Socio-Pragmatic Features of Borana Proverbs

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Abstract. The richness in proverbs in Borana language is enormous. Borana language has set principles that are endowed and reinforced by different proverbs. Moreover, proverbial texts have cultural implications and are influenced by present social circumstances. However, little has been mentioned about Borana proverbs aesthetic background and the situations in which they are performed. Moreover, proverbs communicate in an obscure way and have comprehension difficulties since they are structurally complex, couched in paradigmatic forms and embody truisms representing thought of people. This paper was therefore set to analyze the socio-pragmatic features of Borana proverbs. The objectives of the study were to; describe the pragmatic meaning and function of Borana proverbs and to determine how Borana culture is reflected and maintained in the linguistic structure of Borana proverbs. The study applied the relevance theory of pragmatics. The study employed a descriptive research design. The target population was the Borana speakers in Garbartulla Sub County. A sample size of 50 participants was sampled using purposive sampling and a corpus of 100 proverbs. The methods of collecting data were interview schedule and focus group discussions. Data analysis was done through qualitative analysis. Thematic analysis was used to analyze Borana proverbs in terms functions and meanings. The findings also show that the meanings of proverbs are context dependent. The study illustrates how ethnographically evaluative themes can be encoded in proverb form.

Key words: Borana language, pragmatics, Pragmatic meaning and functions, cultural values

Introduction

The Borana people are among the Oromo group (Baxter, 1954; Legesse, 1963) who speak the Borana language. The Borana people live in the Borena Zone of the Oromia Region of Ethiopia and the former Northern Frontier District (now northern Kenya) of Northern Kenya (Baxter, 1954). The Borana are involved in cattle pastoralism. In ethnographic studies, Borana people are known for practicing their generation system, known as Gadaa (Baxter 1954; Haberland, 1963; Legesse, 1963; Knutsson, 1967). The heartland of Borana People is Ethiopia and more specifically in Moyale, Arero and Tertelle. The word Borana refers to the people or the language of the people. The Borana people migrated from Horn of Africa and entered Northern Kenya during the 16th century and later they spread to the Eastern Kenya thus they are said to belong to the Eastern Cushitic linguistic. The Borana people in Kenya live either in Marsabit or in Waso. In these areas, the Borana traditions have been strongly maintained and cultural practices in spite of introduction of formal education and Islamic faith.

The Borana language is laced with use proverbs in the sense that a speech without a proverb is considered as "stew without salt" just like Igbo in Nigerian consider "Proverbs as the palm oil with which words are eaten" or without proverbs a language would be a skeleton without flesh (Finnegan, 1970). The elders particularly use proverbs as a means of cultural transmission. Abraham (1964, p.6) defines proverbs as the aphoristic saying enjoying traditionally handed down currency...having protean powers of interpretation". Abraham

further observes that the protean powers of interpretation may enjoy a certain universality of application, but essentially proverbs reveal the culture in which they exist. Finnegan (1970) observes that Proverbs in many African cultures are a means of expressing abstract ideas through imagery and allusive phraseology. However, some research shows that proverbs may reveal only a particular section of a given society (Kerschen, 1998). Language and culture are intricate. Heath (2003) portends that language is said to be culturally transmitted and proverbs is one of the means through which the cultural background of a group of people could be known. Proverbs are part and parcel of forklore in linguistic cultures.

Canalleda (2001) views proverbs as a conceptual universal phenomenon with similar mental mechanism in all languages. Thus, proverbs are a conceptual universal phenomenon, with high communicative and instructive power. Universally, all of the speakers around the world use the same cognitive mechanisms in order to produce, understand and transmit proverbs. Proverbs are means of reflecting thought and conceptualization, grounded in sensory perception, embodied experiences and the external world. Thus, they are products of human experiences and mostly culture specific (Abraham, 1964; Obiechina, 1975) since they come from the depth of tradition, reflecting intellect and wisdom of people. In fact, in Africa proverbs are viewed by elders as wise sayings (Nwoga, 1976). In terms of structure, proverbs are concise, have formulaic language, often known by heart and loaded with philosophical meaning that is used instantly as effective rhetoric in oral and written communication (Mieder, 2004). Proverbs are passed from one generation to another (Hrisztova-Gotthardt & Varga, 2014). Proverbs are a model of compressed or forceful language and they are normally expressed in striking languages that make remarks about human experience.

