UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

**A MORPHO-PRAGMATIC AND STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS OF
NZEMA PROVERBS**

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to both my extended and nuclear families.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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ABBREVIATIONS

1SG	1st Person Singular	A	Adjunct
2SG	2nd Person Singular	Adj	Adjective
3SG	3rd Person Singular	ObjC	Object Complement
1PL	1st Person Plural	OI	Indirect Object
3PL	3rd Person Plural	OD	Direct Object
NEG	Negative Marker	O	Object
CAUS	Causative Verb	SubjC	Subject Complement
DEF	Definite Article	Compl	Complement
RED	Reduplicated Morpheme	Sub	Subordinate
SUBJ	Subjunctive Marker	DEM	Demonstrative Pronoun
INDEF	Indefinite Article	C	Complement
FOC	Focus Marker	INT.PT	Interrogative Particle
FUT	Future Marker	CON.PT	Conditionality Particle
HAB	Habitual Marker	TEMP.PT	Temporality Particle
QUES	Question Word	EMPH.PT	Emphatic Particle
POST	Postposition	CDET	Clausal Determiner
PAST	Past Marker	NOM	Nominalising Suffix
PERF	Perfective Marker		
PROG	Progressive Marker		
POSS	Possessive Marker		
IMP	Imperative		
COPV	Copula Verb		
CONJ	Conjunction		
COMPL	Complementizer		
COND	Conditional Marker		
NP	Noun Phrase		
VP	Verb Phrase		
S	Subject		
V	Verb		

ABSTRACT

This study is a morpho-pragmatic and syntactic analysis of proverbs in Nzema, a Kwa language spoken predominantly in the South-West part of the Western Region of Ghana. Specifically, the study aimed at investigating some morphological structures that occur at the lexical level in the syntactic string of Nzema proverbs and examining how these morphological structures contribute to the general interpretations and understanding of the proverbs. The study further discusses the sentential structures and functions of proverbs in Nzema. It is a qualitative study that combines Chomsky's (1965) Descriptive Adequacy Grammar Theory, which deals with assigning structural description to well-formed sentences and Goddard's (2006) Ethno-pragmatic Model, which relates to understanding discourse in cultural-context. Data for the study (115 Nzema proverbs) were purposively gathered from primary and secondary sources. Three (3) scholars in Nzema who are also indigenous speakers were consulted to crosscheck and elicit useful clarifications on the data. The discussions at the morphological level focused on word formation processes such as reduplication, inflection, derivation, lexical borrowing and compounding; which are prevalent in the structure of Nzema proverbs. The study demonstrates that these word formation processes manifest in Nzema proverbial structures to contribute to the pragmatic interpretations and the entire messages intended to be communicated through the proverbs. At the syntactic level, the study identifies simple, compound and complex-embedded sentences. The proverbial structures were also noted for performing sentential functions such as declarative, imperative and interrogative. Overall, the study shows that the oral constructions of proverbs in Nzema are grammatically insightful; and thus, provide a window to the morpho-syntactic description of the language.
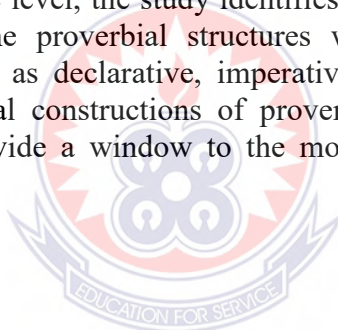
CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

The study of proverbs has been an interesting field of scholarship for quite a long time. Its nature, function, and rhetorical uses for the beauty of speech have attracted the attention of many scholars from diverse linguistic backgrounds (Maledo, 2015). Scholars such as Finnegan (1970), Owomoyela (1981), Yankah (1989), Okpewho (1992), Dzobo (1997), Agyekum (2005), Ababila (2006) and Dipio (2019) among others have extensively studied proverbs in various dimensions including sociolinguistics, socio-cultural and ethno-linguistics domains. Proverbs are context-dependent and culture specific (Hallen, 2000; Moshood, 2016). This present study thus, seeks to explore and provide a morpho-pragmatic and structural analysis of Nzema traditional proverbs. This first chapter has been organized into sections. It covers the introduction, background of the study, Nzema people and language, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research objectives and questions, significance of the study, scope of the study, as well as conclusion.

1.1 Background of the Study

The etymology of proverbs among the people of Nzema appears to be a fascinating historical narration. The people of Nzema refer to proverbs as ˍmɛlɛ' with its singular counterpart as ˍɛrɛlɛ'. Originally, ˍɛrɛlɛ' (which means a proverb) among the people of Nzema was believed to have metamorphosed from ˍarɛlɛ' (which means palm tree or palm fruit). History has it that, the early men of Nzema found numerous usefulness of the palm tree as for instance obtaining wine from the fresh trees, preparing their soup out of the fruits, making brooms out of the leaves, making palm kernel oil from the nuts and getting an edible type of mushroom from the decomposing trees among

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others. Thus the early men attributed the countless moral lessons, wisdom, truth, advice and other significance that could be deduced from some of their wise sayings to that of the palm tree. Therefore, ‗arɛlɛ' (palm tree) gradually, metaphorically resulted in ‗ɛrɛlɛ' (proverb) since they both shared a similar feature of possessing several benefits[1]. This is not to say that ‗arɛlɛ' (palm tree) does not still exist in the language. It pertains in the language presently as palm tree or fruit. In my view, however, the initial vowel /*a*/ as in ‗arɛlɛ' (palm tree or fruit) has alternated with /*ɛ*/ to mean a proverb.

A proverb is seen as a significant aspect of the oral traditions of indigenous languages and cultures (Maledo, 215). For almost every communicative situation, the people of Nzema have a proverb that is appropriate for that situation. Stressing the significance of proverbs for the embellishment of speech, Ashipu (2013) reports that, proverbs are used to add colour to everyday conversation; without them, the language will be but a skeleton without flesh, a body without soul (Ashipu 2013:11). As in many other cultures, the Nzema people use proverbs mainly in communication to admonish, rebuke, direct, praise, encourage, educate, and entertain people. In the view of Olatunji (1984), proverbs are perceived as horses of speech; they are used to discover the truth when it is missing.

A proverb is purposively and contextually employed by a speaker to serve as a messenger or medium through which the speaker makes his/her intentions reach his/her audience (see Ehineni, 2016:73). Agyekum (2017:30) avers that ―in Akan indigenous communication, the use of proverbs is the acknowledged mark of one's

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[1]I am indebted to Egya Koawo and Egya Kabenla of Awiebo (in the ɛlɛmgbɛlɛ District in the Western Region of Ghana) for their information. These respondents were 72 and74 years respectively as at the time of interacting with them. This etymological information is also given in Yakub (2018).

communicative competence". Parallel to Agyekum's view, in the socio-cultural setting of the Nzema, proverbs are indispensable in almost every communicative encounter and as such, its citation and interpretation in communication (either formal or informal) are amongst the productive means to evaluate the competence of an average native speaker. However, studies (e.g. Mensah, 2010; Bhuvaneswar, 2012; Aku-Sika, 2016) have shown that proverbs are not just constructed haphazardly; rather, there are grammatical (morpho-syntactic) rules which the structure of proverbs follow in terms of the structural features of a given language. Hence, the focus of this study is on the morpho-pragmatic and structural analysis of proverbs in Nzema.

Literary works have received the attention of linguists for the purpose of investigating whether such creative writings come with a set of data that can be adequately described in terms of linguistic analysis. Linguists may also seek to find out whether a piece of literary work represents data which may deviate from linguistic analysis. The ‗proverb' as an aspect of such literary works, which is orally produced, is noted for its extensive investigations by a number of reputable linguists with particular concentration on its structural analysis cross-linguistically. Some scholars who have paid attention to the structural analysis of proverbs include Mensah (2010) who tackled ―A Morpho-syntactic Analysis of Efik Proverbs", Bhuvaneswar (2012) studied ―The Syntax of Telugu Proverbs" Dorzie (2013) studied ―The Structure, Style and Use of Dagaaba Proverbs", Akanbi (2015) examined ―The Syntax of Yoruba Proverbs", and Yuka (2016) investigated ―The Structure of the Lamnso Proverb" among many others.

Finnegan (1970:390) described proverbs as a body of short statements built up over the years, which reflect the thought and insight of a people…..). Owomoyela (1979:16) in a similar sense, views proverbs as short but witty statements which convey basic truth deduced from careful observation of the life of a people. A proverb is a short pithy, generally known sentence of the folk that has embedded in its wisdom, truth, morals and traditional views in metaphorical presentations (Mieder, 1990). Proverbs according to Mensah (2010:250) are morpho-syntactic constructions of different kinds, structures and functions, with their unique grammatical peculiarities". He proffers further that, proverbs are constructed with words that exist in a language, which are strung up to form larger grammatical units like phrases, clauses and sentences. Admitting and emphasizing the role of grammatical features in the structure of proverbs, MacCoinnigh (2014:112) also posits that, structural elements are amongst the most universal and easily identifiable proverbial markers and feature with high frequencies across world languages". MacCoinnigh's claim suggests that, cross-linguistically, proverbs are built in structures and are made up of linguistic elements which serve as markers for one to easily notice and identify an utterance as either proverbial or non-proverbial. As Yuka (2016:1) rightly states, proverbs are linguistic devices employed in conversations to achieve specific communication goals that commonplace phrasal computation in the language cannot attain".

Taking insights from the few definitions of proverbs above, it appears obvious that proverbs are generally constructed in sentences which may either be simple or complex, based on the grammatical properties of a given language, and that, morphological features at the lexical level are inevitable in the structure of proverbs. Therefore, the concern of this study is to provide a linguistic analysis of Nzema

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proverbs from a morpho-pragmatic and syntactic perspective, showing some word formation processes at the lexical level and the structural patterns of Nzema proverbial constructions.

1.2 The Nzema People and Language

Nzema is located at the South Western part of Ghana. It is bordered to the West by Ivory Coast (also known as the La Cote d`Ivoire), to the East by the Ahanta, to the North by Aowin (or Anyi) and Wassa and to the South by the Gulf of Guinea. Nzema is a Volta-Comoe (or Southern Bia) language of the Niger-Congo language Phylum ofthe Kwa language family spoken mainly in the Western part of Ghana and some parts of the LaCote d`Ivoire both in West Africa (Kwesi, 1992; Annan, 1994).

Nzema consists of five dialects namely; **Jomoro** (NzemaWest), **Ellembele** (Nzema Central), **Evaloɛ** (Nzema East), **Adwomoro** (Nzema East) and **Egila** (Nzema East) (see Annan, 1980; Kwaw, 2010). The language, the people and the place are called Nzema (Annan, 1980). Nzema is also categorized under Atlantic-Congo, Nyo, Potou-Tano, Tano and Central Bia language groups (Simons & Charles, 2018). Some of the Nzema speaking communities in Ivory Coast include: Apolonu, Maama, Agyɛkɛ, Mouah (Mowa), Ngyeme, Noi (Noe), Akpanye, Anzeasawu, Manvea (Mafia), Bassam, Kakusuazo, Kpɔkɛti, Poso (Boder town) and Eboko. Their capital is Bassam (also known as Grand Bassam).

According to population estimates available on 31st May, 2012, the total population of Ghana as at 26th September, 2010 was 24,658,823 people of which 298,436 were Nzema. The statistics specifically showed the various population of Nzemain each of the three Districts/Municipals respectively as follows: Nzema East Municipal; 60, 828, Ellembele District; 87, 501 and Jomoro District (currently Municipal); 150, 107

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(www.statsghana.gov.gh>2010phc>201). Nzema, as it is called today was not called Nzema (Annan, 1980; Kwesi, 1992). The history ofthe origin of Nzema dates back to earliest 2000 BC. The people (Nzema) were only a group without a name. They were probably called ‗Kɔtɔkɔ' as they are affectionately called Nzema Kɔtɔkɔ today. The ‗Kɔtɔkɔ' of Nzema is not the same as that of the Asante of the Akan. The porcupine represents the Nzema ‗Kɔtɔkɔ' while hedgehog for the Akan (Annan, 1980).

The people who are today called Nzema, moved with many other groups to the South of the Sahara in order to survive the many wars that broke in the Sahara Desert and subsequent wars against the Arabs. During their sojourn in the wilderness, they came to settle at where it is today called Techiman. From Techiman, they moved southward to settle along the River Nzi, which is North-East of La Cote d`Ivoire. Other settlers behind the River Nzi began referring to them as ‗Nzi-ma', an Anyi language which means ‗Nzi people'. It was through this that the people came to be called Nzema. It is also from this background that some non-Nzema today mistakenly refer to the people as ‗Nzima'.

Traditionally, Nzema is divided into five states; Jomoro, Ellembele, Egila, Ajomoro and Ɛvaloɛ (Annan, 1980). Annan (1980:16) adds that, the Ahanta were part of Nzema and so were called Nzema-Ahanta. This is not surprising as languages that share borders with Nzema are mostly Volta-Comoe languages; Eboloza, Wasa, Aowin, Ahanta, Sehwi and Anyi of the La Cote d`Ivoire. By the 1920s, authors of Nzema had begun publishing in the language. One of such early works is titled ―Nzema Primer" by Frank Couloo Ainooson.

The language is studied as a subject at all levels of education in Ghana. The ‗Dwɔmɔlɔ' dialect of Nzema, being the standard version is the one studied in schools within the three constituencies of the Nzema zone (Western Region of Ghana). Nzema is studied as a core subject in the Primary and Junior High Schools in Nzema speaking communities in Ghana. Basic schools in other communities such as Andenrenle, Kpulisi and Aketakyi (in the Ahanta West District) which are nearly outside the Nzema territory also study the language (Kwesi, 1992). With regard to Ghana's educational policy, Nzema is used as the medium of instruction for the first three years in basic schools in Nzemaland. In the second cycle institutions situated in Nzema speaking zones, the language is an optional elective subject studied by students who have the maximum interest to pursue it as a course. It is also studied as a core subject in a few Colleges of Education in Ghana, specifically those Colleges of Education in the Western part of Ghana. At the most advanced level, Nzema is studied as an academic subject at the College of Ghanaian Languages Education, Ajumako of the University of Education, Winneba, Ghana. Nzema is also used for radio and TV broadcasting programmes, particularly on the five radio stations of Nzema. It is also used in adult education programmes and as a result, has caused an increase in the number of publications in the language.

The map below (in fig.1) shows areas in Ghana and the La Cote d`Ivoire where Nzema language is spoken.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Cross-culturally, proverbs are believed to be the wise sayings of the elderly people, which are common in many languages and cultures (Akanbi, 2015). Proverbs form part of the oral traditions across cultures, which have stimulated a wide ranging of literature on it in the context of Africa and beyond. The study of proverbs has been undertaken by several renowned scholars including Dzobo (1973), Owomoyela (1979), Olatunji (1984), Okpehwo (1992), Obeng (1994), Asare (1997), Ababila (2010), Yankah (2012) Ehineni (2016) and Bisilki & Nkamigbo (2017) among others. Many studies have also examined proverbs with special focus on their syntactic structures. Notable among such studies are Mensah (2010), Bhuvaneswar (2012), Dorzie (2013), Akanbi (2015), Mac Coinnigh (2014; 2015), Yuka (2016), just to mention but a few.

In the perspective of Nzema, scholarly works on proverbs include Kwesi & Quarm (1998) which provides a collection of some Nzema proverbs with their meaning. Kwesi's (2007) ‗*Nzema Mrɛlɛbulɛ*' (Nzema Proverbs) was also published by the Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana. In their significant contribution, Nyame & Tomekyin (2018) investigated the ―Social Representations of Masculinity and Femininity as Portrayed in Nzema Proverbs‖ and Nyame & Tomekyin (2018) also studied Neological Developments in Nzema Proverbs. Yakub (2018) discussed Unity and Cooperation as Portrayed in Nzema Proverbs whereas Yakub (2018) again did a ―Literary Analysis of Wellerisms in Nzema Proverbs‖. However, besides these studies that have been undertaken on Nzema proverbs, I have not come across any work which extensively examines some specific word formation processes at the lexical level and the syntactic structures and functions of Nzema proverbs. In other words, studies on Nzema proverbs in the light of analysing their morpho-pragmatic

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and syntactic characteristics, still remains a crucial field that has been ignored in the literature. This study is thus essentially motivated to examine the morphological component of some specific words in the structure of Nzema proverbs and the syntactic structures and functions of the Nzema proverbs in its own respect, so that findings and conclusions could contribute to filling the identified gap in the existing body of literature cross-linguistically.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

This study is a linguistic analysis of the Nzema proverb from a morpho-pramatic and syntactic perspective. The main purpose of the study is to explore and specifically discuss the morphological properties (word formation processes) of some specific words in some Nzema proverbs and to examine the pragmatic interpretations of the morphological features in relation to how they enable us understand the proverbs. The study again aims at discussing the sentential structures and functions of Nzema proverbs.
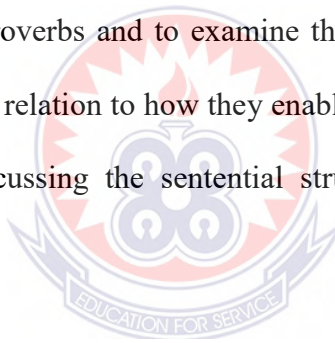
1.5 Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study are to:

1. Identify and examine the morphological structures of some specific words in the construction of Nzema proverbs.

2. Highlight the pragmatic interpretations of these morphological structures and show how they contribute to the understanding of the proverbs.

3. Discuss the structural patterns and functions of sentential structures of Nzema proverbs.

1.6 Research Questions

The study attempts to answer the following questions:

1. What morphological structures exist in Nzema proverbs?

2. What are the functions of these morphological structures in relation to the pragmatic interpretations of the proverbs?

3. What are the structural patterns and functions of sentential structures of Nzema proverbs?

1.7 Significance of the Study

The results of this study will be undoubtedly significant because they will reveal the morpho-pragmatic and structural features of the Nzema proverb. It is also going to add up to the existing body of Nzema literature in particular and the cross linguistic literature as a whole. Teachers and students will also find it most vital and a profitable source of information for academic purposes. Findings, conclusions and recommendations would be appropriate guide to future researchers who may want to do further investigations in the area of Nzema proverbs as a literary genre.

1.8 Scope of the Study

This study pays specific attention to morpho-pragmatic and syntactic description of proverbs in Nzema. It attempts to provide a linguistic account of proverbs from the point of view of some word formation processes and syntactic structures and functions, thereby ignoring other oral literary genres in the language and culture such as riddles, folktales and traditional songs among others. In other words, I intend in this study to limit the choice of corpus to Nzema proverbs only. In the analysis, especially at the morphological level, such specific words in some proverbs shall be discussed in relation to the understanding of the proverbs; since this would help

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appreciate and account for ‗how' and ‗why' certain word formation processes occur in the structure of some Nzema proverbs.

1.9 Organization of the Thesis

The study is organized to cover five (5) chapters. Chapter one provides an introduction, the background of the study; Nzema people and the language, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, scope of the study and organization of the thesis.

The second chapter presents an orientation of the theoretical framework adopted for the study and further provides an overview of previous works on proverbs. This is rightly followed by a review of the concept of linguistic morphology and syntax respectively. Chapter three looks at methodology employed in carrying out the study. The fourth chapter presents data for both morphological and syntactic analysis/discussions. The final chapter gives the summary, findings and conclusions as well as recommendations for further studies.

1.10 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have presented one of the salient components of this study, in which I have made discussions under the following sub-headings: introduction, background of the study, the Nzema people and language, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, scope of the study, and organization of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter presents an overview of the theoretical frameworks adopted for the study. It further providesan overview of previous works on proverbs in a number of languages and cultures. The chapter closes by presenting a review of some contributions made by some scholars on the concept of linguistic morphology and syntax respectively.

2.1 Theoretical Review

The study adopts the Descriptive Adequacy Grammar, which relates to assigning a structural description to each and every well-formed sentence in a language. Descriptive Adequacy Grammar is one of the basic tenets of Chomsky's (1957; 1965) Generative Grammar (see Thakur, 1998:159-167). Another relevant theoretical backing for this study is Goddard's (2006) Ethno-pragmatic Model, which concerns the understanding of discourse from cultural-context. In sections 2.1.1 and 2.1.2 respectively, I provide some orientation on these two frameworks within which the study is grounded.

2.1.1 Descriptive adequacy grammar (Chomsky, 1965)

Transformational Generative Grammar (TGG) was put forward and advanced periodically by Noam Chomsky. Its first (original) model, **syntactic structures** took its name from the title of Chomsky's (1957) book, with its emphasis on formal description through ‗rewrite rules‗ such us S→NP VP (cf. Baker, 1978; Radford, 1981; Borsley, 1999; Finch, 2000; Cook & Newson, 2007). This syntactic theory has had different names through it development such as Transformational Grammar (TG),

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Transformational Generative Grammar (TGG), Standard Theory (ST), Extended Standard Theory (EST), Government and Binding Model (GB), Principles & parameters (P&P) and Minimalist Program (MP) (see Borsley, 1991:8; Carnie, 2013:6). The table below depicts the phases and periodical developments of Chomsky's Generative Grammar:

Table 1: *Periodic developments in Chomsky's Generative Grammar*

Dates	Model	Key terms	Key book/article
1957	Transformational Generative Grammar	Rewrite rules, Kernel sentence	Chomsky, 1957
1965	Aspects, later Standard Theory	Competence/performance Deep/surface structure	Chomsky, 1965
c. 1970	Extended Standard Theory		Chomsky, 1970
1981	Government/Binding Theory	Principles & parameters D- and S- structure movement	Chomsky 1981a
Post 1990	Minimalist Program	Computational system Interface condition Perfection	Chomsky, 1993

(Adopted from Cook & Newson, 2007: 4)

As Chomsky (1965) posits, Generative Grammar provides a system of rules that in an explicit way assigns structural description to sentences. ―A fully adequate grammar must assign to each of an infinite range of sentence a structural description, indicating how this sentence is understood by the ideal speaker-hearer" (Chomsky, 1965:4-5). Thakur (1998) observes that a descriptively adequate grammar can ascertain whether a sentence is well-formed or not. It can in other words, specify what the syntactic, semantic, morphological and the phonological structure of a well-formed sentence is, which can be done in a manner compatible with the linguistic intuition of the native

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speaker (Thakur, 1998:167). Providing further explanation on Descriptive Adequacy Grammar, Thakur (1998:167) presents sentence (1) as follows:

1. *Every reform movement has a lunatic fringe*.

He then notes that, if a descriptively adequate grammar is applied to the above sentence, for example, it can give us all the relevant information about the grammatical relationship between its constituent. It can tell us for example that, in this sentence, ‑every" refers to ‑reform movement" and not to ‑reform". Similarly, it can tell us that ‑reform movement" and ‑a lunatic fringe" are grammatical units but ‑movement has", ‑has a" and ‑a lunatic" are not.

A descriptive grammar describes the language, its structure and the syntactic rules that govern sentence and phrase constructions (see Collins & Hollo, 2010: Carnie, 2013). A prescriptive grammar, on the other hand, specifies how a language should be used and what grammar rules must be adhered to followed; such as *do not split infinitive* or *do not end a sentence with preposition* (Carnie, 2013).

In this study therefore, I adopt the Descriptive Adequacy Grammar as an appropriate framework since it will be a guide to providing a well descriptive account of how morphosyntactic structures are represented in Nzema proverbs.

2.1.2 The Ethno-pragmatic Model (Goddard, 2006)

The discussion/analysis of data in this study is also intended to be in the lens of the Ethno-pragmatic model. Ethno-pragmatics assumes that, though pragmatic universalist over the years has gained dominance, a new pragmatic paradigm known as ‑Ethnopragmatics' has refused to dash away (Goddard, 2006). The basic tenet of Ethno-pragmatics therefore maintains that, speech practices are best understood from

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culture-internal perspective. It focuses on understanding discourse from the point of view of specific cultural perceptions, linguistic choices and communicative practices that are best conceived by a specific cultural group. In essence, discourse practices are best understood in terms, which make sense to the cultural group concerned (Goddard, 2006). Goddard (2006:2) postulates that, ―to understand and explicate the key ethnopragmatic concepts of another culture; however is no easy matter precisely because of their embeddedness within their own language". Largely, proverbs are a form of communicative device which are best conceived and understood from cultural context. Thus, I suggest that the morphological structures in the Nzema proverbs, since they are culturally constructed and incorporated within the proverbial structures, would contribute to the understanding of the proverbs based on the cultural values and worldview of the people of Nzema. The choice of the ethno-pragmatic model as a theoretical underpinning for this study is therefore considered appropriate.

2.2 Empirical Review: Previous Studies on Proverbs

As noted earlier in this study, grammatical and non-grammatical analysis of proverbs has captured the attention of a considerable number of linguists. In the review of literature below, I show cross-linguistically, some trends in the study of proverbs from morpho-syntactic, pragmatic, sociolinguistic and ethnographic point of view.

2.2.1 Review of morpho-syntactic analysis of proverbs

From a linguistic perspective, Mensah (2010) undertakes a morphosyntactic description of proverbs in Efik, a language spoken predominantly in Southern Cross River State, Nigeria. He identifies two categories of Efik proverbs as (1) *proverb-riddle*, which combines the attributes of both the riddle and the proverb in the form of question and answer and (2) *the conventional proverb*. The author claims that, Efik

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proverbs contain enormous morphosyntactic information which is invaluable in giving insights to the native speaker's grammar. The study reveals some word formation processes such as borrowing, reduplication, inflection and derivation which occur at the lexical level in the structure of the proverbs. The author noted further that, Efik proverbs have a rich system of inflection, which underscores the agglutinative nature of the language. He explains this by postulating that, most Efik proverbs have long polymorphic words in which each morpheme corresponds to a single lexical meaning or grammatical function. Mensah's work gives an insight that morphological properties are indispensable in the structure of proverbs, and therefore stand the chance for scholarly investigation, hence, the need to also explore and undertake a description of some word formation processes in the structure of Nzema proverbs. Discussing the syntactic structure of Efik proverbs, the study considers simple declarative, imperative, interrogative functions of a sentence as well as serial verb constructions, modal contrast, and aspectual contrast. Mensah's work fails to give considerations to compound and complex embedded sentences, which in a way validates this current study. It is worth mentioning that Mensah's work is analogous to this present study in terms of analytical approach, since our objective is to examine Nzema proverbs from a morphological and syntactic point of view. However, they differ in the sense that, Mensah's work unlike this study was not grounded in any syntactic theoretical framework.

Another important study on the structure of proverbs is Bhuvaneswar's (2012) contribution on the _Syntax of Telegu Proverbs'. In this study, Bhuvaneswar develops a framework based on the work of Quirk & Greenbaum (1989), which spells out the major classes of English sentence and its constituent elements. In the light of this framework, the author vividly discusses the syntactic characteristics of Telegu

proverbs at the sentential level. The author, through the analysis proffers that, Telegu proverbs are represented in an unrestricted, open-ended fashion in all the major syntactic classes of the declarative, interrogative, imperative and exclamatory sentences. He further postulates that proverbs in Telegu manifest in simple, compound and complex sentence structures including nominal, adverbial, comparative and comment clauses. These are productive areas for syntactic description of proverbs, which in a way relates to this present study. The author, however reports that the adjectival/relative clause type of subordinate construction is nonexistent in Telegu proverbs. This leaves us with a gap in scholarship, thereby embarrassing the cause for this present study to ascertain whether the syntactic structures of proverbs in Nzema underscore or disprove previous assertions made on the structural representation of proverbs. As has been hinted above, Bhuvaneswar's work is to some extent analogous to this study in terms of the scope of analysis at the sentential level, but differs from this because the author focused on syntax only, whereas I attempt a description of some word formation processes at the lexical level, which play a vital role in understanding some Nzema proverbs within which such specific morphological properties take place.

Investigating the Structure, Style and Uses of Dagaaba proverbs, Dorzie (2013) discusses sources of Dagaaba proverbs, etiquettes that go with the use of proverbs as well as the communicative relevance of proverbs. He opines that, proverbs are used by the Dagaaba to express an internal truth and serve as a guide to conduct, used to warn against foolish act. With regard to the structural properties of Dagaaba proverbs, the author identifies simple negative sentences, contrast proposition, double proposition and rhetorical questions. Dorzie's work, though exciting and contributes to studies on proverbs, lacks adequate data for convincing analysis at the sentential

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level. His discussions were geared principally towards the socio-cultural uses of proverbs, resulting in limited attention to the structural analysis. Specifically, no mention was made about complex sentence structure in Dagaaba proverbs. This is evident in his words ―there are other forms of structures which are not discussed in this paper" (Dorzie, 2013:120). Dorzie's work therefore provides a scholarly motivation and validates the essence of this study.

