

CHAPTER SEVEN  
INTRODUCTORY PHRASE

301. Adua ama akut se adisikutte ase akama nsim aduep utong.  
When a squirrel sees what it has never seen before, it uses its tail to wipe its ears.  
**Meaning:** A person becomes cautious after a strange encounter.
302. Akpede ama ndom itut-afid ukereke afid, mmaabo udom ibuo mboho nkere mkpo.  
If you had bitten my anus without minding the faeces, when I want to bite your nose I will not mind the mucus.  
**Meaning:** A person's attitude to another person depends on that person's attitude too. It is a case of measure for measure, a tit for a tat.
303. Ama adede aduk ufok mbokidung edidenge isio.  
When you frequent your neighbours house, you become enemies.  
**Meaning:** There must be some reservations in relationships to avoid conflict. Familiarity breeds contempt.
304. Ama akut nte ndiduok enek unek k'isong akpousung, abide ibit mmo k'ikot asine.  
When you see a humming bird dancing on the middle of the road, it is obvious that the drummer is inside the bush.  
**Meaning:** Quite often, godfatherism may be the cause of a person's sudden wealth.
305. Ase ade ebok akpetongo afid, anye akama nkwa keed asid itut afid.  
When a goat defecates, it leaves one dropping to block its anus.  
**Meaning:** If the goat wants to empty its bowels, nothing will be left and air will gush in, perhaps kill it. Just as the goat considers its safety, human beings should be conscious of their safety in whatever they do.
306. Akpa afon awo ifop nnuene, ade nanga edi dakpa isio k'ikang.  
It would be a pleasurable thing to roast an ant for a meal but the problem is how to remove it from the fire.  
**Meaning:** There is every possibility to try our hands at some economic ventures but the problem is how to raise the money for them.

307. Ayen ubuene ase atongo ndien ke ekwong.  
An orphan first experiences good food from snails.  
**Meaning:** A person who has no one to fend for him should not be too ambitious in life.
308. Ase ade nko eku ekeme efok anye abop.  
A rodent can only build a fortress when it is mature.  
**Meaning:** Age and maturity are important factors in human development.
309. Asiak afang k'ikot iboho k'ede ufok.  
A person who opens a bush tract does not consider it a home.  
**Meaning:** Anyone who goes out of the way to assist others is not doing so because they are his relations. He is just being kind to them.
310. Awo isi miaha ekpe ata ikiduk nwure ufok isine.  
No one dares a lion and seeks refuge in a dilapidated building.  
**Meaning:** A commoner will not challenge a man of substance and goes away unpunished.
311. Ayen isikaha ukang ete afum ibo ikara k'usung.  
A child does not go to his father's house and he is robbed of his headpad by the wind.  
**Meaning:** Any good thing we commit into God's hand can never meet with failure.
312. Awo ama anono awo mkpo iboho, ufok amo ana inwang.  
When a person is too generous, his house is left bare.  
**Meaning:** There should be a limit to our generosity to other people, else it becomes an abuse.
313. Ama adede akom uka anwan "nne adebok", ada adue inua abo "ino adebok".  
When you over appreciate your mother-in-law's meal, you will mistakenly say "thief you have cooked well".  
**Meaning:** If one is too appreciative of another, he can use this opportunity to insult him. Familiarity breeds contempt.
314. Awo ama afide nt'edim ekeda ibong, akang nwen ase abobong awot.  
When a person forgets where the rain beat him, next time he will be beaten to death.

**Meaning:** One should not forget one's benefactor or bite the finger that fed him.

315. Asin ubok ke aba akwok ke akwok ase atop.

An individual who invades the beehive is stung by the bees.

**Meaning:** A person who is too curious is open to imminent danger.

316. Awo isi bene ndidia ekpenoho ayen ikino edi.

No one gives the food meant for a child to a pig.

**Meaning:** A position of responsibility is not entrusted to an unserious person.

317. Awo isiboho uyai awo fakka mmong k'edet.

No one tells a beautiful person to pick water from the teeth.

**Meaning:** A pretty person is without blemish, uncondemnable.

318. Awo isi kpaha ke etok ekpuk awo iben ika ekamba.

No one ever dies in a modest family and he is taken to a royal family for burial.

