida, 1968). Such a negative attitude does not imply that the Punjabi people attempt to refrain from speaking or are any less loquacious than any other culture. Rather, such a position would be an absurd one or, at best impossible to demonstrate. The analysis suggests that what is at issue here is a cautious attitude toward speech. The Punjabi proverbs have stressed a need to be careful about speech, partly because of social norms that stress extreme formality and politeness in interpersonal relational values, which could be disturbed by injudiciously or inappropriately spoken words. The cumulative effect

of social constraints within a hierarchical society is that it is impossible to communicate without providing explicit evidence of one's perception of the relative status of the speaker and listener. This context makes silence a preferred response and socially acceptable option.

When it comes to the cultural beliefs and perceptions about the gender of the speakers, women have been presented as lackadaisical talkers in both linguo-cultures. On the other hand, the males' assertions are ascribed sense and logic as an additional accentuation in Punjabi proverbs. This gender bias, prevalent in the speech-related proverbs, has perpetuated the presence of patriarchal prejudice in the Punjabi and Yoruba societies as identified in several previous studies (Yusuf, 2012; Balogun, 2010; Familusi, 2012; Khan and Ateeq, 2017; Khan, Aziz, and Hussain, 2018; Khan and Khan, 2020; Khan and Awan, 2020). The research could not find any proverbs which negatively evaluate men's talk. This is not surprising, not because men's talk is not open to criticism, but because proverbs represent traditional attitudes. This translates into a regime of silence and muteness foisted on the females whose language becomes silent. With silence comes an existence on the margins or peripheries of the societies (Lazar, 2017). With silence also comes domination, exploitation, repression, and lack of expression. Hence, the semantic density of proverbs targeting gender with relevance to speech has provided proof of gender bias in traditional social setups.

As far as the differences between the speech-related 'culturemes' are concerned, the main difference is the presence of many encouraging Yoruba proverbs to speak one's heart out, and seeking clarity cum appropriateness, while only a few Punjabi proverbs have showcased this appreciation of speech. Instead, 'moderation' has been advised in the Punjabi as well as Yoruba counterparts. The Punjabi one: (*Neither too much talk, nor too much silence, neither too much rain and nor too much sunshine*) (Ahsan, 2011, p. 37); and the Yoruba one (*Excessive economy in speech leads to obscurity*) (Owomoyela, 2005, p. 254). The findings deduced from the Punjabi and Yoruba data can be summarized in Norrick's (1997) words, "Given their adherence to this middle way, we might expect that proverbs represent language as a tool to be used in achieving reasonable goals" (p. 279) and that "they advise us to say neither too much nor too little, to speak truly and rationally, and to speak only good and for good purposes" (p. 280). Speech is precisely the sort of action proper to specific situations, but this does not militate against the general advice against speaking too freely and too much. Whenever words are used judiciously to accomplish some reasonable



end, they are good, but when words turn into mere talk, they become counterproductive and, hence, blameworthy.

In exploring the cultural logic of preferences in speech proverbs, we can say that this cultural logic has been profoundly influenced by factors arising from the nation's historical development, including native cultural traits, moral norms, and elaborate traditional symbolic courtesy. As far as the peculiarities in the Punjabi and Yoruba proverbs are concerned, they naturally occur due to the different origins of the individual proverbs and their specific geographical, historical, social, and cultural environments. Arewa and Dundes remind us that "there may be a common stream of ideas, but as they pass through each cultural area, they become changed and transmuted through contact with and absorption by local character, tradition, and custom" (1964, p. 8). Another point is that if the Yoruba or Punjabi linguo-cultures lack a proverb to represent individual attitudes and situations, it does not imply that such attitudes do not exist in that culture. Instead, the presence of a proverb simply indicates that people are more concerned with that notion in the Yoruba or Punjabi speech community. The interlingual correspondence is limited to the general meaning, and the status of the two units is bound to differ significantly for many parameters. The most important are stylistic value, , intertextuality, modifiability, and connotative and evaluative load.

As far as the presence of opposing proverbs on different notions in a single linguo-culture is concerned, (i.e., 'silence' in the Punjabi and Yoruba languages) from the perspective of the language user, it may be because of the communicative intention to exhort a garrulous individual to silence. A silent person is to be more forthcoming depending on whether the topical subject is perceived as excessively talkative or excessively taciturn. Individual proverbs themselves do no more than provide a resource through which speakers can achieve their rhetorical goals in a particular situation while paying attention to the rules, which govern efficient communication in general and to the particular politeness systems in operation in a given culture. Moreover, the existence of opposing proverbs does not reflect an inconsistency in the cultural model. Instead, these expressions indicate the existence of more than one view about a particular circumstance or situation. It is up to speakers to determine which model best fits the specific context in which a proverb is used.

The presence of similar culturemes in distant linguo-cultures implies that there are some universal or widespread notions about the talk, which are beyond geographical, religious, or cultural ideologies. The presence of proverbs/culturemes on similar speech-related notions (Speech is good, Bilateral Power, Negative Power, Sweet Talk, Silence, Action versus Talk, Indirectness/Directness, Thinking before Speaking, Talkativeness, Irreversibility and Longevity, Gender and Talk) also entails certain fundamental human features that hold good for the whole species of homo-sapiens. Despite the differences between the Yoruba and Punjabi societies, in their cultures, environment, and geographical location, and language characteristics, this study shows similarities between their proverbs, especially on such concerns as excessive talk, adverse effects of careless and bitter talk, gender, and talk, action versus talk, sweet talk, appropriacy of the topic, status, and occasion, and the advice to be cautious about one's words, though with a varying degree of 'culturematic density.' However, both corpora's takeaway message endorses that "the most striking trait in the ethics of proverbs is the adherence to the middle way" (Petrova, 2019, p. 78).

Regarding the presence of a domineering positive attitude toward speech and negative evaluation of silence, the link suggested by Fischer and Yoshida (1968) seems plausible. "Proverbs about speech might be much more positive, for instance, in a sparsely settled nomadic society where individuals see a few of their fellows in everyday life, needed to reassert social ties when they did encounter people" (p. 41). The Nigerian positive propensity toward speech has also been reinforced by Opatá (1992) from the analysis of Igbo proverbs, "a careful analysis of Igbo proverbs shows that the attitude to speech among the Igbo is decidedly positive. The majority of the Igbo proverbs have advocated the primacy of speech over non-speech" (p. 190). The comparative analysis of the Punjabi and Yoruba paremiás and the descending hierarchies of semantic density about different themes of speech have verified the findings reached by Chong (2001). His comparative cultural analysis of speech-related proverbs from 16 different languages regarding the presence of proverbs reinforces similar ideas and notions but with a difference of emphasis. Chong also notes that proverbs in the category that evaluate silence negatively and, therefore, evaluate speech positively generally come from less densely populated regions: Nigeria, Malaysia, Russia, and India. Of particular interest here is the negative evaluation of silence found in the image that still water

is dangerous in the less densely populated France and Spain; this is contrastive to a positive evaluation of still water in the more densely populated British isles, here depth is a positive rather than a negative attribute.

In the end, it can rightly be asserted that the proverbs of Punjabi and Yoruba oral culture are the windows through which investigators can develop a code of conduct about the tacit norms and preferable cultural patterns. The data analyses of the Punjabi and African culture's ideology have revealed the attitude toward speech and specific Do's and Don'ts. It is concluded that both languages have ascribed a great agency to the 'tongue' to create a heaven or hell and the inherent traits of 'longevity' and 'irreversibility' of spoken words. The Punjabi data have emphasized using language with extreme care followed by a piece of advice to avoid unproductive talk, resulting in 'be cautious' as one of the most stressed advice about spoken discourse. In the Punjabi corpus, the largest single thematic class of proverbs on speech and silence consists of those issuing a warning against careless speech and its negative consequences. The contrastive analysis has revealed that the Yoruba corpus has verified the encouragement offered to the appropriate speech, targeting the clarity, directness, and appropriacy of communication. Regarding gender and speech, both cultures have attached negative connotations with feminine speech. However, the Punjabi culture seems to overdo it by attaching extreme power and rationality to the male discourse.

### **5.3 Contribution to Research**

Being of an interdisciplinary nature, this research is beneficial not only for academia but also for the researchers and practitioners in anthropology, ethnolinguistics, sociology, politics, culture, communication, and gender studies. This research is also of interest to the members of civil society as it deals with changing horizons in terms of increasing social awareness about the rich heritage of folk wisdom hidden in folk pieces of literature and oral narratives across the world, mainly Punjabi and African (Nigerian) folklore.

Looking at proverbs from diversified linguistic and cultural backgrounds has given a view of their inhabitants' thinking patterns and the preferred ways of verbal behavior. This cross-cultural semantic investigation, which incorporated numerous different fields, psychology, anthropology, sociology, ethnography, and communication, provided a chance

to comprehend the nature of the similarities and differences between people's preferred ways of communication. Studying proverbs on parallel and explorative lines is a step toward ethnomethodology. The comparative proverbs in such a situation opened two simultaneous windows to study the wisdom entailed in two diverse international cultures.

The significance of this study is multifaceted and multilayered. Firstly, it bridged, to some extent, the gap of paremiological research in the Pakistani context. Secondly, a cross-cultural analysis enhanced the cultural awareness and highlighted the indigenous and foreign norms of speech as communicated in their proverbs. Thirdly, the research has partially filled the gap about the attitude toward speech and communication norms in Punjabi and Yoruba paremia. A thorough investigation of speech proverbs provided authentic knowledge about the tacit norms of speech and culture-specific preferences. Awareness of these speech-related cultural beliefs, conventions, and norms will help the native and non-native speakers to comprehend, develop and hone their communicative competence. The developed Cultural Scripts about the speech norms of Punjabi and Yoruba linguo-cultures would guide the insiders and outsiders to adopt more appropriate speech behaviors and avoid specific manners that might be considered normal and acceptable in some other social contexts. Their awareness will ultimately enhance their communicative competence.

To sum up the theoretical contribution, this study has made a unique contribution by juxtaposing the two approaches to make the pragmatic outcomes possible. This study has tested the applicability of the Linguo-Cultural approach by Petrova (2016, 2019) and Cultural Script Theory by Goddard (2010) and Wierzbicka (2017). This testimony would guide future paremiologists to adopt these conceptual underpinnings to apply to a myriad of themes found in the paremia of almost any language. This study has opened new avenues of research for indigenous and foreign researchers to work on paremiology in semantic areas still unexplored. The national character of Pakistani and Punjabi proverbs has been more clearly perceived when analyzed from comparative cum contrastive perspectives.