MacCoinnigh (2015) adopts both qualitative and quantitative research approaches and examines the syntactic structure of Irish-language proverbs. With regard to sentence structure, the study shows that, simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences manifest in Irish proverbs. The quantitative analysis also revealed that, out of one thousand (1000) proverbs used in the study as sample size, 565 were simple sentence types, 81 were compound sentences, 274 were complex sentences, 11 were compound-complex while 69 appeared as phrases. The author therefore concluded that, the simple sentence is the proverbial structure *par excellence* in Irish (57%), although the complex sentence is also common (27%). Compound structures arefound in only a small minority of proverbs (8%), compound-complex structures (1%) and phrases (7%). The study can be described to be one of the exciting contributions towards linguistics analysis of proverbs in the sense that it subsumes qualitative as well as quantitative designs. This notwithstanding, mention was not made as to whether there were interrogative or imperative functions of sentences in the construction of Irish-language proverbs, making it prudent for further research in a language like Nzema, hence, this study. This present study is similar to MacCoinnigh's work by means of examining the structure of Nzema proverbs in terms of sentence structure but varies in the sense that this work does not adopt quantitative analysis.

Adopting the framework of Principles and Parameters of Chomsky's (1981) Government and Binding (GB) model, Akanbi (2015) uses the X-bar syntax in the analysis of Yoruba proverbs at the sentential level. In his analysis, Akanbi discusses the structure of Yoruba proverbs under negative constructions, interrogative constructions, relative clause constructions, focus, and subjunctive clause constructions. The author observes that, Yoruba proverbs are predominantly complex sentences; hardly will a Yoruba proverb manifest in a simple sentence structure (Akanbi, 2015). This creates a significant scholarly lacuna and attracts attention for further studies on the structure of proverbs in a language like Nzema. Akanbi's work to some extent has resemblance with this study at the level of sentential (structural) analysis but the two differ in the sense that this work incorporates morphological description in the structure of Nzema proverbs. With regard to syntactic theoretical frameworks within which both studies are couched, they can be said to be analogous since the frameworks are sourced from Chomsky's Generative Grammar. This notwithstanding, a slight difference exists in the sense that this study adopts the descriptive grammar as one of the facets of Generative Grammar (which I intend to do without tree diagram representations), whereas Akanbi's work adopts the X-bar approach, which obviously deals with tree and constituent illustrations.

In a Discourse-Structural Analysis of Yoruba Proverbs in Interaction, Ehineni (2016) obtains data through interviews and from native Yoruba texts and examines Yoruba proverbs from functional and formal perspectives. Discussing the structural features of Yoruba proverbs in the same study, Ehineni notes that proverbs at the sentential level comprise elliptical constructions, substitution and compound sentences. In the analysis and discussions, the author was quiet over simple sentence structures as to whether they are prevalent or not in Yoruba proverbs. This seems to underscore

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Akanbi's (2015) observation that, there seem to be no Yoruba proverb that is of simple sentence in its structure; virtually all proverbs in the Yoruba language are of complex sentences (Akanbi, 2015:27). This assertion obviously creates a gap in scholarship. Further, Ehineni did not concentrate solely on the structural features of proverbs in the language. His incorporation of the discourse significance of proverbs, in my view contributed to limited discussions on the structural aspects of proverbs, hence, the need to undertake this study for extensive examination on the structure of proverbs in Nzema.

Yuka (2016) investigates the structure of Lamnso proverbs with the aim to identifying the structural uniqueness of proverbs in the language. The author's approach to the structural analysis of proverbs was drawn largely from the computational assumptions of Chomsky's (1995) Minimalist Programme (MP), which specifies the cheapest ways of satisfying potentially universal properties of grammatical structures. Yuka postulates that Lamnso proverbs are usually short sentences which tend to be very economical with lexical unit; hence, I find his adoption of Chomsky's (1995) Minimalist Programme framework for the study appropriate. The study is based on a sound methodology with adequate data, where the author discussed the structure of Lamnso proverbs under simple declarative statements, comparative proverbs, serial verb constructions, and structural parallelism. Yuka's study though provides a significant contribution, (particularly to the syntactic structure of proverbs); it lacks information as to whether complex embedded clauses do occur in the sentential structure of Lamnso proverbs. This is one of the crucial areas that this present study seeks to explore.

Kouega (2017) explores Features of the Syntax of Proverbs in Cameroon Pidgin English. The author used eighty-two (82) sample proverbs which were elicited by consulting informants who were fluent speakers of Pidgin English, especially uneducated or low educated people (market women, labourers, truck drivers…) in the Southwest and Northwest regions of Cameroon. The data (82 proverbs) were subjected to both qualitative and quantitative analytical approaches. The structural analysis, which was done following Quirk and Greenbaum's (1972; 1985) model of syntactic study (clause pattern), revealed that, proverbs in Cameroon Pidgin English exhibited simple, compound and complex sentence structures. By sentence function, the study further revealed that, sentences are generally declarative (statement) and imperative (command), but questions and exclamations were non-existent. Embedded clauses according to the findings are usually adverbial, nominal, relative and comparative. In the quantitative analysis, an attempt was made to ascertain the word length in each of the sample proverbs; which showed that, the shortest proverbs contained three (3) words, whereas the longest had eighteen (18) words.

Out of the (82) sample proverbs used, as the author noted, 35 (42.68%) were simple sentences, 12 (14.63%) were compound sentences, 30 (36.59%) were complex sentences, while 5 (6.1%) were minor sentences. Kouega therefore concludes that, most proverbs of Cameroon Pidgin English are simple sentences (35 out of 82 representing 42.68%); which replicates MacCoinnigh's (2015) findings that simple sentence was dominant in a study of Irish-language proverb. I find Kouega's work very interesting and describe it as a detailed work since it examines structural and functional types of sentence by making a blend of qualitative and quantitative analytical approaches. This present study differs from Kouega's work because I do not make any quantification in the analysis. Besides, while Kouega's work

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concentrated on syntax only, I incorporate a description of some word formation processes at the lexical level together with sentential analysis in this study.

Agyekum (2017) undertakes a study of the Ethnosemantic and Proverbs of *ohia* ‗poverty' in Akan. The study was grounded in the framework of language ideology, which reflects people‘s beliefs about their language and how they justify the structure of the language including its practical use (Agyekum, 2017:23). In his study, Agyekum examines the concept of *ohia* ‗poverty' in the Akan sociocultural worldview. In other words he discusses how the Akans conceptualise poverty based on their language, culture, society and experiences. The study therefore identifies social, cultural, individualistic and fatalistic sources of poverty; with its major finding that, poverty in Akan is best viewed and conceptualized from Akan language ideology and proverbs.

In the analysis, the author discussed the sociocultural concept of poverty among the Akans from the syntactic point of view such as (a) conditional clauses, (b) use of causative marker *ma* ‗let cause', and (c) the use of the copular verb *yɛ* ‗to be'. The author through the analysis points out that, Akan proverbs concerning poverty that are constructed in a conditional clause type are marked by the split conjunction (sɛ)…..a, which can denote the concept of conditionality (if) and temporality (when); both are expressed by identical lexical syntactic forms in Akan. The first part (*sɛ*) is optional and so can be omitted but the ….a, is obligatory and it is always followed by a comma to indicate the clause boundary between the subordinate conditional clause and the main clause (Agyekum, 2017:31). The following surfaced in his data analysis as examples; (*Sɛ*) *ɛhia buroni a, ɔsan ɛpo* ‗if the white man becomes poor, he crosses the ocean', (*Sɛ*) *ohia ka wo a, na woayɛ mmɔbɔ* ‗when you are afflicted by poverty,

you become miserable'. Some Akan proverbs on poverty as discussed by the author in the same study have the causative marker *ma* to imply that poverty causes one to fall into some unpleasant situations. The author further noted that, most of the causative sentences in the proverbs employ the focus marker *na* _it is', which implies that *ohia* _poverty' is exclusive to cause the situation inherent in the proverb. The following exemplify some Akan poverty-related proverbs in causative and focus constructions that emerged in Agyekum's study: *Ohia na ɛma ɔdehyeɛ dane akoa* _it is poverty that makes the royal become a servant', *Ohia na ɛma ohiani tɔn ne nyansa ma osikani* _it is poverty that makes the poor person sell his/her wisdom to the rich'. The copular verb *yɛ* _to be' is also used in the construction of some Akan proverb related to poverty. Agyekum observes that the link between poverty and the negative attribute is realised through the use of the copular verb *yɛ* _is'. He posits further that, the metaphor implies that poverty has all the semantic attributes that come after the copula verb; *X yɛ Y*. The following are some examples of proverbs in the copular (or stative) verb structure, per Agyekum's data analysis: *Ohia yɛ adammɔ* _poverty is madness', *Ohia yɛ animguaseɛ* _poverty is a disgrace'.

Agyekum's comprehensively discusses the concept of poverty among the people of Akan as portrayed in their proverbs. However, it is deficient in the sense that it lacks an extensive analysis of the syntactic aspect of proverbs. Other structural characteristics such as compound sentences, relative, nominal and comparative clauses which this study seeks to examine were not addressed in the discussions. This may due partly to the fact that the author's focus was not on the syntactic structure of Akan proverbs in particular. It may also be possible that poverty-related proverbs in the language manifest only in the structures which were considered in the analysis. This therefore creates a scholarly gap and demands a study like this present one.

2.2.2 Review of pragmatic analysis of proverbs

Equally significant in the literature of paremiology is the Pragmatic Approach to Proverb use and Interpretation by Ramirez (2015). The study relies on the Relevance Theory espoused by Sperber and Wilson (1995) in exploring the functions and uses of English and Spanish proverbs from a pragmatic point of view. The study aimed at examining and explaining how proverbs allow the speaker to express his/her intention in an implicit way. It was evident through the analysis that the main functions of proverbs are criticism, advice and warning. The study also explains how the ironical and metaphorical nature of proverbs often affects the understanding of proverbs. Ramirez's study, though relevant in the literature of proverbs in general, does not shed light in the structural investigations of proverbs, accounting for the necessity of this present study.

Deploying the Theory of Social Learning as a Reciprocal Determinism, Nwankwo (2015) discusses Igbo Proverbs in the Context of Early Communicative Competence and Social Stability. Data for the study were primarily elicited through interviews with Igbo speakers between the ages of 45 and 65 years, which focused on discussing the causes of conflicts and rate of moral decadence among youths and possible ways of restoring sanity to the society. The study aimed at examining proverbs as a viable means to ensuring proper upbringing and deterring conflict prone tendencies in the Igbo child. The data discussions were grouped under five (5) major sub-headings including (a) Proverbs used to encourage hard work and determination, (b) Proverbs used for reproof, (c) Proverbs that portray unity and hospitality, (d) Proverbs that teach the essence of humility and (e) Proverbs that encourage justice. The author thus observes that, Igbo proverbs are precise and incisive, and if appropriately inculcated to the intellectual and moral development of a child can serve as a tool to reprimand,

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discourage, instruct and correct or praise the growing child's derailing tendencies more intricately. The study shows that the mindset of a growing child can be well prepared by exposing him/her to proverbs that can help prune conflict and criminal tendencies. Nwankwo's work provides interesting insights into child upbringing, but the choice of respondents (in terms of their ages) seems a bit misleading. I suggest the author could have consulted the youth (between the ages of 18 to 25 years) to interview them on how they think early exposure to proverb use could be useful to their communicative competence and proper behaviours in the human society.

Moshood (2016) undertakes a pragmatic analysis of proverbs in selected works of Ola Rotimi. The study draws data (100 proverbs) from four (4) literary works of Ola Rotimi (a Nigerian playwright). Through purposive sampling, Moshood selected 40 proverbs from *Kurunmi*, another 40 proverbs from *The gods are not to blame*, 10 proverbs from *Hopes of the living dead* and 10 proverbs also from *Our husband has gone mad again*. The motivation for obtaining varing numbers of proverbs from the texts, as the author noted, was due to the fact that the texts do not contribute equal number of proverbs because the density of proverbial use by the playwright differs from one text to another. As a qualitative descriptive study, the author subjected the data to textual analysis since the data were sourced from the four (4) plays. In the discussions, the author accounted for the didactic imports of the proverbs as portrayed through the socio-cultural values and worldview of the people being projected in the works of Ola Rotimi. The analysis further explored the relevant contexts of proverbial citations since ―proverbs are essentially context-dependent" (Moshood, 2016: 76). The study shows that both primary and secondary meanings are required to achieve the optimal interpretations of the proverbs under study. The primary level, as Moshood tells us, is needed for the basic meaning of the lexical items used in the

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construction of the proverbs; whereas the secondary level is required to ensure the metaphoric and connotative imports of the messages expressed in the proverbs. Based on this observation, I suggest that Moshood's work could be partly analogous to this present study, in that, some specific morphological structures in Nzema proverbs are also anticipated to have basic or literal senses from which essential inferences could be made to understand the traditional proverbs in general.

Barasa and Opande (2017) also examine the use of animal metaphors in the conceptualisation and representation of women in Bukusu and Gusii proverbs in Kenya. Regarding its methodology, the authors purposively selected proverbs related to animals through ethnographic approach, where five (5) respondents aged between 60-70 years from Bukusu and Gusii communities were consulted. Overall, 48 proverbs were subjected to content analysis in the lens of Conceptual Metaphor Theory by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), which sees metaphorical extensions as mappings across two domains (from a source domain to a target domain) and the Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis Theory (FCDA), which relates to issues of gender, power and ideology. In the light of Conceptual Metaphors, the authors reinforce the dominant roles expected of men and the accompanying subdued roles of women as well as their vulnerability and weakness. The study showed that proverbs among the people of Bukusu and Gusii cultures relegate and compare women with pets, birds, farmyard animals, wild animals and inanimate objects. The study concludes that there is no difference in the metaphorical schemas in the semantics of animal proverbs and that it is related to the socio-cultural beliefs upheld by the Bukusu and Gusii communities. Women according to the selected proverbs are marginalised, discriminated in terms of decision making, participation, and regarded

as domestic workers and caregivers. They are perceived as inferior and subordinated to men.

Yakub (2018) also relied on Yankah's (1989) Theory of Proverbs Praxis, which relates to the use of proverbs in appropriate context of communication and examined ―Unity and Cooperation as Portrayed in Nzema proverbs". The study focused on proverbs that communicate the significance of uniting, cooperating and collaborating in performing a task and making a decision as depicted in selected Nzema proverbs. Data were sourced by interviewing four (4) indigenous speakers of Nzema and reading of literary texts to select proverbs that were relevant to the study. The study explores the appropriate contexts of use of the selected proverbs in Nzema discourse interaction. The study shows that the people of Nzema as part of their culture generally relish in using proverbs for speech embellishment. It was also revealed that unity and cooperation is a key factor in achieving success in all human endeavours, and that the people of Nzema in particular cherish and encourage the positive attitude of being united as evidenced in the sample proverbs. The study concludes that Nzema proverbs are not cited randomly and haphazardly, rather, their employment and incorporation in any traditional speech event is ‗context dependent'.

From pragmatic perspective, Owu-Ewie (2019) employed the Relevance Theory proposed by Sperber and Wilson (1986; 1995) and explored Akan (Fante) proverbs that are largely deployed during traditional marriage contraction. The study adoptedan ethnographic approach of data gathering; where the author visited three (3) different communities in the Shama District of the Western Region of Ghana and sought permission from participants and tape-recorded proceedings of traditional marriage ceremonies. The main goal of the study was to investigate the role of proverbs as a

counselling tool in marriage contraction among the Akans of Ghana. It also examined the pragmatic relevance and impacts of Akan proverbs in the context of advising marriage couples. The study demonstrated that, during Akan traditional marriage contraction, the floor is opened at the latter part of the exercise for optional speakers to offer series of advice in the context of ‗enrolling‘ the couples onto the precious journey of marriage. In this regard, the study showed that the optional speakers deployed various Akan proverbs which highlighted and focused on the following themes: on cooperation, on patience, on hard-work, faithfulness, excessive friendship, heeding advice, emulating good behaviour, respect for each other, respect for in-laws, against violence, against sexual denial, against polygamy, provision of security and on child bearing. Owu-Ewie‘s work, in my opinion is quite appealing, fascinating and contributes significantly to the field of proverbial research. The pragmatic perspective from which the author analysed the data partly connects this present study and brings the two in some sort of resemblance; however, this study captures morphological and structural description of Nzema proverbs, whereas Owu-Ewie‘s work on Akan proverbs did not have these two linguistic aspects (morphology and syntax) as its focus.

2.2.3 Review of sociolinguistic and ethnographic study of proverbs

In a Sociolinguistic Analysis of Urhobo Proverbs, Maledo (2015) adopts Dell Hyme‘s Ethnography of Communication Theory with insights from Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis with the intent to exploring and analysing Urhobo proverbs in the context of English as a second language in Nigeria. It is a qualitative study comprising fifty (50) sample proverbs collected from both primary and secondary sources. The author uses Hyme‘s speaking model to discuss proverbs as an inextricable aspect of Urhobo culture and language, highlighting the meanings of Urhobo proverbs and their sociolinguistic

implications. Maledo notes that, setting and scene take care of the physical and temporal aspects of the context of use of proverbs; that Urhobo proverbs are used in appropriate sociolinguistic context. The author again observes that, in terms of participants, children in Urhobo culture do not make use of proverbs in speech, or at least when talking to elders; and that, women sparingly employ proverbs in communication. The study further reveals that Urhobo proverbs are didactic, which are often used to advise, caution, reprimand and for persuasive purposes.

Oludare's (2017) Ethnographic Analysis of Selected Yoruba Proverbs in Political Media Chats is another contribution to studies on proverbs. Relying on the framework of Dell Hyme's (1964) Ethnography of Communication, the study examines the use of proverbs by Governor Olagunsoye Oyinlola (of Osun State, Nigeria) on a television programme, _Open Forum' aired on Osun State Broadcasting Corporation (OSBC), in order to bring to the fore, and unveil the aesthetic and persuasive values inherent in proverbs as a means of beautifying language. Data for the study according to the author comprised twenty (20) purposively selected proverbs employed by Governor Oyinlola on the programme. As part of the data gathering, one hundred adult respondents ranging from 45-70 years who regularly listened and watched the programme were interviewed. Based on the appropriateness of the proverbs to their context of use, the author tackled the analysis by classifying the data into four (4) groups such as: (i) proverbs that portray some Yoruba beliefs (ii) proverbs that warn and caution (iii) proverbs that express power-relationship and (iv) proverbs associated with self-evaluation. The study showed that Prince Oyinlola through his dexterous use of proverbs demonstrated his good mastery of the Yoruba language. The author proffers therefore that linguistics skills entail more than the mastery of a linguistic code that allows the language user to produce sentences that are grammatical, they

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also involve knowledge about how to use language, spiced with proverbs and idiomatic expressions in diverse social settings. The author further concludes that proverbs are timeless economic resources in the transmission of ideas and are very informative as they provide access to the traditions and the popular beliefs of a community. Oludare's work is purely ethnographic; hence the adoption of Hyme's Ethnography of Communication as the framework for the analysis was appropriate. It is obvious therefore that the study has no focus on the morphological and structural properties of proverbs, thereby varying from this present one in terms of theoretical and analytical approaches. This consequently underscores the relevance of exploring the morpho-pragmatic and syntactic features of proverbs in Nzema.

Investigating the Social Representations of Masculinity and Femininity as Portrayed in Nzema Proverbs, Nyame & Tomekyin (2018) report on the gender situation in Nzema society and show how men and women are stratified socially in Nzema culture. The data (Nzema proverbs relating to men and women), were purposively gathered from primary and secondary sources and analysed through the lens of social construction of gender framework. In the discussions, the proverbs were put into nine (9) categories according to various themes that were found relevant to shed light on the way men and women are perceived in the socio-cultural set up of Nzema such as (a) Proverbs related to women's beauty and physical appearance, (b) Proverbs that portray women as dependent, (c) Proverbs that emphasise hegemonic masculinity, (d) Proverbs that project women as physically and psychologically weak, (e) Proverbs that convey women as supportive, (f) Proverbs that depict complementary roles of women, (g) Proverbs that encourage women empowerment, (h) Proverbs that convey women as showing genuine love and (i) Proverbs that portray women as intelligent. The study reveals that proverbs in Nzema are considered as a validation of their

culture and that Nzema traditional proverbs are rich in creating and perpetuating gendered culture. It further establishes that Nzema society has values and traditions that influence the behaviour of it people, which are communicated via proverbs in different dimensions. Contrary to previous opinion in scholarship that African oral literature presents women as oppressed and men as oppressors, the authors conclude that the societal construction of masculinity and femininity in Nzema proverbs rather shows society's aspiration and desire to social order by presenting patriarchy as an immutable part of that social order in the nuclear family.

Nyame and Tomekyin (2018) did a descriptive qualitative study of Neological Developments in Nzema Proverbs. The research goal was to discuss recent Nzema proverbs; why they are described as recent, the central messages they seek to communicate and the differences between the recent and traditional Nzema proverbs as well as their similarities. The data for the study, which were primarily obtained through the researchers' native speaker introspection were examined in the light of neological issues in proverbs, variations on existing proverbs, reasons for considering some Nzema proverbs as recent and the differences and similarities between the recent and traditional proverbs. The study reveals that it is possible to create new proverbs from the old proverbs. Nzema proverbs, as the authors aver are based on real life situations and observations and so many people use their artistic skills, wisdom, linguistic knowledge and observations from new occurrences in the society to create proverbs. The study further concludes that the major difference between the recent Nzema proverbs and the traditional Nzema proverbs is explicated in terms of their _wording'. In other words, some people interchange the words in the traditional proverbs with words that are pronounced similar to them, in order to suit current circumstances, experiences and trend of affairs. Nonetheless, as the authors observe,

most recent and traditional Nzema proverbs connote similar meaning. They have the same structure that provides the same idea despite the difference in wording.

In an analysis of wellerisms in Nzema proverbs, Yakub (2018) purposively selects some Nzema proverbs in which fictional entities such as animals, birds and plants among others are personified as if they are capable of quoting certain proverbial statements. The study sought to investigate the metaphorical implications of the attributes of such fictional creatures in relation to the philosophical and socio-cultural worldview of the Nzema. In other words, it sought to unveil the way nonhuman entities are made to depict the wisdom, values, beliefs, traditions and experiences of the people. The study demonstrates that some Nzema proverbs are woven around nonhuman creatures such as ants, dogs, antelopes, monkeys, doves, ducks, vultures and others; which central messages transcend metaphorically to teach good morals and advise all categories of people to refrain from practices which societies frown upon.

As mentioned at the beginning of this section, structural analysis of proverbs has gradually become the interest of many linguists cross-linguistically. The literature review above has explicated that there is enormous literature available on the study of proverbs, particularly from a linguistic and for that matter grammatical perspective. It is worth noting that the findings of these works would provide a significant insight and be useful to this study. Though these works are interesting and contribute to literature in the study of proverbs, there are still some gaps left to be covered.

First, it appears obvious that not much has been done on Nzema proverbs either from a morpho-pragmatic and structural perspective. It can also be deduced that the works of Nyame & Tomekyin (2018) and Yakub (2018) focused on equally essential themes

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such as gender, neologism, unity and wellerism in Nzema proverbs; however, no work was identified to specifically tackle a linguistic investigation of proverbs in Nzema. This leaves a wide scope for scholars interested in the study of Nzema proverbs from a linguistic, and for that matter morpho-pragmatic and syntactic perspective.

Again, Mensah (2010) identifies some morphological properties such as inflections, derivations, reduplication and lexical borrowing as occurring at the lexical level in the structure of Efik proverbs. I find this interesting and so it gives me the insight to investigate as to whether Nzema proverbs at the lexical level are made up of specific word formation processes that may not occur at random, but may be present in the structures for a purpose and lend themselves to be related to the inferences and understanding of the proverbs.

Further, there are some inconsistencies in the findings and conclusions as per the reviewed literature so far. Akanbi (2015) for instance argues that hardly do Yoruba proverbs manifest structurally in a simple sentences, whereas MacCoinnigh (2015) and Kouega (2017) maintain that simple sentences are predominant in Irish-language proverbs and Cameroon Pidgin English proverbs respectively.

Also, in terms of functional classification of sentences, Bhuvaneswar (2012) asserts that Telegu proverbs are represented in an unrestricted, open-ended fashion in all the major syntactic classes of the declarative, interrogative, imperative and exclamatory sentences whereas Kouega (2017) states that declaratives and imperatives do exist but interrogations and exclamations do not occur in the syntax of Cameroon Pidgin English proverbs. These controversies and inconsistencies in the syntactic structure of

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proverbs in some languages as the literature has shown tend to validate and thus call for this present study to also contribute a quota to the existing literature.

Finally, the analytical approaches adopted as can be gleaned from the literature so far leaves us with a wide range of theoretical areas to explore. None of these previous works, per the review, specifically adopted the Descriptive Adequacy Grammar Theory and the Ethno-pragmatic Model. These are the theoretical frameworks which support the analysis and discussion in this present study. In what follows, I give an overview of what some previous scholars have contributed on the concept of morphology, followed by the concept of syntax.

2.3 Conceptual Review: The Concept of Linguistic Morphology

The term morphology according to Bussman (1996) was coined by a German philosopher, Johaan Wolfgang Von Goethe (in 1822) from a biological perspective (to refer to the study of form and structure of living organisms). Since the nineteenth century, the term morphology has also been used in linguistics to describe the study of inflection and word formation (cf. Bussman, 1996; Thakur, 1997; Yule, 2010). In the view of Lyons (1981), Morphology is the branch of linguistics that is concerned with the study of the internal structure of words and how words are formed in a language. Katamba (1993) concisely defines linguistic morphology as ―the study of word structure". Morphology in linguistics deals with how words are shaped, and how the shapes of words may be systematically adjusted in order to accomplish communicative task (Payne, 2006:8). In the above definitions, a common concept that seems to recur is the fact that morphology is one of the arms of linguistics responsible for the study of the components and internal structure of words in a given language.

2.3.1 The morpheme

In the words of Thakur (1997:2), a morpheme is ―the minimal grammatical unit of a language". Wiredu (1999:112) defines a morpheme as ―the smallest meaningful unit of grammatical analysis which cannot undergo any further division". Wiredu (1999) stresses his view on a morpheme by illustrating that, the word *cat* for example, is a single morpheme which will only result in individual sounds such as /**k**/, /**a**/, and /**t**/ if one attempts to divide *cat.* This means, an attempt to break *cat* into any further linguistic unit will render it meaningless. A morpheme is the smallest indivisible linguistic unit that bears meaning (Katamba, 1993; Hayes, 2009). In Nzema as well, the concept of a morpheme as defined above applies. Kwaw (2008) notes that, a word in Nzema such as **sua**, which means‗house‗, cannot be further divided into any meaningful constituents. He explains that, any division of the word will yield nothing meaningful in the language except sound segments like /**s**/, /**u**/ and /**a**/. These individual sounds do not make any meaning in isolation.

Morphemes may be free or bound. A free morpheme is a word that can occur alone to denote some meaning as for instance *faith* while morphemes like {*-full*}, {*-ness*} and {*un-*} are bound morphemes which need to be attached to the free morpheme *faith* before they become grammatically meaningful (cf. Thakur, 1997:8; Wiredu, 1999:117). For further explanation, Wiredu provides the various morphemes in the word *unfaithfulness* as this; {*un-*} bound morpheme, {*faith*} free morpheme, {*-ful*} bound morpheme and {*-ness*} bound morpheme.

Similarly, in the word *boys* for example, {*boy*} is a free morpheme whereas {*-s*} is a bound morpheme and a plural marker; in *went*, {*go*} is a free morpheme whereas {*-ed*} is a bound morpheme and past marker (see Thakur, 1997:8). Figure 2 below

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(adopted from Yule, 2010:70), provides a useful illustration of the different types of morphemes.

Figure 2: *An illustration of the different kinds of morphemes*
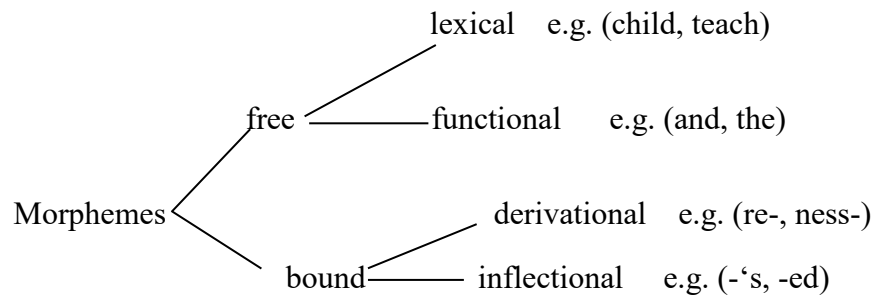
These claims on free and bound morphemes in English as observed above also hold true in Nzema. In the morphology of Nzema as Kwaw (2008) reports, a free morpheme (root morpheme) can exist independently to make meaning while a bound morpheme attaches its self to a root morpheme for its meaning to be realised. Below (in table 2) are some examples of free and bound morphemes in the language:

Table 2: *Examples of free and bound morphemes in Nzema*

Root word	bound morpheme (past marker)	past form of verb
a. tia ‗walk'	{-le}	diale ‗walked'
b. soa ‗carry'	{-le}	zoale ‗carried'
c. bie ‗urinate'	{-le}	biele ‗urinated'
d. tɔne ‗sell'	{-le}	dɔnele ‗sold'
e. fa ‗take'	{-le}	vale ‗took'

In the above examples, the verbs **tia**, **soa**, **bie**, **tɔne** and **fa** are free morphemes whereas {-**le**} is a bound morpheme (a past marker), which becomes meaningful after it is has been added to the base verbs to achieve their past forms.

