

CONVERSATIONAL PHILOSOPHY AS A DECOLONIAL PROJECT

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Abstract

This paper seeks to establish that conversational philosophy has contributed tremendously to the growth of African Philosophy. This is evidenced in its decolonial capacities of unveiling new concepts and opening new vistas of ideas. We contend that since the colonial era, African philosophy has been inundated with western methods and categories without much differences from its frameworks and that of the west. We further contend that system building that yields new concepts and thoughts are critical to the growth of African philosophy as a discipline. We discuss the meaning, method, and tenets of conversational philosophy as espoused by Jonathan Chimakonam and endorsed by the conversational school of philosophy. We show that the decolonial project of conversational philosophy has the capacity to address the stunted growth facing African philosophy as a discipline.

Keywords: Conversationalism, Ezumazu, Benoke, Arumaruka, Decolonization.

Introduction

Every discipline has a tool for its operation. This tool in one way or the other makes the administration of such an enterprise easier to understand. And so, a tool is also an imperative and foundational element for doing any task. To embark on any task without the necessary tool is an invitation to weariness and frustration. Philosophy as a discipline operates with ease through the instrumentality of reason. Reason can be regarded as a portal for thought and a nexus between the self and other things in the world. Reason is equally perceived as an existential pillar of human beings. In critical enterprise, reason is supposedly the common index of the human mind and the living element of Philosophy. It is the basic denominator of thought, which in its presence there is a philosophy while in its absence, there is no philosophy (CHIMAKONAM 2015a, 467).

The foundation of philosophy is based purely on the pursuit of reason and the importance of reason to any philosophical tradition cannot be overemphasized. This is why Chimakonam contends that philosophical reason can help African philosophy to inquire and comprehend realities emanating from those traditions. According to him:

For any philosophical tradition to adequately secure its place in the map of world philosophy, its philosophers must employ 'philosophical reason' to reflect upon, inquire about and seek to understand the structure of various realities that manifest in their cultural environment. In the absence of philosophical reason, I (Chimakonam) describe such a tradition or whatever corpus produced by excavating certain layers as ethnographic. (CHIMAKONAM 2015a, 467)

Unfortunately, some enlightenment philosophers like immanuel Kant and Hegel excluded African philosophy and philosophers from the map of world philosophy who arrogantly denied

Africans this essential element of human hood (rationality). I. Kant (1960) was so prominent in this exclusionary exercise when he ascribed greater mental capacities to people of European descent than he did to people of African descent. African philosophers that emerged subsequently devoted their intellectual energy to countering this perverse and misleading submission. Ever since then, there has been a long wait for the framework that can offer new direction and champion this decolonial drive in African philosophy. The deconstructionists effort during the great debate have not offered this either. Ever since, there has been a big loophole in African philosophy eagerly waiting to be filled. We argue that conversational philosophy holds a brighter promise in offering this needed decolonial drive in order to promote the growth of African philosophy. This paper, therefore, shows how conversational philosophy can fill these loopholes through the canon of moderate decolonization which has been consistent in unveiling concepts and ideas in other to suit the African lived experience.

The conversational method was adopted in this work by employing the tools of textual criticism and analysis in protesting and contesting ideas for more knowledge production. To accomplish this task, this work, in the first section, discusses the meaning, methods, and tenets of conversational philosophy as espoused by Chimakonam and endorsed by the conversational society/school of philosophy. The second section looks at the canons of conversational schools to show how conversational philosophy has given contemporary African philosophy the needed focus and direction. In the third section, this work considers how conversational philosophy through the canon of moderate decolonization hastened the growth of African philosophy by creating original, innovative and rigorous concepts from an under-represented Igbo-African language to encourage robust engagements in philosophical space.

The Meaning of Conversational Philosophy

Conversation is an informal exchange of ideas or dialogue between two interlocutors (SMITH 2004, 285). It is also a formal intellectual undertaking that is driven by philosophical reasoning that is equipped with rigorous questioning of concepts and criticality. This second aspect of conversation is central to conversational philosophy. In conversational philosophy, conversation involves an “arumaristic relationship” (EGBAI & CHIMAKONAM 2019, 173), which is a wilful, creative and critical experience where two epistemic agents critically engage an idea with the intention to create new concepts and open up new vistas of thought. In such an arumaristic relationship, two epistemic agents, known as *Nwa-nju* (the enquirer) and *Nwa-nsa* (the responder), engage in a creative struggle in which *Nwa-nju* raises critical questions and issues on *Nwa-nsa*’s position and *Nwa-nsa*, in turn, reacts to those questions and issues raised (CHIMAKONAM 2017, 16).