**Meaning:** We should be contented with what we have.

319. Ama abo udia mkpo nne awo idomo kama anyan ekpang.

If you choose to dine with the devil, use a long spoon.

**Meaning:** Keep a long distance between yourself and your enemy.

320. Awo isidiongoke nanga nuene ewongoke ekpong ufok, mbod ammo asuk adada.

No one knows when the ants desert their home, their mould remains intact.

**Meaning:** Human beings cannot truly predict an unforeseen circumstance. The future is unknown to man.

321. Ase ade ikot akpesua unen anye atime udia.

If the bush is harmful to the hen, it should stop feeding there.

**Meaning:** Anything that harbours danger to people should not attract their attention.

322. Ayen adi duaka idu uwem ase abo eka akama nyen udung akok utia ino

A child who is not willing to live requests the mother to use a pestle and construct a bow for him.

**Meaning:** This is making an impossible demand from someone.

323. Ayen adisinyaka eka adaiya isidaiyake.  
A child who does not allow the mother to sleep does not sleep.  
**Meaning:** In an attempt to disturb others people also disturb themselves.
324. Ayen akpaha ke ndon ete aba nte adaiya idap ukot.  
A child who dies in his father's family compound is like the sleep of a drunkard.  
**Meaning:** The person is properly disposed of and goes into oblivion with the ancestors.
325. Ama afon akwa ekpo, aboiyo ekpo.  
When it is well with the chanter, it is well with the masquerade.  
**Meaning:** A good leader should be able to impact positively on the followers.
326. Awo ase aka ufok awo aka idiongo awo.  
Someone pays a visit to another person in order to know the person properly.  
**Meaning:** The way we perceive others may not be their exact portrayal in their private moments.
327. Abasi isi noho idiok unam nnuk.  
God does not provide a vicious animal with horns.  
**Meaning:** The things that are likely to endanger our lives should not be close to us.
328. Akpok adiok idem idiaha idiok.  
The lizard may appear scary but it does not consume detestable food.  
**Meaning:** A person's appearance does not predict his prowess or capabilities.
329. Ande ade eto anyan anem.  
The person is a tree at a long entrance into a compound.  
**Meaning:** A woman who is well adorned with beauty but unproductive (barren).
330. Anyen ase asa asat nkok ikpong asio.  
The eye selects cocoyam seedling before picking it.  
**Meaning:** Human beings know what is good for them. They go for the best.
331. Ata utop isi tokpo inuen ama adak ikut anye.  
Hardly does a hunter hit a bird which has already seen him.

**Meaning:** It is better to stay away from a potential source of danger at all cost.

332. Ayen ikpong isi dehe nsek.

The child of a helpless person is never premature.

**Meaning:** Nature's blessings to man do not come with sorrows

333. Ata ase ata ufok.

A challenge often destroys a home.

**Meaning:** Anyone who challenges another person must be ready to face severe consequences.

334. Afia ase akara ekpe.

A trap sometimes entraps a lion.

**Meaning:** A man of valour may also be overtaken by eventualities. No one can predict misfortune.

335. Awo isitemeke nkwok ayet.

No one prompts nkwok on how to cry.

**Meaning:** What a person is good at does not pose any challenge to him.

336. Adia ndidia ufok awo idehe inuuk.

Anyone who eats from another is not greedy.

**Meaning:** Sometimes we accept kindness from others not out of lack but in order to please them.

337. Ayen ama adiok inua abanga eka.

A bad child attracts criticisms to the mother.

**Meaning:** When we fail in our duties as role models, the bad legacy trails us behind.

338. Asokpo idem ase adiana ekwong anyong.

A fast runner picks snail from a tree.

**Meaning:** The seriousness we give to our endeavours makes it possible for us to achieve our goals in life.

339. Akuk ase ayide ke eto mkpa.

Money often hangs on the tree of death.