The researcher has formulated 'Cultural Scripts' of the speech-related norms and conventions of Yoruba and Punjabi linguo-cultures. These 'Cultural Scripts' are a way of spelling out different 'local' and 'foreign' conventions of communication using the

metalanguage of Natural Semantic Metalanguage. Cultural norms and ethics are spelled out by using this approach with much greater precision than possible with technical labels such as ‘direct,’ ‘polite,’ ‘formal,’ etc. These are phrased in simple and translatable terms, so the danger of ethnocentric bias creeping into the very terms of the description is minimized. Furthermore, Cultural Scripts are intended as descriptions of commonly held assumptions about how ‘people think’ about social interaction. People bring these assumptions with them into everyday interactions, cultural scripts influence the form taken by particular verbal encounters, but they do not in any sense determine individual interactions. Individuals can and do vary in their speech behavior. These scripts form a kind of interpretive background against which individuals position their own acts and others’.

Lastly, the methodological contribution cannot be undermined by the presence of linguistic, thematic, theoretical, paremiological, and geographical contributions. This study has formed a research design by taking insights from anthropology, theories of language and culture, cross-culture, paremiology, ethnomethodology, and folklore. This research methodology would guide future researchers to conduct mono and cross-cultural research by tailoring it according to their own objectives, research questions, and field-specific contexts.

#### **5.4 Recommendations for Future Research**

This research has opened many avenues for future researchers for cross-cultural, paremiological, and anthropological investigations. The review of paremiological studies and data from both cultures revealed that many significant explorations need to be conducted about several aspects from a diversified range of angles. Some of these may be the concept of happiness, success, death, religion, money, poverty, help, hospitality, animal imagery, food metaphors, and color images. An exciting angle may be to incorporate the insights from the field of comparative rhetoric. Regarding the current thematic domain, only paremiological data could have been analyzed due to time and resource constraints. The same theme can be studied by using people’s perceptions of these proverbs.

Furthermore, proverbs from other languages and cultures may also be studied by applying the conceptual framework and methodological procedures adapted for the present study. The frequency and variability of proverb usage can be other exciting investigations.

Gender-based proverb usage has its unique scope to be investigated by modern researchers working on oral cultures and their folk traditions. The possible reasons behind positive and negative attitudes toward speech and talk may prove a unique exploratory venture. Studies in the communication domain can also explore the reasons behind the etymology and vitality of these proverbs and bring forward new, unique and significant angles. This research could not take into account the dialectical variations found in both languages. Investigating proverbs from this angle may also bring exciting discussions to the forefront. The proverb dictionaries provided Punjabi explanations, which have been translated into English for the readers' understanding. Some professional translators cum researchers may provide systematic and communicative translation and explanation of Punjabi proverbs, and it can form the basis of some mega projects in the future. These translations will make this rich cultural heritage to be accessible to non-Punjabi speakers for future investigations. Lastly, some other aspects for future researches may include the historical and textural peculiarities of proverbs.

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## ANNEXURE A

### LIST OF THE YORUBA PROVERBS

This list contains all the Yoruba proverbs discussed in the thesis arranged by topics as discussed in chapter 5.

#### Positive Evaluation of Talk

##### Talk (19 +), Silence (11 -)

- i. *“òrọ̀ la fí n jẹ́ omiotooro òrọ̀”*

*Oro la fi n je omiotooro oro*

“It is with words that one resolves all problems” (Owomoyela, 2005, p. 155)

- ii. *“Àì-sọ̀rọ̀ ní nmú ẹ̀nu rùn”*

*Ai-soro ni nmu enu run*

“It is abstention from speaking that makes the mouth smell” (p. 114).

- iii. *“Àìlẹ̀fọ̀hùn ní n sáájú orí burúkú”*

*Ailefahun ni n saaju oriburuku*

“Inability to speak out precedes misfortunes” (p. 162).

- iv. *“A kì í fì itijú kárùn”*

*A ki i fi itiju karun*

“Never be too shy to speak out on your own behalf” (p. 103).

- v. *“Èní gbé àrùn pamo kọ́já ọ̀rẹ́ onísẹ̀gùn”*

*Eni gbe arun pamo koja ore onisegun*

“A person who conceals a disease is beyond help from a doctor” (p. 126).

- vi. *“Àpẹ̀júwe ni alagbẹ̀dẹ́ n rọ̀”*

*Apejuwe ni alagbede n ro*

“The blacksmith manufactures from a description” (p. 253).

vii. ***“Orivwin si isiesii”***

*Orivwin si isiesu*

“The dead never put up an argument” (Ohwovoriole, 2009, p. 133).

viii. ***“Ó kù díe kí n wí”:* ojo ní n so ni da”**

*O ku die ki n wi, ojo ni n so ni da*

“I was just on the verge of speaking my mind”: it only makes one into a coward” (p. 223).

ix. ***“A kì í sinni ká má nì àpèjúwe”***

*A ki i sin ni ka ma ni apejuwe*

“One does not escort a traveler and lack a description” (p. 452).

x. ***“Òrò kù í gbórín ká fì òbẹ̀ bù ú, ẹ̀nu la fì n wí i”***

*Oro ki i gborin ka fi obe bu, enu la fi n wi*

“A problem is not so formidable that one attacks it with a knife; one tackles it with the mouth” (p. 143).

xi. ***“Kí á gà, kí á gò, èdè ni ò yédè”***

*Ki a ga, ki a go, ede ni o yede*

“Sitting and refusing to budge from one's position results from the lack of communication” (p. 293).

xii. ***“Erù ogun kì í ba jagun-jagun”***

*Eru ogun ki i ba jagun-jagun*

“Fear of battle never afflicts a warrior” (p. 225).

xiii. ***“Ebí n pa mí” ò sé fífé wí”***

*Ebi n pa mi o se fife wi*

““I am hungry” is not a message that whistling can convey” (p. 221).

xiv. **“*Bí ojú bá ye ojú; kí ohùn má yẹ ohùn*”**

*Bi oju ba ye oju; ki ohun ma ye ohun*

“If the eyes no longer see eyes, let the voice not miss the voice” (p. 242).

xv. **“*À-rí-ì-gbòdo-wí, à-rí-ì-gbòdọ̀fọ̀ ni kú awo*”**

*A-ri-i-gbodo-wi, a-ri-i-gbodo fo ni ku awo*

“Sometimes the eyes see things that are too sacred for the mouth to mention” (p. 165).

xvi. **“*Omode gbon agba gbon lafi da Ile-ife*”**

*Omode gbon agba gbon la fid a Ile-Ife*

“Youths are wise and the elders are wise; that’s the principle by which people found *Ife*” (Ademowo and Balugun, 2014, p. 10).

xvii. **“*Owo omode o to pepe, t’agbalagba o wo keregbe*”** (ibid, p. 11).

*Owo omode o to pepe, t’agbalagba o wo keregbe*

“No person has the final answer, but everyone has something to contribute”

xviii. **“*Bí èyàn-án bá ṣeun ká sọ pé ó ṣeun; bí èyàn-án bá ṣèyàn ká sọ pé ó ṣèyàn; nítorípe, ohun tí a ṣe, ó yẹ kó gbeni*”**

*Bi eeyan ba seun ka so pe o seun ; bi eeyan ba seeyan ka so pe o seeyan; nitoripe, ohun ti a se, o ye ko gbe ni*

“If a person deserves gratitude, we should say that he deserves gratitude; if a person is kind, we should say that he is kind, because one should reap the rewards of one’s actions” (p. 342).

xix. **“*Àgùntàn ò jí ní kùtùkùtù ṣe ẹnu bọbọ*”**

*Aguntan o ji ni kutukutu se enu bobo*

“A sheep does not wake in the morning and droop its mouth” (p. 65).

#### Clarity in Speech (13 +)

i. **“*Àwíyẹ nIfẹ́ ńfọ̀; gba-n-gba lOrò ńperan*”**

*Awiye ni Ife n fo; gba-gba ioro n peran*

“Explicitly is the way Ifẹ speaks; it is openly that Orò kills animals” (p. 241).

ii. **“Àsoroàìlàdí ló pa Elempe ìṣáájú tó ní igbá wúwo ju àwo lo”**

*Asoro alailadi lo pa Elempe isaaju to ni igba wuwo ju awo lo*

“Saying words without proper explanation killed the first Elempe when he said the Calabash is heavier than a clay pot” (p. 241).

iii. **“Ègbètàlá: bí a ò bá là á, kì í yé ni”**

*Egbetala: bi a o ba la ki i ye ni*

“Ègbètàlá: if one does not explain it, no one understands what it means” (p. 244).

iv. **“Àwíyé ní òmú oràn yéni; oodúnrun okun la fì òsin egeba; bí a ò bá là á, kì í yéni”**

*Awiye ni mmu oran yeni; oodunrun okun la fin sin egeba; bi a o ba la a, ki i yeni.*

“Vivid explanation of someone will bring honor” (p. 241).

v. **“Òrò bọ̀tí-bọ̀tí ò yẹ àgbàlagbà”**

*Oro boti-boti o ye agbalagba*

“Speech like drunken babble does not befit a venerable person” (p. 85).

vi. **“Mo kò ó” kì í ṣe àìní àpẹ̀júwe”**

*Mo ko o` ki i se aini apejuwe*

“‘I met him’ is not a description” (p. 146).

vii. **“Èlà lẹ̀rọ̀; bí á bọ̀ bá là á rírú ní òrú”**

*Ela loro, bi a o ba la a riru ni ru*

“Statements must be clarified; if they are not, they become muddy” (p. 244).

viii. **“Èlà lẹ̀rọ̀; bóbìnrín bá jókó a laṣọ̀ bobo”**

*Ela loro, bo binrin ba joko a laso bobo*

“Statements must always be clarified; when a woman sits, she covers her genitals with her wrapper” (p. 244).

ix. *“Àjànàkú kúro ni “A rí nkan firí”; bí a bá rérin ká wí”*

*Ajanaku kuro ni mo ri n kan firi; bi a ba rerin ka wi*

“The elephant is more than something of which one says, ‘I caught a fleeting glimpse of something’; if one saw an elephant, one should say so” (p. 239).

x. *“Ibi tí a tí na omọ oba là mbèrè, a kì íbèrè ibi tí omọ obá tí pin legbee”*

*Ibi ti a ti na omo oba la mbere, a ki bere ibi ti omo oba ti pin legbe*

“What one should ask is where the prince was attacked and flogged; one does not ask where the prince got the welts on his side” (p. 242).

xi. *“A kí í pè é lerú, ká pè é ló bí”*

*A ki i pe e leru, ka pe e lobi*

“One does not call it a slave and also call it a child of the house” (p. 237).

xii. *“A kí í pè é lerù ká pè é loşoo”*

*A ki i pe e leru ka pe e losoo*

“One does not call it a burden and also call it an adornment” (p. 237).

xiii. *“Pátá-pátá leégún hífaşo borí”*

*Pata-pata ni egugun n fi aso bori*

“It is completely that the masquerader covers his head with his shroud” (p. 253).