Undergirding this arumaristic relationship is the method of Conversationalism/Conversational thinking. As a method, Conversationalism/Conversational thinking is seen as a formal procedure for assessing the arumaristic relationships of opposed variables, in which thoughts are shuffled through disjunctive and conjunctive modes to constantly recreate a fresh thesis and antithesis each time at a higher level of discourse without the expectation of synthesis (CHIMAKONAM, 2017). This kind of arumaristic relationship is somewhat different from.

the dialectic relationship proposed by Friedrich Hegel (1969). The difference is that, in a dialectic relationship, the component of thesis and anti-thesis come together to form the synthesis but in an arumaristic relationship, the struggle between, what one may call, thesis and antithesis, does not culminate in the emergence of a new position (synthesis). It, rather, encourages the improvement of both positions. To be sure, in this arumaristic arrangement, *nwa-nsa* is the party that holds and defends the contested position while the *nwa-nju* questions the viability of such a position to unravel its deficiencies and creatively fill them up. As a result, this creative struggle perpetuates the reshuffling of thesis and anti-thesis and frustrates the emergence of synthesis.

Another interesting point worth noting with regards to arumaristic relationships is that the outcome of the relationship between *nwa-nsa* and *nwa-nju* in conversational thinking is described as complementation (as seen in Innocent Asouzu's *Ibuanyidanda* philosophy) rather than synthesis (as seen in the Hegelian dialectic framework). Thesis does not arise out of the womb of synthesis; rather it is the *nwa-nsa* that re-invents it. In an arumaristic relationship, there is continuous progress in thought unlike in the dialectic relationship where you reach a compromise by contributing components towards the formation of a new order.

The thesis has a trans-generational life span in conversational relationships. It grows in sophistication as it is being re-invented. In dialectic relationships, the life span of a thesis is generational. In conversational relationships, the life span fizzles out in each generation allowing room for the emergence of another thesis to take its place. The *nwa-nsa* reinvents this during the process of contestation and protestation of ideas with *nwa-nju* that is why there is a continuous struggle in idea formulation without a synthesis.

Beyond these, there is what is called the benoke point, which is a limit to how close the opposed variables can relate. This concept is derived from a collection of Igbo words: *bere* which means 'reaching' and *n'oke* which means 'the limit or terminal point'. When the two vernaculars are lumped together we get a new concept known as 'berenoke' or 'benoke' for short, which means "reaching the limit or terminal point" (CHIMAKONAM 2017, 19). This is the point beyond which opposed variables cannot get closer. This is the major difference between conversational philosophy and Hegelian dialectics.

All these ideas are grounded by a theory of logic called Ezumezu logic, which is a logic that relays and systematizes the foundation of thought in Africa. This logic is an African culture-inspired and equally universalizable system of logic that can be applied in all relevant contexts anywhere in the world (CHIMAKONAM 2019, xiv). Within this logical system, the traditional laws of thought and truth value system, as found in western Aristotelean two-valued logic, are seen as insufficient in capturing some aspects of reality (the indeterminacy of the quantum world is a good example). Thus, apart from augmenting the three laws of thought in classical Western logic, *Ezumezu* logic proposes a third value called *ezumezu*, which emphasizes that a thing can be true and false at the same time depending on context or complementation.

Furthermore, Conversational philosophy employs the modes of deconstruction, construction/reconstruction, and critical synthesis to interrogate some of Africa's decadent social structures by sifting valuable and usable elements of tradition in constructing futurity. It also employs textual criticism, rigor, and analysis to reconstruct faulty epistemic edifices in African philosophy (CHIMAKONAM 2015a). Chimakonam (2015c) proposes conversational philosophy for a new era of African philosophers and philosophy in our contemporary age.

Critics can, of course, allege that Conversational philosophy is just a remodelled version of Socratic dialogue and Hegelian dialectics. It should be established here that Conversationism derives its uniqueness and originality from an African background and an African undeveloped notion of relationships. So it is an African-inspired and implemented method that promotes social and intercultural discourse. Beyond this, the emphasis for any conversational engagement is not the defeat of a thesis through a *reductio ad absurdum*, but the improvement of a thesis via creative struggle as shown above.