**Meaning:** Money-making is a costly venture; sometimes we pay dearly with our lives.

340. Afia afong asua mbat ubok.  
A white material that hates dirty hands.  
**Meaning:** Purity should not be contaminated with dirt.
341. Abine etokunen ada aduo abe, etokunen afaha atang anyong.  
The person who chases a chick will fall into the pit but the chick will escape through the fence.  
**Meaning:** The trap we lay for others may turn around to entrap us
342. Awo isikeneke nanga udukikot anyiong inua awo isum ikang isin.  
The length of a snake's mouth is not a consideration to set fire on it.  
**Meaning:** We do not approach a challenging situation with aggression
343. Atimme ase ade nko atutuk isong anye atot Abasi.  
Atimme would first touch the ground before it appeals to the gods.  
**Meaning:** In a traditional Annang society, atimme is a wooden or a metal object used for harvesting of yam. It moves upward from the ground as it breaks open the soil to expose yam seedlings. By this upward and downward thrust, both the earth and the heavens are linked together. These two planes are important in human existence, representing both the physical and the spiritual levels which guarantee our survival.
344. Ekamba awo ama atua abiong, ntok eyen edongo inno.  
When an adult complains of hunger, the youth take to pilfering.  
**Meaning:** An adult is a mature person who can absorb certain inconveniences. Where he fails to do so, he is not setting good example to the young ones. The proverb calls for credibility and discipline on the part of an adult.
345. Etim akebo ke asanga isang anyie awo ade ndien.  
It was the millipede which said that having kith and kin wherever one goes to is a blessing.  
**Meaning:** Our first reaction when we spot a millipede is to throw it far away with a stick. By doing so, we are directly giving it an upward mobility. As human beings, we cannot succeed alone without the interaction and the cooperation of others.
346. Edim isidekpe akom keed.  
Rain does not fall on a single roof.

**Meaning:** The good things of this life do not reside in one person's home. God's blessings are sufficient to every human being.

347. Ese ekama ikpa afuo emia ayeyen.

We use a tender plant to beat a grandchild.

**Meaning:** In Annang, our relationship with a grandchild is sacrosanct. We have to avoid conflict.

348. Ekpu ufok ase akekot ekpu ikot abo di ke ndia aba.

It is the house rat which invites the bush rat to a feast.

**Meaning:** People who know our secret are those who often betray us.

349. Ese ebo ke ime ade inyene.

It is said that patience is wealth.

**Meaning:** When we endure certain conditions in life and follow due process we would eventually achieve our goals.

350. Ese edat uyo inuen ediongo ubon ete ato.

It's a bird's voice that reveals its ancestry.

**Meaning:** Human beings bear certain characteristics which identify them as members of particular family.

351. Ekong ama anyie adot usen, iwotto inyion.

When the drum of war is sounded, the cripple is not killed.

**Meaning:** Any venture that has a proposal cannot challenge us beyond our wits.

352. Ese ewot adudukutong eno idiok anying.

A parasitic insect is often killed because of its bad name.

**Meaning:** Some people may be adjudged wickedly because of their past crimes and the company they keep.

353. Ese ekut idet k'ibuo awo edat etang.

People copy the hairstyle from other people's head to make their own.

**Meaning:** The proverb portrays the apparent dependency which exists among human beings. There is always a case of rub me and I rub you.

354. Etok ayen ase ayie idem idib idib.

A child usually bathes only the belly.

**Meaning:** We should not seek for mysterious things which are hidden from man.

355. Enang adi inyiehe isim ase abinne nsung k'ideh.

A cow without a tail chases away flies hastily.

**Meaning:** An individual without a benefactor must be proactive.

356. Edim abong akom idehe ikang ata.

It is rain that beats the roof, it is not fire that consumes it.

**Meaning:** A problem which is not life-threatening will eventually have a solution.

357. Ebo ke eto ama ato awo itakutong ke ano item.

It is said that when a tree hits a person at the eardrum it seems as a warning to him.

**Meaning:** People should learn from their mistakes.

358. Ema efide ntak, ntak atoho.

If we forget the origin of something; the origin becomes angry.

**Meaning:** We must learn to appreciate the people who have made significant contributions to our success in life.

359. Ikpong adi bo isian asen awo, anyie ufok ama utom amo.

Before the cocoyam starts to irritate the guest, the owner of the house had performed her task.

**Meaning:** Sometimes our goodwill to others may not yield the kind of response expected of them.

360. Idehe nanga awo abong akam ke mkpo afon.

The way we pray does not determine our prosperity.

**Meaning:** Our endeavours in life are not commensurate with our wealth. Some people make it to the top with little or no stress, others labour in vain.