### Directness/Indirectness

#### Yoruba (12) (9+, 3-)

i. *“Awiye ni Ife nfo; gba-n-gba lOro nperan”*

*Awiye ni ife nfo, gbangba ni oro n peran*

“Explicitly is the way Ife speaks; it is openly that Orò kills animals” (p. 254).

ii. *“Ó pẹ tí tí ní “A-bẹnu-bí-ẹnu-òbọ”; ká şá sọ pé, “Ìwọ Lámọnrín, òbọ ní ó.”*

*O pe tit ni a-bi-enu-bi-enu-obo; ka sa o so pe, iwo lamonrin, obo ni o.*

“It is mere circumlocution to say, ‘A person has a mouth like a fool’s; one should rather say, ‘You, so-and-so, you are a fool’” (p. 263).

- iii. *Àbàtá pani; àbàtá pani; ká sá sọ pé odò-ó gbéni lọ*  
*Abata pani; abata pani; k so pe odo o gbeni lo.*

“He died in the mire; he died in the mire; let us simply say that the person drowned” (p. 250).

- iv. *“Àdàpè ọrò ò jẹ ká mọ itumọ orúkọ”*  
*Adape oro o je ka mo itumo orulo*

“Riddling makes it impossible for one to know the meanings of names” (p. 251).

- v. *“Ài-fẹ-àlejò-şe là nwi pé “Ọrẹ ọrẹ-ẹ mí dé”; ká sàà ti wí pé, “Ọrẹ-ẹ mí dé.”*  
*Ai-fe-alejoo-se la nwi pe “ore ore-e mi de’ ka saa ti wi pe, ore-e mi de*

“Reluctance-to-extend-hospitality makes one say, “My friend's friend has arrived”; one should simply say, “My friend has arrived.” *Online*

- vi. *“Ebí npa mí” ò sẹé fifé wí”*  
*Ebi n pa mi, o see fi ife wi*

“To say I’m hungry, one can’t whistle!” *online*

- vii. *“Àjànàkú kúro ni ‘A rí nkan firi’; bí a bá rérin ká wí”*  
*Ajanaku kuro ni a ri nkan firi, bi a ba ri erin ka wi*

“The elephant is more than something of which one says, ‘I caught a fleeting glimpse of something’; if one saw an elephant, one should say so” (p. 239).

- viii. *“Ọjú gba-n-gba là nta awọ gbà-ń-gbà”*  
*Oju gbangba la n ta awo gbangba*

“It is out in the open that one spreads a huge skin”(p. 251).

- ix. *“Bí òwe bí òwe nIfá nsọrọ”*  
*Bi owe bi owe ni ifa n soro*

“Like proverbs, like proverbs are the pronouncements of Ifá” (p. 112).

- x. *“A kì í tí ojú on-íka-mesàn-án kà á”*

*A ki i ti oju oni ika mesan kaa*

“One does not count the fingers of a person who has only nine in his or her presence” (p. 107).

- xi. *“A kì í bú oba onígégè`lójú àwọ̀n èyàn-án rẹ̀”*

*A kii bu oba oni gege ni oju awon eniyan re*

“One does not insult a king with a goiter in the presence of his people” (p. 157).

- xii. *“Èni tí yó yàáni lówó, tí kò nù sinni, ohùnenu-u rẹ̀ la tí mmọ̀”*

*Eni ti yo yaani lowo, ti ko nu sinmi, ohun enu re ni a ti n mo*

“The person who will lend money and will not keep pestering one for repayment, one can tell from the tone of his or her voice” (p. 131).

#### **Bilateral Power of Tongue (2 +, -)**

- i. *“Gbólóhùn kan-án ba ọ̀rọ̀ je; gbólóhùn kan-án tún ọ̀rọ̀`se”*

*Gbolohun kan-an ba oro je, gbolohun kan tun oro se*

“One solitary statement muddies an entire affair; one solitary statement clears all the confusion” (p. 183).

- ii. *“Ènu tí igbín fì bú òrìṣà ní ñfì-í lẹ̀lẹ̀ lẹ̀bá a”*

*Enu ti igbin fib u orisa ni n fi lo ile lo ba a*

“The same mouth with which the snail insults the god is the one on which it crawls to the god” (p. 40).

#### **Negative power of Speech (8-)**

- i. *“Pẹ̀tẹ̀pẹ̀tẹ̀ ọ̀rọ̀, a-ta-síni-lára-má-wọ̀n-ọ̀n”*

*Petepete oro, a ta sini ni ara ma won*

“The soiling caused by speech stains a person and cannot be removed”

(‘Injury by spoken words cannot be healed’) (p. 207).

- ii. *“Ipa ọ̀gbẹ̀ ní ñsàn; ipa ohùn kì í sà̀n”*

*Ipa pgbe ni nsan, ipa ohun kii sun*

“The wound left by a cutlass may heal, but the wound left by speech does not heal” (p. 134).

iii. *“Òrò lomọ etí híjẹ”*

*Oro ni omo eti n je*

“Words are what the child of the ear eats” (“People who misbehave must endure tongue-lashes” (p. 94).

iv. *“Ènu àimenu, ètè àimétè, ní nímú oràn bá ereke”*

*Enu aimentu, ete aimate, ni n mu oran an ereke*

“A mouth that will not stay shut; lips that will not stay closed are what bring trouble to the cheeks” (p. 134).

v. *“Ènu iná ní npa iná; ẹnu èrò ní npa èrò”*

*Enu ina ni npa ina, enu ero ni n pa ero*

“The mouth of the louse is its death; the mouth of the nit is its death” (p. 180).

vi. *“Ì-dún-kídùn-ún ọyo ni wn fi nso ọyonígi; ì-fkúf ọgbìgbì ni wn fi nta ọgbìgbìlókò; ì-jẹ- kújẹ àdán ní hí-í tẹnu p fẹnu ẹnu”*

*I dunkidun oyo ni won fi n so oyonigi; i-ku ogbigbi ni won fi n at ogbigbiloko; i-je kuje adan ni nfi I tenu pe fie nu so*

“It is the incessant chattering of the Pataguenon monkey that causes people to belabor it with sticks; it is the annoying sounds of the ọgbìgbì bird that causes people to throw stones at it; it is indiscriminate feeding that causes the bat to ingest food and excrete with the same mouth” (p. 184).

vii. *“Èlejo kú sílé, aláròyé kú síta gbangba”*

*Elejo ku sile, alaroye ku sita gbangba*

“The person involved in an affair dies at home; the spokesperson dies out in the open” (p. 176).

viii. *“Kpro owo yovwi ure ta cho”*

“A slip of the tongue is worse than a slip of the foot” (Ohwovoriole, 2009, p. 132).

**Relationship of Action and talk (8+)**

i. *“A kì í gbé odò jiyàn-an ọşẹ hó tàbí kò hó”*



*A kii gbe odo jiyar ose ho tabi ko ho*

“Where the claim can be put to the test, the verbal argument is foolish” (p. 104).

ii. *“Ó jọ gàtè, kò jọ gàtè, ó fẹ̀şẹ̀ méjèjèjì tiro rìn”*

*O jo gate ko jo gate, o fese mejejeji tiro rin*

“It may seem like staggering, and it may not seem like staggering, but he is tipping forward on tiptoes” (“A euphemism does not make an action anything other than what it is”) (p. 262).

iii. *“Tábà tí ò dùn, ẹ̀nu ò tà á”*

*Taba ti o dun, enu o ta a*

“Snuff that is not pleasant, the mouth cannot sell” (p. 157).

iv. *“A kì í rí bàtá nílẹ̀ ká fẹ̀nu sín-in jẹ”*

*A kii ri bata ni ile ka fie nu sin je*

“One does not see a bàtá drum on the ground and use one’s mouth to mimic its sound” (p. 106).

v. *“Èbìtì ẹ̀nu ò tàsé”*

*Ebiti enu o tase*

“The mouth-trap never misses” (p. 65).

vi. *Ènú dùn-ún ròfọ́; agada ọwọ́ dùn-ún şánko”*

*enu dun ro efo, agada owo dun san eko*

“The mouth cooks vegetable stew most expertly; the hand, emulating a machete cuts a field most effortlessly” (p. 212).

vii. *“Oro pipo kò kún agbon”*

*Oro pipo ko kun agbon*

“Many words do not fill a basket” (p. 10).

viii. *“Àgbàlagbàú şenú kerenden; ẹ̀yí tó máa şe mbẹ̀ ní kùn-un rẹ”*

*Agbalagbaa se inu kerreden ; eyi to maa se n be ni ikun re*

“An elder shows a smooth belly to the world, but what he will do is known to him” (p. 99).

**Silence (8)****i. “*Okunrin jejebiwà-kunkun*”**

*Okunrin jeje biwa kunkun*

“An easygoing man’s gentle mien hides a strong disposition” (p. 151).

**ii. “*Qbe şilò-ó mbáni şeré a ní kò mú; bí eré bí eré ó npani lówó*”**

*Obe silo n bani sere a ni ko mu, bi ere bi ere o n pani lowo*

“The şilò knife is playing with one and one says it is not sharp; just as in play it has slashed one's hand” (online)

**iii. “*Ìdáké róró ni ti òkú, aláàyè ló n fohùn*”**

*Idake roro ni ti oku, alaaye lo n fohun*

“Silence is an attribute of the dead: he who is alive, speaks” (Stone, 2006, p. 390).

**iv. “*èrù máa dáké róró şùgbón òní enu bí ilù*”**

*Eru maa dake roro sugbon oni enu bi ilu*

“Fear a silent man. He has lips like a drum” (Chong, 2001, p. 145).

**v. “*Èledee ní ojo tí òún ti já ogbon hùn, ojo náà ni orò ti niun lára mo*”**

*Eledee ni ojo ti oun ti ja ogbon hun, ojo naa ni oro ti ni oun lara mo*

“The pig says since the day it learned to reply to every statement with a grunt it has not got into any trouble” (p. 129).

**vi. “*A kì í dáke şìwí; a kì í wòsùn kádàrà̀n*”**

*A kii dake siwi, a ki I wosun kadaran*

“One does not keep quiet and yet misspeak; one does not silently contemplate the world and yet get into trouble” (p. 55).

**vii. “*Àdán sọ orí kodò, ó n wòşe eyẹ gbogbo*”**

*Adan so ori kodo, o n wose eye gbogbo*

“The bat hangs its head and contemplates the doings of birds” (“The quiet person sees more than the loudmouth”) (p. 407).

**viii. “*Fehintì kí o rí işe èké; fì ara pamo kí o gbo bí aşeni-í ti n sọ*”**

*Fehinti ki o ri ise eke, fi ara pamo ki o gbo bi a seni i ti n so*

“Sit back and you will see how a devious person operates; conceal yourself and you will hear

how those who seek others' destruction speak" ("One must be cagey in order to learn the truth about unreliable people") (p. 181).

### **Loquacity (7 -)**

**i. "ení bá sọ púpo á ùsìsọ"**

*Eni ba so pupo a siso*

"Whoever talks a lot will misspeak" (p. 177).

**ii. "Oro púpo ò kún agbon; iro ní mmú wá"**

*Oro pupo o kun agbon, iro ni n mu wa*

"A lot of words will not fill a basket; they will only lead to lies" (p. 206).