The Canons of Conversational Philosophy

The need for systematic studies in conversational philosophy necessitated the development of eight (8) canons as criteria for doing African philosophy. Chimakonam (2015c, 26-28) articulated these canons as a way of "checking perverse dialogues"¹ and ensuring standards for African philosophy. These canons aim to evaluate the "minimum requirements, mode, focus, and direction of thinking in contemporary African philosophy" (CHIMAKONAM 2015c, 26; NWEKE 2016, 61). With these standards, conversational philosophy attempts to check some confusion in a systemless African philosophy (CHIMAKONAM 2015c, 26): perverse orientation, illicit philosophizing, and the impending danger of stagnation. They are the effective intellectual tools for doing African philosophy because they are innovative, systematic, and devoid of any racial segregation or "intellectual apartheid" (NWEKE 2016, 63). These canons include the following:

¹ Perverse dialogue is attributed to Jennifer Vest, she called for certain measures that should justify a proper African philosophy and deliver it from illicit philosophizing. These perverse dialogues are some implicit concerns regarding African Philosophy's legitimacy and assumptions regarding its definition of Western philosophy. (VEST 2009, 3)

- 1). Critical Conversation (C2): stipulates that a standard work in African philosophy should be engaging. This is where the “author engages other authors/positions/philosophical traditions in a critical conversation” (CHIMAKONAM 2015c, 27). It entails that in doing African philosophy, a scholar should strive to consult, compare and contrast existing views, especially some glaring opposing views. This canon arms an African philosopher with the necessary premise to draw an informed judgment and articulate a better proposition about the reality in question (NWEKE 2016, 54-55).
- 2). Transformative indigenization (TI): stipulates that a work on non-African issues (concepts/methods that have developed in other traditions) can still be regarded as African philosophy if the authors try to indigenize them through a contextual transformation that would give them relevance in the African place. Indigenization does not mean cultural bracketing, as in ethno-philosophy, but finding a contextual relevance in African tradition (NWEKE 2016; ASOUZU 2004, 257-60).
- 3). Noetic Re-Africanization: requires that for one to be an African philosopher, he/she must be versed in African intellectual life. When a scholar is from Africa or other traditions but has a sparing knowledge of African intellectual life, he/she must undergo a measure of re-Africanization. Re-Africanization involves a re-conscientization through rigorous self-study and internalization. Re-conscientization aims to balance the non-African/African modes of thought and to recognize the relevance of both modes in the epistemic systematization of African philosophy.
- 4). Constructive modernization: stipulates that a standard text or work in African philosophy is one that marks a creative fusion of relevant modern and traditional thoughts developed in different philosophical places (African, Asian, Western, etc.), using the background logic of African ontology. This means that an African philosopher should systemically blend significant critical rigor, creative emendations, and synthesis recommended by the modernist school and the pristine African thought system.
- 5). Non-Veneration of authorities: “stipulates that any work in African philosophy, irrespective of the author, deserves a full measure of peer criticism” (CHIMAKONAM 2015c, 27). This canon is credited to Peter Bodunrin (1985, xii, xiv). The complete criticism should display to a great extent personal critical reflection, analytic evaluation, apt explanation, and creative articulation in critiquing another’s work. This will reduce unnecessary sacred-cowism in intellectual discourse.
- 6). Theoretic interrogation: is a conversational canon that stipulates that the proven channel to a systemic development of African philosophy is continuous interrogation. This kind of interrogation includes peer criticism, and critical and creative (re)construction of thoughts that are oppressive to Africans and humanity in general. The application of interrogation theory to African social structures will liberate Africa from oppressive institutions that have held her down for centuries (CHIMAKONAM 2014a, 4, 22).
- 7). Checking Perverse Dialogues² (CPD): stipulates that before a philosophical work is acknowledged as properly African, it must pass the test for ‘perverse orientation’ (CHIMAKONAM 2015c, 28). This canon is attributed to Jennifer Lisa Vest (2009, 21). She declares that not every published work that claims to be a treatise in African philosophy should be accepted as such unless the said work can pass the test of systematic African philosophy.

The nature of this test is where African philosophy should address substantive philosophical issues and, to a large extent, in fruitful conversations on issues that would seek to unveil the African life world in the light of philosophy.

8). Moderate decolonization: incorporates some parts of the colonial mode of thought that are relevant to understanding the African lived experience. Moderate decolonization is different from Kwasi Wiredu's radical decolonization of African philosophy, which encourages the use of only African concepts by African philosophy and negates the reality of cross-cultural borrowing as well as the possibility of non-African scholars doing African philosophy as an academic discipline. It stipulates that an African scholar should creatively reconstruct the standpoint of both African and non-African concepts that he/she finds wanting in relation to providing an adequate explanation to them.