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2.3.2 The affix

Discussing the concept of affixation, Thakur (1997) mentions that, in a word which is made of more than one morpheme, there is usually one morpheme which is central and one or more morphemes which are peripheral. He notes that the central morphemes function as the head whereas the peripheral morphemes function as modifiers. These central morphemes in words are known as the root(s) and the peripheral ones are called affixes. Considering the positions they occupy, Thakur (1997) describes three types of affixes namely; prefixes, suffixes and infixes. He explains that a prefix is a word-element that is added at the beginning of a word to form another word. A suffix is a word-element that is added at the end of a word to form another word or to obtain another form of the same word whereas an infix is inserted in the middle of a word to form another word (Thakur, 1997).

Wiredu (1999:121) also defines affixes as bound morphemes, either inflectional or derivational which are attached to the base morpheme. He further distinguished that bound morphemes which are added to the base morphemes to the left (before the base) are called prefixes and those attached to the base on the right (after the base) are known as suffixes (see also Baruah, 1991:74). In Nzema word structure also, some words can be made up a root/base with a prefix to the left and a suffix to the right. Some examples are shown in table 3:

Table 3: *Prefixes and suffixes in Nzema*

Word	Base	Prefix	Suffix
a. awieleɛ ‗end time'	wie ‗finish'	{a-}	{-leɛ}
b. ewule ‗death'	wu ‗die'	{e-}	{-le}
c. ahyɛlɛ ‗gift'	kyɛ ‗give'	{a-}	{-lɛ}

2.3.3 Inflectional and derivational affixes

Discussing inflectional and derivational affixes, Baruah (1991), Thakur (1997) and Yule (2010) agree that, the difference between inflection and derivation can be seen in the fact that the former produces different forms of the same lexeme whereas the latter results in the formation of new lexemes (lexical categories). In other words, inflection has a grammatical function whereas derivation has a lexical function. Wiredu (1999) also avers that, a morpheme which changes the part of speech of a stem is called a derivational morpheme and those that still make the stem remain in its class when added are known as inflectional morphemes. Simply put, affixes can be said to be class changing or class maintaining. Nzema exhibits a system of derivation, where a word in one lexical category can be changed to another category by means of attaching a bound morpheme (suffix) like {-volɛ} to a base verb as exemplified in table 4. In table 4 below, the derivational suffixes are in bold. The suffix {-volɛ} is attached to the base verbs **kɛlɛ** ‗write' **tendɛ** ‗talk' and **tie** ‗listen' to derive their nominalised counterparts as in **kɛlɛvolɛ** ‗writer' **tendɛvolɛ** ‗speaker' and **tievolɛ** ‗listener' respectively.

Table 4: *Derivational morphemes in Nzema*

Verb	derivational suffix	derived noun
a. kɛlɛ ‗write'	{-volɛ}	kɛlɛvolɛ ‗writer'
b. tendɛ ‗talk'	{-volɛ}	tendɛvolɛ ‗speaker'
c. tie ‗listen'	{-volɛ}	tievolɛ ‗listener'

(Adopted from Kwaw, 2008).

As Wiredu (1999) and Mensah (2010) mention, an inflectional affix (morpheme) does not necessarily change the word class of the root word to which it is attached. In other words, if the root word belongs to either the class of noun, verb, adjective or adverb, the newly formed word does not change it lexical category after the inflectional

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morpheme has been added (Katamba, 1993; Wiredu, 1999). According to Kwaw (2008) and Arloo (2014), Nzema employs the suffix {-**nli**} which represents human and singular to attach to a lexical noun category as in **Gana** ‗Ghana‘ becomes **Gananli** ‗a Ghanaian‘. Nzema again uses the suffix {-**ma**} to indicate human and plural as in **nɛɛse** ‗nurse‘ becomes **nɛɛsema** ‗nurses‘ as well as **sukoavo** ‗student‘ becomes **sukoavoma** ‗students‘.

In table 5 for instance, it is shown that the inflectional suffix {-**nli**} in Nzema is added to a base noun as in **ehyia** ‗poverty‘ becomes **ehyianli** ‗an indigent‘, **nza** ‗alcohol‘ becomes **nzanli** ‗a drunkard‘ and **bange** ‗bank‘ becomes **bangenli** ‗a banker‘.

Table 5: *Inflectional morphemes in Nzema*

Base noun	Inflectional suffix	Inflected noun
a. ehyia ‗poverty‘	{-nli}	ehyianli ‗an indigent‘
b. nza ‗alcohol‘	{-nli}	nzanli ‗a drunkard‘
c. bange ‗bank‘	{-nli}	bangenli ‗a banker‘

As part of Nzema inflectional affixes, Kwaw (2008) further distinguishes the prefixes {**n-**}, {**m-**} and {-**ŋ**} as plural markers in the language which operate through homorganic nasal assimilation. A homorganic nasal rule is a process in which the place of articulation of an initial sound of a word is assimilated by the final sound in a prefix (Katamba, 1989; Tilahun, 2014). Table 6 illustrates the prevalence of this morpho-phonological phenomenon in Nzema where the point of articulation is underlined:

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Table 6: *Plural markers in Nzema: A homorganic nasal manifestation*

Base noun	inflectional prefix	plural form of noun
a. ɛdanlɛ ‗dothe'	{n-}	ndanlɛ ‗dothes'
b. tokule ‗hole'	{n-}	ndokule ‗holes'
c. bote ‗rat'	{n-}	mbote ‗rats'
d. baka ‗tree'	{m-}	mbaka ‗trees'
e. kakula ‗child'	{ŋ-}	ŋgakula ‗children'
f. kundu ‗blanket'	{ŋ-}	ŋgudu ‗blankets'

It can be learnt from table 6 that some lexical nouns in Nzema inflect for number (plural) in terms of homorganic assimilation rule; where the alveolar nasal /**n**/ assimilates in place to the voiced alveolar stop /**d**/ as in (6a and b), the labial nasal /**m**/ assimilates in place to the voiced labial stop /**b**/ as in (6c and d) and the nasal velar /**ŋ**/ assimilates in place to the voiced velar stop /**g**/ as in (6e and f).

2.3.4 Root, base and stem

Most words can be analyzed as having a central morpheme to which remaining morphemes are attached. This central morpheme is called the root (Hayes, 2009). A root (free morpheme), is that part of the word which remains after all the affixes have been removed (Thakur 1997:8). In the word *international* for instance, {*nation*} is the root whereas {*inter-*} and {*-al*} are affixes (Thakur, 1997).

The base is an alternation to root or stem that indicates the indivisible unit attached to different affixes (Katamba, 1993:45). The base, also called a root, is that morpheme considered as the first morpheme in a word to which the other morphemes are added (Wiredu, 1999:118).

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A stem is a base morpheme to which another morphological element is added. In other words, it is the part of the word which remains after all the inflectional affixes have been taken away (Thakur, 1997:18) Thakur adds that, in the word *cigarettes*, for example, *cigarette* is the stem and {-*s*} is an inflectional suffix. In the word *repayable*, *repay* is the stem because it serves as the base to which the suffix {-*able*} is attached (see Wiredu, 1999:121).

2.3.5 Reduplication

Dolphyne (1988) defines reduplication as ―a type of word formation process which consists of the repetition of the whole or part of a stem". Spencer & Zwicky (2001:130) view reduplication as a morphological phenomenon in which the base, root, stem of a lexeme or a part of it is repeated completely or with a slight change. Reduplication indicates the recurrence of a morpheme either fully (completely) or partially (Katamba & Stonham, 2006). Hayes (2009:105) buttresses the view of Katamba & Stonham by postulating that reduplication is a morphological process which copies or repeats the morphological base either entirely or only partially. From the above definitions, it is observe that two forms of reduplication known as *full* and *partial* reduplication are highlighted. In full reduplication, the whole of the base is repeated or copied in the reduplicant slot (Mattes, 2006 (cited in Boakye, 2015)). Table 7 below, adopted from Boakye (2015:27) indicates a phenomenon of full (complete) reduplication in Akan.

Table 7: *Full reduplication in Akan*

Base	Reduplicant	Meaning
a. afe ‗year'	afe-afe	annually
b. anwa ‗oil'	anwa-anwa	oily
c. nsuo ‗water'	nsuo-nsuo	watery
d. aba ‗lump'	aba-aba	lumpy

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Partial reduplication, according to Ghomashie et al (2004), involves copying only a portion/part of the stem, which results in alternation of either a vowel or consonant. Table 8 shows a process of partial reduplication (both vowel and consonant alternations) in English.

Table 8: *Partial reduplication in English*

Vowel alternation (ablaut)	Consonant alternation (onset)
a. criss-cross	handy-dandy
b. chit-chat	teeny-weeny

 (Adopted from Omer, 2012).

As Arloo (2014) mentions, reduplication is a common word formation process in Nzema. Like in Akan, (see table 7) and possibly in many other languages around the globe, reduplication in Nzema can also be complete or partial. Tables 9 and 10 exemplify full reduplication of verbs and nouns respectively, whereas table 11 shows partial reduplication in Nzema.

Table 9: *Full reduplication in Nzema: Verbs with CV structure*

Base verb	Reduplicated form	Semantic function
a. di ‗eat‗	didi ‗eat repeatedly‗	continuity
b. si ‗pound‗	sisi ‗pound repeatedly‗	continuity
c. me ‗swallow‗	meme ‗swallow repeatedly‗	continuity
d. fe ‗vomit‗	fefe ‗vomit repeatedly‗	continuity
e. bu ‗break‗	bubu ‗break repeatedly‗	continuity

In table 9(a – e), we observe that the reduplicated verb forms semantically suggest continuity of an event.

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Table 10: *Full reduplication of Nzema nouns*

Base noun	Plural	Reduplicated form	Semantic function
a. toba ‗bottle'	adoba	adoba-adoba ‗many bottles'	abundance
b. sua ‗house'	azua	azua-azua ‗many houses'	abundance
c. baka ‗tree'	mbaka	mbaka-mbaka ‗many trees'	abundance
d. tokule ‗hole'	ndokule	ndokule-ndokule ‗many holes'	abundance
e. kɛkɛba ‗insect'	ŋgɛkɛba	ŋgɛkɛba-ŋgɛkɛba ‗many insects'	abundance

Dolphyne (1988:136) points out that, only plural nouns (in the case of Akan) may be reduplicated and the reduplicated form is basically a repetition of the plural noun. Gleaning from table (10a-e), we see that the reduplicated forms of the nouns were obtained by copying the plural nouns; which serve as the base nouns. This suggests that Nzema reduplicated nouns conform to Dolphyne's claim in the case of Akan. It is further evidenced from the data that Nzema iterate/copy nouns for quantification, which semantically indicates excessiveness and abundance.

Table 11: *Partial reduplication in Nzema: Verbs with CV and CVCV structure*

Base verb	Reduplicated form	Semantic function
a. tɔ ‗buy'	tʊtɔ ‗buy continuously'	repetition of action
b. ka ‗bite'	kɪka ‗bite continuously'	repetition of action
c. sɛlɛ ‗beg'	sɛlɛzɛlɛ ‗beg continuously'	repetition of action
d. tɔnɪ ‗sell'	tɔnɪdɔnɪ ‗sell continuously'	repetition of action

From Table 11, it is observed that partial reduplication manifests in Nzema. In (11a) and (11b), the base verbs have CV structure, which reveal ablaut (vowel alternation) as seen in the reduplicated forms. In (11a), the back mid-low vowel /ɔ/ as in the base verb **tɔ** ‗buy' becomes /ʊ/ in the reduplicated slot as in **tʊtɔ** ‗buy continuously' to result in –ATR harmony since /ʊ/ and /ɔ/ share the vocalic feature –ATR. In (11b), the low central vowel /a/ as in the base verb **ka** ‗bite' becomes /ɪ/ as in **kika** ‗bite

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continuously' in the reduplicated form to result in –ATR harmony since /ɪ/ and /a/ are –ATR vowels in Nzema. In (11c) and (11d), consonant alternation occurs. The voiceless fricative /s/ and the voiceless stop /t/ at the onset of the base verbs **sɛlɛ** _bɛg' and **tɔne** _sɛl' in (11c) and (11d) respectively, mutates with their voiced counterparts /**z**/ and /**d**/ in the reduplicated forms as in **sɛlɛzɛlɛ** and **tɔnɪdɔnɪ**.

2.3.6 Lexical borrowing

Language is the best means of human communication changing from time to time by language contact, interference or borrowing from other languages (Omer, 2012:70). Borrowing occurs when speakers of one language _adopt' a word from another language for things that the first language does not have readily available (Akpanglo-Nartey, 2002:142). Words entering a language this way are referred to as loan words; and two major situations that promote lexical borrowing according to Akpanglo-Nartey (2002) are trade relations and invasion of one language group by another. Mensah (2010) also views borrowing as a morphological phenomenon where words of one language are adopted and adapted by another language. Largely, when there is lexical borrowing, the loan word is made to conform to the phonological and morphological patterns of the recipient language (Jindayu, 2013:61). Akpanglo-Nartey (2002:143) asserts that, ―various phonological adaptations are made in order to accommodate a loan word into a target language; hence, English [skul], for instance becomes [suku] in Japanese, a language with basic CVCV syllable type" (Akpanglo-Nartey, ibid). As Yule (2010) has rightly noted, English language for instance has adopted a vast number of words from other languages, including *croissant* from (French), *tattoo* from (Tahitian), *sofa* from (Arabic), *dope* from (Dutch), *piano* from (Italian), *pretzel* from (German), *yogurt* from (Turkish), *tycoon* from (Japanese), *zebra* from (Bantu), and *lilac* from (Persian) (see Yule, 2010:54).

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In Nzema, some words (especially lexical noun categories) are mostly borrowed from English. One significant phonological process that often takes place when words are borrowed from English to Nzema is the _addition of vowel segment' (epenthesis). This usually occurs at word final position of the adapted word because the syllable structure of Nzema does not permit CODA (see Annan, 1980, Arloo, 2014). This implies that, any borrowed word from English that has a consonant at syllable final position would employ a vowel sound at word final in the case of Nzema as seen below in table (12a-d). Another observation is that, the consonant clusters /**tr**/ as in _petrol' and /**sk**/ as in _school' are broken in the borrowed words (Nzema version) by inserting the high back vowel /**u**/ as in **pat<u>u</u>lo** and **s<u>u</u>kulu** (see table 12c and 12d). The examples are shown as follows:

Table 12: *Borrowed words from English to Nzema*

English	Nzema
a. pen	pɛne
b. bucket	bokiti
c. petrol	patulo
d. school	sukulu

2.3.7 Compounding

In the words of Shopen (2007:24) ―Compounding involves word-formation based on the combination of at least two potentially free forms, most frequently members of open lexical classes such as nouns or verbs". Yule (2010:55) also defines compounding as the process of combining two separate words to produce a single form. A compound word contains at least two bases which are both words, or at any rate, root morphemes (Katamba, 1993; Booij, 2010). The various definitions aggregate to imply that compounding is a morphological process where two or more

free morphemes are joined to form one new word. It can further be noted that a compound word can consist of two root words or beyond as for instance, *haircut, headache, girlfriend,* or *mother-in-law, editor-in-chief, officer-in-charge* (see Wiredu, 1999:133). Compounding can be put into semantic and formal classifications (Owu-Ewie, 2014 (citing Kurosaki, 2009; Syal & Jindal, 2007)). Semantic classification of compounds deals with the issue of the head word. There are four types which are *endocentric compound* (consists of a head, i.e. the categorical part that contains the basic meaning of the whole compound, and modifiers), *exocentric compound* (does not have a head, and meaning often cannot be transparently guessed from its constituent parts), *copulative compound (*have two semantic heads) and *appositional compound* (have lexemes with two (contrary) attributes) (see Owu-Ewie, 2014:234). Formal classification of compounds on the other hand, is where compounds are classified based on the word classes that compose it. Table 13(a-c) shows some examples of compound words in Nzema:

Table 13: *Lexical compounding in Nzema*

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   a. **Noun + Noun**

     manra + sua → manrasua

     raffia + house → a house built with raffia sticks.

   b. **Noun + Adjective**

     sonla + mgbane → sonlamgbane

     human + useless → useless person.

   c. **Verb + Verb**

     fa   + kyɛ → fakyɛ

     take + share → forgiveness.

2.4 The Concept of Syntax

Finch (2000:77) describes syntax as a branch of linguistics concerned with the study of the rules governing the way words are combined to form sentences. Syntax studies how words are strung together in the construction of sentences (Akpanglo-Nartey, 2002; Payne, 2006). In a parallel sense, Yule (2010:96), views syntax as the study of the structure and ordering of components within a sentence. Carnie (2013:4), on his part states that, ―syntax studies the level of language that lies between words and the meaning of utterances". This implies that syntax is placed between morphology and semantics. Tallerman (2015:1) simply defines syntax as ―sentence construction". From my standpoint, the above definitions for syntax hold true. Syntax as a subfield of grammatical linguistics describes the study of how lexical items are arranged within sentences of a particular language.

Discussing the position (occurrence) of words in a language in grammatical sense, Akpanglo-Nartey (2002:83) postulates that, the order in which words are combined in a language to form sentences plays a significant role in the meaning we convey to our listeners. He further explains that, sentences may contain the same number of words, in fact, identical words, but the positions occupied by each word in the combination would make it acceptable in one language or unacceptable in another language. He used these sentences in (2-5) below for further explanation.

2. The boy killed the snakes

3. The snakes killed the boy

4. *Boy the killed snakes the

5. *Killed the boy the snake

Following the sentences in (2-5) above, Akpanglo-Nartey (2002) observes that (2) and (3) are grammaticallycorrect sentences in English language. Sentence (4) is also perfectly grammatical in the Ga, while (5) is grammatically acceptable in Arabic. In Akan, as Akpanglo-Nartey noted, (4) is grammatically right, but (5) would not convey any meaningful thought in Akan. This suggests that the patterning of words in a particular language to ensure grammaticality may differ from one language to another. Nzema for instance, does not permit a determiner ‗the‘ to come after a verb, followedby a nominal component within a sentence as shown in (7):

6. Kakula   ne   hu-nle   ɛwɔlɛ   ne.   [grammatical]
   Child.boy   DEF   kill-PAST   snake   DEF
   ‗The boy killed the snake‘.

7. *Hu-nle   ne   kakula   ne   ɛwɔlɛ.   [ungrammatical]
    Kill-PAST   DEF   child.boy   DEF   snake
    ‗Killed the boy the snake‘.

2.4.1 The structure (pattern) of the sentence

Quirk and Greenbaum (1973) have identified basic components or structures of the simple sentence (clause). Considering those elements that are normally obligatory, seven useful clause types can be distinguished (see Quirk & Greenbaum, 1973:166; Biber, Conrad & Leech, 2002:47; Downing & Locke, 2006:39-40). Following Quirk & Greenbaum (1973), Baruah (1991) notes that, the number of possible sentences in English is infinite, but they can be reduced to a finite set of basic patterns on the basis of essential parts and fixed word order (Baruah, 1991:95). These sentences are called basic or ‗kernel sentences‘ because all other sentences are derived from them (Baruah, 1991:95; Tallerman, 2015:19). As Baruah (1991) and Thakur (1998) noted, these basic sentences are often *simple, declarative, positive* and *active* from which *complex, interrogative, negative, passive* and so on can be derived through various processes of

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transformation. In (8-14) below, (adopted from Baruah, 1991:96), I show the basic clause patterns which have received attention in the literature.

Subject	**Verb**		**(SV)**
8. Birds	fly.		

Subject	**Verb**	**Adjunct (place)**	**(SVA)**
9. The book	is	on the table.	

Subject	**Verb**	**Complement (S)**	**(SVC)**
10. He	is	a fool.	

Subject	**Verb**	**Object (D)**	**(SVO)**
11. He	shot	the tiger.	

Subject	**Verb**	**Object (D)**	**Adjunct (place)**	**(SVOA)**
12. He	put	the book	on the table.	

Subject	**Verb**	**Object (I)**	**Object (D)**	**(SVOO)**
13. They	gave	him	the book.	

Subject	**Verb**	**Object (D)**	**Complement (O)**	**(SVOC)**
14. They	made	him	a fool.	

It should be mentioned that the basic sentence pattern of Nzema also follows the Subject Verb Object (SVO) structure (see example in 6 in section 2.4).

2.4.2 The noun phrase and its functions

The noun phrase (NP) is defined as the element in the sentence which typically functions as subject, object and complement (Annan, 2014:172). The phrase is called a **noun phrase** because its most obligatory, essential, head word is a noun, which can replace the whole group of words (see Wiredu, 1999:69; Annan, 2014:172). The term nominal phrase is sometimes preferred and used rather than noun phrase because not only lexical nouns but pronouns and other words may also be the head of the noun phrase (Annan, 2014).

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Highlighting the grammatical function of the noun phrase as **subject**, Annan (ibid), describes the subject as ―the person or thing that does the action indicated by the verb, or that is in the state indicated by the verb". Collins & Hollo (2010) posit that the subject is prototypically an NP, but subordinate clauses are also possible to function as subject. In sentences (15) and (16) below, as Collins & Hollo (2010) noted, both *his confession* and *that he confessed* are NP and subordinate clause respectively which function as subject of the verb ‗*was*'.

15. (His confession) (was) (a surprise).
       S   V   C

16. [That he confessed] (was) (a surprise).
       S   V   C

The two kinds of object mentioned in the literature are **direct object** (OD) and **indirect object** (OI) (cf Biber et al., 2002:49; Collins & Hollo, 2010:101). A direct object characteristically refers to a ‗patient', someone or something directly affected by an event whereas an indirect object refers to a ‗recipient' (one who receives something) or a ‗beneficiary' (one on whose behalf an activity occurs) (see Aart, 2001; Collins & Hollo, 2010). In (17-20) below, adopted from Annan (2014:173), the NP elements which function as direct object are in italics whereas the NP components which function as indirect object are bolded.
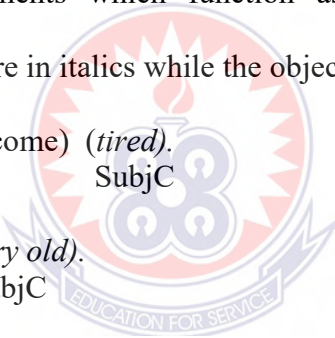
17. (John) (has bought) (*the car)*.
       S   V   OD

18. (He) (closed) (*the door)*.
       S   V   OD

19. (Dad) (gave) (**me)** (a book).
       S   V   OI   OD

20. (He) (found) (**Kofi)** (a chair).
       S   V   OI   OD

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Complements according to Collins & Hollo (2010:44) are more closely related to the head than adjunct, and typically are not omissible; whereas adjuncts are able to be omitted. Like the object, two kinds of complement are also identified as *subject complement* and *object complement.* A subject complement is an adjective or noun phrase which comes after a linking verb such as _be' or verbs like **seem**, **appear**, **consider**, **become, feel**, etc, and gives more information about the subject of the sentence (Wiredu, 1999; Annan, 2014:). In other words, a subject complement refers back to the subject already mentioned in the sentence. The object complement on the other hand provides additional formation and makes reference to the element which functions as object of the sentence (Wiredu, 1999). In (21-24), adopted from Wiredu (1999:108-109), the elements which function as complements and thus make reference to the subjects are in italics while the object complements are in bold.

21. (Stephen) (has become) (*tired).*
     S   V   SubjC

22. (My car) (is) (*very old).*
     S   V   SubjC

23. (We) (consider) (Paul) (**a good friend**)
     S   V   O   ObjC

24. (I) (found) (the novel) (**interesting**)
     S   V   O   ObjC

2.4.3 Structural types of sentence

With regard to its structure, a sentence can be described as *simple* and *non-simple*, where the latter comprises compound and complex sentences (Wiredu, 1999). These sentence types are reviewed as follows:

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2.4.3.1 Simple sentence

A simple sentence as Wiredu (1999) and Kirkpatrick (2013) simply define, often contains only one clause; usually with subject and predicate. Annan (2014) in a similar sense describes a simple sentence as consisting of one finite verb, which expresses a single thought. The length of a sentence does not necessarily determine its structural type; once there is only one clause involved and provides a single idea; the structure is a simple sentence (Wiredu, 1999:10). Examples (25-27) are simple sentence structures in Nzema.

25. Aku   le   sukua-vo.
    Aku   COPV   learn-NOM
    ‗Aku is a student'.

26. Kile-hile-volɛ   fofolɛ   ɛ-ra.
    Teach-RED-NOM   new   PERF-arrive
    ‗A new teacher has come'.

27. Raalɛ   kɔkɔlɛ   belane   tendenle   ne   hɔ-le   Ngɛnla   anoma.
    Woman   fair.colour   fat   tall   DEF   go-PAST   Accra   yesterday
    ‗The fair fat tall woman went to Accra yesterday'.

2.4.3.2 Compound sentence

Compound sentences as Crystal (2007) observes, consist of two or more main clauses. Similarly, in the view of Collins & Hollo (2010:125), a compound sentence involves the coordination of two or more clauses of equal grammatical status, with neither being contained within the other. A compound sentence is constructed of two or more clauses (which are independent), and linked by coordinating conjunctions such as ‗and', ‗but', ‗or' (Biber et al., 2002; Annan, 2014). In Nzema, (see Kwaw, 2008) compound sentences are formed by linking independent clauses with coordinators

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such as **nee/yɛɛ/na/eza** _and', **na/noko** _but' as well as **anzɛɛ** _or'. Examples (28-30) exemplify compound sentence constructions in Nzema with the conjunctions in bold:

28. Me ze ɛ-zi sua **eza** ye-dɔ kale.
    1SG.POSS father PERF-build house **CONJ** 1SG.PERF-buy car.SG
    _My father has built a house **and** (he has) bought a car'.

29. Bɛ-vɛlɛ-le nrenyia ne **na** ye-an-gɔ.
    3PL-call-PAST man DEF **CONJ** 1SG-NEG-go
    _They called the man **but** he did not go'.

30. Ɔ-ba-ra ɛnɛ **anzɛɛ** ɛhyema.
    3SG-FUT-come today **CONJ** tomorrow
    _He will come today **or** (will come) tomorrow'.

2.4.3.3 Complex sentence

Complex sentences contain a dependent (subordinate) clause and at least one independent clause; the two clauses are connected by a subordinator (e.g. because, when, who, that, although, if, despite, since, until, among others) (cf. Collins & Hollo, 2010; Annan, 2014). In complex sentences, the main clause often comes before the subordinate clause, but sometimes the subordinate clause is put first as in (31) (Kirkpatrick, 2013). Complex sentences in Nzema involve a combination of main and subordinate clauses with subordinating connectors like **kyesɛɛ** _unless', **na** _before' **ɔluakɛ** _because', **saa** _if/when' and others. Examples are shown below in (32) and (33):

31. <u>Because</u> his car broke down, he arrived late at the wedding.

32. Yɛ- n-rɛ-maa ye ezukoa **kyesɛɛ** ɔ-yɛ gyima ɛsesebɛ.
    1PL-NEG-FUT-give 3SG money **CONJ** 3SG-do work difficult
    _We will not pay him **unless** he works hard'.

33. **Saa** ɛ-yɛ kpalɛ a, ɛ-ba-hɔ hɛvene.
    COND 2SG-do good CON.PT 2SG-FUT-go heaven
    _**If** you do good, you will enter paradise'.

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2.4.4 Functional types of sentence

The use of sentences corresponds with four different discourse functions such as *declarative*, *imperative*, *interrogative* and *exclamation* (Aarts, 2001; Quagie, 2010). These sentence types with communicative functions, according to Collins & Hollo (2010:110) are traditionally described as the ‗mood‘. This suggests that such utterances can reveal speakers‘ attitudes and emotions.

2.4.4.1 Declarative sentence

A declarative sentence is the most straightforward sentence type which ‗states‘, ‗declares‘ or provides information with syntactic configuration that usually displays an *unmarked* order of the functional categories Subject, Predicate, Direct object etc (cf. Aarts, 2001; Downing & Locke, 2006; Collins & Hollo, 2010; Kirkpatrick, 2013). This implies that, in a declarative utterance, the subject comes first, followed by the predicator, which in turn is followed by a Direct object (if there is one) and an Indirect object (again if present) (Aarts, 2001). Mensah (2010) and Kirkpatrick (2013) share the view that declarative sentences can also be negatively constructed. Explaining the notion of negative declaratives therefore, Kirkpatrick notes that a negative sentence is one that makes negative, rather than positive statement; with the inclusion of words such as *not*, *nothing* or *never* as can be seen in (34-37). In Nzema, the morphemes {**tɛ**} and {**n**}, both meaning ‗not‘ are used as markers in negative statements (Kwaw, 2008). Examples are seen below in (38-40):

34. We did <u>not</u> invite her.

35. I <u>don‘t</u> know the man.

36. They did <u>nothing</u> about it.

37. She has <u>never</u> been here.

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38. Ɔ-tɛ-ba-le.