**iii. "Kò sí ohun tó yára pa ẹni bí oro àsojù"**

*Ko si ohun to yara pa eni bi oro asoju*

"There is nothing that kills faster than talking too much" (p. 191).

**iv. "Eni t'o so pupo a si so"**

*Eni ti o so pupo a si so*

"Whoever says a lot will say the wrong thing" (p. 11).

**v. "O dájú dánu, o ò mọ ẹsán mésàn"**

*O daju danu, o o mo esan mesan*

"Your eyes flinch not and your mouth is unstoppable, but you do not know nine times nine" ("Too much mouth often indicates too little substance") (p. 91).

**vi. "Ìlọrin o lóosà; ẹnu loosà Ìlọrin"**

*Ilorin o ni orisa; enu ni orisa ilorin*

"The Ìlórín person has no god; his or her mouth is his or her god" ("The person under reference is all mouth and no substance" (p. 212).

**vii. "Ahon ni ipínle ẹnu"**

*Ahon ni ipinle enu*

"The tongue is the border of the mouth" (p. 52).

## Sweet Talk (6, 5+, 1-)

i. *“òrò rere ní òyò obì lápò; orò búburú ní òyò ofà ní ápó”*

*Oro rere ni n yo obi ni apo, oror bubur ni nyo ofa ni apo*

“Good talk brings the kola nut out of the pouch; provocative talk draws the arrow out of the quiver” (p. 155).

ii. *“òrò pẹ̀lẹ́ yí ibínú pada”*

*Oro pele yi ibinu pada*

“A good word takes kola nut from the pocket” (p. 214).

iii. *“Ohun pele, o yo obi n’ apo; ohun lile yo ida n’ako” online*

*Ohun pele, o yo obi ni apo, ohun lile yo ida ni ako*

“A gentle voice brings kola from the pocket while a harsh voice brings out a sword from its sheath”

iv. *“Tútù ní òtẹ̀nu ẹ̀ja wá”*

*Tutunni n tenu eja wa*

“Only coolness comes out of the fish’s mouth” (p. 276).

v. *“Yí mi sẹ̀bẹ̀, kí n yí ọ sí póró oko”*

*Yi mi siebe, ki n yi o si poro oko*

“Throw me on the heaps, and I will throw you into the furrows” (“To whatever attack you mount against me, I will respond in kind”) (p. 249).

vi. *“Eégún pẹ́ lóde, ó fètè òkè dáhùn; won ní, “Baba kú àbo” ó ní, “Hì ì ì”*

*Eegun pe lode, o fete oke dahun; won ni, baba ku abo, o ni, hi i*

“The masquerader stayed too long on parade and was reduced to speaking with his upper lip. They said, ‘Welcome, father,’ and he responded, ‘He-e-e-e.’” (p. 76).

### Miscellaneous Verbal Etiquettes (7)

i. *“Ojú ni lẹ̀ orọ̀ wà”*

*Oju ni oro wa*

“Discourse is in the eyes” (p. 264).

ii. *“Ọ̀mọ̀ orán bèèrè oràn wò; Àjàpá ní, “Ènití won pa lánàá, kàà kú tán?”*

*O mo oran beere oran wo, ajapa ni, eniti won pa lanaa, kaa ku tan*

“If you know the answer to a question already, don’t ask it” (p. 265).

iii. *“Ìyàwó ò fọ̀hùn ó fọ̀ ojú”*

*Iyawo o fo ohun o fo oju*

“The bride does not speak, and she is also blind” (p. 188).

iv. *“À-jókòó-àì-dìdè, à-soro-àì-gbèsì, ká sinni tíí ká má padà sílé: àì-sunwon ní ñgbehìn- in re”*

*A-jokoo-ai-dide, a-soro-ai-gbesi, ka sinni titi ma pada sile: sunwon ni ngbehin in re*

“Sitting-without-getting-up, speaking without-waiting-for-responses, walking people on their way and not turning back: unpleasantness is what they breed” (p. 67).

v. *“Ọ̀ràn yí ò dùn mí”: èẹ̀kanşoşo là híwí I”*

*Oran yi o dun mi, eekan soso ni a n wi I*

“This matter does not hurt me”: stating it only once suffices” (p. 252).

vi. *“Ilé kan-án wàl Oyoo nígbà àtíjo tí à ñpè ní Àkíje; oyinbó kú níbe”*

*Ile kan wa ni oyo, nigba atijo ti a n pe ni akije, oyinbo kuu ni ibe*

“There was a house in Oyo in ancient times called One-that-does-not-acknowledge greetings; a white man died there” (p. 269).

vii. *“Ènu oníhin ni ihin-ín tí ñdùn”*

*Enu onihin ni ihin ti n dun*

It is in the mouth of the person who has the news that the news is interesting (p. 480).

### Appropriacy (6 +)

i. *“Ìgbà ara là n bú ara”*

*Igba ara la n bu ara*

“One swears when it is time to swear” (p. 136).

ii. **“Ibi tí a tí ñjẹun bí ikun bí ikun, a kì í sọrọ̀ bú kẹ̀lẹ̀bẹ̀ bú kẹ̀lẹ̀bẹ̀ níbe”**

***Ibi tí a tí n je bí ikun bí ikun, a kí I soro bú kelebe bú kelebe ní ibe***

“Where one is eating food which looks like mucus, one should not speak of matters like phlegm” (p. 135).

iii. **“Eégún ègbá, ègbá ní ñfo”**

***Egugun egba, egba ni nfo***

“The *egbá* masquerader must need to speak *egbá*” (p. 127).

iv. **“Eleeḡà kì í lọ ẹḡà-a re ká sọ pé o di ijẹḡà tí a tí jẹun”**

***Eleefa kii lo efa re ka so pe o di ijefa ti a ti jeun***

“When a person proclaims the loss of six articles, one does not respond by saying one has not eaten in six days” (p. 79).

v. **“A kii se elejo ní “Ngbo?”**

***A kii se elejo ni Ngbo?***

“One does not ask the main litigant, ‘How about it?’” (p. 236).

vi. **“Amoràn bini Oyo, bí o bá gbé kete léri, wọ̀n a ní oko lo ñlọ̀ tàbí odo”**

***Amoran bini oyo, bi o ba gbe kete le ori, won a ni oko ni o lo ni tabi odo***

“People who know the answer yet ask the question, natives of Oyo: if they see you carrying a water pot, they ask whether you are on your way to the farm or the stream” (p. 240).

### **Irreversibility (3-)**

i. **“Eyin lọ̀rọ̀; bó bá balẹ̀ fíḡo ní ñfọ̀”**

***Eyin ni oro, bi o ba ile fifo ni nfo***

“Words are eggs; when they drop on the floor, they shatter into pieces” (p. 181).

- ii. *“Eghen oun e i, do ba a ti ja fo e du se e”*

*Eghen oun e i, do ba a ti ja fo e du se e*

“Egg voice is if it falls and breaks, it cannot be gathered together” (Akinmade, 2005, p. 156).

- iii. *Itó tí a tu sílẹ̀ kì í tún padà re ẹ̀nu ẹ̀ni mọ́”*

*Ito ti a tu si ile ki i tun pada re enu eni mo*

“The saliva one has spat out of one's mouth does not return to one's mouth” (p. 187).

### Think First

#### Yoruba (2 +)

- iii. *“Eyin ni oro Bi ó bá bale, fífo ní nfo”*

*Eyin ni oro bi O ba bale, fífo ni nfo*

“Speech is an egg, when it drops on the floor it shatters” (p. 168).

- iv. *“Àgbàlagbà ma nyájú ni, àgbàlagbà o kii yánu”*

*Agbalagba ma n yaju ni, agablagba kii ya enu*

“An elderly person is quick to see, but not quick to speak” Online

#### Gender and Talk (34)

- i. *“Obìnrin kì í ròhìn àjò tán”*

*Obinrin kii rohin ajo tan*

“A woman is never done telling about the trip she took” (p. 390).

- ii. *“Ìyàwó ò fọ̀ ohùn ó fọ̀ ojú”*

*Iyawo o fo ohun o fo oju*

“The bride does not speak, and she is also blind” (p. 188).

- iii. *“Adásínìlrun, obìnrin ọ̀dọ̀gọ̀: ẹ̀lẹ̀rú ńwáẹ̀rú , ó ní kí wọ̀n jẹ́ kí ọ̀kọ̀ ọ̀dun tí ọ̀kọ̀ dé ná”*

*Adasinilrun, obinrin odogo: eleru nwaeru, o ni ki won je ki oko oun ti oko de na*

“A woman’s loose mouth is a dangerous thing for the owner and his or her kin” (p. 325)

iv. ***“Obinrin L’eke, obinrin l’odale”***

***Obinrin ni eke, obinrin ni odale***

“The woman is a gossip; the woman is a traitor” (Olojede, 2012, p. 8).

v. ***“A benu mimu bi obe”***

***A benu mimu bi obe***

“Her lips are as sharp as the knives” (Olojede, 2012, p. 8).

vi. ***“Obinrin tori oro rodo”***

***Obinrin ti ori oro re odo***

“Women go to the stream only in search of gossip” (p. 378)

vii. ***“Oro ti aboyun ba so, eni meji lo so o”***

***Oro ti aboyun ba so, eni meji lo so o***

“Whatever a pregnant woman says is said by two people” (p. 283)

viii. ***“Obinrin ko ni gogogò”***

***Obinrin ko ni gongongo***

“Women have no Adam’s apple” (i.e. They cannot keep secrets)” (p. 287).

ix. ***“Obinrin ko see finu han”***

***Obinrin ko see finu han***

“A woman is not suitable to expose one’s secrets to” (p. 377).

x. ***“Omùgo èyàn ní mbóbinrin mule; ojo tóbinrin bá mawo lawó bàje”***

***Omugo eniyan nib a obinrin mu ile, ojo ti obinrin ba mawo lawo baje***

“Only a foolish person enters into a secret pact with a woman; the day a woman knows a cult mystery is the day it is exploded” (p. 135).

xi. ***“Ara ya ayaju obinrin ode ti o ni oko oun pa araba si idi okete”***

***Ara ya ayaju obinrin ode ti o ni oko oun pa araba si idi okete***

“Over-excitement, the wife of the hunter, who said that her husband killed an Araba tree beneath a squirrel” (Yusuf, 1994 p. 285).



xii. ***“Pa mi n ku” se ori benbe si oko”***

*Pa mi n ku se ori bebe si oko*

“‘Kill-me-and-let-me-die’ acts defiantly towards her husband” (p. 285).

xiii. ***“Mo ku! Mo ku!’, obinrin si tun ibi ana re”***

*Moku! moku!, obinrin sit un ibi ana re*

“I’m dead! I’m dead!!, cried a woman (during sexual intercourse), yet she went again to the place at which she was ‘killed’ yesterday” (p. 265).

xiv. ***“Esin obinrin soro gùn, o le gbéni subù”***

*Esin obinrin soro gun, o le gbeni subu*

“It is not good for a man to climb on his wife’s horse because he can fall to his death” (Balogun 2010, p. 7).

xv. ***“Awo burúkú ni lobinrin lè şe, obinrin ni àlè mēfà, mēfēfà ò mọ ara wọn”***

*Awo buruku ni obinrin le se, obinrin ni ale mefa, mefeefa o mo ara won*

“Women are capable of only vicious secrecy: a woman has six lovers, (and) the six do not discern about each other” (Olojede 2012, p. 8).

xvi. ***“Obinrin lodale, obinrin leke, Emo fi inu han obinrin”***

*Obinrin lodale, obinrin leke, e ma fi inu han obinrin*

“Women are disloyal and deceitful; Do not expose your inner thought to a woman” (p. 306).

xvii. ***“Eniyan ti ko gbon ni i bobiriin mule Ijo obinrin bo mawo lo baje”***

*Eniyan ti ko bon ni bobinrin mule, ijo obinrin bo mawo lo baje*

“Only a stupid man takes an oath with a woman; the day a woman knows the secrets of a cult, that cult is destroyed” (p. 307).

xviii. ***“E ma je ka finu han’ obinrin; ibi ti oju re o to, enu re debe”***

*Emi ma je ka finu han obinrin, ibi ti oju re o to, enu re debe*

“We should desist from revealing our secrets to a woman; her mouth will speak more than her eyes can see” (p. 308).