Decolonization in African Philosophy.

Decolonization is a process of re-centering Africa and the search for a liberating perspective within which to understand Africans qua Africa in relationship with the rest of the world (Paschal. MUNGWINI 2016, 523-536). We can discern here that decolonization is what emboldened Africans on the need to assert their identity and regain their battered image in the face of their unfortunate maelstrom.

Most scholars do mistake decolonization for Pan-Africanism and the other way round. Pan-Africanism can be classified majorly as an African movement while decolonization is not peculiarly African. It has a wider international scope, covering most of the previously colonized regions of the world, especially those of the global south. Decolonization can be traced as far back as the 1940s as one of the aftermaths of the events of the Second World War, where it was used to designate the dismantlement of the colonial empires. E. Etieyibo (2018, 10) observes that these colonial empires were established (in Africa) and throughout the world in the 19th century, and some of these empires transcend the 14th and 15th centuries.

Some of the indelible marks of these empires in the areas where they endured especially in Africa are racialism, history of slavery, and colonialism. These factors negatively affected the way the colonized identified themselves and how they viewed their realities. The effects of colonialism were so traumatic that the realities of the colonized and their worldviews were often subject to western validation and authentication. In Africa, the West employed colonial education to de-Africanize and Europeanize Africa, thereby reducing them as strangers to their environment. Simphiwe SESANTI reiterates this assertion as he quotes Kwei ARMAH (2006, 10) as follows, "school system offered Africans an invitation into European universe. So our teachers tried to equip us to discuss snow and European flowers and cities as if we lived there while remaining silent about the tradition we had left behind at home" (2006, 10). Babs FAFUNWA describes this European mentality as a "shade of skin better than their European or American counterpart" (1967, 152).

Then after independence, it was observed that there were no real changes in the living conditions of the African population. The only glaring traits in the lives of Africans were the

fact that they were fast losing their personality and identity and, at the same time, embracing the values and European lifestyle. African nationalists and scholars realized that it is only the process of decolonization that will save Africa and Africans from this uncritical and unwholesome assimilation of the European way of life.

Decolonization assumed different dimensions during the quest for African liberations, and all of them yielded the expected outcomes in repositioning Africa. Though there are many forms of decolonization, we are going to focus on political and educational decolonization. Political decolonization is achieved when “a territory that used to be either under the full or partial political control of another country or occupied by a colonial power ‘overthrows’ this form of domination or political control” (Etieyibo 2018, 10). This usually happens when a country or nation gains independence. Indeed, most African nationalists believe strongly that political decolonization is pivotal to African development and they contend that once Africa is freed from colonial rule, she will be up for unprecedented progress. With the above mindset, Wa Thiango (1993, 17) submits that independence was about people's struggle to claim their own space, and their right to name the world for themselves, rather than be named through the color-tinted glass of the Europeans. To underscore the importance of political decolonization, Kwame Nkrumah encouraged his followers to “seek ye first the political kingdom, and all else shall be added unto you” (OGBA & OKPANACHI 2018, 13). Political decolonization is the foundation of all forms of decolonization because once political power is achieved, all other things follow.

Further, when we talk about educational decolonization in Africa we refer to the content and substance of knowledge production in African space. Educational decolonization arose from the perception that the overall character, content, and substance of much of educational theory and practice in Africa are overwhelmingly either European or Eurocentric. This means that the general educational process in Africa is overwhelmingly not African, but rather a reflection of Europe in Africa. Decolonization in education became expedient because “the norm for educational achievement and success for African children is that of Western European capitalist elitist culture, where the English language is sacralized, and the internalization of bourgeois European values is seen as the index of progress” (HIGGS, 2008). This is the undoing of our educational system in Africa today

The idea that everything colonial is good and everything African demonic made our educational policymakers miss a crucial point in their quest for developing our educational content. The point is that colonial education was not intended to develop Africa rather it was structured to undermine African values and norms because of European universalists' orientations. European educators' simply abandoned indigenous African education at a corner and were never in a hurry to encourage the local educational system. A. Ali (2011, 91) raised this sentiment, albeit bitterly, thus: “indeed, without any of the essential questions about indigenous African education and possibilities of local development being raised, the postcolonial situation continued to be dominated by the colonial curriculum, colonial languages, and colonial structuring and distribution of educational resources”. It is no longer

news that our curriculum, languages, and other educational structures are dominated by colonial resources and this can be traced to the crisis of identity we witness in our continent today. As a conscious remedy to our fast eroding indigenous languages, efforts are being made by our African scholars like Chimakonam (2016), Etieyibo (2018) to remedy this conundrum.

