

Thoughts on Weekends, Visitors, and Registration

Transcript in Twi:

Interviewer: Aha, Saturday wo ye den? Se me nim sɛɛ weekday die wo be ko class, wo pon a, wo be ye homework, na weekend nso ɛ?

Young man: Aa, weekend, yeah, Saturday night sei no, w'ahu, awia ko saa no a, wo be hu sɛɛ adie nsaa ye, but adie ɛɛbe sa aa, na obiaa ho pre no, obiaa ɛɛpe sika, wo eye calls, cause ewo se wo ko krom na wo ko gye w'ani. Ye ko tena tena asi, boys boys, te sɛɛ ... eyi sei... "On the run", anaa se "Strawberry", ewo krom, anaa, you know, places bebree. Ye ko tena ho, na y'agye y'ani kakra, na y'a release stress naa ewo ye so no, na ye dea prepare for the following week.

Interviewer: Mm... na eye aa, mbrɔfo na omo ba Ghana no, eye aa wo hu omo sen? Se omo life bi aa eye aa omo ko no, ene Ghana die no ye pe anaa se wo hu se, eye aa abrɔfo no omo ba a, omo enhu so?

Young man: Abrɔfo no, omo enhu so kwraa.

Interviewer: omo enhu so ko kwan ben so?

Young man: ɛkyere sɛɛ, the way a omo ye omo ho no, omo ntaree mu kwraa mpo no, enye. Wo te ase?

Interviewer: Sɛɛ, enye sen? Eye aa na omo ho aye fi anaa?

Young man: Ebi nom ye fi, wo be hu se chalewɔte na omo hye, na omo de nenam kwan ho basabasa. Yen aa eye yen krom kwraa no yen ye, omo ba aa, na omo ye omo ho basaa... knicker aa ewo se odo tena fie no, na odo ɛɛko beebi tesɛɛ asɔredɛem kwraa no mpo, wo be hu se na odo knicker aba ɛbe wura ho. Na yen, ye culture no, senea etee no, asɔre dɛem yen fa knicker enkɔ, wo de knicker ko ho kwraa no a, ye be hu wo sɛɛ "aden? Wo kwraa wo ye nipa ben?" omo ba aa, omo fa biribiaa keke, biribiaa ohye biao, everywhere, beebi aa odo ko biao no, na wa ye ne ho basabasa, na odo nam.

Interviewer: Enti se obroni be ba Ghana na w'ako asɔre aa, anka den saa na otumi hye aa eye?

Young man: Sɛ ɔba Ghana saa no aa, ɔmo ɔɔ ɔmo aa ɔmo ba ɔɔn kyɛn ɔɔ ha, wo te ase? Sɛ anka ɔmo ba naa, te sɛ adie yi aa ekita me sei no, traditional... yɛ culture mu no, ahɛnfo no... royal family no... wo te ase? Sɛ anka ɔmo ba sei no a, me sei na ɔɔba me nkyɛn aa, mɛ ɔɔ akɔ pɛ eebi aa yɛ local nneɛma no bi, entaadeɛ no bi, tie and dye ne kente ne saa nneɛma no (Interviewer: ɛne Woodin na ɔmo apam no fine)... wo te ase? ɔmo apam, na ɔmo ahyɛ, na ɔmo nso ɔmo elooko... te sɛɛ ɛyɛ saa no aa, owura asɔre dem hɔ aa, wo be hu sɛ obiaa ani agye, na yɛ ɔɔ yɛn sɛm, because akɔ yɛ sɛɛ opɛ yɛn so yɛ culture no. ɔmo ba ha na ɔmo hyehyɛ ɔmo knickers no aa, ase ɔmo emmu yɛn, wo te ase? ɛhɛɛ, ɔmo hu yɛn biribi... because, ɔmo aa na ɔmo yɛɛ ntaadeɛ no ɛde ɛbaa ha sei, but ɔmo ɛba aa, ɔmo mpo, ɔmo nhyɛ ntaadeɛ no ɛmma yɛn hu sɛɛ ɔmo na ɔmo yɛ. Yɛn na yɛ hyɛ, ɛkyɛrɛ won. ɛhɛɛ.

Interviewer: Wo yɛ ɔbɛɛma aa wo ɔɔ Ghana yi, na wo ɔɔ University of Ghana, sɛ obroni bi bɛ ba na sɛ w'ani gye ne ho aa, wo bɛ date no anaa? Anaa sɛ ofiri abrokyi no nti, wo ndate no?

Young man: Question wei deɛ eehu oo, but, wo nim biribi? Ni nyinaa bɛ dependi on nea me ɔɔ ma no no. Se feeling no aa ɛɔɔ me mu na me ɔɔ ma no no... se me hwɛ na se ɔbɛ yɛ okay ama me, na ɔno nso me ne no kasa na me hwɛ na me nso mɛ yɛ okay ama no a, I wouldn't mind sɛ me yɛ Ghanani nti, ɛɔɔ sɛ me fa me krom ɔbaa anaa sɛ den - no. I will go in for her - wo te ase? Me ne no bɛ yɛ one or two... eebi kwraa, me tumi atwe no ama ɔno aba Ghana ha sei kwraa... wo te ase? ɛbɛ ma m'ani agye paa.

Interviewer: Enti ɛnɛ sei, yɛ se ɛyɛ mo first day of school, usually sɛ mo ɛsai ebie skuul aa, ɛden na ɛyɛ aa mo yɛ? Ma te sɛ mo no, registration no, mo de sɛ one week oo sɛ one month na mo de yɛ.

Young man: Ebi ɔɔ hɔ kwraa two weeks.