**xix.** *“Etí ni obìnrín fì ñ gbo ohùn orò”*

*Eti ni obinrin fi n gbo ohun oro*

“It is only with the ears that a woman hears the voice of Orò” (p. 77).

**xx.** *“Orí jẹ kí mpé méjì” obìnrin kò dénú”*

*Ori je ki m pe meji obinrin ko de inu*

“Women often pay lip service to concepts they do not believe in” (p. 265).

**xxi.** *“Orisa, je n pe meji’ obinrin ko denu”*

*Orisa je n pe meji obinrin ko de inu*

“When a woman says, “God, let my husband marry a second wife”, the prayer is not whole-hearted” (Yusuf, 1994 p. 286).

**xxii.** *“Nwó lọ, nwó lọ’, obìnrin fì nda ẹrù ba ọkọ”*

*’Nwo lo, nwo lo’ obnrin fi n da eru ba oko*

“I’ll divorce you, I’ll divorce you’ is the weapon with which a woman threatens her husband.” (Olojede 2012, p. 8).

**xxiii.** *“Ihale ebo iya egbe ti yoo pa oromodie, ti o lo ree ta asia, ti o tun n pase pe ki gbogbo ilu ma lo si ibikan”*

*Ihale ebo iya agbe ti yoo pa oromodie, ti o lo ree ta asia, ti o tun n pase pe ki gbogbo ilu ma lo si ibikan*

“The braggadocio of the old woman's sacrifice: because she wanted to kill a chick, she hoisted a flag and ordered that everybody in the town remain indoors”(Yusuf, 1994, p. 284).

**xxiv.** *“Obun riku oko tiran mo; o ni lati ojo ti oko oun ti ku ni oun o ti we mo”*

*Obun ri iku oko ti oran mo, o ni lati ijo ti oko ohun ti ku oun o ti we mo*

“The dirty woman uses her husband's death as an excuse for her filthiness: she said that she had stopped taking a bath right from the time he died”(Yusuf, 1994, p. 287).

**xxv.** *“Obinrin so iwa nu, o ni oun o ni ori oko”*

*Obinrin so iwa nu, o ni oun o ni ori oko*

“A woman lacks character, and yet says that she is not lucky with marriage” (p. 287).

**xxvi.** “*Òjòwú ò já gèlè; kooro ló lè já*”

*Ojowu o ja gele, kooro lo le ja*

“Jealous women are all mouth and no action” (p. 145).

**xxvii.** “*Obínrin-ín bímo fún ọ o ní o ò rínú e; ọfẹ́ kó o nífun ni?*”

*Obinrin ni omo fun o o ni o rinu e, ofe ko o ni fun ni*

“A woman has a child by you, and you still say you do not know her mind; would you have exposed her intestines?” (p. 273).

**xxviii.** “*Ọrọ̀ ò dùn lénú iyá olè*”

*Oro o dun ni enu iya ole*

“Speech is not pleasant in the mouth of the mother of a thief” (p. 176).

**xxix.** “If you have five wives, then you have five tongues” (Schipper, 1991, p. 192).

**xxx.** “He who is not smart in speech and argument should not take a talkative wife” (p. 193).

**xxxi.** “You can trust your brother, your father, your mother, but never your wife” (p. 193).

**xxxii.** “Love your wife, but do not trust her” (p. 194).

**xxxiii.** “The food of a woman who speaks sweetly will never be rejected by her husband” (p. 194).

**xxxiv.** “Who follows a woman's plan will drown himself” (p. 194).

## ANNEXURE B

### LIST OF PUNJABI PROVERBS

This list contains all Punjabi proverbs discussed in the thesis arranged in a descending order according to the culturematic semantic density of the themes discussed in chapter 5.

#### Power of words (11+19=30)

- i. *zabaan e raaj bethavy, te zabaan e bheek mangaway* (3, p. 342).  
 زبان ای راج بٹھاوے، تے زبان ای بھیک منگاوے  
 The tongue makes one sit on the throne or make one beg.
- ii. *Gul e takhat bethandi ae te gul e bheek mangandi ae* (2, p. 39).  
 گل ای تخت بٹھاندی اے تے گل ای بھیک منگاندی اے  
 Words make you sit on the throne or make you a beggar.
- iii. *zabaan e takhat bethandi ae, zabaan e khote te bethandi ae* (3, p. 342).  
 زبان ای تخت بٹھاندی اے، زبان ای کھوتے تے بٹھاندی اے  
 The tongue makes you sit on the throne or ride a donkey.
- iv. *zabaan e ghorray charhaway te zabaan e litter pawaway* (3, p. 342).  
 زبان ای گھوڑے چڑھاوے تے زبان ای لٹر پواوے  
 The tongue makes you ride a horse and the same can become a cause of being beaten up.
- v. *jibh e hathi charhaway, jibh e sir katavay* (1, p. 218).  
 جیبھ ای ہاتھی چڑھاوے، جیبھ ای سر کٹاوے  
 The tongue can make you ride the elephant, the same can hang you on the gallows.
- vi. *jibh e halal ae jibh e haraam ae* (1, p. 218).  
 جیبھ ای حلال اے جیبھ ای حرام اے  
 Only the tongue is fair or unfair.
- vii. *jibh e sajan noo'n dushman te dushman noo'n sajan banandi ae* (p. 218).  
 جیبھ ای سجن نوں دشمن تے دشمن نوں سجن بناندی اے  
 The tongue makes people friends or enemies.

- viii. *jehe baat tehi zaat* (p. 167).  
جیہی بات تہی ذات  
Like words like caste/class.
- ix. *Jedi zabaan ohdi zaat ucheri* (p. 380).  
جیہدی زبان تکھیری اوہدی ذات اچیری  
A person with an oily tongue is socially upgraded.
- x. *Zabaan thalle dukaan* (4, p. 78).  
زبان تھلے دکان  
The shop is under the tongue.
- xi. *nokari di jarr zabaan ute way* (p. 463).  
نوکاری دی جڑ زبان اتے وے  
The root of one's job is in his/her tongue.

#### Negative Power (19)

- i. *jay ik bol Shah Mansoor nah bolda te sulī kyu'n charrhda?* (p. 157).  
جے اک بول شاہ منصور نہ بولدا تے سولی کیوں چڑھدا؟  
If Shah Mansoor has not uttered the word, why would he be hanged?
- ii. *zabaan naal dhi puttār vi baigane ho jandy nei'n* (p. 249).  
زبان نال دھی پتر وی بیگانے بوجاندے نیں  
The unwise use of the tongue may avert one's own daughters and sons.
- iii. *Jehrra bolda ae, oho marda ae* (p. 164).  
جیہڑا بولدا اے، اوہو مردا اے  
The one who speaks, dies!
- iv. *Gul daa thirrkya bunda te taahni daa thirrkya bandar fair nai'n sambhal da* (1, p. 281)  
گل دا تھڑکیا بندہ تے تہنی دا تھڑکیا بندر فیر نیں سمبھلدا  
A tongue slipped and the monkey tumbled from a tree can never be equaled.
- v. *Mu'nho'n kaddi gul, te pay gya wall* (p. 349).

مونہوں کڈی گل تے بے گیا ول

Just uttered some words and got entangled.

- vi. *Gul akhdi ae to'n mainu mu'nho'n kadh, mei'n tenu pindo'n kadhni aa'n* (2, p. 36).

گل آکھیدی اے توں مینوں مونہوں کڈھ، میں تینوں پنڈوں کڈھانی آن

The talk says, you utter me from your mouth and I will expel you from your village.

- vii. *Jehrra bolay ohi kunddi khole* (p. 164).

جیہڑا بولے اوبی کنڈی کھولے

One who speaks has to open the lock of the door

- viii. *Mu'nho'n niklee gul, te pay gaya tar thal* (4, p. 229).

مونہوں نکلی گل، تے بے گیا تر تھل

The talk uttered by the mouth, causes severe disruption/upheaval.

- ix. *Talwar da phatt mil janda ae, zabaan da phatt nahi milda* (p. 128).

پھٹ مل جاندا اے، زبان دا پھٹ نہیں ملداتلوار دا

A wound of the sword is curable, but of words is incurable.

- x. *Gul da zakhham talwar day zakhham nalo'n doonga hunda ay* (p. 307).

گل دا زخم تلوار دے زخم نالوں ڈونگا ہوندا اے

Wounds given by words are deeper than given by a sword.

- xi. *Is jibh da kih ja si? Gul akh kay ander warr ja si* (p. 168).

اس جیبھ دا کیہ جا سی؟ گل کر کے اندر وڑ جا سی

What will be the damage of the tongue, which will recoil inside after uttering any words?

- xii. *Gaalh kaddan to'n goonga vee bolay* (p. 304).

گالھ کڈھن توں گونگا وی بولے

Even a tongueless person would reply to abusive words.

- xiii. *Chum di zaban jo hoi, dhoka kha ee jandi ae* (p. 466).

چم دی زبان جو ہونی، دھوکہ کھا ای جاندی اے

The tongue is made of flesh, so it gets deceived.

- xiv. *Jida'n di kehni odha'n di sun'ni* (p. 32).

جیداں دی کہنی اودھاں دی سننی  
Like talking, like listening.

xv. *Jibh diwani apne kam koo'n sayani (p. 219).*

جیبھ دیوانی اپنے کم کوں سیانی  
A mad tongue becomes sane when it turns to itself.

xvi. *Mu'nh'o'n bolay te heins tolay (3, p. 414).*

مونہوں بولے تے بینس تولے  
He/she does not talk usually, but when does, it is some abominable talk.

xvii. *Murda bolay ga te kafan pharry ga (3, p. 414).*

مردہ بولے گا تے کپھن پاڑے گا  
The cadaverous will talk tearing its coffin.

xviii. *Chundri jibho'n sada chandri gul e nikaldi ae (p. 225).*

چندری جیبھوں سدا چندری گل ای نکلدی اے  
A hexed tongue utters an unfortunate word ever.

xix. *Mu'nh icho'n chandri gul nai kadhi di, Koi wella qabuliyat da hunda ae (p. 284).*

منہ اچوں چندری گل نہیں کڈھی دی، کوئی ویلا قبولیت دا ہندا اے  
Cursed words should not be uttered, there can be any moment for divine acceptance.