Hence, language is an important and undeniable aspect of every culture. To deny its importance is like denying one's shadow. It shows the worldview of people, how they comprehend, define, and taxonomize ideas about themselves, their relations, their hierarchies, their ecosystem, and their values and dangers (MASOLO 2002, 33). It is through linguistic expositions that the philosophy of a people is established. In fact, "to lose one's vernacular is to impoverish one's culture" (BUSIA 1964, 7). This shows that indigenous languages are valuable, beautiful and, above all, rewarding in concept generation and idea dissemination.

These advantages, when applied to African indigenous languages, are far from being realized because of the recurrent suppression by colonial languages. This is partly because some contemporary Africans are speaking colonial languages for prestige, invariably looking down on African languages. Unfortunately, even the colonial languages with their rich and famed vocabularies have not translated African concepts accurately to capture their original meaning. But they have, sometimes (some would say, for the most part), misrepresented and misinterpreted African concepts and meanings and termed the existing ones as 'not good enough'.

Conversational philosophy has played a significant role in the decolonization of African *episteme*. It strongly believes that it is impossible to eradicate illiteracy on the African continent without the empowerment and greater use of African languages built on African culture and its educational lessons delivered in African languages. This point is re-echoed A. Bamgbose when he observes that "indigenous languages are the most efficient means of knowledge acquisition, of circulating information and of empowerment of citizens" (2011, 29). In the next section, we will explore Conversational philosophy as a decolonial project.

Conversational Philosophy as a Decolonial Project

Conversational philosophy has, as one of its canons discussed above, adopted moderate decolonization as a viable medium to grow the stunted growth in African philosophy. As previously shown, moderate decolonization is not radical but moderate, which differentiates it from the radical form of Wiredu's conceptual decolonization. While the radical form of decolonization espouses absolute and total rejection of the framework and the resources of the former colony (see: CESAIRE 2000, 89), the moderate form of decolonization promotes partial and selective rejection of the resources of the educational contents of the former colony. In this moderate form, the educational contents are mixed with colonial frameworks and resources and indigenous or local frameworks and resources (ETIEYIBO 2018, 11). For instance, There are two dimensions to Wiredu's conceptual decolonization: negative and positive dimensions. The negative dimension is about the avoidance or crawling back "through

a critical conceptual self-awareness the unexamined assimilation in our thought of the conceptual frameworks embedded in the foreign philosophical that has had an impact on African life and thought.” With regards to the positive dimension, “decolonization involves the judicious exploitation of the resources of our indigenous conceptual schemes in our philosophical meditations on even the most technical problems of contemporary philosophy” (WIREDU 1996, 136).

Unlike Wiredu’s radical conceptual decolonization, Conversational philosophy’s moderate decolonization incorporates some parts of the colonial mode of thought that are relevant to understanding the African lived experience. Conversational philosophy’s moderate decolonization encourages the use of African concepts in African philosophy and does not negate the reality of cross-cultural borrowing as well as the possibility of non-African scholars doing African philosophy as an academic discipline. This is because “the beauty of philosophical enterprise is that anything philosophical can be philosophically criticized to open new vistas and then sustain the conversation” (CHIMAKONAM 2015b, 11–12).

In the light of the above, conversational philosophy is channelled toward decolonizing the African mind from the superimposition of western categories on the African thought system. Conversational philosophy intends to help Africans master the arts of a balance living by exorcising the stronghold of coloniality in the mind of the African child and ingrains in them the élan for reflective choices.

The lack of conversation breeds misconception and misinterpretation but a breakthrough in concept generation and dissemination will facilitate the movement of African philosophy from her place to her destined space. The above authenticate the fact that the goal of philosophy is not only logical analysis of language but a creation of new concepts and ideas to enhance even more conversation.

As a viable approach to doing African philosophy, conversational philosophy has unveiled loads of decolonial concepts most of which are framed in a native African language to address the stunted growth facing African philosophy as a discipline. The density of these new concepts

in the works of conversationalists has attracted critics from western scholars (Chimakonam did not reveal the identities of these authors) to term this ingenuity as an art of ‘parking the bus’² Justifying the density of African languages in the development of new concepts in the works of conversationalists, Chimakonam (2021, 6) explains that:

The conversational style requires its user to frame most of their concepts in African philosophy in native languages. The core ingredient of philosophy, after all, are concepts, and if we can frame the concepts of African philosophy in native African languages, we can be relieved that despite the violence of the colonial linguistic structure, our ideas can be carefully preserved in their originality.