    3SG-NEG-come-PERF

    ‗He has not come'.

39. Tɛ   me   ze   a   le   wɔ.

    NEG 1SG.POSS   father EMPH.PT COPV   2SG

    ‗You are not my father'.

40. Me-n-gulo   kale dɛba.

    ISG-NEG-like   car   old

    ‗I do not like an old car'.

2.4.4.2 Imperative sentence

Imperatives are sentences which verbs are the base forms and normally have no overt grammatical Subject. They have implicit Subject ‗*You*', which can only be discovered at the level of interpretation (Quagie, 2010). The discourse function of an imperative sentence is primarily a directive, which means it is mostly used to order someone to do something such as commanding, inviting, warning, suggesting, and advising (Aarts, 2001; Quagie, 2010). Essuah (1965), Kwaw (2008) and Arloo (2014) on imperative sentences in Nzema report that, the second singular pronoun **wɔmɔ** ‗you', which is implied, is always assumed to occupy the Subject-agent position. (41-43) as outlined by Kwaw (2008) are syntactic structures in Nzema with imperative function.

41. Kpoa   egyaade   ne.
    Sweep.IMP   kitchen   DEF
    ‗Sweep the kitchen'.

42. Kɔ   nehane.
    Go.IMP   there
    ‗Go away'.

43. Bɔ   ɔ   nzo   nu.
    Hit.IMP   3SG   ear   POST
    ‗Slap him'.

2.4.4.3 Interrogative sentence

Kirkpatrick (2013:27) and Annan (2014:325) agree that interrogative sentencesseek information of some kind; which are followed by a question mark (?). Interrogative structures are commonly classified into (a) **yes/no questions**, (b) **wh-questions** and (c) **alternative questions** (see Aarts, 2001; Downing & Locke, 2006; Kirkpatrick, 2013).

2.4.4.3.1 Yes/no questions

Biber et al. (2002:251) opine that, yes/no questions have verb subject (VS) word other; they begin with the operator followed by the subject, where the listener or addressee is expected to reply with a truth value- either **yes** or **no**. In interrogative (yes/no) structures, the finite verb precedes the subject, where the speaker seeks confirmation or denial of the clause content (Downing & Locke, 2006; Annan, 2014). In the view of Collins & Hollo (2010:110-111), yes/no questions are described as **closed interrogatives**, and are so-called because the set of possible answer is closed and restricted to either affirmative ‗yes' or negative ‗no' (see also Annan, 2014:326). Downing and Locke (2006) noted examples of yes/no interrogatives in English such as in (44). Yes/no questions in Nzema however, as illustrated in (45) and (46) do not begin with an ‗operator' (or finite verb) as in the case of English described above. They appear in the form of declarative structures with the obligatory particle,…ɔ; which actually functions as the question marker (or interrogative particle) and exists largely at sentence final.

44. Are we meeting again tomorrow?

45. Kakula   ne   ɛ-hɔ   ɔ?

   Child   DEF   PERF-go   INT.PT

   ‚The child has gone?' (Has the child gone?).

46. Ɛ-li-le   awule   ne   ɔ?

   2SG-eat-PAST   rice   DEF   INT.PT

   ‚You ate the rice?' (Did you eat the rice?).

2.4.4.3.2 Wh-questions

Annan (2014) mentions that *wh-questions* allow a wide range of possible answers. They begin with ‚*wh-*' question words such as *why, where, what, when, which, who* etc (see Quagie, 2010; Annan, 2014). Aarts (2001:59) and Collins & Hollo (2010:111) refer to *wh-questions* as **open interrogatives**, which are so-named in recognition of the fact that the set of possible answers to such questions are in principle, without a limit. Wh-questions in Nzema are marked by the question words **nienwu** ‚where', **nwane** ‚who', **duzu** ‚what', **boni** ‚which' and **kenle nzu** ‚when' (Arloo 2014). They are marked by an obligatory interrogative particle,…*a* at sentence final; which is required to ‚complement' the question words that occur at sentence initial. (47-49) are some examples:

47. Boni   a   ɛ-va-le   a?

   QUES   INT.PT   2SG-take-PAST   INT.PT

   ‚Which one did you take?'

48. Nienwu   a   ɛ-kɔ   a?

   QUES   INT.PT   2SG-go.PROG   INT.PT

   ‚Where are you going?'

49. Duzu   a   bɛ-ba-li   a?

   QUES   INT.PT   3PL-FUT-eat   INT.PT

   ‚What will they eat?'

2.4.4.3.3 Alternative questions

Wiredu (1999) posits that, alternative questions require the listener to provide a reply that refers to the options giving in the sentence. Biber et al. (2002:251) postulate to buttress Wiredu's claim, in that alternative questions are structurally similar to *yes/no* questions; they begin with **operator** + **subject**, but instead of expecting a *yes/no* answer, they present alternatives for the addressee to choose between. They contain a conjunction ‗*or*' to link the options from which the listener or addressee is expected to make a choice of an answer (see Wiredu, 1999; Aarts, 2001; Kirkpatrick 2013). In Nzema, an alternative question specifically employs the interrogative conjunction **anzɛɛ** ‗or' to link the options from which the listener is expected to select an answer. The following sentences in (50-52) exemplify alternative questions in Nzema:

50. Ɛ-vo-le   kale   a   ɛ-ra-le   **anzɛɛ**   ɛ-dia-le?
     2SG-board-PAST car   PART 2SG-come-PAST **CONJ** 2SG-walk-PAST
     ‗Did you come by bus **or** on foot?'

51. Ayia   ne   bahɔ   zo   Kenlenzile **anzɛɛ** Yalɛ?
     Meeting DEF FUT-go on   Monday   **CONJ** Friday
     ‗Will the meeting be on Monday **or** Friday?'

52. Ɔ-wo-le   nrenyia   **anzɛɛ**   raalɛ?
     3SG-born-PAST   male.baby **CONJ**   female.baby
     ‗Did she deliver a baby boy **or** girl?'

2.4.5 Embedded clauses

A clause, like a major sentence, is a meaningful group of words containing a subject and predicate; however, unlike sentences, not all clauses can stand alone and make sense (Kirkpatrick, 2013:35). Annan (2014:277) describes the clause as ‖a group of words consisting of a subject, a finite verb and a complement, or an object if necessary". He states further that, a clause is usually grammatically complete itself,

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but does not always make complete sense except in the case of some main clauses. The above definitions give the signal that clauses come in two forms; one that can stand alone to give complete meaning and another that cannot exist alone to provide complete thought. These are referred to as *main/independentclause* and *subordinate/dependent clause* respectively (cf. Biber et al., 2002; Collins & Hollo, 2010; Kirkpatrick, 2013; Annan, 2014). Subordinate (dependent) clauses rely on main (independent) clauses for their complete meaning; such clauses are then said to be **embedded** as in: *The doctor knows* [*that you are waiting*] (see Downing & Locke, 2006:100). The whole sentence, (*the doctor knows that you are waiting*) in which the subordinate clause is embedded is called the **superordinate** clause, while (*the doctor knows*) is the **matrix** clause (Downing & Locke, 2006). The complementizer, ‗*that*‘ as Downing and Locke noted, has little semantic value and functions as introducer of an embedded clause.

In (53-59) below, adopted from Kirkpatrick (2013:36-38), the main clauses are in italics, the subordinate clauses are enclosed in square bracket while the complementizers (subordinating conjunctions) which introduce the various subordinate clauses are bolded.

53. *Here is the book* [**that** I borrowed].

54. *It is a country* [**whose** population is in decline].

55. *I lost the ring* [**which** he gave me].

56. *We didn‘t know* [**who** had done it].

57. *He refused to say* [**where** he was going].

58. [**When** he saw her] *he smiled*.

59. [**Whenever** they meet] *they quarrel*.

In (53-55) as Kirkpatrick explains, [*that I borrowed*], [*whose population is in decline*], and [*which he gave me*] are subordinate relative clauses which post modify the head nouns ‗book', ‗country' and ‗ring' in (53), (54), (55) respectively. [*Who had done it*] and [*where he was going*] are subordinate nominal clauses which function as object of the verb phrases ‗didn't know' and ‗refused to say' in (56) and (57) respectively. He notes further that, [*When he saw her*] and [*whenever they meet*] are subordinate adverbial clauses (of time), which function as adjunct in (58) and (59) respectively.

Similarly, Essuah (1965) and Kwaw (2008) describe embedded clause in Nzema as a complex construction where a subordinate clause is nested in a main clause. Essuah (1965) notes three types of subordinate clauses in Nzema, namely; ***dumangilenu ɛdendɛfoa*** ‗relative clause', ***duma ɛdendɛfoa*** ‗nominal clause' and ***yɛkpɔkɛngilenu ɛdendɛfoa*** ‗adverbial clause'. Kwaw (2008) affirms Essuah's assertion and further mentions comment and comparative clauses in Nzema. The subordinating conjunctions (complementizers) which introduce subordinate clauses in Nzema are ***mɔɔ…*** ‗which/who/whoever/what/whatever', ***mekɛ mɔɔ…*** ‗when', ***mekɛ biala mɔɔ…*** ‗whenever', ***ɛlaka mɔɔɔ…*** ‗where', ***kɛ…*** ‗that' and ***tɛla…*** ‗than' (Kwaw, 2008). The following structures in (60), (61), (62) and (63) are examples of relative, nominal, adverbial and comparative clauses respectively in Nzema:

60. Sukoavo ne   [mɔɔ   ha-le   amozi la,]   ɛ-nriandi.
    Student DEF COMPL remain-PAST late   CDET   PERF-run.away
    ‗The student [who came late] has run away'.

61. [Mɔɔ   ɛ-lɛ-ka   la,]   le   nɔhalɛ.
    COMPL 2SG-PROG-say CDET COPV true
    ‗[What you are saying] is the truth'.

62. Kpolosi   ne   wolo-le   [ɛleka mɔɔ awule ne   hɔ-vea-le   la].

    Police   DEF   enter-PAST   COMPL   thief   DEF go-hide-PAST CDET

    ꞊The police entered [where the thief went to hide]ʻ.

63. Nwomazukaolɛ   yɛ   se   tɛla   ndilebɔlɛ.

    Learn.PROG   COPV   hard   COMPL   weed.PROG

    ꞊Learning is more difficult [than weeding]ʻ.

2.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have made a review of literatures that are deemed relevant to the study. The reviews of literature were in three (3) sections. I have given an orientation on the appropriate theoretical frameworks in which the study is situated. I have also provided an overview of previous literature on the study of proverbs, followed by an overview of some opinion and contributions by a number of scholars on the concepts of morphology and syntax respectively. In the empirical review, I have critically examined the works and noted the necessary scholarly gaps which the study attempts to fill.
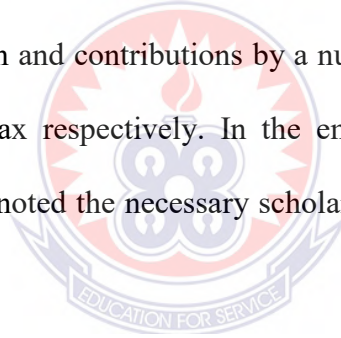
CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter looks at the methods and procedures adopted in carrying out the study. It mainly describes the type of research design adopted, source of data, population/participants, sampling techniques and a brief hint on how the data was organised and analysed.

3.1 Research Design

The study is a qualitative descriptive analysis of proverbs in Nzema. Qualitative research design is a method of describing events or persons scientifically without making use of numerical data (Patton, 2002; Creswell, 2009). Vanderstoep and Johnson (2009) also aver that a qualitative research produces narrative and textual descriptions of the phenomena under investigation. Thus, I consider the qualitative analytical approach most relevant for this study; since it would permit adequate description and explanation of some word formation processes in the structure of some proverbs and their pragmatic interpretations as well as the structural properties of Nzema proverbs.

3.2 Source of Data

The data for the study were obtained from primary and secondary sources. From the secondary source, I consulted a number of published works (literary texts in Nzema). One of these works is titled *Nzema Mrɛlɛ nee bɛ Ngilenu* by Kwesi & Quarm (1998); which is a compilation of some traditional proverbs in Nzema. I found this material relevant because it contained most Nzema proverbs and the authors were native speakers. The other works (both novel and drama) in Nzema which were consulted

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areHemans (1969), Soboh-Blay (1972; 1991; 2013), Ezenrane (1992), Kwesi (1996), Blay (1997) and Kwaw (2012). While reading these materials, I purposively selected proverbial structures and wrote them in my data collection notebook. In this endeaviour, one hundred and thirty-five (135) Nzema proverbs were hand-recorded. The primary source of gathering information also involved a means of elicitation, where I crosschecked the data and sought clarifications from native Nzema scholars (participants). My intuition and introspection as an indigenous speaker of Nzema was also significantly brought to bear on this study.

3.3 Population/Participants

Best & Kahn (2006) observe that, a population is a group of individuals who share a common characteristic and are of interest to the researcher. With regard to the data crosscheck and elicitation of information, I made contacts and had discussions (on separate occasions) with three (3) participants comprising one (1) Nzema lecturer at the College of Ghanaian Languages Education, Ajumako of the University of Education, Winneba, one (1) retired Nzema lecturer who also had M.Phil and one (1) M.Phil student who studies Nzema in the same institution. I selected three respondents only, because the study is qualitative in nature; and in my view, may not need many respondents for quantification. The specific roles of my respondents were to provide me with more insights and clarifications on the morphological structures in the proverbs and how they may contribute to the general interpretations of the proverbs as well as the structural patterns of the proverbs at hand.

The verification of the data was also necessary because, gradually, newly constructed proverbs that seem to be structurally opposite to the indigenous ones that are known and used by the folks are getting rooted in Nzema proverbs since language and culture

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are both said to be dynamic. For instance, an indigenous Nzema traditional proverb reads *saa raalɛ sie boane a nrenyia a bɔ ye bolɛ* ‗if a woman rears a sheep, it is a man who determines its price'. The above proverb, which is constructed in the affirmative (positive), has got its contemporary version in the negative form as *raalɛ ɛnzie boane na nrenyia ɛmbɔ ye bolɛ* ‗a woman does not rear a sheep for a man to determine it price. Therefore, I observed that I could be misled if the accuracy of the proverbial structures is not confirmed.

After all necessary consultations had completed, I purposively considered and analysed one hundred and fifteen (115) proverbs in this study; out of the total collection of one hundred and thirty-five (135) proverbs tht were gathered.

3.4 Sampling Technique

As Owu-Ewie (2012) rightly states, ‗a sample is a small population of the population that is selected for observation and analysis". Sampling is the process or act of selecting a suitable size, or a representative part of a population in order to determine certain characteristics of the whole population (Tuckman, 1999 (cited in Owu-Ewie 2012)).

In this study, it is worth describing the sampling technique as purposive in the sense that I did not randomly select the participants who represented the total population, rather, the selection was motivated by the fact that the three participants were indigenous speakers of the language and academic scholars who could read, write and analyse the morpho-syntactic structure of the language.

3.5 Data Analysis Procedure

The data for this study were obtained from primary and secondary sources. Having obtained enough data for the study, I presented the discussion/analysis in chapter four. The data discussions involved morpho-pragmatic and syntactic analysis. Under the morphological analysis, I examined some morphological features of the proverbial structures and shed light on the relevance of their existence in the proverbial structures; with respect to how they contribute to the entire understanding of the Nzema proverbs.

It is worth at this juncture explicating the scope of the morphological discussions intended to be made in this study, since one may doubt the possibility of morphological analysis in the structure of proverbs. In fact, some Nzema proverbs are characterised at the lexical level by a number of word formation processes as will be seen in the analysis in chapter four. In chapter four, I did not consider all the words in a particular proverb for morphological analysis, though almost every word in the proverb may be liable to morphological analysis. Instead, I highlighted (bolded) a specific word with a morphological property that is paramount to the pragmatic inferences and understanding of the proverb. In other words, such ‗key' words in the proverbs usually undergo certain word formation processes that contribute to the entire concept intended to be communicated in the proverb, and that served the scope and focus for our discussions in the morphological domain. On the other hand, the syntactic (sentential level) analysis included the following headings: *types of sentence by structure* and *types of sentence by function*. These headings had other sub-headings which have also been shown in the discussion in chapter four.

3.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have demonstrated the appropriate methodology employed in carrying out the study. Discussions in this section were highlighted under these sub-headings: research design, source of data, population/participants, sampling techniques as well as data analysis procedure.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter analyses and discusses the data for the study. I examine the morphosyntactic structure of proverbs in Nzema, situating the discussions in the grammatical properties of the language. The discussions first begin with morphological analysis; where I examine some word formation processes that occur at the lexical level of some Nzema proverbs. Such word formation processes include ***reduplication***, ***inflection***, ***derivation***, ***borrowing***, and ***compounding***. As has been mentioned in section 3.5, the morphological analysis does not capture all lexical items/constituents in the structure of the selected proverbs, rather, I highlight (bold) a specific word in each proverb and examine a particular word formation process that takes place. Further, I discuss the essence of the occurrence of such morphological features (word formation processes) in relation to how they contribute to the understanding and pragmatic inferences of such proverbs. I also examine the interaction of the various sentence types in Nzema with proverbs. Discussions at the sentential level therefore shall be focused on the ***structural types of sentence*** and ***functional types of sentence***. In the following discussions therefore, I take up the morphological analysis first, followed by the syntactic description of proverbs in Nzema. Throughout the data presentation and analysis however, the proverbs shall first be written in the local language, followed by equivalent interlineal glossing and a literally translation in English.

4.1 Morphological Analysis (Word Formation Processes)

4.1.1 Reduplication

One of the interesting morphological features (word formation processes) that is prevalent in the structure of Nzema proverbs is the phenomenon of reduplication. Dolphyne (1988) defines reduplication as ―a type of word formation process which consists of the repetition of the whole or part of a stem". Reduplication indicates the recurrence of a morpheme either fully (completely) or partially (Hayes, 2009). Marfo & Osam (2018:34) posit that ―reduplication occurs in all the major word classes in Akan". In the morphology of Nzema as well, the major lexical categories such as *verbs, adverbs, adjectives* and *nouns* are capable of undergoing reduplication. I now discuss reduplication under these major word classes in turn; as they prevail in the syntactic string of some proverbs in Nzema.

4.1.1.1 Reduplicated verbs in nzema proverbs

In (64-69), the bolded verbal reduplicated forms in the proverbial structures have undergone total/complete reduplication. I examine these reduplicated verbs as they manifest in the structure of some Nzema proverbs.

64. Aleɛ   mɔɔ   ɛ-kɛ-li   bie   la   ɛ-**wuda- wuda**   ɔ   bo.
    Food COMPL 2SG-FUT-eat INDEF CDET 2SG- fan RED   3SG POST
    ‗Rekindle the fire for cooking the food you intend to partake in its consumption.'
  (Make continuous contribution towards something that you wish to benefit out of it).

In (64), the base verb *wuda* ‗to rekindle' is reduplicated as **wuda-wuda** ‗continue to rekindle'. This verb has been repeated in the construction of the proverb to provide a crucial influence in understanding the proverb. The essence of reduplicating the verb actually informs us that one needs to make continuous effort and contribution towards something that he/she wishes to benefit out of it. The proverb teaches us to refrain

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from laziness and the habit of isolating ourselves; allowing our colleagues to struggle for us to enjoy the benefits later. It actually encourages collaborative efforts for mutual benefits in the end. It must be mentioned that the people of Nzema largely were; and still many of them are peasant subsistent farmers (Kwaw, 2010) who go to the farm and come home with some firewood to prepare their food. Thus, it seems tangible for one to suggest that the proverb in (64) has some culture-internal background; emanating from the fact that firewoods that are used for cooking often need to be rekindled as in **wuda-wuda**. This makes it possible for us to conceptualise and interpret the proverb that ‗we must make continuous effort to ensure the success of something that we wish to benefit out of it'.

65. Saa   m-gbanyinli kposa m-gbandu a   n-gakula **ne-ne**   nwolɛ ebinli.
   COND PL-elder   chew PL-bottle CON.PT PL-child shit-RED self faeces
   ‗If elders chew bottles, the younger ones repeatedly defecate with blood content.'
   (Future generations suffer the consequence of their forefathers' wrong deeds).

In (65), the verb *ne* ‗defecate' is reduplicated as **ne-ne** ‗defecate repeatedly'. The repeated morpheme makes it possible for us to best understand the proverb from the view point of ―cause and continuous effect". In other words, the verb has been repeated to indicate that the younger generation rather suffer continuously should their elders indulge in any undesirable behaviour.

66. Ɛkpɔtɛ   **di-di**   fovolɛ   zo   kpondɛ   ngoane   tendenle.
   Vulture eat.HAB-RED refuse.dump POST search   life   long
   ‗The vulture continuously feeds on waste in order to live long'.

In (66), we observe that the base verb *di* ‗eat' has been iterated. The vulture is noted for habitually feeding on carcass and other dirty and unwanted materials. It often enjoys those waste materials because it does not want to go near any thing that is

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precious to mankind for the owner of such an item to harm it. This in a way helps the vulture to protect its life and live long. Therefore, the purpose of repeating the verb in the proverbial structure is to enable us make the inference that we should continue to take precautions in life by always doing what would not lead us into predicaments.

67. Boane toa **su-su** a anrɛɛ ɔ-n-li alɛɛ.
Sheep follow go.away-RED CON.PT SUBJ 3SG-NEG-eat food
_If the sheep were to care about continuous sacking, it would not have eaten.'
(Keep doing what you think is right despite any criticism against the act).

In (67), the base verb *su* _go/leave' has been totally copied as **su-su** _the act of driving away repeatedly' in thestructure. The sheep (as the proverb portrays) keeps feeding on whatsoever feed it comes across and ignores the repeated effort by a person to prevent it from feeding because it finds feeding as an obligation to sustain life. The reduplicated verb form therefore exists in the proverb as a specific morphological component that provides a semantic signal and so drives the hearer's understanding of the proverb to the fact that one must keep doing what is right, despite any criticism against the act.

68. Saa ɛdanlɛ **te-te** a bɛ-fɛlɛ ye fuazinli.
COND clothe tear RED CON.PT 3PL-call 3SG rag
_If a clothe is torn continuously, it is considered to be a rag.'

In (68) above, the base verb *te* _to tear' is fully copied as in **te-te** _tear continuously. The verb is reduplicated to achieve the purpose of the proverb in the sense that, a clothe that is torn ones may not necessarily be seen as a rag, rather, when it is torn repeatedly, it loses its value and then considered a rag. This implies that when one tries to do something for the first time but does not succeed, it should not be taken as complete failure until continuous effort still does not materialise.

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69. Saa   ɛ-**kye-kye**   a   yɛɛ   bɛ- soa   wɔ   a.

    COND   2SG-tie RED   CON.PT   then   3PL-help.carry 2SG   EMPH.PT

    ‗If you adequately tie your load, others will help you carry it.'

In (69), the verb *kye* ‗to tie' has been iterated as in **kye-kye** ‗tie repeatedly. The repetition of the verb suggests continuous tie of one's load, which is likened to one's readiness and adequate preparation on a task before seeking help from other people.

A summary of the reduplicated forms as discussed in (64-69) are illustrated below in table 14:

Table 14: *Verbal reduplication in the structure of Nzema proverbs*

Base verb	Reduplicated form
a. **wuda** ‗fan/rekindle'	**wuda-wuda** ‗fan/rekindle continuously'
b. **ne** ‗defecate'	**ne-ne** ‗defecate continuously'
c. **di** ‗eat'	**di-di** ‗eat continuously'
d. **su** ‗go away'	**su-su** ‗go away continuously'
e. **te** ‗tear'	**te-te** ‗tear continuously'
f. **kye** ‗tie'	**kye-kye** ‗tie continuously'

In the following discussions under section 4.1.1.2, I examine ***reduplicated adverbs*** in the lexical constituents of some Nzema proverbs.

4.1.1.2 Reduplicated adverbs in nzema proverbs

In the view of Boakye (2015:56), some Akan adverbs are able to undergo reduplication for the purpose of emphasising and describing the intensity of the action/event denoted by the verbs that the adverbs modify. Parallel to the functions of Akan reduplicated adverbs, Nzema adverbs are capable of undergoing reduplication to semantically indicate emphasis and intensity of the action being modified. The data

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revealed some instances of reduplicated adverbs in Nzema proverbs. I discuss this morphological phenomenon in (70-72).

70. Baka mɔɔ   kɛ-wɔ   bɛ   nye la   bɛ-pɛ   zolɛ **ndɛ-ndɛ**.
    Tree COMPL FUT-pierce 3PL.POSS eye CDET 3PL-cut POST quickly RED
    ‗A stick that is capable of piercing ones eye must be cut immediately'.
    (One must quickly prevent/avoid circumstances that can bring about troubles).

71. **Bɛtɛɛ-bɛtɛɛ**   a   bɛ-fa   bɛ-kye   akowule   a.
    Slowly RED   EMPH.PT 3PL-use 3PL-catch gnat   EMPH.PT
    ‗It takes adequate patience to catch *akowule* (gnat).'
    (One needs to be patient in all endeavours).

72. Saa ɛ-tendɛ   **somaa somaa** a   ɛ-tia   ɛ   zebɛla   agyakɛ azo.
    COND 2SG-talk much RED   CON.PT 2SG-step 2SG mother-in-law leg POST
    ‗If you talk excessively, you step on the toes of your mother-in-law.'
    (One who talks so much always invites troubles for him/her self).

In (70-72), the adverbs as highlighted in the structure of the proverbs are fully/completely reduplicated. In (70) and (71), *ndɛ* ‗quickly' and *bɛtɛɛ* ‗slowly' are adverbs of manner which have been reduplicated as in **ndɛ-ndɛ** ‗very quickly' and **bɛtɛɛ-bɛtɛɛ** ‗very slowly' respectively. In (70), the adverb is reduplicated to intensify/emphasize how quickly one must cut off a stick that is able to damage one's eye. The semantic import then implies that one must immediately prevent any circumstance that is capable of causing harm. In (71), the essence of the reduplicated adverb in the proverbial structure is to stress and for that matter intensify how slowly one must make a move (in an attempt) to catch *akowule* ‗the gnat'. This is likened to how carefully one must plan in addition to adequate patience in dealing with delicate issues. In (72), *somaa* ‗much' is an adverb of quantity, which has been copied as in *somaa-somaa* ‗so much'. The repeated morpheme as in (72) demonstrates the degree

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or amount of talking that is likely to make someone step on the toes of his mother-in-law. This helps to understand the proverb in the sense that, one who engages in excessive conversation, would one day make certain comments which would put him or her into trouble. The base adverbs and their respective reduplicated forms as examined in (70-72) above are represented below in table 15:

Table 15: *Adverb reduplication in the structure of Nzema proverbs*

Base adverb	Reduplicated form
a. **ndɛ** ‗quickly'	**ndɛ-ndɛ** ‗very quickly'
b. **bɛtɛɛ** ‗slowly'	**bɛtɛɛ-bɛtɛɛ** ‗very quickly'
c. **somaa** ‗much'	**somaa-somaa** ‗so much'

In what follows under 4.1.1.3, I examine ***reduplicated adjectives*** in Nzema proverbs.

4.1.1.3 Reduplicated adjective

Another major word class that is capable of undergoing reduplication in the structure of Nzema proverbs is an adjective. However, the data, in as much as this sub-section is concerned, revealed only an instance of reduplicated adjective. This is examined in (73):

73. Saa ɛ-nwu   nrɛlɛbɛ **dɔɔnwo dɔɔnwo** a   ɛ-biza   m-boane ahye.
COND 2SG-know sense   much   RED   CON.PT 2SG-ask PL-sheep greet
‗If you become so much sensible, you rather offer greetings to the sheep.'
(One who feels he knows so much of everything disgraces himself easily).

In (73), *dɔɔnwo* ‗much' is an adjective of quantity which is fully reduplicated as **dɔɔnwo dɔɔnwo** ‗so much' in the structure. This reduplicated form contributes significantly to the meaning of the proverb because it intensifies the fact that one who thinks he knows so much about everything can easily forgo something precious and rather make an awkward choice.

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4.1.1.4 Reduplicated nouns in Nzema proverbs

According to Dolphyne (1988:136), in the case of Akan for instance, only plural nouns may be reduplicated and the reduplicated form is basically a repetition of the plural noun. Most Nzema nouns (see table 10 in section 2.3.5) also reduplicate their plural forms. This means that the plural forms of such nouns serve as the basic stems which are copied. Functionally, Nzema nouns are reduplicated to indicate quantity or the amount of one substance in another. The examples in (74) and (75) below show reduplicated nouns in the construction of some proverbs in Nzema.