#### Loquacity (23 -)

i. *Oona'n hoya kharr kharr bolay, bherya kadi nah bolay (p. 309).*

اونان بویا کھڑ کھڑ بولے، بھریا کدی نہ بولے  
Only a half-filled vessel makes much noise, the filled one will never do so.

ii. *Jehrra bhanda sukhna huvay ohi kharrakda ae (p. 165).*

جیہڑا بھانڈا سکھنا ہووے اوبی کھڑکدا اے  
Only an empty vessel makes a noise.

iii. *thotha chuna bajay ghana (p. 134).*

تھوتھا چنا باجے گھنا  
Empty vessels make louder sounds.

iv. *Khali bhaanda bohta kharrke (1, p. 229).*

خالی بھانڈا بوبتا کھڑکے

Empty vessels make louder sounds.

- v. *Jhallay kitho'n japan, gula'n karun ta'n sanjapan* (3, p. 543).

جھلے کتھوں جاپن، گلاں کرن تاں سنجاپن

A foolish man is recognized by his talk.

- vi. *Lami zaban diharre thorrey* (4, p. 466).

لمی زبان دیہاڑے تھوڑے

The long tongue shortens the days in this world. Being talkative, would number your days in this world.

- vii. *Lami jibh te cheti mout* (p. 324).

لمی جیبھ تے چھیتی موت

A long tongue (being too talkative) causes an earlier death of the speaker.

- viii. *Jinha'n khout, onha'n mu'nh mokla* (4, p. 250).

جینہاں کھوٹ، اوہناں منہ موکلاء

The higher adulteration, the more open mouth.

- ix. *itni koo'n jaan 100 gaz di zabaan* (p. 370).

ایتنی کوں جان سو گز دی زبان

A tiny person who has a 100 meter long tongue (speaks a lot).

- x. *Kaa'n da jhoota khada ae* (4, p. 389).

کاں دا جھوٹھا کھادا اے

He has eaten the leftover by the crow.

- xi. *Kaa'n khadi betha ei'n* (4, p. 390).

کاں کھادی بیٹھا این

He has eaten the crow.

- xii. *Kute da bheja khadi betha ei'n* (4, p. 391).

کُتے دا بھيجا کھادی بیٹھا این

He has eaten the brain of a dog.

- xiii. *Meri jibh hey be ikhtiyari* (p. 353).



میری جیبھ بے بے اختیاری

My tongue is out of my control.

xiv. *Chambrray di zaban ae chook jandi ae* (p. 174).

چمبڑے دی زبان اے چُک جاندی اے

The tongue is made of leather and it slips.

xv. *Mei'n te bechari, meri jibh hay bey ikhtyari* (p. 419).

میں تے بیچاری میری جیبھ بے بے اختیاری

I am innocent, my tongue is not in my control.

xvi. *Marde day huth pharry jande nei'n, kehnde di zaban nai pharri jandi.* (p. 320).

ماردے دے ہتھ پھڑے جاندے نیں، کہندے دی زبان نہیں پھڑی جاندی

You can stop a physical fight, but not the tongue of an aggressive person.

xvii. *Nuk kupya'n mu'nh khulda ae* (5, p. 345).

نک کپیاں منہ کھلدا اے

A closed nose makes the mouth wide opened.

xviii. *Mu'nh to'n lathi loi, kih kare ga koi* (5, p. 344).

منہ توں لتھی لونی، کیہ کرے گا کوئی

When a person becomes shameless, no one can do something in this regard.

xix. *Bolat bolat budhay bakari* (2, p. 232).

بولت بولت بڈھے بکاری

The old man is talking like a dog.

xx. *Jutta'n da mu'nh koharrey parrya* (3, p. 233).

جٹاں دا منہ کوہاڑے پریا

The mouth of the *Jutts* is cut with an ax.

xxi. *Chota mu'nh te vadi gul* (p. 427).

چھوٹا منہ تے وڈی گل

Small mouth, big talk.

xxii. *Dund khandya'n ghis gaye nei'n, jibh gilay kar deya'n nai ghissi (p. 327).*  
 دندکھانڈیاں گھس گئے نیں، جیبھ گلے کر دیاں نیں گھسی  
 The teeth have grated due to eating, but the tongue is not grated of complaining.

xxiii. *Rogi di jibh te waid day kunn Rub sababi wadday (p. 481).*  
 روگی دی جیبھ تے وید دے کن رِب سببی وڈے  
 A patient's tongue and a healer's ear are by default long.

#### Irreversibility, Longevity, Uncontrollability (19 -)

i. *Dilo'n uthi, sungh te aayi, jibh te aayi, hoi parai (1, p. 235)*

دلوں اٹھی، سنگھ تے آئی، جیبھ تے آئی، ہوئی پرائی

The (talk) rose from the heart, reached the throat, reached the tongue and shifted to others

ii. *Mu'nh wicho'n niklee, khudai tak uprri (2, p. 37)*

منہ وچوں نکلی، خدائی تک اپڑی

Out of the mouth, reached all the creations of God.

iii. *Mu'nho'n niklee parai hoi (p. 37)*

مونہوں نکلی پرائی ہوئی

Out of the mouth, became others'.

iv. *Mu'nho'n niklee tan turat parai (p. 349)*

مونہوں نکلی تاں ترت پرائی

Out of the mouth, instantly becomes others' possession.

v. *Mu'nho'n niklee, gul parai (4, p. 229)*

مونہوں نکلی گل پرائی

Out of the mouth, the talk goes to others' custody.

vi. *Gul mu'nho'n niklee te parai hoi (3, p. 307)*

گل مونہوں نکلی تے پرائی ہوئی

Words once spoken are not yours anymore.

vii. *Jibh janay ikko waar (p. 218)*

جیبھ جنے اکو وار

The talk gives birth only once.

viii. *Zaban janay ikko waar, maa'n janay waar waar (3, p. 342)*

زبان جنے اکو وار، ماں جنے وار وار

The tongue breeds/generates only once, the mother breeds again and again.

ix. *Mu'nh vicho'n niklee, kothay charrhi (p. 38).*

منہ وچوں نکلی کوٹھے چڑھی

Out of mouth, reached the rooftop.

x. *Zaban to'n niklee kothay upri (3, p. 342).*

زبان توں نکلی کوٹھے اپڑی

Leaving the tongue, reaches the rooftop.

xi. *Mu'nh vicho'n niklee gul nai parat di (2, p. 39).*

منہ وچوں نکلی گل نہیں پرت دی

Words, once uttered can't be restored.

xii. *Bandoqo'n niklee goli, mu'nh'o'n niklee gul nai murrdi (1, p. 180).*

بندوقوں نکلی گولی مونہوں نکلی گل نہیں مڑدی

A bullet fired from a gun and the talk out of the mouth, both are irreversible.

xiii. *Teer kamano'n gul zabano'n nai murrdi (1, p. 207).*

تیر کمانوں گل زبانوں نہیں مڑدی

An arrow fired from an arch and the talk do not return.

### Uncontrollable Talk

i. *Mu'nh ai hoi nai rukdi (p. 37) .*

منہ آئی ہوئی نہیں رکدی

Reached the mouth, it does not stop.

ii. *Mai'n te bichari, meri jibh nah rehndi (p. 324).*

میں تے بیچارى میری جیبھ نہ رہندی

I am gutless but my tongue is out of my control.

## Longevity

- i. *Gaalee'n reh wehndiya'n nei'n, bunda nai rehnda* (4, p. 208).  
گلیں رہ و بندیاں نیں، بندہ نہیں رہندا  
Words remain and the speaker does not.
- ii. *Bunda nai renda bunday di gul reh jandi ae* (p. 86).  
بندہ نیں رہندا بندے دی گل رہ جاندی اے  
The speaker dies, but talk does not.
- iii. *Wela lungh janda ay per gul yaad reh jandi ae* (1, p. 301).  
ویلا لنگھ جاند اے پر گل یاد رہ جاندی اے  
Time passes, but the words stay forever.
- iv. *Hath vich pharri aa tasbi, mu'nh wich rakhi aa gaalh, maala eythe rehni te bol chalan ge naal* (p. 383).  
بتھ وچ پھڑی اے تسبیح، منہ وچ رکھی اے گالھ، مالا ایتھے رہنی تے بول چلن گے نال  
Holding prayer beads in hand and speaking abusive language, the garland will remain here and the words will go along to the hereafter.

## Sweet Talk (15 +)

- i. *Gurr nah daiye, gurr jehe gul te kariye* (p. 306).  
گڑ نہ دینے، گڑ جیہی گل تے کرنیے  
Don't hand over jaggary; but do talk sweet like it.
- ii. *Sharbet ghol nah ghol, bol mithay bol* (5, p. 411).  
شربیت گھول نہ گھول، بول مٹھے بول  
Don't shake sweet drink, but talk sweet words.
- iii. *Mithey bol te betha reh kol* (4, p. 220).  
میٹھے بول تے بیٹھا رہ کول  
Use sweet words and be seated beside me.
- iv. *Jehrra gurr dityo'n marey ohnu zehar kyu'n dena?* (p. 166).  
جیہڑا گڑ دیتوں مرے اوبنوں زہر کیوں دینا  
The person who dies with jaggary why give him poison?

- v. *Jibh rasili aapni, very mitt karey* (p. 159).  
جیبھ رسیلی اپنی، ویری مت کرے  
One's own dripping tongue, convert enemies into friends.
- vi. *Zubaan shiri'n mulak geeri'n* (p. 231).  
زبان شیریں ملک گیریں  
With sweet tongue, the whole country can be subdued.
- vii. *Mithey bola'n vich jadu hunda ae* (p. 220).  
میٹھے بولاں وچ جادو ہوندا اے  
There is magic in honeyed words.
- viii. *Narmi naal sunday vi pasma lai day nei'n* (p. 360).  
نرمی نال سنڈے وی پسمانی دے نیں  
With softness, even a bull may be milked.
- ix. *Mitha bol ta'n moti rol* (p. 336).  
مٹھا بول تان موتی رول  
Sweet talk can make the speaker roll precious pearls.
- x. *Mu'nh bhairra huvay te gul changi karni chai di ae* (p. 292).  
مونہ بہیڑا ہووے تے گل چنگی کرنی چاہیدی اے  
Having a deformed/unattractive face, use good words at least.
- xi. *Tail tama jaa'n koo'n miley, turat naram ho ja* (p. 132).  
تیل طمع جاں کوں ملے، ترت نرم ہو جا  
As oil makes the working of hard machines smooth, so sweet words help overcome rough situations.
- xii. *Mitha bol, te kih lagda ae mol?* (p. 336).  
مٹھا بول، تے کیہ لگدا اے مول  
Sweet words, do they cost anything?

xiii. *Naram mudai ta'n fazal e Kkhuda, sakhat mudai ta'n qehar e Kkhuda* (p. 360).