361. Ikwot ase atama nte akpere abe.

A toad normally jumps close to the pit.

**Meaning:** An individual should aim at what he can accomplish. It is a caution to one not to bite more than one can chew.

362. Imuk awo ase akongo ekyat ke nt'ubok atude.



A short person hangs a bag where his hand stops

**Meaning:** Sometimes our status in life determines our achievements and progress.

363. Isidehe anyie ufok idiaha afere akwenge.

If the owner of the house has not eaten, the soup cannot be totally consumed.

**Meaning:** The owner of a particular property deserves the right to a fair treatment.

364. Ibaha nanga awo aka ito edimine iso.

There is no how a person defecates without twisting his face.

**Meaning:** Important family projects have adverse effects on the individuals.

365. Idehe uwa idiok nditod anye kod nya adada.

The misfortune of the egg plant will not cause it to give supremacy to the garden egg.

**Meaning:** Men who are wealthy by world standard, will not accord unmerited regard to people with ill-gotten wealth.

366. Isidehe etat ikad eka ayen, ayen mmode atie.

No one exposes a mother's secret in the presence of the child.

**Meaning:** It is foolishness for a person to malign another person before his close relations who are likely to divulge the discussion to him later.

367. Isidehe awo keed ama atime udua, udua inyamma.

The absence of an individual does not shut down the market.

**Meaning:** No one is indomitable or indispensable. What one person can do, another one can also do it. Knowledge is evenly distributed by God.

368. Idehe usen etikpeke abe ke mfot ase aduo aduk.

It is not the day a pit is dug that a frog falls into it.

**Meaning:** Trouble comes to us when we least expect it.

369. Isidehe adia edia adia-dia, abam adikwok mfod.

It is not the case for one person to eat yam and another comes to sweep the peels.

**Meaning:** A person should not be blamed for the mistake of another person. One should be able to take responsibility for one's actions.

370. Isidehe awo aben akpo enin abiom amana adat ukot afet ediang  
A man who carries the carcass of an elephant on his head should not dig for crickets with his toes.  
**Meaning:** A person should not embark on a significant and insignificant project at the same time. The proverb captures the greedy nature of our public office holders, the winner takes all attitude.
371. Isidehe ekpanga Ukpong, anim idem nsek.  
Even with the death of one's parents, one should not remain permanently premature.  
**Meaning:** People must learn to fend for themselves in any circumstance.
372. Isidehe anunune afid unem ayen atikpe ebua.  
A dog does not go blind by merely sniffing at chicken droppings.  
**Meaning:** What we are not part of should not be an aberration to us.
373. Ikidehe unya idi di anye ade ndidia ebok.  
The discovery of unya did not make it the only meal of the monkey.  
**Meaning:** The monkey was still feeding fat before the fruit called unya came into existence. Man had learnt to survive without the support of others.
374. Isidehe anono ikot afo adong uno.  
One should not plant economic trees on a leased farmland.  
**Meaning:** We should not abuse any opportunity given to us by other people.
375. Isidehe akpa ikood ikifono ebua, ayoho iba adifon.  
If the first call of a dog did not favour it, the second one will not.  
**Meaning:** A dog responds to the owner's call either to eat or to attack a prey. If it responds once and it finds nothing that pleases it, it may not likely respond at the second call. The proverb typically applies to a relationship which is not beneficial to one of the partners.
376. Inwang ifono se enyam k'isong.  
Farmland is not good to be sold with the crops.  
**Meaning:** We should protect the things that we cherish in life.

377. Idehe idib mkpere mkpere, edat ubok ekekara inua.  
The belly was close by but we took the hand to dominate the mouth.  
**Meaning:** This is engaging in an unprofitable venture
378. Ikidehe mkpuk k'ise mkpafere ada asong.  
If yam were in the barn, the ptero carpus would not outgrow its freshness.  
**Meaning:** Sometimes the deprivations we suffer in life cause us to ignore or gloss over our rights.
379. Isidehe eka abom awo k'ufok ebote aman nyen ke ako.  
When an adult is at home, a goat cannot deliver while it is in tethers.  
**Meaning:** An elder should be responsible and willing to offer a timely intervention during emergencies.
380. Isidehe eka ama aman ibieteke.  
Children from the same mother cannot be dissimilar to one another.  
**Meaning:** There is a strong bond among members of a given family.
381. Inwang mben usung awak awo inua.  
The road-side farm that rattles the mouth.  
**Meaning:** This refers to a conspicuous project that attracts commendations from onlookers.
382. Inuen ase anem uyo nanga adibene akpo.  
A bird maintains a sweet voice when it has not been attacked with a sling.  
**Meaning:** The daily problems we face may mar our progress in life.
383. Ibanga edem ase awot owo.  
Gossip kills a person  
**Meaning:** Gossip is like an affliction, it takes away the better half of the person affected.
384. Ikang ama asak ikot iwuo mbere anime.  
When fire burns a bush to the boundary, it phases out.  
**Meaning:** At the end of a calamity, there is peace, normalcy.