74. **A-zua**   **a-zua**   ze   bɛ   nzi.
    PL-town   RED   know   3PL.POSS   origin
    ‗All nations know their origin.'
    (Every individual belongs to a particular royal family).

75. Mɔɔ   sua ɛhane **a-wolɛa-wolɛ** zo   la   ze   ɛleka   mɔɔ
    COMPL set trap PL-rock RED   POST CDET know place   COMPL
    ɔ-bɔ   ye   takola   ne.
    3SG-fix 3SG.POSS   sticks.PL   DEF
    ‗Whoever intends to set a trap at a rocky area knows where to fix the sticks.'
    (One who decides to do a difficult task has the means to overcome all challenges).

Table 16 shows the base nouns and their corresponding reduplicated forms.

Table 16: *Noun reduplication in Nzema proverbs*

Singular noun	Plural	Reduplicated form
a. **sua** ‗town'	**azua** ‗towns'	**azua-azua** ‗many towns'
b. **bolɛ** ‗rock'	**awolɛ** ‗rocks'	**awolɛ-awolɛ** ‗many rocks'

In (74) and (75) above, we can observe that the plural forms of the nouns serve as the base/stem morphemes that are copied. Thus the nouns *azua* ‗towns' and *awolɛ* ‗rocks' are reduplicated as in *azua-azua* ‗many towns' and *awolɛ-awolɛ* ‗many rocks'

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respectively. In (74), the reduplicated noun *azua-azua* ‗many towns' occur in the structure of the proverb to inform us that, not only one nation or community has its origin, but all nations have historical narrations and that all people belong to indigenous royal family. In (75), the reduplicated noun *awolɛ-awolɛ* ‗many rocks' exists in the structure to show that the area where one intends to set a trap abounds in rocks, which could make it difficult for one to set the trap. This is likened to many challenges that may be associated with undertaken a particular task in life.

The next discussions under section 4.1.2 deal with some ***inflectional processes*** in the structure of Nzema proverbs.

4.1.2 Inflectional processes in the structure of Nzema proverbs

Bound morphemes which signal grammatical categories such as tense, aspect, person, number, and negation are said to be inflectional (Mensah, 2010). In Nzema, prefixes such as {**a-**, **n-**, **m-**, **ŋ-**} are bound morphemes that are attached to base morphemes to indicate number (see table 6 in section 2.3.3 for details). The suffixes {**-ma**} and {**-le**} also indicate number and tense respectively in the morphology of Nzema. These morphemes identified above are class maintaining affixes in the sense that they do not change the lexical categories of the root word they may be attached. In (76-78) below, I show some inflectional processes in the structure of proverbs with {**n-**, **m-**, **ŋ-**} as bound morphemes which indicate number.

76. Anloma   nwo   **n-dɛkɛ**   le   ye   ngoane.
    Bird   self   PL-feather   COPV   3SG.POSS   life
    ‗The feathers of a bird are its security'.
    (A king depends on his subjects for his security/strength).

77. Tunli nu **m-boane** le kpolane na ɛweɛne deda nu.

   Pen POST PL-sheep COPV group CONJ boundary.PL exist POST

   ‗A flock of sheep in a pen appear in a group but there are boundaries in-between'.

   (People who constitute a clan/family actually come from individual mothers).

78. Saa kusu ɛn-le ɛkɛ a **n-gila** dwe.

   COND cat NEG-live there CON.PT PL-mouse rejoice

   ‗When the cat is away, the mice rejoice'.

   (When there is no authority, many people take the opportunity to misbehave).

In table 17, I show the internal structure of the words as highlighted in (76-78).

Table 17: *Some inflectional processes in the structure of Nzema proverbs*

Base noun (singular)	inflectional prefix	inflected noun (plural)
a. ɛdɛkɛ	{n-}	ndɛkɛ
b. boane	{m-}	mboane
c. kila	{ŋ-}	ŋgila

In (76-78) above, as can also be seen in table 17, the bound morphemes {**n-**}, {**m-**} and {**ŋ-**} are prefixed to the base nouns *ɛdɛkɛ* ‗feather', *boane* ‗shæp' (singular) and *kila* ‗mouse' respectively to obtain their plural counterparts as in ***n**dɛkɛ* ‗feathers', ***m**boane* ‗shæp' and ***ŋ**gila* ‗mice' through **homorganic nasal assimilation** (see section 2.3.3 for details). In (76), *ndɛkɛ* ‗feathers' as a constituent in the structure has essentially inflected for number; in that, it helps us better understand that a king for instance, uses his subjects for security. In (77), the inflectional process as in *mboane* ‗shæp' (plural) informs us that, in any multitude of people, there are differences among them in terms of family, religion or ethnic background. In (78), the plural form *ngila* [*ŋgila*] ‗mice' is significant in the structure for us to conceptualise that, not an individual, but many people (subordinates) take the advantage to rejoice and also misbehave whenever there is no authority or order.

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The following analysis under section 4.1.3, focus on some ***derivational processes*** in the lexical constituents of Nzema proverbs.

4.1.3 Derivational processes in nzema proverbs

Words that exist in a language consist of elements known as morphemes; the minimal indivisible units of meaning or grammatical function (Katamba, 1993; Yule, 2010). Morphemes are principally free or bound; free morphemes can stand on their own and make sense whereas bound morphemes do not have independent existence, rather, they have semantic content only in the context of free morphemes (Mensah, 2010:258). Bound morphemes which signal the creation of new lexical categories from existing ones are **derivational morphemes** (Thakur, 1997; Mensah, 2010).

In Nzema derivational processes, the suffixes {–***volɛ***} and {–***nli***} are identified as able to change one lexical category to the other. The data for this study proved instances that, some Nzema proverbs at the lexical level display a system of derivation. This occurs through the process of nominalization, where a verb is converted to a noun by adding the nominalising suffix {–***volɛ***} to the root/base verbs as exemplified below in (79-81):

79. Azule mɔɔ   n-lɛ   ye **kakye-volɛ**   la   ati   bɔ nyevile nu.
    River COMPL NEG-have 3SG remind-NOM CDET head hit sea   POST
    ‚A river that does not have a reminder joins the sea.'
    (One who does not have a counsellor always encounters difficulties).

80. **Boa-volɛ**   bɛ-n-nyia   ye.
    Help-NOM   3PL-NEG-get   3SG.
    ‚It is not easy to find someone to offer you assistance.'

81. **Biza-volɛ**   ɛm-minli   kpɔkɛ   nu.
    Interrogate-NOM   NEG-lost   forest   POST
    ‚One who seeks direction does not get lost in the forest.'
    (One who does not hesitate to seek information is always on top of issues).

The internal components of these derivational processes are further shown in table 18:

Table 18: *Derivational process (verbal nominalization) in Nzema proverbs*

Base verb	Nominalising suffix	Derived noun
a. **kakye** ‗remind'	{-volɛ}	**kakyevolɛ** ‗reminder'
b. **boa** ‗help'	{-volɛ}	**boavolɛ** ‗helper'
c. **biza** ‗interrogate'	{-volɛ}	**bizavolɛ** ‗interrogator'

In (79-81), the words **kakyevolɛ** ‗reminder', **boavolɛ** ‗helper' and **bizavolɛ** ‗interrogator' are nouns with two morphemes each. The base verbs *kakye* ‗remind' *boa* ‗help' and *biza* ‗interrogate' are suffixed by the bound morpheme {-***volɛ***} to derive their nominalised counterparts respectively as can further be seen above in table 18. Again, in (79), (80) and (81), such noun categories have been derived from the verbs because they exist in the proverbial structures to perform certain roles such as **reminding**, **helping** and **interrogating** respectively; which could not have been conceptualised if the verbal forms ***kakye*** ‗remind' ***boa*** ‗help' and ***biza*** ‗interrogate' had rather been deployed in the construction of the proverbs.

I now turn to explore the prevalence of borrowed words from English to Nzema proverbs.

4.1.4 Lexical borrowing in Nzema proverbs

Another word formation process that showed in the data was the phenomenon of *lexical borrowing*. Some of the words in the proverbial structures were noted to have originated from different languages. These words are adopted and adapted to conform to the phonological system of Nzema, particularly in terms of syllable structure. The data specified words that are borrowed from English as well as Akan into the structure

of Nzema proverbs, which are discussed in turn under sections 4.1.4.1 and 4.1.4.2 respectively.

4.1.4.1 Borrowed words from English into Nzema proverbs

In (82-85) below, the bolded words **patulo** ‗petrol‗, **sigalɛte** ‗cigarette‗, **kale** ‗car‗, and **pawoda** ‗powder‗ are borrowed from English to phonologically copy the Nzema sound system. In my view however, the concept of these nouns; *petrol*, *cigarette*, *car*, and *powder* were non-existent in the Nzema cultural and linguistic vocabulary, and there were no appropriate referent to express them except when one decides to make a lengthy description of such items; hence the adaptation and recourse to the linguistic resources of English. The forms of these borrowed words in the proverbs actually follow the pronunciation of English, though their sound patterns have been simplified to reflect a local flavour (Mensah, 2010:261). These words are not just employed into the structure of some proverbs in Nzema, but can crucially relate and contribute to the understanding of such proverbs in which they manifest. Some borrowed words from English were found in the data (Nzema proverbs) as exemplified in (82-85):

82. **Patulo**   lɛ   ye   nganeɛ.
    Petrol   has.POSS   3SG   scent
    ‗Petrol has its scent‗ (petrol has a unique scent).
    (Everything has got its unique property/characteristic).

In (82) for instance, the word **patulo** ‗petrol‗ is borrowed to the proverb and described as having a unique scent. This holds true because petrol has a unique scent from other liquids such as kerosene, gasoline, palm oil, coconut oil and others. This is therefore likened to our real life situations, where every person or thing has distinctive and peculiar features/characteristics to provide an outstanding mark of such a person or thing.

83. Bote nyia **sigalɛte** a ɔ-kɛ-nlo na esike ne ati ɔ.

Rat get cigarette CON.PT 3SG-FUT-drink CONJ somke DEF because EMPH.PT

‗The rat wishes to smoke cigarette, but it is deprived because of the ‗smoke‘.

(One may wish to do something but certain conditions can prevent him/her).

In (83) above, we encounter **sigalɛte** ‗cigarette‘ as a borrowed word in the proverbial structure. The literal meaning of the proverb suggests that, ‗the rat has the desire for cigarette smoking, but it is discouraged/prevented because of the ‗smoke‘ that comes out in the course of smoking‘. Cigarette smoking is obviously accompanied by ‗smoke‘, and the rat detests the presence of smoke especially in its habitat. This accounts for why it is often driven away from its habitat (hole) by setting fire around the hole in order to make the smoke enter its hole. This is metaphorically attributed to a situation where someone‘s social status or health condition prevents him/her from fulfilling his/her heart desires. A chief in Nzema culture for instance is deprived from playing games such as draught especially in public, though he may have the desire to play draught. This is so because of his status as a chief; since there are certain invective utterances that accompany the playing of draught among the youth.

84. **Kale** ne mɔɔ ɛ-dwu zo la anwo **patulo** ɛ- ra.

Car DEF COMP PERF-come new CDET same petrol PERF-come

‗The kinds of cars that are available in these days have got petrol that befits them.‘

(A particular situation at hand calls for its appropriate consequence).

In (84), both **kale** ‗car‘ and **patulo** ‗petrol‘ have been adopted into the proverb. The proverb literally suggests that ‗the kinds of cars that are available in these present days have got petrol that befits them‘. The choice of **kale** ‗car‘ represents a current situation/condition or somebody‘s attitude and way of life, whereas the choice of **patulo** ‗petrol‘ in this context represents an appropriate result/consequence that is in

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order with such situation or deed. It simply underscores the fact that one gets the effect of what one does.

85. Ɛ-kpondɛ tuɛkɛ anyiamgba wɔ-abɔ   a   bia ye bɔ   ye **pawoda**.

   2SG-want hernia disgrace   2SG-cause CON.PT bath 3SG apply 3SG powder

   ‗If you want to put inguinal hernia into shame, bath it and apply powder on it'.

    (You need to convince/persuade someone before he tells you about a top secret).

In (85), **pawoda** ‗powder' is borrowed to represent the sense of decorating something which may not originally look beautiful or pleasant. People living with ―inguinal hernia" are quite not comfortable and out of shyness would not want others to recognise them with such health conditions. The act of applying powder on the hernia is a way of decorating it, which would then make the carrier (patient) find it pleasant to avail it for public awareness. In this vein, **pawoda** ‗powder' in the proverb is attributed or likened to using a fair means of persuading and convincing a person to reveal a secret.
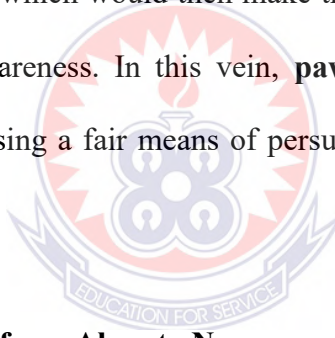
4.1.4.2 Borrowed words from Akan to Nzema proverbs

Like observed in the discussions in borrowed words from English to Nzema proverbs, these words from Akan are also specific words that are borrowed to contribute to the understanding of such proverbs in which they are incorporated. In (86-89) below, I examine certain *borrowed words* from Akan into some Nzema proverb as the data showed.

86. **Koatelekoa**   se   ɔ-kɛ-maa   wɔ ɛdanlɛ a   tie ye duma.
Clotheless.person say   3SG-FUT-give 2SG clothe CON.PT hear 3SG name

   ‗When a poor person promises to offer you a clothe, just consider his status'.

87. Saa   ɛrelera   butua   wie   a   ɔ-kɔ **ababunlu** deɛ nu.

COND old.person buttocks finish CON.PT 3SG-go youth   POSS POST

‗If the buttocks of the elderly people get finished, they enter into that of the youth.'

(As the old people become weaker, the youth rather gain much strength/wisdom).

88. Huhuhuhu   dwu   **manɔne**.

Rumours   reach.HAB   far places/countries

‗A rumour spreads beyond other nations.'

(Bad news quickly transcends boundaries for others to hear).

89. Ɛ-nrɛ-nwu   bie   ka   a   ɛ-se   bɛ-am-maa   wɔ **nsɛmpa**.

2SG-NEG-know some say CON.PT 2SG-say 3PL-NEG-give 2SG opportunity

‗When one is speechless, he claims he was not given the order to contribute'.

(One who has no idea about an issue rather says he was not given the chance to talk).

In (86-89) above, the bolded words **koatelekoa** ‗wealthless person', **ababunlu** ‗youth', **manɔne** ‗far places' and **nsɛmpa** ‗order to speak' are borrowed words from Akan into the structures of such proverbs in Nzema, but are modified phonologically to conform to the sound system of Nzema. This is perhaps possible because Akan and Nzema are both Niger-Congo Kwa languages. In my view also, the adaptation of such words may be motivated by the fact that the Akan people might have first used such proverbs before the Nzema would conceptualise them as part of their adages. In (86) for instance, a specific word that controls the understanding of the proverb is the borrowed word **koatelekoa**. Its literal meaning, ‗wealthless person' is likened to a situation where somebody is absolutely poor. It therefore helps to understand that, a promise made by a needy person to provide someone with something cannot be fulfilled. In (87), **ababunlu** is adopted to literally represent the ‗youth'. This helps to understand that, as the elderly people grow older and weaker, their thinking faculties, strength and ability to perform herculean tasks become the responsibilities of the youth (younger generation). In (88), the borrowed word **manɔne**, which literally

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means ‗far places or across nations', helps us to understand the proverb in the sense that whenever there is a rumour (especially concerning undesirable issues), the message easily spreads beyond boundaries for many others to hear.

In (89), we come across **nsɛmpa**, a borrowed word from Akan, which in this context means ‗the opportunity to shear one's view or narrate one's side of a case/mission'. This contributes to the understanding of the proverb in the sense that, when someone has no meaningful contribution or suggestion to offer, he/she secures him/herself by saying others refused to invite him/her. In other words, if you cannot perform a task, you say you were not ordered to do so.

The next discussions concentrate on *compounding* as a word formation process in the structure of some Nzema proverbs.

4.1.5 Lexical compounding in the structure of Nzema proverbs

90. **Sonlamgbane**   ɛn-le   ewiade.
    Person-useless   NEG-exist   world
    ‗There is no useless person in the world.'
    (Every creature in this universe has a purpose for its existence).

91. **Ewulekpolike**   sonla   ko   ɛn-vo.
    Death-ladder   person   one   NEG-climb
    ‗One person doesn't climb the ladder of death/ death is inevitable to all mankind.'
    (Every individual is likely to encounter a misfortune in the journey of life).

In (90), **Sonlamgbane** is a Noun+Adjective compound word, made up of a root noun **sonla** ‗person' and a root adjective **mgbane** ‗useless'. In this compound structure, the adjective qualifies the noun, thereby resulting in the gloss as ‗useless person'. The entire essence and meaning of the proverb is chiefly dependent on this compound word **sonlamgbane** ‗useless person'. This is because it serves as the ‗key' word in the

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proverb from which referent can be made to interpret the proverb in the sense that, everything in this world, whether human or nonhuman, in one way or the other has a significant reason for its existence/occurrence. It further helps to derive the essence of the proverb, in that, nothing happens without a purpose. In (91), **ewulekpolike** ‗death-ladder‘ is a Noun+Noun compound structure. The combination consists of the root nouns **ewule** ‗death‘ and **kpolike** ‗ladder‘. In this compound structure, the former noun **ewule** ‗death‘ modifies the latter **kpolike** ‗ladder‘ to achieve the gloss as ‗death-ladder‘ (a ladder made up of death). A better understanding of the proverb can be derived by using this compound word **ewulekpolike** ‗death-ladder‘ as the most ‗vital‘ constituent in the structure and as a reference point to conceptualise that, death is inevitable in the life of man and that every individual is likely to encounter a misfortune in the journey of life.

In the discussion that follows, I look at Nzema proverbs and sentential level analysis.

4.2 Proverbs and Sentential level Analysis: Sentence by Structure

4.2.1 Proverbs with simple sentence structure

In order to facilitate the understanding of the discussions made in this section, it is necessary to mention again that the basic requirement of the Nzema simple sentence structure as Kwaw (2008) noted is Subject + Verb + Object (SVO). However, it also consists of other simple patterns such as a noun (Subject) and a verb (SV), or a noun (Subject) + a copula verb + a noun (Complement) (SVC), a noun (Subject) + verb + adverb (Adjunct) (SVA) and others. A simple sentence in Nzema, just as in English, and Akan (Fante) (see Owu- Ewie, 2014) has a single clause (made up of one finite verb) and conveys a single idea. Relying on adequately described grammar, I provide a description of the patterns of some Nzema proverbs in the simple sentences structure in (92-98) as the data shows:

92. *Etile   ko   le   namule.*

    Head   one   COPV   cottage

    N(Subject)   Verb   N(Complement) (SVC)

    ‗Single head is a cottage.'

93. *Ezukoa   le   bozonle.*

    Money   COPV   god

    N(Subject) Verb   N(Complement) (SVC)

    ‗Money is a deity'.

94. *Nɔhalɛ   le   ayile.*

    Truth   COPV   medicine

    N(Subject) Verb   N(Complement) (SVC)

    ‗Truth is medication'.

95. *Ngyigyilira   lɛ   ye   atwɛ.*

    Ant   has.POSS   3SG   arrow

    N(Subject)   Verb   N(Object)   (SVO)

    ‗Ant has (its) arrow.'

96. *Ezukoa   lɛ   ndɛbalɛ.*

    Money   has.POSS   wings

    N(Subject)   Verb   N(Object) (SVO)

    ‗Money has wings'.

97. *Bane   lɛ   ɔ   nzo.*

    Wall   has.POSS   3SG   ears

    N(Subject) Verb   N(Object) (SVO)

    ‗Wall has (its) ears.'

98. *Ehyia   bɔ.*

    Poverty   smell.HAB

    N(Subject)   Verb (SV)

    ‗Poverty stinks.'

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The structure of the proverbs in (92-94) appears in the metaphorical form of *A le B* (A is B). The metaphor implies that the antecedent NPs *etile ko* ‗one head‘, *ezukoa* ‗money‘ and *nɔhalɛ* ‗truth‘ respectively have the semantic attributes of the NPs *namule* ‗cottage‘, *bozonle* ‗a deity‘ and *ayile* ‗medicine‘ which come after the copula verb *le* ‗is‘. The copula verb also connotes that the NP that comes after it, complements the antecedent NP and that they share certain properties in common (see also Agyekum, 2017:35). In (95-97), the auxiliary verb *lɛ* ‗has‘ stands as a main transitive verb. This renders the NPs *atwɛ* ‗arrow‘, *ndɛbalɛ* ‗wings‘ and *nzo* ‗ears‘ to function as grammatical Object (patient), as if they are owned/possessed respectively by the antecedent NPs *ngyigyilira* ‗ant‘, *ezukoa* ‗money‘ and *bane* ‗wall‘. In (98), the proverb is constructed in the order of Subject and Verb (SV). By this structure, we are able to conceptualise the negative attributes or effects of poverty that are likely to be experienced by anyone who may be afflicted. It helps to inform us on the ‗state‘ and ‗characterstics‘ of poverty.

In (99) and (100) below, I examine another syntactic feature that was observed in the data, which has to do with **‗causative verb**‘ in Nzema proverbs with simple sentence structure. Causatives simply denote actions in which an entity causes something to happen to another entity, either positively or negatively (Lyons, 1977 (cited in Caesar, 2016:115). In Nzema, the basic causative marker is ***maa*** which denotes English factitive ‗make‘ or permissive ‗let‘. The use of ***maa*** in Nzema also connotes the preposition ‗for‘ and the transitive verb ‗give‘; however, our concern in this study shall be on its use as a **causative verb**, which denotes an action, process or state that triggers/instigates a particular reaction or condition in another person or thing (see Caesar, 2016). The following are examples of simple sentence proverbs which employ ‗causative verb‘:

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99. *Koyɛlɛ   maa   anwosesebɛ.*

Unity   CAUS   strength

N(Subject)   Verb   N(Object) (SVO)

‗Unity causes strength.'

100. *Ehyia   maa   adwenledwenle.*

Poverty   CAUS   think.PROG

N(Subject) Verb   N(Object) (SVO)

‗Poverty causes thinking.'

In (99), *koyɛlɛ* ‗unity' represents a causative agent that causes strength among a group of people. In (100), *ehyia* ‗poverty' also acts as the causative agent that brings about continuous thinking and deliberation in the mind of an afflicted person.

I now consider as per the data, some Nzema proverbs with simple sentence structure which are made up of ‗**compound subject**'. It is prudent explicating here that, a simple sentence in Nzema may consist of two noun entities that are joined with a coordinating conjunction such as *nee/yɛɛ* ‗and' to serve as the Subject-agent of the action denoted by the verb. It should be noted that, such sentences are not necessarily compound sentences as Annan (2014) rightly states in the case of English; rather, once the structure comprises a finite verb and provides a single thought, it is a simple sentence (see Annan, 2014:323). Two examples from the data are demonstrated in (101) and (102):

101. *Ebutua   **nee**   ebinli   n-li   mgba.*

Anus   **CONJ** faeces   NEG-COPV   separable

N(Subject)   Verb   Adj(Complement) (SVC)

‗Anus **and** faeces are not separable.'

102.   *Alehyenlɛ   **nee**   aledwolɛ   n-le   ko.*
       Day   **CONJ** night   NEG-COPV   one
       N(Subject)   Verb   N(Complement) (SVC)
       ‚Day **and** night are not equal.'

In (101) and (102), the Subject-agent NPs are compound entities which are connected with the coordinating conjunction *nee* ‚and' (in bold). In (101), the two noun entities that form the compound subject are *ebutua **nee** ebinli* ‚anus **and** faeces'. These compound nouns function as Subject-agent of the VP *nli* ‚are not', followed by the adjectival complement *mgba* ‚separable'. In (102), *alehyenlɛ **nee** aledwolɛ* ‚day **and** night' are also linked as a single noun constituent to function as Subject-agent of the negative copula *nle* ‚are not', which employs *ko* ‚equal' as an adjectival complement.

In the discussion that follows, I consider Nzema proverbs with compound sentence structure.

4.2.2 Proverbs with compound sentence structure

In this sub-section, I give an adequately descriptive account of compound proverbial structures in Nzema. A compound sentence in Nzema is also made up of two or more main (independent) clauses linked by the coordinating conjunctions *nee/yɛɛ/eza* ‚and', *na/noko* ‚but', *anzɛɛ* ‚or' (see section 2.4.3.2 for details). Compound sentences in Nzema can have overt/explicit coordination (also called ‚syndetic') and covert/implicit coordination (called ‚asyndetic'). In the data for the study, a handful of both ‚syndetic' and ‚asyndetic' compound structures surfaced. With regard to ‚syndetic' compound structures, the particular coordinating conjunctions that emerged from the data are *yɛɛ* ‚and' as well as *na/noko* ‚but'. The examples in (103) and (104) are compound structure proverbs with *yɛɛ* ‚and' as a coordinating conjunction.

103. *Domunli lɛ ye kenle yɛɛ akutue lɛ ye kenle.*

lemon	has.POSS	3SG	day	**CONJ**	orange	has.POSS	3SG	day

N(Subject) Verb   N(Object)   **CONJ**   N(Subject) Verb   N(Object)

‗Lemon has its day **and** orange has its day.'

(There is time for everything to become very useful/ nobody is useless).

104. *Kɛtɛboɛ ɛkɛla le ndakyile yɛɛ dabɔ ɛkɛla le ngakyile.*

Antelope destiny COPV different   **CONJ** deer destiny COPV different

N(Subject)   Verb Adj(Compl) **CONJ** N(Subject) Verb Adj(Compl)

‗Antelope's destiny is unique **and** deer's destiny is unique.'

(People can have different opportunities in life).

In (103), the coordinating conjunction *yɛɛ* ‗and' is used to join the main clauses *domunli lɛ ye kenle* ‗lemon has its day' and *akutue lɛ ye kenle* ‗orange has it day' to obtain a compound sentence structure expressing two but related ideas. In (104), *yɛɛ* ‗and' similarly links the main clauses *kɛtɛboɛ ɛkɛla le ngakyile* ‗antelope's destiny is unique' and *dabɔ ɛkɛla le ngakyile* ‗deer's destiny is unique' to also arrive at a compound sentence structure.

In (105-109), I examine proverbs with compound sentence structure in which *na* ‗but' occurs as a coordinating conjunction.

105. *Bɛ-soa nrɛlɛbɛ-volɛ na bɛ-n-zoa koasea.*

3PL-send.HAB   wise-person   **CONJ**   3PL-NEG-send   fool

N(Subject)-Verb N(Object)   **CONJ**   N(Subject)-Verb N(Object)

‗They send a sensible person **but** they do not send a fool.'

(Senseless people are disregarded).

106. *Bɛ-tɔ mo na bɛ-n-zɛlɛ.*

3PL-buy.HAB   thanks   **CONJ**   3PL-NEG-beg

N(Subject)-Verb N(Object) **CONJ**N(Subject)-Verb

‗They buy praises **but** they do not beg for it.'

(One must work hard to receive a reward).

107. *Kakula   ze   nriandi   **na**   ɔ- n-ze   fea.*

Child   know.HAB   run   **CONJ** 3SG-NEG-know   hide

N(Subject) Verb   **CONJ** N(Subject)-Verb

‗A child can run **but** (he/she) cannot hide.'

(Children are inexperienced).

108. *Kakula   tu   bɛsea   **na**   ɔ-n-du   bɛtenle.*

Child   uproot little palm tree **CONJ**   3SG-NEG-uprrot mature palm tree

N(Subject) Verb N(Object)   **CONJ**   N(Subject)-Verb   N(Object)

‗A child uproots young palm tree **but** (he/she) doesn't uproot mature palm tree.'

(Children must do things in their own capacity).

109. *Me kunlu   ɛlɛ-tu   **na**   me-n-nene   me   gyakɛ anzi.*

1SG stomach PROG-run **CONJ** 1SG-NEG-shit.PROG 1SG   leg   POST

N(Subject)   Verb   **CONJ** N(Subject)-Verb   (Adjunct)

‗My stomach is running **but** I am not defecating at the back of my legs.'

(Little difficulty does not mean absolute failure).

In (105-109), the coordinating conjunctions are in bold. The initial main clauses that precede the conjunction *na* ‗but' as seen in (105-109), are positive (affirmative) clauses, whereas the second main clauses that come after the conjunction are negative clauses. Each compound sentence expresses two ideas, where the second main clause consists of the negative marker *n* ‗not', making each of the compound sentences a contrastive construction.

The examples in (110-113) look at Nzema proverbs with compound sentence structure which involve *noko* ‗but' as a coordinating conjunction.