نرم مدعی تان فضل خدا، سخت مدعی تان قہر خدا

Soft talk brings blessings from God while the harshness invites His wrath.

xiv. *Jidha sur mitha, ohdi sardari vi mithi* (4, p. 16).

جیہدا سر مٹھا اویدی سرداری وی مٹھی

Whose tone is sweet, his captaincy is sweet too.

xv. *Mu'nh da mitha shah ae* (3, p. 314).

منہ دا مٹھا شاہ اے

The sweet spoken is the king.

### Silence (12 +)

i. *Ik chup 100 sukh* (p. 47).

اک چپ سو سکھ

A (single moment of) silence guarantees hundreds (moments) of comfort.

ii. *Sau so jo chup* (p. 250).

ساق سو جو چپ

The quiet one is the wiser one.

iii. *Bherya bhanda nai bolda* (p. 138).

بھریا بھانڈا نہیں بولدا

A filled vessel does not make a noise.

iv. *Gaala gul karey, syana qias karey* (4, p. 208).

گالا گل کرے، سیانا قیاس کرے

A talkative person talks and the wise man infers silently

v. *Ayana gul karey, syana qayas karey* (p. 33).

ایانا گل کرے، سیانا قیاس کرے

The foolish person talks, the wise one infers.

vi. *Chup adhi marzi* (1, p. 221).

چُپ ادھی مرضی

Silence is the half consent.

vii. *Gajdi gaja'n marey, chupati kam sa'nwarey* (p. 304).

گجدی گجاں مارے، چپاتی کم سنوارے

The talkative person (woman) wastes time, the silent one works efficiently.

viii. *Wajdi da waja'n marey, chup chpati kum sa'nwarey* (p. 372).

وجدی دا واجاں مارے، چپ چپاتی کم سنوارے

The talkative one talks, the wise one works silently.

ix. *Jithay jitt k harna, othay changee chup* (4, p. 22).

جتھے جت کے ہارنا اوٹھے چنگی چپ

Where you lose after winning, it's better to keep quiet.

x. *Agla bolda howay te ap chup ho rahiye* (p. 55).

اگلا بولدا ہووے تے آپ چُپ ہو رہیے

Keep quiet when someone is talking.

xi. *Chup keete aadmi te banhay hoey pani to'n darna chahida ae* (p. 22).

چُپ کیتے آدمی تے بہنے ہوئے پانی توں ڈرنا چاہیدا اے

Be alarmed with a silent person and the forcefully stopped water.

xii. *Kehn noo'n te assi vi jibh rakhnay aa'n* (p. 44).

کہن نوں تے اسی وی جیبھ رکھنے آن

To say, we also have a tongue.

**Action and Talk (11)**

i. *kehna sokha, kerna okha* (p. 295).

کہنا سوکھا، کرنا اوکھا

Easy to utter, difficult to act.

ii. *khund khund akhya'n mu'nh mitha nai hunda* (p. 30).

کھنڈ کھنڈ آکھیاں منہ مٹھا نہیں بوندا

Saying 'sugar, sugar' does not sweeten the mouth.

iii. *Kurr kurr vaddi te anday thorray* (p. 205).

کڑ کڑ وڈی تے انڈے تھوڑے

Loud clucking and small eggs

iv. *Amal bina ilam azar te khaloos bina amal bekar* (4, p. 442).

عمل بنا علم ازار، تے خلوص بنا عمل بیکار

Without performance mere knowledge is a boon, without candor the efficacy is meaningless.

v. *Zor thorra te shor dhair* (p. 233).

زور تھوڑا تے شور ڈھیر

Less compression and much noise.

vi. *Gula'n karun noo'n ouliya, kertooti'n kheh* (p. 308).

گلاں کرن نوں اولیاء، کرتوتیں کھیہ

Advising like a savant, performance ashes.

vii. *Jo gajdy nei'n oh wasde nai* (p. 156).

جوگجڈے نیں اوہ وسدے نہیں

Barking dogs seldom bite. Thundering clouds don't pour rain.

viii. *Aa baho bastii, dende ghinday kujh nah, jibh nai ghisdi* (p. 21).

آ بہو بستیا، دیندے گیندے کجھ نہ، جیبھ نہیں گھسدی

Let's sit together, they don't offer anything but their tongue does not stop.

ix. *Kum di kohrri, mu'nh di sajar* (p. 444).

کم دی کوڑھی، منہ دی سجر

She is inefficient in performance, but proficient in talk.

x. *Guli'n gula'n te damee'n ghorrey* (p. 308).

گلیں گلاں تے دامین گھوڑے

With talk only talk is attained, one needs money to buy a horse.

xi. *Gula'n nal dhidh nai bherda* (p. 308).



گلاں نال ڈھنڈ نہیں بھردا

Only talk doesn't fill the stomach.

### Think before you Speak (7)

**i. *Pehla'n toliye fair boliye* (p. 117).**

پہلاں تولیے، فیر بولیے

First weigh then utter.

**ii. *Soch kay alaway te chith kay khaway* (p. 253).**

سوچ کے الاوے تے چتھ کے کھاوے

To think before speaking and masticate before eating (are advisable acts).

**iii. *Chith ke khaiye, samajh alae, os nu khata kadi na aaye* (p. 22).**

چتھ کے کھائیے، سمجھ الائے، اُس نوں خطا کدی نہ آئے

Who eats after chewing and speaks after thinking would never be at any loss.

**iv. *Murda bolay ga kaphan pharr ky* (p. 339).**

مُردہ بولے گا کپھن پہاڑ کے

The defunct will speak tearing the shroud.

**v. *Soch karey so sugharr naar, kar sochay so koorr* (p. 251).**

سوچ کرے سو سگھڑ نار، کر سوچے سو کوڑ

A girl who broods before saying anything is smart, while who thinks afterwards is unsophisticated.

**vi. *Bhutt pave meri jibh* (p. 183).**

بھٹ پوے میری جیبھ

To hell with my tongue.

**vii. *Mu'nh wich aya so buk dita* (4, p. 416).**

منہ وچ آیا سو بک دتا

He/she vomits whatever comes to his/her mouth.

### Indirectness (7 +)

- i. *Burey nu vi mu'nh te bura nai akhi da* (p. 81).  
برے نون وی منہ تے برا نہیں آکھی دا  
Don't call a rascal with the same name on his face. Don't call a spade a spade.
- ii. *Bharrolay nu vi mu'nh te bharrola nai akhi da* (p. 85).  
بھڑولے نون وی منہ تے بھڑولہ نہیں آکھی دا  
Don't call a wheat drum 'Drum' on its face.
- iii. *Kanay nu vee mu'nh te kaana nai akhi da* (p. 167).  
کانے نون وی منہ تے کانا نہیں آکھی دا  
It is not nice to call a one-eyed person 'You are one-eyed'
- iv. *Akha'n dhi nu, sunawa'n noo'nh nu* (p. 35).  
آکھاں دھی نون، سناواں نونہ نون  
To ask daughter, to intend for daughter-in-law.
- v. *Dhiye gul sun, noo'nhe'n kun kar* (p. 87).  
دھیے گل سن نوبیں کن کر  
O daughter listen to me, O daughter-in-law be attentive!
- vi. *Akhan kutti nu, sunawa'n parohnay nu* (p. 36).  
آکھاں کتی نونہ، سناواں پروبنے نون  
I am talking to the calf, intending for the guest.
- vii. *Aaqal noo'n ishara, jahal noo'n phatkara* (p. 24).  
عاقل نون اشارہ' جاہل نون پھٹکارہ  
A nod to the wise, a rod to the otherwise.

### Appropriacy (7 +)

- i. *Aakhan wele na aakhna'n, te na aakhan weley aakhna'n, ehmaq'a'n da kum* (p. 27).  
آکھن ویلے نہ آکھناں، تے نہ آکھن ویلے آکھناں احمقان دا کم

To speak at the wrong moments and be silent on the occasions of speaking are the indications of a dupe person.

ii. ***Khasa'n di gul aama'n uggey nai manasib karni* (p. 190).**

خاصاں دی گل عامان اگے نہیں مناسب کرنی

It is not appropriate to talk about noble people in front of ordinary lot.

iii. ***Chota mu'nh te vaddi gul* (p. 184).**

چھوٹا منہ تے وڈی گل

A petty mouth and the big talk.

iv. ***Sawal kanak, jawab cholay* (p. 253).**

سوال کنک ، جواب چھولے

The wheat is the question; the answer is the gram.

v. ***Mujh day uggay veen wajana* (p. 45)**

مجھ دے اگے بین وجانا

To blow a flute in front of a buffalo

vi. ***Gul kara'n gul naal, nuk wadhawa'n wull nal* (p. 307).**

گل کراں گل نال، نک وڈھاواں ول نال

One should talk in appropriate manners, even to cut a nose there should be some decorum.

vii. ***Baat kariye jug bhaondi, roti khaiye munn bhaondi* (p. 31).**

بات کریے جگ بھاندى ، روٹی کھایے من بھاندى

Speak what the world likes to hear, eat what your heart relishes.

**Miscellaneous Verbal Etiquettes (6)**

i. ***Agla bolda howay te ap chup ho rahiye* (p. 55).**

اگلا بولدا ہووے تے آپ چپ ہو رہیے

Keep quiet when someone is talking.

ii. ***Phulla'n te ai na torriye wull nu, preh vich beh kay nah tokiye gul nu* (2, p. 40).**

پھلاں تے آئی نہ توڑئیے ول نوں، پرہیہ وچ بہہ کے نہ ٹوکیے گل نوں

Don't harvest raw fruits and don't interrupt court proceedings.

iii. *Kha laiye ya bol laiye* (p. 297).

کھا لئیے یا بول لئیے

Either eat or speak.

iv. *Kisay day dairay jaiye, huqqah piye muth naal, majlis vich beh ke gul kariye thukk naal* (1, p. 274).

کسے دے ڈیرے جائیے حقہ پیئے مٹھ نال، مجلس وچ بہہ کے گل کرنیے ٹھک نال

When in a public place, eat with table manners and speak with evidence and integrity.

v. *Bin bulae bolna ehmaq'a'n da kum* (p. 85).

بن بلانے بولنا احمقاں دا کم

Uninvited speech is an act of a stupid person.

vi. *Thanda thanda kha na pavi phookna, kolo'n kolo'n sudd na pavi kookna* (p. 26).

ٹھنڈا ٹھنڈا کھا نہ پاوی پھوکنا، کولوں کولوں سد نہ پاویں کوکنا

Eat cold, so your mouth may not burn, call when you are physically close so you don't have to shout.