385. Idehe awo ika Bende ade anye, ade anye iben itiat nyong.  
It is not going to Bende that makes the story, it is going and coming back with a stone.  
**Meaning:** Bende is a community in Abia State and it is known for its rocky platform. People who go there are often attracted by the presence of the rocks but the distance and the terrain make it impossible for tourists to bring home the masterpiece. The proverb refers to an unaccomplished task.
386. Mkpo iba ase aben inuen aka inyang; adi nwongo wong, aye ayieyie.  
Two things attract a bird to the sea, if it does not drink the water, it bathes with it.  
**Meaning:** Human beings make their preference based on their priorities.
387. Mfin ade mfin, mkpong ade mbuk.  
Today is today; tomorrow is the story.  
**Meaning:** This is a situation of utmost uncertainty, a deadlock.
388. Mkpa aseke ada etok ebua k'iso isiyakka akop uyo ikood ete ufok.  
Death which confronts a puppy does not allow it to listen to the master's entreaties.  
**Meaning:** Our blind pursuit of material things often stops us from taking to the advice of others.
389. Nyoho nsuho ufok ase ano awo iko.  
A spare room often constitutes a problem to the owner.  
**Meaning:** Sometimes our good intention to others becomes a serious indictment.
390. Nsimaha s'unen awo akong ebote ami.  
I do not like another person's hen pecking at my goat.  
**Meaning:** Sometimes people condone ill-treatment from their superiors but when the ill-treatment comes from subordinates, it is considered demeaning.
391. Nde ubong nwuo adan idem.  
I am fluted pumpkin, I lubricate my body myself.  
**Meaning:** A person's achievements are through personal endeavours.
392. Ndongo ebua inno nkwa unen.  
I do not send the dog to steal egg.  
**Meaning:** Do not encourage an unwholesome act by another person.

393. Nte nsin ukod, idim akakpa inyang.  
Wherever I step into, a stream becomes an ocean.  
**Meaning:** Human beings are often trailed by uncertainties. Hardly do they experience an enduring peace.
394. Ntok mkpo ifono inana.  
Little things should not be out of our reach.  
**Meaning:** Significant and insignificant things contribute to human development.
395. Nsuaha se inwang aduk ano ekung, itong mbiomo ama akap isong.  
I do not envy the robust yield in the farm of a hunch-backed individual provided he has the neck to carry it.  
**Meaning:** Sometimes we expend our energy in a project that leaves little to be remembered.
396. Se awo anyie k'edia ubok usen.  
What a person has is what he eats as breakfast.  
**Meaning:** Our resources determine our sustainability.
397. Si ininge ase adodoro.  
Whatever is sweet also turns bitter.  
**Meaning:** The things that are pleasurable to humans also encompass danger
398. Ufok ama afon ekwo ntang.  
When the home is peaceful people engage in a telltale.  
**Meaning:** A conducive environment promotes creativity.
399. Unen akebo ke tongo usen emo ikidemmeke idap iditoko nkum, ke esit nkum ama isong.  
The hen said that since the day it woke up without urinating, she had overlooked such acts.  
**Meaning:** Naturally birds have no urinary tract and anything about urinating is a taboo to them. In the human society, people belong to different status – the rich and the poor. In any circumstance, we know where we belong.
400. Uyo-Uyo afid ama adong awo, ese esiak afang k'ide.

When an individual has a pressing feeling in the bowels, he makes a hasty move through the bush to dislodge it.

**Meaning:** An urgent matter requires an urgent attention.