Interviewer: Ei, ɛno die sɛ ɛwa oo, efiri sɛɛ abrokyi die twenty seconds.

Young man: Sɛ mo no, computer ne ho nneɛma no, mo de mo nsa bobɔ bobɔ nneɛma ne so aa, na biribiaa ewura mu. Na mo no ɛɔɔ sɛɛ, sɛ wo yɛ four courses aa, ɛwo sɛ wo ɔɔ department wei, ɛno nso wo bɛ nanti akɔ ekirikyiri, na w'akɔ yɛ registration ɔɔ hɔ. Wo ɔɔ ɛhɔ ɛnso aa, wo ɔɔ di queue mu, wo te ase, ansa na ɛbɛ du. ɛbɛ duru wo turn no kwraa mpo, na adie asa. Enti ɛsɛ sɛ wo use the following day, na wo de yɛ another course, na the fourth day no nso, wa yɛ another course, saa... ansaa na wo bɛ tumi awie. Wo wie nso aa, w'akɔ departmental head hɔ, na w'a sign nneɛma bi ama wo, enti yɛ registration paa die, in fact ɛyɛ den, ɛyɛ den paa. ɛma yɛn brɛ.

English Translation:

Interviewer: Aha, what do you do on Saturdays? I know that on weekdays you go to classes, and afterward, you probably do your homework, but what about the weekends?

Young man: Ah, weekends. Yeah, on Saturday nights after the sun has been beating down on us all day – even when it's not yet nightfall -- when the sun is about to set, everyone is restless, looking for money, making calls, because we want to go out on the town and enjoy ourselves. We guys go out to places in town like "On The Run," or "Strawberry," or, you know, different places. We hang out and enjoy ourselves, let off steam and get ready for the coming week.

Interviewer: Hmm... well, what do you think of the white people who come to Ghana, the foreigners? Do you think that the way they behave when they are here is compatible with the Ghanaian way of life, or do you think that when they come here, their lifestyle is very different?

Young man: White people? Their lifestyle is completely different!

Interviewer: Different in what way?

Young man: I mean, the way they conduct themselves, even in terms of clothing, is no good at all. Do you understand?

Interviewer: Well, how is their lifestyle not good? Are they unkempt or what?

Young man: Well, some of them are untidy, you see the flipflops they wear that they walk around town in. Even we, whose country this is, we don't do that, but when they come here, they dress any way they like . . . in shorts they should only be wearing at home. You see them even going to church in these shorts. As for us, our culture is such that we don't wear shorts to church, and when someone does, people are like, "Why? What kind of person are you?" When they come, they bring everything, anyhow. They wear whatever they bring anywhere they go. They're always walking around messy and nonchalant.

Interviewer: So if a white person were to come to Ghana and go to church, what would you tell them to wear that would be more appropriate?

Young man: When they come to Ghana, they usually have specific people that they come to visit, you understand? When they come . . . like this thing that I have in my hand, traditional . . . In our culture, the kings . . . the royal family . . . do you understand? When they come – for instance, if they visit me, I will get them some of this local clothing, like tie dye or *kente* or other things [Interviewer interjects: “Or well-tailored woolen fabrics?”]. Do you understand? They’ll have these tailored clothes and wear them, so that they’ll also look . . . when that happens and they go to church, you’ll see that everyone will be happy, and clap, because it’s as if they also like our culture. When they come and wear shorts, it’s as if they don’t respect us, do you understand? Aha, they see us as if . . . because, they themselves made the clothing to bring here, but when they come, they don’t wear the clothes in any way that indicates that they made it. We are the ones who wear it, and show it off to them. Aha.

Interviewer: You are a man in Ghana, and you are at the University of Ghana. If a white woman were to come there, and you liked her, would you date her? Or would you not do it just because she was white and a foreigner?

Young man: That question is really hard, but you know what? It would all depend on what I felt for her. If what I felt for her . . . if I thought about it and saw that she would be okay for me, and talked to her and saw that I would be okay for her, I wouldn’t think that I was Ghanaian and so had to date my own fellow countrywomen – no. I would go out with her, do you understand? We would do one or two things together . . . maybe I would even be able to convince her to stay in Ghana permanently, do you understand? It would make me very happy.

Interviewer: So, today, it’s your first day of school. Usually when you start school, what do you do? I’ve heard that for you, registration for classes takes a week or even a month.

Young man: Sometimes as much as two weeks.

Interviewer: Ei, that’s a pretty long time, because abroad, it only takes about twenty seconds.

Young man: Well, as for you, you use computers and such things, and you type in the information. For us, when you want to take four courses, you have to go to this department, and for that you have to walk really far, and register there. When you go there, you’ll be part of a long line, you understand, before it’s your turn. By the time it gets to be your turn, the sun will already have set. And so you have to take the following day to register for another course, and the fourth day you register for another course, and so on . . . until you are

finally done. And even when you're done, you go to the department head, who then has to sign something for you, so registration, in fact, is very difficult. We suffer through it.

About CultureTalk: CultureTalk is produced by the Five College Center for the Study of World Languages and housed on the LangMedia Website. The project provides students of language and culture with samples of people talking about their lives in the languages they use everyday. The participants in CultureTalk interviews and discussions are of many different ages and walks of life. They are free to express themselves as they wish. The ideas and opinions presented here are those of the participants. Inclusion in CultureTalk does not represent endorsement of these ideas or opinions by the Five College Center for the Study of World Languages, Five Colleges, Incorporated., or any of its member institutions: Amherst College, Hampshire College, Mount Holyoke College, Smith College and the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

© 2003-2008 Five College Center for the Study of World Languages and Five Colleges, Incorporated.