110. *Akɔlɛ belɛ   ze   alehyenlɛ **noko** ɔ-tie   nyinli ane.*

Fowl   female   know daybreak   **CONJ** 3SG-listen   male   voice

N(Subject)   Verb   N(Object) **CONJ** N(Suubject)-Verb N(Object)

‗The hen recognizes daybreak **but** it looks up to the cock to crow.'

(Women are subordinates to men).

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111. *Bɔvolɛ   tɛladeɛ   le   kpotokpoto **noko**   ye   subue   yɛ   fɛ.*

     Hunter   shirt   COPV   dirty   **CONJ**   3SG   soup   COPV   sweet

     N(Subject)   Verb   (Compl)   **CONJ**   N(Subject)   Verb   (Compl)

     ‗The hunter's garment is dirty **but** his soup is delicious.'

     (There are challenges in achieving anything that is good).

112. *Agbuyia   kpomgba   tokule   **noko**   tokule   la   ɔ   bo   ati.*

     Needle   stitch   hole   **CONJ**   hole   exists   3SG   bottom   tip

     N(Subject)   Verb   N(Object)   **CONJ**   N(Subject)   Verb   (Adjunct)

     ‗The needle stitches a hole **but** a hole exists at it bottom.'

     (One cannot always be satisfied with his/her needs).

113. *Ezukua   ka   nɔhalɛ   **noko**   ɔ   nwo   edwɛkɛ   wale.*

     Money   say.HAB   truth   **CONJ**   3SG   self   matter   COPV.long

     N(Subject)   Verb   N(Object)   **CONJ**   N(Subject)   Verb   (Complement)

     ‗Money is a good servant **but** its matters are complicated'.

     (Money is a good resource but could be dangerous).

In (110-113) above, the coordinating conjunction *noko* ‗but' is in bold. The conjunction links the two independent (main) clauses in each sentence. It is seen that the main clause that precedes the conjunction and the other main clause that comes after the conjunction are affirmative clauses in each case. The contrastive sense in the entire compound construction is not explicitly indicated by any negative marker in either of the two independent clauses in (110-113), rather, the contrastive sense in each case is achieved at the level of interpretation through the effect of the conjunction *noko* ‗but'. This does not however suggest that the coordinating conjunction *noko* ‗but' in Nzema always combines two or more main clauses which are all positive; some other data from a different source may reveal otherwise.

In (114) and (115), the discussions concentrate on proverbs with ‗asyndetic'
compound sentence (where the coordinating conjunctions are not explicit in the
structure, rather, the relationship between the main clauses is marked by a comma)
(see Thakur, 1998:123). Here are two examples from the data:

114. *Ɛbɔnu m-baka   le   m-gbole gyɛne, senlenra a   le   kpanyinli a.*

    Forest PL-tree COP PL-big just   ‗senlenra' FOC COP   old   EMPH.PT

    N(Subject)   Verb Adj(Compl)   N(Subject)   Verb   Adj(Compl)

    ‗Forest trees are just big, ‗senlenra' (a kind of stick) is the oldest.'

    (Being old does not necessarily make one intelligent).

115. *Bɛ-se   ko,   bɛ- n-ze   nwiɔ.*

    3PL-say   one   3PL-NEG-say   two

    N(Subject)-Verb (Adjunct)   N(Subject)-Verb (Adjunct)

    ‗They speak once, they do not speak twice.'

    (You cannot always fool a person).

In (114) and (115) above, the main clauses are not joined by an overt conjunction.
Thus the clause boundaries are marked by a comma. In this study however, I consider
the coordinating conjunction **na** ‗but' appropriate to link such independent clauses in
(114) and (115) in the sense that the sentences appear to suggest contrast even in the
absence of a contrastive conjunction ‗but'.

4.2.3 Proverbs with complex-embedded structures

This section examines the interaction of complex-embedded clauses in the grammar
of Nzema with proverbs. In Nzema, the identified subordinate clauses are relative
clause, nominal clause, adverbial clause and comparative clause (Kwaw, 2008). In the
data for this study, instances of embedded sentences where subordinate clauses are
nested/layered in matrix clauses were observed. Taking up the discussions in turn, I

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begin by highlighting relative clauses in the structure of Nzema proverbs under section 4.2.3.1:

4.2.3.1 Relative embedded constructions in Nzema proverbs

In the grammar (syntax) of Nzema, as Essuah (1965) observes, an adjectival clause is a subordinate clause that performs same grammatical function like an adjective in a sentence. In other words, it describes, and for that matter post modifies an **antecedent** NP in a given sentence by providing information needed to make the antecedent definite. The adjectival clause in Nzema, just as it is in English (as noted in chapter two), is also referred to as a ‗relative' clause because it is often introduced by the relative pronoun **mɔɔ** ‗who/which' or the complementizer ‗that' (see section 2.4.5 for details). It is prudent to note here that the relative clause in Nzema begins with **mɔɔ** and ends with the clausal determiner **la**, thus **mɔɔ**…….**la**. One basic feature of Nzema relative clause as (Kwaw, 2008) opines is that, it has to follow its antecedent immediately, and thus it often separates the head-word in the subject from the predicator (VP). In this study, the relative clauses as the data shows are described as restrictive (defining), in that semantically, the relative clauses define their respective antecedent NPs; they give sort of adequate information to make the NPs definite (see also Annan, 2014:302). In (116-119) below, I discuss relative embedded clause constructions in Nzema proverbs where the **antecedent** NPs are nonhuman entities.

116. *Kpakpa* [***mɔɔ*** *so ma fɛlɛko la*] *baka m-kpa ɔ bo*.
Pawpaw.tree **COMPL** bear fruit sweet CDET stick NEG-leave 3SG POST
‗Pawpaw tree [**that** produces delicious fruits] always has a stick under it.'
Kpakpa ‗pawpaw tree' — (antecedent NP)
[***mɔɔ*** *so ma fɛlɛko la*] ‗**that** produces delicious fruits'- (subordinate relative clause)

In (116) above, the complemetizer *mɔɔ* ‗which/that' which also serves as the subordinating conjunction and therefore introduces the clause is in bold, whereas the entire subordinate relative clause is in square bracket. The antecedent NP *kpakpa* ‗pawpaw tree' is post modified by the relative clause [*mɔɔ so ma fɛlɛko la*] ‗which/that produces delicious fruits. The effect of the post modification of the NP helps to understand that, not all pawpaw trees may have sticks placed under them, but those that produce delicious fruits. The adjectival/relative clause simply answers the question ‗which pawpaw tree always has a stick under it?" Then the obvious answer shall be one ‗**which/that** produces delicious fruits'.

117. *Nane* [***mɔɔ*** *n-lɛ dualɛ la*] *Nyamenle a hoho ɔ nwo a.*
Animal **COMPL** NEG-have tail CDET God   FOC fan 3SG self EMPH.PT
‗An animal [**that** does not have a tail] has its flies driven away by God only.'
(God intervenes in matters concerning the poor or vulnerable).
Nane ‗an animal' — (antecedent NP)
[***mɔɔ*** *ɛnlɛ dualɛ la*] ‗**that** does not have a tail' — (subordinate relative clause)

In (117), the entire subordinate adjectival/relative clause is in square bracket with the complementizer *mɔɔ* ‗which/that' in bold. The relative clause [***mɔɔ*** *ɛnlɛ dualɛ la*] ‗**that** does not have a tail', post modifies the antecedent NP *nane* ‗an animal', which in effect describes a particular animal that has its flies (or enemies) driven away by God.

118. *Akɔlɛ* [***mɔɔ*** *doa -le ɔ nli la*] *li-le abɛbɛ ɛzɔlɛ.*
Fowl **COMPL** follow-PAST 3SG mother CDET eat-PAST grasshopper thigh
‗A fowl [**that** followed its mother] ate the thigh of a grasshopper.'
(A respectful and obedient child gets the best from his/her parents).
Akɔlɛ ‗a fowl' — (antecedent NP)
[***mɔɔ*** *doale ɔ nli la*] ‗**that** followed its mother' — subordinate adjectival clause

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In (118), the entire relative clause [***mɔɔ** doale ɔ nli la*] ‚**that** followed its mother',
which describes (post modifies) the antecedent NP *akɔlɛ* ‚a fowl' is in square bracket
with the complementizer *mɔɔ* ‚which/that' in bold. The relative clause provides
somewhat detailed information about the antecedent NP for us to note the specific
kind of fowl that had the opportunity to eat the thigh of a grasshopper.

119. *Nzule* [***mɔɔ**   gyi   diinyi   la*]   *se*   *ɔ*   *bo.*
      Water **COMPL** stand.HAB quiet   CDET   run.HAB 3SG POST
      ‚Water [**that** stands quietly] runs under.' (Still waters run deep).
      Nzule ‚water' — (antecedent NP)
      [***mɔɔ** gyi diinyi la*] ‚**that** stands quietly' — (subordinate relative clause)

In (119), the antecedent NP *nzule* ‚water' is post modified by the relative clause [***mɔɔ**
gyi diinyi la] ‚**that** stands quietly'. This gives a description of the state of the
particular waters that run deep. In other words, it answers the question ‒which waters
run deep?"

I now consider in (120-123), relative clause which post modifies antecedent NPs that
are human entities.

120. *Kakula* [***mɔɔ**   kenlebie kɛ-dɔ   kale   la*]   *biza*   *patulo   bolɛ.*
      Child   **COMPL** later   FUT-buy car   CDET   ask.HAB petrol   price
      ‚A child [**who** intends to buy a car in future] often seeks the prices of fuel.'
      Kakula ‚a child' — (antecedent NP)
      [***mɔɔ** kenlebie kɛdɔ kale la*] ‚**who** intends to buy a car in future' — (relative clause)

In (120) above, the relative clause [***mɔɔ** kenlebie kɛdɔ kale la*] ‚**who** intends to buy a
car in future' is a post modifier of the antecedent NP *kakula* ‚a child'. This specifies
the particular child who often seeks the prices of fuel. It implies that, not every child
asks the prices of fuel but the one ‚**who** intends to buy a car in future'.

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121. *Raalɛ* [***mɔɔ*** *bo nrienyia la*] *kɔkɔsɛlɛ bɔ ɔ ti anwo mgbɔlɔka.*
Woman **COMPL** beat man CDET crow gather 3SG head POST round
‗A woman [**who** beats a man] has her head surrounded by crows.'
Raalɛ ‗a woman' — (antecedent NP)
[***mɔɔ*** *bo nrienyia la*] ‗**who** beats a man' — (subordinate relative clause)

In (121), the relative pronoun (complementizer) *mɔɔ* ‗who' is bolded while the subordinate adjectival clause is put in square bracket. The antecedent NP *raalɛ* ‗a woman' is qualified (post modified) by the relative clause [***mɔɔ*** *bo nrienyia la*] ‗**who** beats a man'. The description given on the antecedent NP helps us to point out a particular woman who can have her head surrounded by crows.

122. *Kakula* [***mɔɔ*** *a-nzo yɛ se la*] *wu anzosesebɛ ewule.*
Child **COMPL** POSS-ear COPV hard CDET die.HAB ear.hard death
‗A child [**who** is adamant/recalcitrant] dies as a result of recalcitrance.'
kakula ‗a child' — (antecedent NP)
[***mɔɔ*** *anzo yɛ sela*] ‗**who** is adamant/recalcitrant'— (subordinate relative clause)

In (122), the antecedent NP *kakula* ‗a child' is qualified (post modified) by the adjectival/relative clause [***mɔɔ*** *anzo yɛ se la*] ‗**who** is adamant or recalcitrant'. By this information on the antecedent NP, we are able to identify which child is likely to die out of recalcitrance.

123. *Kpɔmavolɛ* [***mɔɔ*** *n-lɛ edwɛkɛ ka la*] *se Nana ɛ nzo nu ɔ.*
Spokesperson **COMP** NEG-have case talk CDET say chief 2SG ear POST EMP.PT
‗A spokesperson [**who** cannot talk on an issue] says my lord; it's in your ears.'
kpɔmavolɛ ‗a spokesperson' — (antecedent NP)
[***mɔɔ*** *ɛnlɛ edwɛkɛ ka la*] ‗**who** cannot talk on an issue' — (relative clause)

In (123), the relative pronoun *mɔɔ* ‗who', which also serves as the subordinate conjunction/complementizer is in bold, whereas the entire subordinate relative clause is in square bracket. The antecedent NP *kpɔmavolɛ* ‗a spokesperson' is post modified

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by the relative clause [**mɔɔ ɛnlɛ edwɛkɛ ka la**] ‚**who** cannot talk on an issue'. The post modification of the antecedent NP in essence, informs us that not every spokesperson would say *Nana ɛ nzo nu ɔ* ‚my lord, you have heard it yourself'; rather, a spokesperson who cannot comment on an issue would make such an utterance. It must be mentioned that the relative clauses in (116-123) as the analysis has shown, syntactically post modify and semantically help restrict the reference of the ‚heads', that is (the antecedent NPs) within the main clauses (see also Annan, 2014; Asante & Ma, 2016:27).

It is worth emphasising that, throughout the discussions in (116-123) above, it can be seen that the relative clauses post modify NPs which function as Subject-agent in each proverbial construction. However, the data also displayed an interesting syntactic phenomenon where the relative clause post modifies a noun constituent that functions as Object-patient of a verb. This is exemplified below in (124):

124. *Bɔvolɛ*   *ɛn-ze*   *nane*   [***mɔɔ***   *ati*   *ku*   *ye*   *la*].
      Hunter   NEG-know   animal   **COMPL**   head   ache   3SG   CDET
      ‚A hunter doesn't recognise an animal [**that** is not healthy.]'

Bɔvolɛ	*ɛnze*	*nane*	[***mɔɔ** ati ku ye la*]
(A hunter)	(doesn't recognize)	(an animal)	[**that** is not healthy]
N(Subject)	(VP)	N(Object)	Relative clause (modifier).

In (124) above, as the sentence structure has been demonstrated, *bɔvolɛ* ‚a hunter' is the Subject-agent, *ɛnze* ‚does not know' is the VP, *nane* ‚an animal' is the Object-patient, while the relative clause [**mɔɔ** *ati ku ye la*] ‚**that** is not healthy' post modifies the Object-patient constituent, *nane* ‚an animal'.

The following analysis under section 4.2.3.2 focuses on nominal embedded clause constructions in the structure of Nzema proverbs.

4.2.3.2 Nominal embedded clauses in Nzema proverbs

A noun clause in Nzema is a subordinate (dependent) clause that expresses a meaningful thought in the presence of a main (independent) clause in a sentence. It is introduced by the subordinating conjunctions (complementizers) *kɛ* ‗that‘, *ɛleka mɔɔ* ‗where‘ as well as *mɔɔ* ‗what/whatever/whoever‘ and always has the clausal determiner *la* at the clause final position; hence, *mɔɔ….la*, *ɛleka mɔɔ…la*, *kɛ…la*. The clausal determiner *la* is rightly followed by a comma to show the clause boundary between the subordinate clause and the main clause. A noun clause in Nzema, just as a noun phrase, performs grammatical functions such as *Subject*, *Object* and *Complement*. In this study however, I consider adequate description of a noun clause functioning as **subject-agent** and **direct object-patient** because the data so far did not reveal any instance of a noun clause which functions as complement; where the verb is described as **linking**, as for instance *le* ‗is‘, *yɛle* ‗made/became‘, *zɔho* ‗seem/appear‘, though future studies may identify the phenomenon.

4.2.3.2.1 Nominal clause as subject of a verb

In (125-128), I examine nominal clauses introduced by *mɔɔ* ‗whoever‘, which perform grammatical function as Subject-agent in the structure of Nzema proverbs.

125. [*Mɔɔ* *ɛwɔlɛ* *ɛ-ha* *ye* *ɛlɛ* *la*,] *sulo* *sone*.
      COMPL snake PERF-bite 3SG ever CDET fear.HAB worm
      ‗[**Whoever** has experienced a snake bite,] fears a worm.‘ (Once bitten, twice shy). (The child)

In (125) above, the subordinating conjunction (complementizer) *mɔɔ* ‗whoever‘ is in bold, whereas the entire subordinate clause is put in square bracket. The subordinate clause [*Mɔɔ* *ɛwɔlɛ* *ɛha* *ye* *ɛlɛ* *la*] ‗whoever has experienced a snake bite‘ can be described as a noun/nominal clause in the sense that it can be replaced in the sentence

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by an NP[2], say *kakula ne* ‗thechild'. If that is done, the sentence would be realized as;

kakula ne sulo sone **‗the child fears aworm'**. The noun clause functions as the

Subject-agent, in that it precedes the verb *sulo* ‗fears' and also refers to the costituent

that tells us who the sentence is about. It answers the question *who fears a worm*?

126. [*Mɔɔ   n-wula   mgbɔlaboa la*,]   *n-li   nwɔhoa m-bowule   zo.*
       COMPL NEG-wear footwear CDET NEG-eat play   PL-thorn   POST
       ‗**[Whoever** walks bare footed,] does not play on thorns.'
            (John)

In (126), the subordinate clause [*Mɔɔ ɛnwula mgbɔlaboa la*] ‗whoever walks bear

footed' is in square bracket with its subordinating conjunction (complementizer) *mɔɔ*

‗whoever' in bold. The clause can be said to be a noun clause because it is possible in

the sentence to insert a noun element in the slot occupied by the clause. For instance,

when we replace the clause with say, *John*, we shall have the structure as **John does**

not play on thorns. The noun clause functions as Subject-agent of the sentence. It

precedes the VP *ɛnli nwɔhoa* ‗does not play' in the sentence an dgives a clear idea

about whom the sentence is about. When the question *who does not play on thorns*? is

asked, the answer shall pinpoint the noun clause, hence, the Subject-agent of the

sentence.

127. [*Mɔɔ   biza   la*,]   *ɛn-vo   adenle.*
       COMPL   ask.HAB CDET   NEG-wrong   path
       ‗**[Whoever** seeks direction,] does not take a wrong path.'
            (A hunter)

In (127), the subordinating conjunction (complemetizer) *mɔɔ* ‗whoever' is bolded.

The subordinate clause [*Mɔɔ biza la*] **‗whoever** seeks direction' can be substituted for

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[2]This phenomenon of substituting a subordinate clause for an NP constituent is what Annan
(2014:318) describes as **rankshifting**.

an NP such as *bɔvolɛ ne* ‗a hunter'. When the substitution is done, the structure would

then become *bɔvolɛ ne ɛnvo adenle* ‗**a hunter does not take a wrong path**'. It can be

realized that the noun clause occupies the Subject-agent position in the sentence and

therefore represents the element that tells us who the sentence is about.

128. [*Mɔɔ   nwɔnla   la,*]   *ɛn-do   ɔ   nli   funli.*
      COMPL roam.HAB CEDT   NEG-meet 3SG.POSS mother corpse
      ‗[**Whoever** keeps roaming,] does not meet his/her mother‗s corpse.'
            (A police man)

In (128), the clause [*Mɔɔ nwɔnla la*] ‗whoever keeps roaming' is placed in a square

bracket with the complementizer *mɔɔ* ‗whoever' in bold. It is possible to replace the

clause with an NP, say, *polisinli* ‗a police man'. After such substitution, the sentence

would become; *polisinli ɛndo ɔ nli funli* ‗**a police man does not meet his mother's**

corpse'. The noun clause occupies the Subject-agent position and so serves as the

constituent that informs us who the sentence is about.

In (129) and (130) below, I consider noun clause introduced by *mɔɔ* ‗what', which

also functions as Subject-agent.

129. [*Mɔɔ   le   awie   aleɛ   la,*]   *le   awie   kyibadeɛ.*
      COMPL COPV person food   CDET   COPV   person   taboo
      ‗[**What** is cherished/admired by a person,] is detested by another person.'
            (Rice and beans)

In (129), the clause [*Mɔɔ le awie aleɛ la*] ‗**what** is cherished/admired by a person' is

referred to as noun clause because its position is likely to be occupied by an NP

constituent, say, *awule nee aluba* ‗rice and beans'. This would result in the

construction of the sentence as; *awule nee aluba le awie kyibadeɛ* ‗**rice and beans is**

disdained by another person'. We observe that the clause performs Subject-agent

function, in that it represents the constituent in the sentence that reveals what or who is in the state indicated by the copula verb ‚is'.

130. [**Mɔɔ**   bɛ-n-dɔne   ye   la,]   bɛ-m-kpaye.
      COMPL 3PL-NEG-sell   3SG   CDET   3PL-NEG-broadcast
      ‚[**What** is not meant for sale,] is not advertised.'
                (The car)

In (130), the clause [**mɔɔ** bɛndɔne ye la] ‚what is not meant for sale' is found in square bracket with the subordinating conjunction (complementizer) mɔɔ ‚what' in bold. The clause is said to be a noun clause because the position occupied by the clause [**mɔɔ** bɛndɔne ye la**] ‚what is not meant for sale' can be substituted for an NP such as *kale ne* ‚the car'. When this substitution takes place, the sentence would then be; **the car is not advertised**. The noun clause functions as Subject-agent of the sentence because it is in a state indicated by the copula ‚is' and as such provides a clear idea about what the sentence is about.

4.2.3.2.2 Nominal clause as object of a verb

In (131) and (132) that follow, I explore noun clause introduced by mɔɔ ‚whoever' and mɔɔ ‚what' respectively. These clauses function as Object-patient in the proverbial structures of Nzema.

131.   *Anwuma boa*   [**mɔɔ**   boa   ɔ   now   la].
        Sky   help.HAB   **COMPL** help.HAB   3SG   self   CDET
        ‚Heaven helps [**whoever** helps himself].'
                    (the teacher)

In (131) above, the subordinate clause [**mɔɔ** boa ɔ nwo la] ‚whoever helps himself' is put in square bracket with the subordinating conjunction (coplementizer) mɔɔ ‚whoever' in bold. The clause [**mɔɔ** boa ɔnwo la] ‚whoever helps himself' is

described as a noun clause because we can put an NP such as *kilehilevolɛ ne* ‗the teacher' in its position to still realize the sense in the sentence. This would result in a sentence such as; *anwuma boa kilehilevolɛ ne* ‗**heaven helps the teacher**'. The clause then functions as Object-patient of the verb *boa* ‗helps'. In other words, it appears as the noun constituent in the sentence which comes after the verb *boa* ‗helps' and therefore seems to experience the effect of the action taken by the Subject *anwuma* ‗heaven'.

132. *Ɛrɛladane ze* [***mɔɔ ɔ m-ra ba-li la***].
     Parent   know.HAB **COMPL** 3SG.POSS PL-child FUT-eat CDET
     ‗A parent knows [**what** his/her children will eat].'
                         (the truth)

In (132), the subordinate clause is put in square bracket with the subordinating conjunction (coplementizer) *mɔɔ* ‗what' in bold. The clause is described as a noun clause because we can replace it with an NP constituent such as *nɔhalɛ ne* ‗the truth' to still have a meaningful statement. Hence, the sentence would be as follows; *Ɛrɛladane ze nɔhalɛ ne* ‗**A parent knows the truth**'. We find that the noun clause functions as Object-patient in the sentence, in that it comes after the verb *ze* ‗knows' and so refers to the entity that seems to undergo/experience the activity or process denoted by the verb.

I now turn to discussions on noun clause in the structure of Nzema proverbs which is introduced by *kɛ* ‗that' and functions as Object-patient.

133. *Koasea ɛn-ze* [***kɛ ɔ ti zo bɔ***].
     Fool   NEG-know **COMPL** 3SG.POSS head POST stink
     ‗A fool does not know [**that** he/she has a smell around his/her head].'
                         (his/her mother)

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In (133), the subordinate clause is put in square bracket with the subordinating conjunction (coplementizer) *kɛ* ‚that' is in bold. The clause is described as a noun clause because we can replace it with an NP constituent such as *ɔ nli* ‚his/her mother'. This will consequently produce a sentence as; *koasea ɛnze ɔ nli* ‚**a fool does not know his/her mother**'. We find that the noun clause comes after the VP *ɛnze* ‚does not know' in the sentence and so functions as Object-patient of the VP.

134.   *Ɛnloanlɛ   ɛn-ze*   [*kɛ*   *ɔ*   *menle*   *le*   *akɛlɛ*].
       Mouth   NEG-know **COMPL** 3SG.POSS owner   COPV   slave
       ‚The mouth does not know [**that** its owner is a slave].‘

                                   (the tongue)

In (134), the subordinate clause [*kɛ ɔ menle le akɛlɛ*] ‚**that** its owner is a slave' is in square bracket with complementizer *kɛ* ‚that' in bold. It is worth describing the clause as a noun clause; since an NP element, say, *ɛtafinlimalɛ* ‚the tongue' can fill its position in the structure to obtain a sentence as for instance, *Ɛnloanlɛ ɛnze ɛtafinlimalɛ* ‚**the mouth does not know the tongue**'. The noun clause occurs after the VP *ɛnze* ‚does not know' and so it functions as Object-patient of the VP.

4.2.3.2.3 Nominal clause as subject and object in a proverbial structure

In the following discussion, I highlight yet a more interesting embedded sentence structure that came up as part of the data for this study. It has to do with a sentence that consists of a noun clause as its Subject-agent and a noun clause as Object-patient. In other words, a single proverbial structure in Nzema comprises noun clause at the Subject position and another noun clause at Object position. There were two instances of such syntactic phenomenon in the data as examined in (135) and (136) below:

135. [***Mɔɔ*** pɛ adenle la,] ɛn-ze [***kɛ*** ɔ nzi ɛ-hyea].
   COMPL cut path CDET NEG-know **COMPL** 3SG back PERF.bend
 ‗[**Whoever** constructs a path] doesn‗t know [**that** there is a curve behind him]‗
  (The teacher)-- Subject-agent VP   (the doctor)-- Object-patient
   (The teacher)   (doesn‗t know) (the doctor).

In (135) above, there are two subordinate clauses, [***Mɔɔ*** *pɛ adenle la*] ‗**Whoever** is constructing a path‗ and [***kɛ*** *ɔ nzi ɛhyea*] ‗**that** there has been a curve behind him‗. The subordinating conjunctions (complementizers) *mɔɔ* ‗whoever‗ and *kɛ* ‗that‗ which respectively introduce the clauses are in bold. Further, as can be gleaned from (135), the clause [***Mɔɔ*** *pɛ adenle la*] ‗**Whoever** is constructs a path‗ can be replaced with an NP constituent such as *kilehilevolɛ ne* ‗the teacher‗, while the second clause [***kɛ*** *ɔ nzi ɛhyea*] ‗**that** there is a curve behind him‗ is also replaceable by an NP such as *dɔketa ne* ‗the doctor‗. The plausible sentence after such substitutions is: **The teacher does not know the doctor**. From this point, we can see that the first clause which is substituted for the NP *kilehilevolɛ ne* ‗the teacher‗ precedes the VP *ɛnze* ‗does not know‗ and thus functions as Subject-agent of the sentence, whereas the second clause substituted for the NP *dɔketa ne* ‗the doctor‗ comes after the VP and so functions as Object-patient of the action denoted by the VP.

136. [***Mɔɔ*** *sua ɛhane awolɛ zo* la,] ze [***ɛleka mɔɔ*** ɔ-bɔ ye takola a].
 COMPL set trap rocks POST CDET know **COMPL** 3SG-put 3SG stick CDET
 ‗[**Whoever** intends to set a trap at a rocky area] knows [**where** to place the sticks].‗
   (Ama) — Subject-agent   VP (Aku) — Object-patient
   (Ama)   knows (Aku)

In (136), there are two subordinate (dependent) clauses, [***Mɔɔ*** *sua ɛhane awolɛ awolɛ zo la*] ‗**Whoever** intends to set a trap at a rocky area‗ and [***ɛleka mɔɔ*** *ɔbɔ ye takola ne a*] ‗**where** to place the sticks‗. The clauses can be replaced with NPs such as *Ama* and *Aku* respectively as seen in data (136) above. The initial clause, which is represented

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by the NP *Ama* (a personal name), functions as Subject-agent of the VP *ze* ‚knows‘, which is a transitive verb and so selects the second clause represented by the NP *Aku* (also a personal name) as Object-patient. In other words, the first noun clause that precedes the VP *ze* ‚knows‘ is the Subject-agent whereas the second noun clause that occurs after the VP is the Object-patient.