**Positive Evaluation of Talk (5 +)**

i. *Jibh chalay 100 bla taly* (Bajwa, 2011, 1, p. 218).

جیبھ چلے سو بلا تلیے

A sensible tongue can avert 100s of misfortunes.

ii. *Jihdi jibh chaldi ae, osday hul chaldai nei'n* (p. 66).

جیہدی جیبھ چلدی اوسدے بل چلدے نیں

A wisely speaking man can make his work done through words.

iii. *Dastaar guftaar ee kam aundi ae* (1, p. 230).

دستار گفتار ای کم اوندی اے

The leader's turban and talk work well.

iv. *Mai'n faqeer gula'n da, roti lay k hilla'n ga* (p. 353).

میں فقیر گلاں دا، روٹی لے کے ہلاں گا

I am a talker and will leave after taking the piece of bread.

v. *Mu'nh ich zaban te turat maidan (4, 228).*

منہ اچ زبان تے ترے میدان

Having a tongue in the mouth, you can win in any field.

**Gender and Talk**

1. *Kadi murghi di bang vi rawa hoi ay? (p. 238).*

کدی مرغی دی بانگ وی روا ہوئی اے

Can the hen's cluck ever be meaningful?

2. *Gulee'n pai te wusno'n gai (p. 308).*

گلیں پئی تے وسنوں گئی

The lady involved in gossip is deprived of the happy marriage.

3. *Bud kardar ruch jandi ae, bud zaban nai ruchdi (p. 45).*

بد کردار رچ جاندی اے، بد زبان نہیں رچدی

The woman with moral laxity can be successful in marital life, however, not the one with a bad/bitter tongue.

4. *Chupp chapiti kum sa'nwarey (p. 55).*

چُپ چپیتی کم سنوارے

The quiet lady performs effectively.

5. *Husni ghar wasni (p. 386).*

بسنی گھر وسنی

A cheerful lady makes a happy marriage.

6. *Bohtyo'n hassyo'n noo'nh gayi, gher gher phir di dhi gayi (p. 27).*

بوہتوں ہاسیوں نونہ گئی، گھر گھر پھر دی دھی گئی

The excessive laugh ruined the bride/wife, the excessive socialization exploited the daughter.

7. *Chor nu marey khansi, naar nu marey hansi (p. 77).*

چور نوں مارے کھانسی، نار نوں مارے ہنسی

A thief is caught due to his cough, a girl is trapped due to her smile.

**8. *Mu'nh di kooli gula'n patawey* (p. 234).**

منہ دی کولی گلاں پٹاوے

A soft spoken lady's cheeks will be pulled.

**9. *Soch karey so sugharr naar, kar sochey so koorr* (p. 251).**

سوچ کرے سو سگھڑ نار، کر سوچے سو کوڑ

A wise girl thinks before uttering words, while an artless lady would think afterwards.

**10. *Khasma'n nal brabari, mu'nh mu'nh chota'n khayiye* (5, p. 173).**

کھسماں نال برابری، منہ منہ چوٹاں کھائیے

The wife who answers her husband in the same coin will have to face humiliation.

**11. *Run pai rahay oh vi gai, runn pai salahy oh vi gai* (p. 135).**

رن پئی رابے اوہ وی گئی، رن پئی سلابے اوہ وی گئی

The wife who keeps wandering would be lost, the wife who keeps asking for suggestions would be lost too.

**12. *Gulee'n lagi te aata kuttya'n khada* (p. 308).**

گلیں لگی تے آٹا کتیاں کھابدا

The wife indulged in gossip, the dog ate her flour.

**13. *Gula'n walo'n mai'n vaddi, aqlo'n vaddi jathani* (p. 308).**

گلاں ولوں میں وڈی، عقلوں وڈی جٹھانی

I am elder in talking, while my sister-in-law is elder in her wisdom.

**14. *Gula'n walo'n mai'n vaddi, kurtoota'n vaddi jathani* (p. 308).**

گلاں ولوں میں وڈی، کرتوتوں وڈی جٹھانی

In the talk, I excel; at the work, my sister-in-law does.

**15. *Mei'n kachajji, merey bol sachajay* (p. 353).**

میں کچجی، میرے بول سچجے

I am not talented but my talk is very efficient.

**16. *Kum di kohrri, mun'h di sajjar* (p. 444).**

کم دی کوہڑی منہ دی سجر

Inefficient in execution, dynamic in talk.

**17. Jey shoh akhey phitte mu'nh ta'n mai'n jivi (p. 158).**

جے شوہ آکھے پھٹے منہ، تاں میں جیوی

If my husband rebukes me, I get a new life.

**18. Kothey te charrh bhokdi, run saarey lok di (p. 292).**

کوٹھے تے چڑھ بھوکدی، رن سارے لوک دی

The lady who makes noise on the roof is the wife of the whole world.

**19. dhiyye gul sun, noonhe'n kunn kar (p. 55).**

دھیے گل سن نوبیں کن کر

O daughter! Listen. O bride! Be attentive

**20. Kehwa'n dhi nu, sunawa'n noo'nh nu (p. 176).**

کہواں دھی نوں، سناواں نونہ نوں

To ask daughter, to make daughter-in-law listen.

**21. Mar ager koot ager derti nai, meri niklee zaban barrey berrii nai (p. 287).**

مار اگر کوٹ اگر ڈرتی نہیں! میری نکلی زبان باڑے بڑتی نہیں

Regardless of your beating me, I would not be apprehensive; once my tongue is out, it does not recover itself.

**22. Jithay runn ikk, othay gula'n di sikk ,**

جتھے رن اک اوٹھے گلاں دی سیک

Where there is one woman, there would be lack of talk.

**Jithay runna'n do (2), othay gula'n di khasbho**

جتھے رناں دو اوٹھے گلاں دی خوشبو

Where there are two women, there will be the fragrance of conversation;

**Jithay runna'n Trey (3), othay haae o haae**

جتھے رناں ترے اوٹھے ہائے او ہائے

Where there are three women, it's time to worry;

**Jithay runna'n char (4), othay gula'n di ghumyar**

جتھے رناں چار اوٹھے گلاں دی گھمیار

Where there are four women, there will be much talk;

**Jithay runna'n punj (5) othay su'nwein sunj (5, p. 166).**

جتھے رناں پنج اوتھے سنویں سنج

Where there are five women, there would be no work done.

**23. *Jinhy laya gulee'n, ohdai naal tur challi* (p. 169).**

جنے لایا گلیں، اوہدے نال ٹر چلی

The woman is vulnerable to the gossiping person.

**24. *Itni koo'n jaan, 100 gazz di zaban* (p. 248).**

اتنی کوں جان، سو گز دی زبان

Too tiny in height, having 100 meter long tongue.

**25. *Rundi di jibh derh gaz bhar di hundi ae* (p. 329).**

رنڈی دی جیبھ گز بھر دی ہندی اے

A widow's tongue is one meter long.

**26. *Sokan noo'n sau (100) kun* (p. 255).**

سوکن نوں سو کن

The co-wife has 100 ears.

**27. *Paen koka'n, mehnay apnay dewey loka'n* (p. 67).**

پائیں کوکاں، مہنے اپنے دیوے لوکاں

A lady blaming others with her own faults

**Men and Talk (17)**

**1. *Marad da bolya te fajar da gerjya berth na jaey* (p. 245).**

مرد دا بولیا تے فجر دا گرجیا برتھا نہ جائے

The roaring cloud of the first light and the words uttered by a man don't go squandered.

**2. *Marad di gul te gaddi da pahiya agay noo'n jande nei'n* (1 p. 289).**

مرد دی گل تے گڈی دا پہیہ اگے نوں جاندے نیں

Men's words and the tyre of a vehicle consistently move ahead.

**3. *Mu'nh te kehway taan marad munno* (3, p. 415).**



منہ تے کہوے تے مرد منو

Think of him as a genuine Man, if he speaks truth in front of a powerful person.

**4. Runna'n nal matha laway taa'n kunna'n di khair manavay (5, p. 166).**

رناں نال متھا لاوے تاں کناں دی خیر مناوے

When a man indulges in a verbal fight with women, he should take care of his ears.

**5. Zaal day mureed da dalcha kharab (p. 124).**

زال دے مرید دا دلچا خراب

The follower of his wife would face humiliation in the long run.

**6. Zaal day mureed da mu'nh sharminda (p. 124).**

زال دے مرید دا منہ شرمندہ

The follower of his wife has a humiliated face.

**7. Jehrra run di munnay oh khawar honda ay (p. 169).**

جہڑا رن دی منے اوہ خوار ہوندا ایہہ

**The man who consents to his wife must be embarrassed.**

**8. jehrra run day akhay lagay oh kharab honda ae (p. 66).**

جہڑا رن دے آکھے لگے اوہ خراب ہوندا اے

A man who pursues the guidance of his better half needs to endure a great deal of trouble.

**9. Runna vich baho te runno akhwaey (p. 45).**

رناں وچ بہو تے رنو اکھاوے

Sit among women and be called womanish.

**10. Qoul harun jawana'n da kum nai (p. 274).**

قول ہارن جواناں دا کم نہیں

Real men don't back out.

**11. janani nu bhait nah dey (p. 73).**

جنانی نوں بہیت نہ دے

Don't reveal your secret data to a woman.

**12. Sapahi nal yari na la, run noo'n bhait na day, te dar te beyri nah uga (p. 233).**

سپاہی نال یاری نہ لا، رن نوں بھیت نہ دے، تے ڈر تے بیڑی نہ اگا

Don't be friends with a policeman, Don't share your secret with your wife, Don't grow a berry tree in front of your door.

**13. Chup chapeeta putt munda, chitte wali dhi, phirney wali noo'nh mandi, ehnu wala mee'nh (p. 171).**

چپ چپیتا پت مندا، چٹے والی دھی پھرنے والی نونہ مندی، ایہنوں والا مینہ

A silent son, a daughter with love aptitude, wandering bride, the hailing rain: all are not good.

**14. Marad bate, kutta rate, ghorra sate (p. 338).**

مرد باتے، کتا راتے، گھوڑا ساتے

Men should value his words, the dog should be vigilant at night, and the horse should run fast.

**15. Lai lag na hovay gher wala, te chandra gwandh na hovay (p. 212).**

لائی لگ نہ ہووے گھر والا، تے چندرا گوانڈھ نہ ہووے

The husband should not be a blind believer of everything told and the neighbor should not be mean.

**16. Khasma'n deya'n sawariya'n, kadi na dendiya'n waariya'n (p. 189).**

خصماں دیاں سواریاں، کدی نہ دیندیاں واریاں

A wife is strictly advised not to equate her husband.

**17. Chudd runa'n di dosti, khuree'n jinha'n di mutt, hass hass landiya'n yaria'n, ro ro dendiya'n dus**

چھڈ رناں دی دوستی، کھریں جنان دی مت بس بس لاندیاں یاریاں رو رو دیندیاں دس

Don't be friends with women, they would befriend you through smiles and would disclose to their family members while crying. (2, p. 149).