The deliberate preservation of African ideas in their original form is a *sine qua non* because it increases robust discourse in African philosophy and saves African philosophy from the criticism of transliteration and copy-catism levelled against the discipline by her western counterparts. This is why Sousa Santos extolled this approach when he wrote:

Chimakonam’s mother tongue is the Igbo language and writes... based on the extremely painful memory and lived experience of colonialism and patriarchy... According to him, African philosophy can dare to be original and creative vis-a-vis the Aristotelian and Platonic tradition without condemning itself to the identity ghetto. African philosophy is context- and culture culture-sensitive in a way that makes it an original and creative contribution to the worldwide search for the ultimate meaning of life. (CHIMAKONAM 2019, vii-viii)

² Chimakonam disagrees with this assumption but rather contrasts parking the bus with the idea of parking the box which is used to describe a team in the game of soccer that lines up all of its players in its eighteen-yard box. He was quick to remind his readers that this tact is most often employed by a team that plans to defend its advantage so as not to concede any goal. In his essay, “What, really, is this thing called Conversational Thinking”, Chimakonam clarifies the connection between language and conversation and between conversation and other approaches that prizes language. It was at this juncture that he replied his western critics who criticized his writing style of “parking the bus” and he was resolute that he will not give in to too much analyticity where consistency and coherency of discourse holds sway (CHIMAKONAM 2021, 5).

A keen look at the works of contemporary conversational philosophers demonstrates the genius of weaving the English language with their local language to bring out the beauty and the original ideas of these concepts. Most conversationalists extract some African concepts to demonstrate their experiences and use them to handle some phenomenological challenges confronting Africa. For instance, Asouzu used his, *ibuaru*, *ikwa ogwe* and *ibuanyidanda* theories to demonstrate a metaphysical doctrine that upholds being as a missing link in a network of realities (ASOUZU, 2004). Chimakonam, (2017), uses the same approach as Asouzu to expound and expose some key African concepts in his works, like the idea of arumaristics (which we discussed earlier), from the Igbo term *arumarū-uka*. Or ‘benoke’ from the Igbo phrase *bere n’oke* – which is a crucial idea in conversational thinking (CHIMAKONAM 2017, 19). Other decolonial concepts that have been critical and viable to the growth of African philosophy are *Ezumezu* (*njikoka*, *ononetiti*, *nwaizugbe*), which is a three-value theory of logic.

Efforts at theorizing in a decolonial manner, and bringing to bear new and existing concepts, also allow for a robust interaction within the tradition of African philosophy and also in intercultural philosophy. Jennifer Vest collaborates this point by saying, “African languages ought to be studied for their epistemological insights regardless of whether similar insights can be found in Anglo-American analytic investigations of language” (2009, 19). Continuing, she advised that “African philosophers ought to engage in intercultural dialogues with Asian, Native American and African American philosophers, and no longer focus all of their attention on Western interlocutors” (2009, 19). There is, therefore, a need to develop and introduce more concepts in other core areas like ethics, epistemology, metaphysics, and some neglected areas like the scientific spheres. African philosophers should draw inspiration from the view that “there is no concept that cannot be expressed in any language provided the need to do so arises” (BAMGBOSE 2011, 4).

The need has arisen for African philosophers to develop African concepts as it will reduce the high level of misconceptions and subjugation by colonial languages. African languages have been subjugated in the past by the Europeans on the flimsy excuse that African languages are undeveloped and as a result lack effective scope and coverage (NNAJIOFOR & ENYIMBA, 2024:168) But Conversational philosophy is gradually opening up these unexplored areas and at the same time developing its concepts to suit African realities devoid of colonial distortions. Other African philosophers ought to do the same.

Conclusion

The importance of conversational philosophy to the growth of African philosophy is a fact that cannot be ignored. Conversational philosophy has shown the systematic and viable way of doing African philosophy by leading the pack in knowledge production. It has demonstrated this by its capacity to unveil new knowledge and its ability to open new vistas of ideas. Conversational philosophy is exorcising the stronghold of coloniality in African minds and equally ingraining the élan for reflective choices in them. It also decolonizes the African mind from the superimposition of western categories on African thought systems. The aim of

conversational philosophy is to help Africans master the arts of balance living and train them to rise and hold their own in the comity of cultures.

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