4.2.3.2.4 Focus markers in nominal clause constructions

Another interesting phenomenon that was found in the data is the occurrence of ‚**focus markers**‘ in nominal clause constructions. A focused item in a sentence according to Agyekum (2017) ‚refers to the most essential information in a given discourse". Boadi (1974) as cited in Agyekum (2017:34) avers that, in Akan for instance, *na* is the basic focus marker and implies an ‚exclusive, emphatic, restricting‘ item in a sentence. In Nzema however, focus is marked by either *yɛɛ* or *a* ‚it is‘, which equally denote ‚exclusion, emphasis and restriction‘. This is discussed below in (137) and (138):

137. [*Mɔɔ*   *kɔ*   *azule la,*] *yɛɛ*   *bɔ*   *buakɛ a.*
      COMPL go.fetch.HAB water CDET **FOC** break.HAB pot EMPH.PT
      ‚It is [**whoever** goes to fetch water] that breaks the pot.‘
               (Kofi)

138. [*Mɔɔ*   *ɛ-kɛ-lua*   *la*]   *a*   *ɛ-bu*   *a.*
      COMPL   2SG-PERF-sow   CDET   **FOC**   2SG-break.HAB   EMPH.PT
      ‚It is [**what** you cultivate] that you harvest.‘
           (maize)

In (137) and (138) above, the subordinate clauses [*Mɔɔ kɔ azule la*] ‚**whoever** goes to fetch water‘ and [*Mɔɔ ɛkɛlua la*] ‚**what** you cultivate‘ precede the focus markers *yɛɛ* and *a* respectively. In (137), the clause [*Mɔɔ kɔ azule la*] ‚**whoever** goes to fetch water‘, which can be replaced by say, *Kofi*, is the constituent that is emphasized and

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restricted in the sense that it is the only entity that breaks the pot. In other words, no one is likely to break the pot except _whoever goes to fetch water' or *Kofi*. In (138), the clause [*Mɔɔ ɛkɛlua la*] _what you cultivate', which may be substituted for an NP say, *abɛlɛ* _maize' is the only constituent or entity or commodity that is exclusively identified as capable of being harvested. It can be seen in (137) and (138) that the focus entities are the entire subordinate clauses _whoever goes to fetch water' and _what you cultivate' respectively. This syntactic phenomenon is what Van Valin & LaPolla (1997:206) described as **broad focus**; in that, they include more than one constituent. The authors on the other hand referred to focus on a single constituent such as an NP, as **narrow focus**. This (narrow focus) can be observed by replacing the subordinate clauses with NPs, _Kof'i and _maize' as shown in (137) and (138) respectively.

The next discussion under section 4.2.3.3 examines adverbial embedded clauses in Nzema proverbial structures.
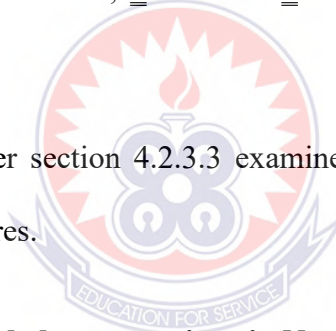
4.2.3.3 Adverbial embedded constructions in Nzema proverbs

An adverbial clause in Nzema, just as in English, Akan and possibly many other languages, consists of a subordinate (dependent) clause which performs same function as an adverb. It mainly modifies a verb in a sentence. Some subordinating conjunctions in Nzema which can introduce adverbial clauses are: *saa* _if/when', *kyesɛɛ* _unless' *yemɔti* _so' etc (as highlighted in section 2.4.3.3). These conjunctions introduce the subordinate (dependent) clauses which rely on the main clauses to express a meaningful thought. An adverbial clause in Nzema can be classified as indicating condition, time, place, manner, reason, purpose, and frequency of an action in a sentence (Kwaw, 2008). The data for this study however, revealed the prevalence

of adverbial clause of **condition**, **reason**, **time** and **place** in the proverbial structures in Nzema; which are intended to be examined in turn in the following sub-sections:

4.2.3.3.1 Conditional constructions in Nzema proverbs

As per the data for this study, conditional clause constructions are pervasive in the structure of Nzema proverbs. The data (as far as this sub-section is concerned), specifically identified *saa* as a marker to denote the concept of conditionality (**if**) and temporality (**when**) (see Agyekum, 2017:31 in the case of Akan). The sentence structure of the proverbs in (139-143) are marked by the split conjunction (*saa*)….*a*, which can denote the concept of conditionality (*if*). The first part (***saa***) ‗if is optional but the conditional particle,….***a***, is essential and obligatory. The obligatory conditional particle …‗***a***‘, is always followed by a comma to mark the clause boundary between the subordinate conditional clause and the main clause. In (139-143), based on descriptive adequacy grammar, I examine Nzema proverbs with conditional clause constructions (with the use of ***saa*** ‗if) as subordinating conjunction.

139. (***Saa***) *ɛ   nli   ara de aduoba zo   a,   ɛ-n-li   aduoba amunli.*
    COND 2SG mother son sit guava POST CON.PT 2SG-NEG-eat guava ripe.NEG
    ‗If your sibling climbs a guava tree, you do not eat the unripe guava‘.
    [(***Saa***) *ɛ nli ara de aduoba zo a*] (If your sibling climbs a guava tree)— Sub clause
    ɛnli aduoba amunli (you do not eat the unripe guava) — main clause

140. (***Saa***) *ɛ-lɛ   awie fa wɔ   ebinli a,   ɛ-ne   awozɛka nu.*
    COND 2SG-have person take 2SG.POSS faeces CON.PT 2SG-shit gravel POST
    ‗If you have someone to sweep your faeces, you defecate in gravels.‘
    [(***Saa***) *ɛlɛ awie fa wɔ ebinli a*] (If you have one to sweep your faeces)-Sub clause
    ɛne awozɛka nu (you defecate in gravels) — main clause

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141. (**Saa**) *ɛ-fa*   *sane*   *nwo*   *ɛya*   *a,*   *wɔ*   *sua*   *nu*   *bɔ.*
      COND 2SG-take broom self   anger CON.PT 2SG room POST stink.HAB

      ‚If you become angry at the broom, your room stinks.'

    [(**Saa**) *ɛfa sane nwo ɛya a*] (If you become angry at the broom)--subordinate clause

     wɔ sua nu bɔ (your room stinks) — main clause

142. (**Saa**) *baka ko*   *die*   *anwoma dedee*   *a,*   *ɔ-bu.*
      COND tree   one   receive air   continuous CON.PT 3SG-breake.HAB

      ‚If a tree always serves as wind break, it falls/uproots'.

    [(**Saa**) *baka ko die anwoma dedee a*] (If a tree serves as wind break)--Sub clause

     ɔbu (it falls/uproots) — main clause

143. (**Saa**) *ɛ-foa*   *wɔ*   *akɔlɛ soɛ-soɛ*   *a,*   *sanza kye*   *ye.*
      COND 2SG-sack 2SG.POSS fowl go RED CON.PT hawk catch.HAB 3SG

      ‚If you always drive away your fowl, the hawk catches it.'

    [(**Saa**) *ɛfoa wɔ akɔlɛ soɛ-soɛ a*] (If you sack your fowl always) — Sub clause

     sanza kye ye (the hawk catches it) — main clause

In (139-143) above, the conditional subordinating conjunction *saa* ‚if', which introduces the subordinate clause in each proverb is bolded. It can be deduced from (139-143) that the message conveyed in the conditional subordinate clause determines or calls for the possibility of the message conveyed in the main clause.

In examples (144-146) below, I tackle proverbial structures (with the use of **saa** ‚when') as a subordinating conjunction to denote the concept of **temporality**.

144. (**Saa**)   *kusu* *ɛn-le*   *ɛkɛ*   *a,*   *n-gila*   *dwe.*
      COND   cat   NEG-live   there   TEMP.PT PL-mouse rejoice

      ‚**When** the cat is away, the mice rejoice.'

    [(**Saa**) *kusu ɛnle ɛkɛ a*] (When the cat is away) — subordinate clause

     ngila dwe (the mice rejoice) — main clause

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145. (*Saa*)   *nzule kyɛ toba nu   a,   ɔ-bɔ.*
      COND water last   bottle POST TEMP.PT 3SG-stink.HAB
      When water last in a bottle, it stinks.'
      [(*Saa*) *nzule kyɛ toba nu a*] (when water lasts in a bottle) — subordinate clause
      ɔbɔ (it stinks) — main clause

146. (*Saa*) *ehyia bɔ wɔ anlekɛ nu   a,   ɛ gɔnwo mɔ nriandi wɔ.*
      COND poverty knock 2SG door   POST TEMP.PT 2SG friend all run   2SG
      When you are afflicted by poverty, all your friends desert you.'
      [(*Saa*) *ehyia bɔ wɔ anlekɛ nu a*] (When you are afflicted by poverty)- Sub clause
   *ɛ gɔnwo mɔ nriandi wɔ* (all your friends desert you) — main clause

In (144-146) also, the temporality structures (subordinate clauses) consist of the optional conjunction (*saa*) when' and the obligatory temporality particle ….*a*, which is followed by a comma to mark the clause boundary. In (144), the notion of temporality is achieved through the use of *saa* when', in that the mice do not always rejoice, but they do so in the absence of the cat (people misbehave when there is no authority/ order). In (145), we realise that water does not stink by obligation, but does so when it stays in a bottle (container) for a very long period. It can also be deduced from (146) that, one's friends may not permanently stay away from him/her; rather, friends would desert one when he/she is adversely afflicted by poverty.

4.2.3.3.2 Adverbial clause of reason

In the grammar of Nzema, an adverbial clause of reason (see Kwaw, 2008) is a subordinate clause introduced by *kɛmɔ/ɔboalekɛ/ɔluakɛ* because'. In the data for this study, the specific subordinating conjunction that surfaced to denote reason is *ɔluakɛ* because'. In (147) and (148) below, the discussion focuses on adverbial clause of **reason** with the use of *ɔluakɛ* because' as a subordinating conjunction.

147. *Bonze   ɛn-gyia   m-bualɛ   **ɔluakɛ** kekebetele di   adwunli.*
    Crocodile NEG-need PL-metal **CONJ**   lizard   work.HAB blacksmith
    ‗The crocodile has many metals **because** the lizard works as a blacksmith.'
    Bonze ɛngyia mbualɛ (The crocodile has many metals) — main clause
    [**ɔluakɛ** *kekebetele di adwunli*] (**because** lizard works as a blacksmith) — sub clause

148. *Bonze   dua-le   ɔ   nzo **ɔluakɛ** ɔ-n-gulo   mgbanemgbane.*
    Crocodile cover-PAST 3SG.POSS ears **CONJ** 3SG-NEG-like nonsense
    ‗The crocodile covered its ears **because** it hates nonsense.'
    Bonze duale ɔ nzo (The crocodile covered its ears) — main clause
    [**ɔluakɛ** *ɔngulo mgbane-mgbane*] (**because** it hates nonsense)--subordinate clause

In (147) and (148) above, the subordinating conjunction *ɔluakɛ* ‗because', which serves as an introducer of the subordinate clause and also forms part of it, is in bold. It is observed that the messages conveyed in the subordinate clauses as in (147) and (148) provide answers as to why the events in the main clauses took place. In other words, the subordinate clauses inform us about the reasons for undertaking certain activities in the main clause.
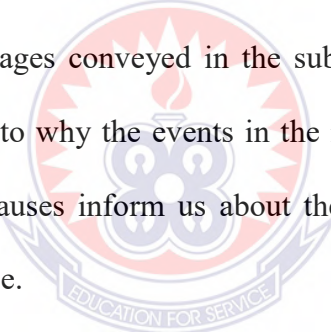
4.2.3.3.3 Adverbial clause of time

The adverbial clause of time in Nzema is usually introduced by *sumunli kɛ* ‗since', *dahuu biala/kenle biala* ‗whenever' *mekɛ mɔɔ*…..‗when' and *na* ‗before'. Examples (149) and (150) show adverbial clause of **time** with *mekɛ mɔɔ*….‗when' as a subordinating conjunction in the structure of Nzema proverbs.

149. [***Mekɛ mɔɔ*** *asikyɛlɛ wɔ   abolokyi la*,] (*ɛnee*) *wolɛ   wɔ   Nzema.*
    CONJ   sugar   exist   abroad CDET (then) honey exist Nzemaland
    [‗**When** sugar was in abroad,] honey was in Nzemaland.'
    [***Mekɛ mɔɔ*** *asikyɛlɛ wɔ abolokyi la*] (When sugar was in abroad)-- subordinate clause
    (*ɛnee*) *wolɛ wɔ Nzema* (honey was in Nzemaland) — main clause

150. [***Mekɛ mɔɔ*** *ɛhɔlɛ   ɛlɛ-fu   la*,] (*ɛnee*) *kosi   noko   ɛlɛ-fu.*

CONJ   crab   PROG-dig CDET (then) kosi   also   PROG-dig

[_**When** the crab was digging,] kosi _a kind of crab' was also digging.'

[*Mekɛ mɔɔ ɛhɔlɛ ɛlɛfu la*] (When the crab was digging) — subordinate clause

(*ɛnee*) *kosi noko ɛlɛfu* (kosi _a kind of crab' was also digging) — main clause

In (149) and (150) above, the subordinate adverbial clauses (of time) which begin with the conjunction *mekɛ mɔɔ* _when' and end with the clausal determiner *la*, are in square bracket, while the subordinating conjunctions are bolded. Again, in both (149) and (150), there appears the ―time indicator" *ɛnee* _then' after the clausal determiner *la*, to indicate the simultaneous occurrence of the two situations that exist in the subordinate clauses as well as the main clauses.

In (151-153) below, the analysis is intended to highlight adverbial clause of **time** with *na* _before' as a subordinating conjunction.

151. *Bɛ- nea   kenlamo   gye* [*na   bɛ-amaa   ye   ɛsɛsɛlɛ*].
    3PL-look.HAB muslim.POSS teeth **CONJ** 3PL-give   3SG   cola nut
    _A muslim's teeth must be considered [**before** he is offered a cola nut].'
    Bɛnea kenlamo gye (A muslim's teeth must be considered) — main clause
    [*na bɛamaa ye ɛsɛsɛlɛ*] (**before** he is offered a cola nut) — subordinate clause

152. *Bɛ-bɛlabɛla   kakula* [*na   bɛ-aha   ye   elue*].
    3PL-deceive.HAB   child   **CONJ** 3PL-bite 3SG   yam
    _A child must be convinced [**before** his food could be tasted].'
    Bɛbɛlabɛla kakula (A child must be convinced) — main clause
    [*na bɛahe ye elue*] (**before** his food could be tasted) — subordinate clause

153. *Nyiene sosɔ   bɛ   nwo* [*na   bɛ-apɛ   azule*].
    Ant.PL hold.HAB   3PL self   **CONJ** 3PL-cut river
    _The ants hold one another [**before** they cross a river].'
    Nyiene sosɔ bɛ nwo (The ants hold one another) — main clause
    [*na bɛapɛ azule*] (**before** the cross a river) — subordinate clause

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In (151-153) above, we can observe that the subordinate clauses do not have independent existent to make complete meaning, unless the fall on the main clauses. The subordinating conjunction *na* ‗before‘, which introduces and forms part of each subordinate clause is in bold. The semantic import of the structures as in (151), (152) and (153) suggest that the activities that take place in the main clauses are prerequisite requirements for undertaking the activities contained in the subordinate clauses. In other words, before the task in the subordinate clause would be performed, a necessary action in the main clause would have been taken in relation to time.

4.2.3.3.4 Adverbial clause of place

This subordinate clause in Nzema is introduced by *ɛleka mɔɔ*… ‗where…‘ and *ɛleka biala mɔɔ...* ‗wherever…‘. In (154) and (155) below, I exemplify the existence of adverbial clause of place with the use of *ɛleka mɔɔ*… ‗where…‘ as a subordinating conjunction in the structure of Nzema proverbs.

154. *Boane sie   ye   fufule   wɔ*   [***ɛleka mɔɔ***   *ɔ-kulo   la*].
     Sheep put   3SG.POSS   white   POST   CONJ   3SG-like CDET
     ‗A sheep places its white colour at [**where** it wishes].‘

155. *Ɛ-n-do   bolɛ   ɛn-gɔ*   [***ɛleka mɔɔ*** *wɔ   nwole   kpalɛ wɔ   la*].
     2SG-NEG-throw stone NEG-go CONJ   2SG   oil   good live CDETT
     ‗You do not throw a stone at [**where** you keep your precious property].‘

In (154) and (155), the subordinate clauses which begin with *ɛleka mɔɔ* ‗where‘ and end with the particle *la*, are in square bracket with the subordinating conjunctions in bold. In (154), the clause can be replaced with *ɔ nzi* ‗its back‘ to indicate the specific location where the sheep places its white colour. This possible substitution will render the structure as *Boane sie ye fufule wɔ ɔ nzi* ‗**a sheep places its white colour at its back**. In (155), the clause is likely to be replaced with *sua nu* ‗home‘ to indicate the

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particular place where one is not supposed to throw a stone. When this possible substitution takes place, the resulting sentence shall be as *Ɛndo bolɛ ɛngɔ sua nu* ‗**you do not throw a stone at home**‘.

Section 4.2.3.4 explores the prevalence of comparative clauses in the structure of Nzema proverbs.

4.2.3.4 Comparative clause constructions in Nzema Proverbs

A comparative clause in Nzema is easy to identify because it mostly follows a comparative form such as *kpole* ‗bigger‘, *ekyi* ‗smaller/less‘, *dɔɔnwo* ‗more‘, *kpalɛ* ‗better‘, *ndɛndɛ* ‗faster‘, etc. and is introduced by the conjunction *tɛla* ‗**than/surpass**‘. It is crucial to note here that comparative constructions in Nzema may include the use of *kɛ* ‗**as…as**‘. In this study however, I show the manifestation of comparative clauses with *tɛla* ‗**than**‘ as a subordinating conjunction in (156-159) below:

156.   *Mogya   yɛ   ɛnlomboɛ   [**tɛla**   nzule**].
        Blood   COPV   heavy   CONJ   water
        ‗Blood is thicker [**than** water].‘
        Mogya yɛ ɛnlomboɛ ‗Blood is thicker‘ — (main clause)
        [***tɛla** nzule*] ‗**than** water‘ — (subordinate comparative clause)

157.   *Duma   kpalɛ   ɛbɔlɛ   le   kpalɛ   [**tɛla**   konle   ko   anyiabɛnwo**].
        Name   good   mention   COPV   better   CONJ   day   one   rich
        ‗Good name is better [**than** being rich overnight].
        Duma kpalɛ ɛbɔlɛ le kpalɛ ‗Good name is better‘ — (main clause)
        [***tɛla** konle ko anyiabɛnwo*] ‗**than** being rich overnight‘--- (comparative clause)

158.   *Ɛzonledolɛ   yɛ   nyane   [**tɛla**   nrɛnlande-bɔ-lɛ**].
        Wrong accusation   COPV   pain   CONJ   cutlass-beat-PROG
        ‗Wrong accusation is more painful [**than** a cut by cutlass]‘.
        Ɛzonledolɛ yɛ nyane ‗Wrong accusation is more painful‘ — (main clause)
        [***tɛla** nrɛnlandebɔlɛ*] ‗**than** a cut by cutlass‘- (subordinate comparative clause)

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159. *Raalɛ   ɛtane   le   kpalɛ   [**tɛla**   (kɛ)   ɛ   ngome ɛkɛla].*
     Woman   bad   COPV   good   CONJ (COMPL) 2SG alone   sleep
     ‗It is better to have a bad wife [**than** to sleep alone].‗

     Raalɛ ɛtane le kpalɛ ‗It is better to have a bad wife‗ — (main clause)

     [**tɛla** (kɛ) ɛ ngome ɛkɛla] ‗**than** to sleep alone‗- (subordinate comparative clause)

In what follows, I explore Nzema proverbs and sentence function.

4.3 Funtional Types of Sentences in Nzema Proverbs

The data further revealed that Nzema proverbs declare and provide some sort of information (they make statements). They also seek to direct and command (they perform imperative function). The proverbs also seek to ask questions (they perform interrogative fuction). Examples from the data are shown below in turn:

4.3.1 Functions of declarative sentence proverb

As has been highlighted in section 2.4.4.1, a declarative sentence makes statement and provides information of some sort. In (160-165) below, I consider from the data, some Nzema proverbs that ‗declare‗ (provide information) and tend to reveal some facts:

160. *Abotane   tudu   a-woka.*
     Patience   remove.HAB   PL-mountain
     N(Subject)   Verb   N(Object) (SVO)
     ‗Patience dismantles mountains.‗

161. *Bulalɛ   bu.*
     Metal   break.HAB
     N(Subject)   Verb   (SV)
     ‗Metals (can) break.‗

162. *Mekɛ   le   ezukoa.*
     Time   COPV   money
     N(Subject)   Verb   N(complement) (SVC)
     ‗Time is money‗.

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163. *Ɛkolɛ   kpole sie   ninyɛndane.*

    Stomach   big   keep.HAB   bad things

    N(Subject)   Verb   N(Object) (SVO)

    ‗Big stomach keeps waste materials.'

    (Uneasy lies the head that wears the crown).

164. *Boka   zo   m-baka   nyi   ndɛ.*

    Mountain POST PL-tree   mature   quickly

    N(Subject)   Verb   (Adjunct) (SVA)

    ‗Trees on a mountain grow faster.'

    (A rich person's child easily becomes wealthy).

165. *Budu   sokoɛ   bɛdɛ.*

    Budu   visit.HAB   cassava

    N(Subject) Verb   N(Object) (SVO)

    ‗People with same character live together.' (Birds of a feather flock together).

In (160-165) above, the proverbs make simple affirmative propositions, where the speaker communicates a true statement. Sentences that perform a declarative function in Nzema can also manifest in the form of a negative proposition with the use of the negative marker/morpheme {*n-*} ‗not' in the statement. In (166-170) below, I present examples of negative declarative sentences as they manifest in Nzema proverbs.

166. *Ngyenle ngome n-de   aleɛ.*

    Salt   alone   NEG-make   food

    N(Subject)   Verb   N(Object) (SVO)

    ‗Salt alone does not prepare food.'

    (People must work in collaboration).

167. *Ɛnlankɛ ndɔma n-genda   mgbane.*

    Cattle testicle   NEG-hang   aimlessly

    N(Subject)   Verb   (Adjunct) (SVA)

    ‗Cattle testicle does not hang aimlessly.'

    (Every one belongs to a royal clan).

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168. *Baka ko   n-gakyi   ɛhoayelɛ.*

Tree one   NEG.make   forest

N(Subject)   Verb   N(Complement) (SVC)

‗A single tree does not become forest.'

(People must work in collaboration).

169. *Ɛhɔlɛ   n-wo   anloma.*

Crab   NEG-born   bird

N(Subject) Verb   N(Object) (SVO)

‗A crab does not bear a bird.'

(Children take after their parents).

170. *Anwuma   n-li   kukue.*

Sky   NEG-eat   coconut

N(Subject)   Verb   N(Object) (SVO)

‗The sky does not eat coconut.'

(There is a right time for everything to happen).

The following under section 4.3.2, discusses proverbs with imperative sentence function.
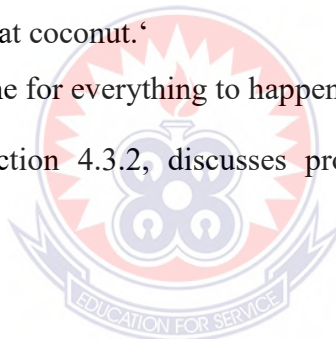
4.3.2 Functions of imperative sentence proverbs

As indicated in chapter two, an imperative sentence has no overt subject. This is the same in the case of Nzema. An imperative sentence in Nzema has an implied subject *wɔmɔ* ‗you', (see section 2.4.4.2 for details); which can only be realised at the level of interpretation. It expresses command and directives. Some examples from the data for this study are the following in (171-173):

171. *Soa   kyɛlɛ   mɔɔ   fɛta   wɔ   la.*

Wear.IMP   cap   COMPL befit   2SG   CDET

‗Wear a cap that befits you.'

(Do things within your capability).

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172. *Di   mɔɔ   la   ɛ   nwo   la.*
     Eat.IMP   COMPL   sleep.HAB 3SG   self   CDET
     ‗Eat what sleeps beside you.'
     (Solve your problems before you criticise my wrong doing).

173. *Nea   baka ti   zo   na   wɔ-ahɔ   ɔ   bo   ayɛne.*
     Look.IMP tree   head POST   CONJ   2SG-go 3SG POST   firewood
     ‗Look on top of a tree before you fetch firewood under it.'
     (Look before you leap).

The proverbs in (171-173) above are positive (affirmative) sentences with imperative function. The base verbs **soa** ‗wear', **di** ‗eat' and **nea** ‗look' begin the sentences as in (171), (172) and (173) respectively; which help achieve the sense of directing, instructing and commanding as conveyed in the proverbial structures. Imperative sentences in the grammar of Nzema can also be in negative forms which are marked by the negative imperative marker **mma** ‗don't' or ‗do not' (see section 2.4.4.2 for details). The data further revealed that Nzema proverbs in terms of sentence function can be negative imperatives beginning with **mma** ‗don't'. Here are some instances of negative imperative proverbs in (174-176).

174. *Mma-se mɔɔ   kposa maa ɛ-di   la   kɛ   ɔ   nloa anu bɔ.*
     NEG-tell COMPL chew   give 2SG-eat CDET COMPL 3SG mouth POST smell
     ‗Don't tell whoever chews for you to swallow that his mouth stinks.'
     (Don't speak ill of a person who provides you some support).

175. *Mma-maa   maanle   bɔ   ɛ   sa   zo.*
     NEG-make   nation/country destroy 2SG.POSS hand POST
     ‗Don't be responsible for the destruction of a nation.'
     (Don't be the cause of people's misfortunes and calamities).

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176. *Mma-nrese ɛ   gye   ɛ-kile   sonla   mɔɔ   ɛ-nrɛ-ha ye   la.*
    NEG-open 2SG teeth 2SG-show person COMPL 2SG-NEG.bite 3SG CDET
    ‚Don't show your teeth to a person who you do not intend to bite.'
      (Don't promise to undertake a task which you are not ready to do it better).

The next discussions under section 4.3.3, examine Nzema proverbs with interrogative sentence function.

4.3.3 Functions of interrogative sentence proverbs

As observed in chapter two, interrogative sentences aim at seeking information of some kind. Nzema interrogative constructions equally seek some information and for that matter require the addressee to provide an answer. Like in English for instance, Nzema interrogative sentences can also be **yes/no** questions, **wh**-questions, and **alternative** questions (see section 2.4.4.3). Some of the question words that are commonly used in Nzema interrogative constructions (in the case of **wh**-question formation) are *boni* ‚which', *nwane* ‚who', *duzu* ‚what', *duzu ait* ‚why', *kɛsi* ‚how', *kenle nzu* ‚when' and *nienwu* ‚where' (see section 2.4.4.3.2 for details). In the data for this study however, none of these mentioned question words exactly emerged in the interrogative proverbs; rather an interesting trend of question formation surfaced, where parts of the interrogative sentences comprised declarative statements. The question word in such proverbial interrogatives is ***na***, meaning ‚what about?' The interrogative particle **ɛ**, which appears at the end of the sentence, also contributes to the completeness of the question formation. In (177) and (178) below, I show two instances of Nzema proverbs with interrogative function.

177. *Boka   se   ɔ-kɛ-nyia   nzule,   **na**   bonza   ɛ?*
    Mountain say 3SG-FUT-get water   **QUES** valley   INT.PT
    ‚The mountain claims it will retain water, **what about** the valley?'
   (Even the wealthless person is confident, what about the rich?)

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178. *Abolɔba ne mɔ   ɛ-kɛ-bo   ye, **na**   ye   pɛne ne   ɛ?*
     Literate DEF DEM 2SG-FUT-beat 3SG **QUES** 3SG pen   DEF INT.PT
     ‗You will beat the literate/scholar, **what about** his pen?'
     (You may cause physical harm to someone but you can't attack his/her talents).

In (177) and (178), the question word ***na*** ‗what about' is bolded. The entire interrogative constructions constitute declarative sentences on one part, which precede the question word ***na*** ‗what about'. The structure that really expresses the question then occurs after the declarative statement. In other words, the speaker declares certain information before seeking information through questioning. In (177), the statement *boka se ɔkɛnyia nzule* ‗the mountain claims it will retain water' precedes the question *na bonza ɛ* ‗what about the valley?' In (178), the statement *abolɔba ne mɔ ɛkɛbo ye* ‗you will beat the scholar' precedes the question, *na ye pɛne ne ɛ* ‗what about his pen?' In both (177) and (178), the interrogative particle …*ɛ* occurs at sentence final (see section 2.4.4.3.2 for the case of the particle …*a*) to complement the question word, ***na*** ‗what about'.
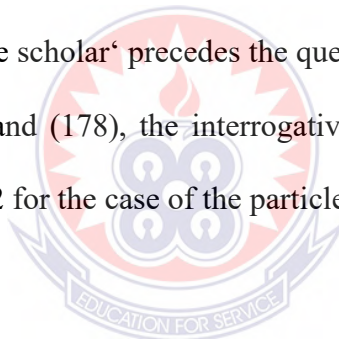
4.4 Conclusion

In this fourth chapter, the data for the study has been presented and analysed/discussed. The discussions at the morphological level focused on some word formation processes such as *reduplication*, *lexical borrowing*, *inflection*, *derivation* and *compounding*. This was followed by a syntactic analysis of the data (Nzema proverbs) at the sentential level; specifically, *sentence by structure*; which covered simple, compound and complex-embedded sentencesas well as *functional types of sentences*; which comprised declarative, imperative and interrogative functions.

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CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This is the final chapter of the study. The chapter gives a general summary of the study and provides a summary of the major findings. It further presents conclusions drawn from the findings as well as recommendations made for future studies on and besides this morpho-pragmatic and structural analysis of Nzema proverbs.

5.1 General Summary

This study qualitatively described and subjected proverbs in Nzema to a detailed linguistic analysis from the point of view of morpho-pragmatics and syntax. The objectives of the study were to examine at the lexical level, some word formation processes that occur in the structure of some proverbs in Nzema and further discuss their sentential structures and functions. The research data were drawn principally from both primary and secondary sources. Further clarifications were sought by consulting three native speakers (who are scholars in Nzema) to arrive at accurate description (analysis) of the data. The study covers five chapters; where each chapter is dedicated to specific issues.

Chapter one gives a general introduction to the study. It presents a general background of the study, followed by a highlight on the Nzema people and their language. The chapter further discusses the statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, the research questions, significance of the study, scope of the study and finally outlines how the thesis is organized.

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The review of literatures in chapter two was under three (3) sub-sections. The chapter first presents an overview of the Descriptive Adequacy Grammar (the syntactic theoretical backing on which this study relies) and the Ethno-pragmatic Model. This was followed by an empirical review of previous works on the linguistic and nonlinguistic analysis of proverbs. The chapter further provides conceptual overview of some opinion and contributions made by a number of scholars on the concept of morphology and syntax respectively; which involves some data in Nzema to unveil and give an insight into the morphosyntactic patterns of Nzema.

Chapter three focused on the methods and techniques employed in collecting and analysing the data for the study. The chapter specifically reports on the research design, source of data, population/participants, sampling techniques as well as data analysis procedure.

Chapter four dealt with a vivid analysis of the data within the frameworks of **Descriptive Adequacy Grammar** (one of the basic tenets of Chomsky's Generative Grammar which relates to assigning a structural description to each and every well-formed sentence in a language) and the **Ethno-pragmatic Model** (which concerns the understanding of discourse from cultural perspective). The discussions in this chapter, at the morphological level, focused on some word formation processes such as reduplication, inflection, derivation, lexical borrowing and compounding and their pragmatic interpretations. This was followed by discussions on the structural properties of Nzema proverbs. The concluding chapter (five) presents the summary, findings, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

5.2 Summary of Findings

This present study brought to the fore a critical analysis of Nzema proverbs from morpho-pragmatic and syntactic view point. It was guided by the following research objectives:

1. To identify and examine the morphological structures of some specific words in the construction of Nzema proverbs.

2. To highlight the pragmatic interpretations of these morphological structures and show how they contribute to the understanding of the proverbs.

3. To discuss the structural patterns and functions of sentential structures of Nzema proverbs.

The study found that a number of word formation processes such as reduplication, inflection, derivation, lexical borrowing and compounding are pervasive in the structure of Nzema proverbs. From the data analysis, it is evident that these morphological features do not occur randomly and haphazardly in the proverbial structures; rather, they manifest purposively to contribute significantly to the understanding of the proverbs.

With regard to reduplication, the study explicates that the major word categiries; verbs, adverbs, adjectives and nouns are capable of undergoing reduplication. This in a way goes to affirm Mensah's (2010) observation that proverbs in Efik at the lexical level are characterised with reduplicated morphemes.

Plural marking was also noted as a prevalent inflectional process in the proverbs. The prefixes {**n-**}, {**m-**} and {**ŋ-**} (see section 4.1.2) were found to be attached to some noun lexical categories to mark plurals, which are relevant to conceptualising the communicative contents of the proverbs. In terms of derivation, the bound morpheme

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{-**volɛ**} (see section 4.1.3) was identified to be suffixed specifically to verbs to derive their nominalised counterparts to help conceive the messages that are put across through the proverbs.

Another productive word formation process as the study demonstrated was lexical borrowing. Some words from English and Akan (see sections 4.1.4.1 and 4.1.4.2 respectively) are borrowed to the structure of proverbs in Nzema. The study also showcased lexical compounding as an essential morphological feature in the structure of some proverbs in Nzema. The particular compound words that manifested in the proverbial structures were N+N (noun + noun) and N+A (noun + adjective) compounding (see section 4.1.5). The N+N compound as the analysis showed can be described as endocentric, in the sense that one of the constituents (bases) manifests as the ‚head‘ to represent the whole entity. The first (left) noun qualifies the second (right) noun which actually serves as the head. In the same vein, the N+A compound is also endocentric, in that the noun serves as the ‚head‘ while the adjective idlely qualifies the noun. However, unlike the N+N compound, the ‚head‘ in the N+A compound happened to be the first (left) element.

At the syntactic level, the study identified simple, compound and complex embedded clauses, including declarative, imperative and interrogative sentence functions as prevalent in Nzema proverbial structures. The simple sentence proverbs involved the copula *le* ‚is‘ and the possessive *lɛ* ‚has‘, which accounted for the manifestation of **Subject Verb Complement** (SVC) and **Subject Verb Object** (SVO) clause patterns respectively (see section 4.2.1). Nzema proverbs with simple sentence structure also employed the causative verb *maa* ‚cause something to happen‘. More interestingly, the study illustrates that, simple sentence proverbs comprise **compound subject**

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constituents; where the NPs occupying the subject slot are two noun entities linked by the coordinating conjuction ***nee*** ‗and'. This finding seems to underscore MacCoinnigh (2015) and Kouega (2017) who maintain that simple sentences are predominant in Irish-language proverbs and Cameroon Pidgin English proverbs respectively. It is on the other hand found contrary to Akanbi's (2015) observation in scholarship that proverbs (particularly in Yoruba) do not occur with simple sentence structure.

The study also showed proverbs with compound sentence structures; where two independent clauses are joined with coordinators (syndetic) such as ***yɛɛ*** ‗and' as well as ***na/noko*** ‗but'. Further, the study revealed instances of compound structures where the coordinate connectives are not overtly indicated (asyndetic).

Concerning complex embedded clauses, the study found that proverbs in Nzema manifest in conditional clause constructions, relative clauses, nominal clauses, adverbial clauses and comparative clauses. The relative clause as the analysis showed, syntactically post modifies and semantically helps restrict the reference of a ‗head' (an antecedent NP) within the main clause (see section 4.2.3.1). This is in contrast with Bhuvaneswer (2012) who however reports that the relative clause type of subordinate construction is nonexistent in Telegu proverbs.

The study further demonstrated proverbs with nominal embedded clause constructions. Like an NP, these subordinate nominal clauses performed grammatical functions such as subject and object. There were other instances where the nominal clause constructions involved focus markers, ***yɛɛ/a*** ‗it is' (see section 4.2.3.2.4) to indicate emphasis, exclusion and restriction of the Subject-agent entities in the structures.

In terms of adverbial embedded clauses, the study revealed adverbial clause of condition, adverbial clause of reason, adverbial clause of time and adverbial clause of place as other subordinate clauses that occur in Nzema proverbial structures. Subordinate comparative clause constructions, which employed the subordinating conjunction *tɛla* ‗than/surpass‗ (see section 4.2.3.4) were also noted for prevailing in the structure of Nzema proverbs. These findings rightly affirm Kouega‗s (2017) observation that proverbs in Cameroon Pidgin English occur in relative, nominal, adverbial and comparative clause constructions.

With regard to functional classification of sentences, the study proved that Nzema proverbs are constructed in declarative (statement), imperative (command) and interrogative (question) mood. This goes ‗partly‗ to confirm Bhuvaneswer‗s (2012) claim that proverbs in Telegu are represented in an unrestricted, open-ended fashion in all the major syntactic classes of the declarative, interrogative, imperative and exclamatory sentences. I have used the word ‗partly‗ above in the sense that Bhuvaneswer (2012) found declarative, interrogative, imperative and exclamatory sentences, while this study did not reveal proverbs with exclamatory function. In this study, proverbs in declarative and imperative mood (see sections 4.3.1 and 4.3.2 respectively) were seen to be further constructed negatively with the inclusion of the negative markers (morphemes) {**n**} ‗not‗ and {**mma**} ‗don't‗ respectively in the sentences. The interrogative proverbial structures revealed an interesting combination; where a declarative proposition was first made before the question word *na* ‗what about…‗ would follow (see section 4.3.3).

5.3 Conclusions

This study has looked at the Nzema proverb with focus on its morpho-pragmatic and syntactic structure. The study evidenced a remarkable manifestation of word formation processes in the syntactic string of proverbs in Nzema; which do not exist at random and haphazardly, but occur in the structures essentially to contribute to listeners' perception and conception of the messages intended to be communicated via the proverbs. The study has made a clear indication that these word formation processes such as *reduplication*, *inflection*, *derivation*, *borrowing*, and *compounding* are prominent in Nzema proverbial structures.

Structurally, Nzema proverbs are constructed in the form of simple, compound and complex embedded sentences. Functionally, the proverbs are assertive (declarative), imperative (command) and interrogative (question).

Overall, the study shows that the oral construction of proverbs in Nzema gives an insight and provides a window to the morphosyntactic and grammatical description of the language.

5.4 Recommendations

Since the scope of this study was limited to analysing the morphological features and syntactic structures and functions of proverbs in Nzema, it appears obvious that other crucial areas need scholarly attention. In this regard, the study makes pertinent recommendations and suggestions for further investigations in the following areas:

1. It is recommended that further studies would focus on quantitative approaches to find out the frequency of the structural types of sentences in Nzema proverbs. In other words, to ascertain which of the sentence types such as

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simple, compound or complex sentences would dominate in Nzema proverbial constructions.

2. Future studies could consider serial verb constructions (SVC) in Nzema proverbs.

3. Another fertile area to look at is linguistic parallelism and the Nzema proverbs.

4. It must be stated that very little attention was paid to focus constructions in this study. Thus detailed description is recommended in this regard.

5. A sociolinguistic analysis of Nzema proverbs is also viable to be undertaken.

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APPENDIX

Below is a list of Nzema proverbs selected for the analysis in this study.

1. **Proverb:** *Aleε mɔɔ εkεli bie la εwude-wuda ɔ bo.*

Gloss: _Rekindle the fire for cooking the food you intend to partake in its consumption'.

2. **Proverb:** *Εkpɔtε di-di fovolε zo kpondε ngoane tendenle.*

Gloss: _The vulture always feeds on waste materials for long life'

3. **Proverb:** *Saa boane sulo su-su a anrεε ɔnli aleε.*

Gloss: _If a sheep were to fear the act of sacking it continuously, it wouldn't have eaten'.

4. **Proverb:** *Saa εdanlε te-te a bεfεlε ye fuazinli.*

Gloss: _If a cloth is torn continuously, it is considered to be a rag'.

5. **Proverb:** *Saa εkye-kye a yεε bεsoa wɔ a.*

Gloss: _If you adequately tie your load, then they help you carry it'.

6. **Proverb**: *Baka mɔɔ kεwɔ bε nye la bεpε zolε ndε-ndε.*

Gloss: _A stick that is capable of piercing ones eye must be cut immediately'.

7. **Proverb:** *Bεtεε-bεtεε a bεfa bεkye akowule a.*

Gloss: _It takes adequate patience to catch *akowule* (a kind of fly which is a parasite)'.

8. **Proverb:** *Saa εtendε somaa-somaa a εtia ε zebεla agyakε azo.*

Gloss: _If you talk excessively, you step on the toes of your mother-in-law'.

9. **Proverb:** *Saa εnwu nrεlεbε dɔɔnwo-dɔɔnwo a εbiza mboane ahye.*

Gloss: _If you become so much sensible, you rather offer greetings to the sheep'.

10. **Proverb:** *Azua azua ze bε nzi.*

Gloss: _All nations know their origin'.

11. **Proverbs:** *Mɔɔ sua εhane awolε awolε zo la ze εleka mɔɔ ɔbɔ ye takola ne a.*

Gloss: _Whoever intends to set a trap on rocks knows where to place the sticks'.

12. **Proverb:** *Anloma nwo ndεkε le ye ngoane.*

Gloss: _The feathers of a bird are its security'.

13. **Proverb:** *Tunli nu mboane le kpolane na εweεne deda nu.*

Gloss: _A flock of sheep appear to be in a group, but there are boundaries in-between'.

14. **Proverb:** *Saa kusu εnle εkε a ngila dwe.*

Gloss: _When the cat is away, the mice rejoice'.

15. **Proverb:** *Azule mɔɔ ɛnlɛ ye kakyevolɛ la ati bɔ nyevile nu.*

Gloss: ˷A river that does not have a reminder joins the see'.

16. **Proverb:** *Boavolɛ bɛnnyia ye.*

Gloss: ˷It is difficult to find one to offer you assistance/guidance'.

17. **Proverb:** *Bizavolɛ ɛmminli kpɔkɛ nu.*

Gloss: ˷One who seeks direction does not get lost in the forest'.

18. **Proverb:** *Patulo lɛ ye nganeɛ.*

Gloss: ˷Petrol has its scent' (petrol has a unique scent).

19. **Proverb:** *Bote nyia sigalɛte a ɔkɛnlo na esike ne ati ɔ.*

Gloss: ˷The rat wishes to smoke cigarette, but it is deprived because of the ˷smoke'.

20. **Proverb:** *Kale ne mɔɔ ɛdwu zo la anwo patulo a ɛ ra la.*

Gloss: ˷The kind of car that is available in these days has got petrol that befits it.'

21. **Proverb:** *Saa ɛkpondɛ tuɛkɛ anyiamgba wɔabɔ a bia ye na bɔ ye pawoda.*

Gloss: ˷If you want to put inguinal hernia into shame, bath it and apply powder on it'.

22. **Proverb:** *Koatelekoa se ɔkɛmaa wɔ ɛdanlɛ a tie ye duma.*

Gloss: ˷If a wealthless person promises to give you clothe, just consider his status'.

23. **Proverb:** *Saa ɛrelera butua wie a ɔkɔ ababunlu ɛdeɛ nu.*

Gloss: ˷If the buttock of the elders gets finish, it enters into that of the youth.'

24. **Proverb:** *Huhuhuhu dwu manɔne.*

Gloss: ˷A rumour spreads beyond other nations.'

25. **Proverb:** *Ɛnrɛnwu bie ka a ɛse bɛammaa wɔ nsɛmpa.*

Gloss: ˷If you have no comments, you say you were not given the order to contribute'.

26. **Proverb:** *Sonlamgbane ɛnle ewiade.*

Gloss: ˷There is no useless person in the world.'

27. **Proverb:** *Ewulekpolike sonla ko ɛnvo.*

Gloss: ˷A single person does not climb the ladder of death'

28. **Proverb:** *Etile ko le namule.*

Gloss: ˷Single head is a cottage.'

29. **Proverb:** *Ezukoa le bozonle.*

Gloss: ˷Money is a deity'.

30. **Proverb:** *Nɔhalɛ le ayile.*

Gloss: ˷Truth is medication'.

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31. **Proverb:** *Ngyigyilira lε ye atwε.*

Gloss: ‗Ant has (its) arrow.'

32. **Proverb:** *Ezukoa lε ndεbalε.*

Gloss: ‗Money has wings'.

33. **Proverb:** *Bane lε ɔ nzo.*

Gloss: ‗Wall has (its) ears'.

34. **Proverb:** *Ehyia bɔ.*

Gloss: ‗Poverty stinks'.

35. **Proverb:** *Koyεlε maa anwosesebε.*

Gloss: ‗Unity causes strength.'

36. **Proverb:** *Ehyia maa adwenledwenle.*

Gloss: ‗Poverty causes thinking.'

37. **Proverb:** *Ebutua nee ebinli εnli mgba.*

Gloss: ‗Anus and faeces are not separable.'

38. **Proverb:** *Alehyenlε nee aledwolε εnle ko.*

Gloss: ‗Day and night are not equal'.

39. **Proverb:** *Domunli lε ye kenle yεε akutue lε ye kenle.*

Gloss: ‗lemon has its day and orange has its day.'

40. **Proverb:** *Kεtεboε εkεla le ngakyile yεε dabɔ εkεla le ngakyile.*

Gloss: ‗Antelope's destiny is unique and deer's destiny is unique.'

41. **Proverb:** *Bεsoa nrεlεbεvolε na bεnzoa koasea.*

Gloss: ‗They send a sensible person but they do not send a fool.'

42. **Proverb:** *Bεtɔ mo na bεnzεlε.*

Gloss: ‗They work for praises but they do not beg for it.'

43. **Proverb:** *Kakula ze nriandi na ɔnze fea.*

Gloss: ‗A child can run but (he/she) cannot hide.'

44. **Proverb:** *Kakula tu bεsea na ɔndu bεtenle.*

Gloss: ‗A child uproots a young palm tree but doesn't uproot a mature palm tree.'

45. **Proverb:** *Me kunlu εlεtu na mennene me gyakε anzi.*

Gloss: ‗My stomach is running but I am not defecating at the back of my legs.'

46. **Proverb:** *Akɔlε belε ze alehyenlε noko ɔtie nyinli ane.*

Gloss: ‗The hen recognizes daybreak butit listens to the cock.'

47. **Proverb:** *Bɔvolε tεladeε le kpotokpoto noko ye subue yε fε.*

Gloss: ‗The hunter's garment is dirty but his soup is delicious.'

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48. **Proverb:** *Agbuyia kpomgba tokule noko tokule la ɔ bo ati.*

Gloss: ‗The needle stitches a hole but a hole exists at it bottom'.

49. **Proverb:** *Ezukua ka nɔhalɛ noko ɔ nwo edwɛkɛ wale.*

Gloss: ‗Money is a good servant but its matters are complicated.'

50. **Proverb:** *Ɛbɔ nu mbaka le mgbole gyɛne, senlenra a le kpanyinli a.*

Gloss: ‗Forest trees are just big, ‗senlenra' (a kind of stick) is the oldest.'

51. **Proverb:** *Bɛse ko, bɛnze nwiɔ.*

Gloss: ‗They speak once, they do not speak twice.'

52. **Proverb:** *Saa ɛ nli ara de aduoba zo a ɛnli aduoba amunli.*

Gloss: ‗If your sibling climbs a guava tree, you do not eat the unripe guava'.

53. **Proverb:** *Saa ɛlɛ awie fa wɔ ebinli a ɛne awozɛka nu.*

Gloss: ‗If you have someone to sweep your faeces, you defecate in gravels.'

54. **Proverb:** *Saa ɛfa sane nwo ɛya a wɔ sua nu bɔ.*

Gloss: ‗If you become angry about the broom, your room stinks.'

55. **Proverb:** *Saa baka ko die anwoma dedee a ɔbu.*

Gloss: ‗If a single tree always serves as wind break, it falls/uproots'.

56. **Proverb:** *Saa ɛfoa wɔ akɔlɛ soɛ-soɛ a sanza kye ye.*

Gloss: ‗If you always drive away your fowl, the hawk catches it.'

57. **Proverb:** *Saa kusu ɛnle ɛkɛ a ngila dwe.*

Gloss: ‗When the cat is away, the mice rejoice.'

58. **Proverb:** *Saa nzule kyɛ toba nu a ɔbɔ.*

Gloss: ‗When water last in a bottle, it stinks.'

59. **Proverb:** *Saa ehyia bɔ wɔ anlekɛ nu a ɛ gɔnwo mɔ amuala nriandi wɔ.*

Gloss: ‗When you are afflicted by poverty, all your friends desert you.'

60. **Proverb:** *Abotane tudu awoka.*

Gloss: ‗Patience dismantles mountains.'

61. **Proverb:** *Bulalɛ bu.*

Gloss: ‗A metal can break.'

62. **Proverb:** *Mekɛ le ezukoa.*

Gloss: ‗Time is money'

63. **Proverb:** *Ɛkolɛ kpole sie ninyɛndane.*

Gloss: ‗Big stomach keeps waste materials' (Uneasy lies the head that wears the crown).

64. **Proverb:** *Boka zo mbaka nyi ndɛ.*

Gloss: ‗Trees on a mountain grow faster.'

65. **Proverb:** *Budu sokoɛ bɛdɛ.*

   Gloss: ‗Budu lives with bɛdɛ' (Birds of a feather flock together).

66. **Proverb:** *Ngyenle ngome ɛnde aleɛ.*

Gloss: ‗Salt alone does not prepare food.'

67. **Proverb:** *Ɛnlankɛ ndɔma ɛngenda mgbane.*

Gloss: ‗Cattle testicle does not hang aimlessly.'

68. **Proverb:** *Baka ko ɛngakyi ɛhoayelɛ.*

Gloss: ‗A single tree does not become forest.'

69. **Proverb:** *Ɛhɔlɛ ɛnwo anloma.*

Gloss: ‗A crab does not bear a bird.'

70. **Proverb:** *Anwuma ɛnli kukue.*

Gloss: ‗The sky does not eat coconut.'

71. **Proverb:** *Soa kyɛlɛmɔ ɔfɛta wɔ la.*

Gloss: ‗Wear a cup that befits you.'

72. **Proverb:** *Di mɔɔ la ɛ nwo la.*

Gloss: ‗Eat what sleeps beside you' (mind your own business).

73. **Proverb:** *Nea baka ti zo na wɔahɔ ɔ bo ayɛne.*

Gloss: ‗Look on top of a tree before you fetch firewood under it.'

74. **Proverb:** *Mmase mɔɔ kposa maa ɛdi la kɛ ɔ nloa anu bɔ.*

Gloss: ‗Don‗t tell whoever chews for you to swallow that his mouth stinks.'

75. **Proverb:** *Mmamaa maanle bɔ ɛ sa zo.*

Gloss: ‗Don‗t be responsible for the destruction of a nation.'

76. **Proverb:** *Mmanrese ɛ gye ɛkile sonla mɔɔ ɛnrɛha ye la.*

Gloss: ‗Don‗t show your teeth to a person you do not intend to bite.'

77. **Proverb:** *Boka se ɔkɛnyia nzule na bonza ɛ?*

Gloss: ‗The mountain claims it will retain water, what about the valley?'

78. **Proverb:** *Abolɔba ne a ɛkɛbo ye a na ye pɛne ne ɛ?*

Gloss: ‗You will beat the literate/scholar, what about his pen?'

79. **Proverb:** *Kpakpa mɔɔ so ma fɛlɛko la baka ɛmkpa ɔ bo.*

Gloss: ‗Pawpaw tree that produces delicious fruits always has a stick under it.'

80. **Proverb:** *Nane mɔɔ ɛnlɛ dualɛ la Nyamenle a hoho ɔ nwo a.*

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Gloss: ‗An animal that does not have a tail has its flies driven away by God.'

81. **Proverb:** *Akɔlɛ mɔɔ doale ɔ nli la lile abɛbɛ ɛzɔlɛ.*

Gloss: ‗A fowl that followed its mother ate the thigh of a grasshopper.'

82. **Proverb:** *Nzule mɔɔ gyi diinyi la se ɔ bo.*

Gloss: ‗Water that stands quietly runs deep.' (Still waters run deep).

83. **Proverb:** *Kakula mɔɔ kenlebie kɛdɔ kale la dahuu biza patulo bolɛ.*

Gloss: ‗A child who intends to buy a car in future often seeks the prices of fuel.'

84. **Proverb:** *Raalɛ mɔɔ bo nrienyia la kɔkɔsɛlɛ bɔ ɔ ti anwo mgbɔlɔka.*

Gloss: ‗A woman who beats a man has her head surrounded by crows.'

85. **Proverb:** *Kakula mɔɔ anzo yɛ se la wu anzosesebɛ ewule.*

Gloss: ‗A child who is adamant/recalcitrant dies as a result of recalcitrance.'

86. **Proverb:** *Kpɔmavolɛ mɔɔ ɛnlɛ edwɛkɛ ka la se Nana ɛ nzo nu ɔ.*

Gloss: ‗A spokesperson who has no comment says my lord you have heard it yourself.'

87. **Proverb:** *Bɔvolɛ ɛnze nane mɔɔ ati ku ye la.*

Gloss: ‗A hunter does not recognise an animal that is not healthy.'

88. **Proverb:** *Mɔɔ ɛwɔlɛ ɛha ye ɛlɛ la sulo sone.*

Gloss: ‗Whoever has experienced a snake bite fears a worm.'

89. **Proverb:** *Mɔɔ ɛnwula mgbɔlaboa la ɛnli nwɔhoa wɔ mbowule zo.*

Gloss: Whoever walks bear footed does not play on thorns.'

90. **Proverb:** *Mɔɔ biza la ɛnvo adenle.*

Gloss: ‗Whoever seeks direction does not take a wrong path.'

91. **Proverb:** *Mɔɔ kola nwɔnla la ɛndo ɔ nli funli.*

Gloss: ‗Whoever keeps wandering does not meet his/her mother's corpse.'

92. **Proverb:** *Mɔɔ le awie alee la le awie kyibadeɛ.*

Gloss: ‗What is cherished/admired by a person is detested by another person.'

93. **Proverb:** *Mɔɔ bɛndɔne ye la bɛmkpaye.*

Gloss: ‗What is not meant for sale is not advertised.'

94. **Proverb:** *Anwuma boa mɔɔ boa ɔ nwo la.*

Gloss: ‗Heaven helps whoever helps himself.'

95. **Proverb:** *Ɛrɛladane ze mɔɔ ɔ mra bali la.*

Gloss: ‗A parent knows what his/her children will eat.'

96. **Proverb:** *Koasea ɛnze kɛ ɔ ti zo bɔ.*

Gloss: ‗A fool does not know that he/she has a smell around his/her head.'

97. **Proverb:** *Ɛnloanlɛ ɛnze kɛ ɔ menle le akɛlɛ.*

Gloss: ‗The mouth does not know that its owner is a slave.'

98. **Proverb:** *Mɔɔ kɔ azule la yɛɛ bɔ buakɛ a.*

Gloss: ‗It is whoever goes to fetch water that breaks the pot.'

99. **Proverb:** *Mɔɔ ɛkɛlua la a ɛbu a.*

Gloss: ‗It is what you cultivate that you harvest.'

100. **Proverb:** *Bonze ɛngyia mbualɛ nwo ɔluakɛ kekebetele di adwunli.*

Gloss: ‗Croꝏdile possesses abundant matels because lizard works as blacksmith.'

101. *Bonze duale ɔ nzo ɔluakɛ ɔngulo mgbane-mgbane.*

Gloss: ‗The crocodile covered its ears because it dislikes nonsense.'

102. Proverb: *Mekɛ mɔɔ asikyɛlɛ wɔ Abolokyi la ɛnee wolɛ wɔ Nzema.*

Gloss: ‗When sugar was in abroad, honey was in Nzemaland.'

103. **Proverb**: *Mekɛ mɔɔ ɛhɔlɛ ɛlɛfu la ɛnee kosi noko ɛlɛfu.*

Gloss: ‗When the crab was digging, kosi ‗a kind of crab' was also digging.'

104. **Proverb:** *Bɛnea kenlamo gye na bɛamaa ye ɛsɛsɛlɛ.*

Gloss: ‗A muslim's teeth must be considered before he/she is offered a cola nut.'

105. **Proverb:** *Bɛbɛlabɛla kakula na bɛaha ye elue.*

Gloss: ‗A child must be convinced before his/her food could be tasted.'

106. **Proverb:** *Nyiene sosɔ bɛ nwo na bɛapɛ azule.*

Gloss: ‗The ants hold one another before they cross a river.'

107. **Proverb:** *Boane sie ye fufule wɔ ɛleka mɔɔ ɔkulo la.*

Gloss: ‗The sheep places its white colour at where it wishes.'

108. **Proverb:** *Ɛndo bolɛ ɛngɔ ɛleka mɔɔ wɔ nwole kpalɛ wɔ la.*

Gloss: ‗You do not throw a stone at where you keep your precious property.'

109. **Proverb:** *Mogya yɛ ɛnlomboɛ tɛla nzule.*

Gloss: ‗Blood is thicker than water.'

110. **Proverb:** *Duma kpalɛ ɛbɔlɛ le kpalɛ tɛla konle ko anyiabɛnwo.*

Gloss: ‗Good name is better than being rich overnight.'

111. **Proverb:** *Ɛzonledolɛ yɛ nyane tɛla nrɛnlandebɔlɛ.*

Gloss: ‗Wrong accusation is more painful than being cut by a cutlass'.

112. **Proverb:** *Raalɛ ɛtane le kpalɛ tɛla kɛ ɛ ngome ɛkɛla.*

Gloss: ‗It is better to have a bad wife than to sleep alone.'

113. **Proverb:** *Saa mgbanyinli kposa mgbandu a ngakula ne-ne nwolɛ ebinli.*

Gloss: ‗If elders chew bottles, the younger people defecate with blood content.'

114. **Proverb:** *Mɔɔ pɛ adenle la ɛnze kɛ ɔ nzi ɛhyea.*

Gloss: ‗Whoever constructs a path doesn‗t know that there is a curve behind him.'

115. **Proverb:** *Mɔɔ sua ɛhane awolɛ zo la ze ɛleka mɔɔ ɔbɔ ye takola ne a.*

Gloss: ‗Whoever intends to set a trap at a rocky area knows where to place the sticks'