There are various studies on proverbs. The issue of politeness in proverbs has been analyzed in Igbo and Akan languages (Nwoye 1991; Obeng, 1996) within the framework of conversational analysis. Some studies show an interconnection between proverbs, thought and behavior (Brigs, 1985; Odebunmi, 2008). Lomotey (2019) studies proverbs by drawing insights from the speech act theory by Austin (1965). Lomotey show that proverbs play the illocutionary acts such as assertive, representatives, directives, commissives, expressives, and/or declaratives, and enable the sustenance of gender violence. Agyekum (2021) using the folkloric approach in data collection investigates the role of politeness and indirection in music by applying Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory of politeness. Dzahene-Quarshie and Omari (2021) on the other hand focuses on a comparative study of proverbs in Akhan and Swahili languages to establish how gender is portrayed within the framework of intertextuality. Their study reveals that Akhan and Kiswahili language express similar gender ideologies. However, proverbs are understood in relation to a background of assumptions and values, so they are primarily a social phenomenon. The current study analyzed proverbs within the cultural context of Borana people since proverbs are bound to a given culture (Obiechina, 1975). The study was pegged on the fact that context is essential for their correct interpretation and that proverbs are learned through social interaction and for social purposes.

This study investigated the Borana proverbs from a pragmatic aspect. Kidane (2002) also gave an overview of the role of Borana proverbs in conflict management through his focus on folk tales. The study is a linguistic study from the pragmatics perspective. Shongolo and Schlee (2007) thoroughly discuss Borana proverbs in their cultural context. Their study however does not show the connection between language and culture in proverbs. Gonfa (2008) focuses on different Oromo proverbs and sayings from a gender point of view. The current study focused on the pragmatic aspects of Borana proverbs. The focus was on human proverbs. The above studies do not mention the aesthetic background of Borana proverbs. However, all proverbial texts are cultural bound. Thus, the current study explored the pragmatics aspects of Borana proverbs with close relation to the context in which they occur hence filling the existing gap.

This research is therefore saddled with two general quests:

   i. To describe the pragmatic meaning and function of Borana proverbs.
  ii. To investigate how Borana culture is reflected and maintained in the linguistic structure of Borana proverbs.

The study deals with the theme of proverbs, pragmatics and culture, thus, the study makes some fundamental contribution to the study of language, society, and culture. The study is beneficial to researchers, scholars, students, and members of the general public who wish to explore the interface between language and culture and in pragmatic studies. The study investigates on the nature, functions and use of Borana proverbs. Hence, the research provides insights to researchers in the world on the cultural understandings and context of Borana people. The study also provides data for comparison with other Cushitic languages which helps in making general conclusions and better understanding of Proverbs. Therefore, the analysis of Borana proverbs in a pragmatic perspective is of great importance to other researchers in understanding of the rich and diverse culture and more particularly the Borana culture. The study explores contexts which influence how the meaning of Borana proverbs is interpreted. Therefore, the knowledge gathered from this study benefits Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) in areas of curriculum development. Institutions of learning also benefit from information from the study because the genre of proverbs is incorporated in academic curriculum at various levels of learning. Moreover, in Kenya, the language policy for education stipulates that MT (Mother Tongue) shall be used as a MOI (Medium of Instruction) in primary schools up to Grade Three (Kembo & Ogechi, 2006). The findings of this study are useful to teachers and learners in schools and colleges where pragmatic aspects as riddles, metaphors and proverbs are taught and analyzed. Therefore, a study on Borana proverbs informs on language policy making and provides a good resource especially on the syllabus of Borana language.

Pragmatics

The term pragmatics was first coined in the 1930s by a philosopher named C.W. Morris in the 1970s. Morris (1938) defined pragmatics as "the field related to the relations of signs to the interpreters, whereas semantics deals with the relations of signs to the objects". Morris considered the term pragmatics in a broad sense to refer to "the study of the relation of signs to interpreters" (Morris, 1938, p. 6). Pragmatics studies the factors that govern our choice of language in social interaction and the effects of our choice on the other (Cystal, 1985). Leech (1983) states that pragmatics is central to the study of communication which is a crucial factor in social organization. Levinson (1983) on the other hand defines pragmatics as the study of the ability of language users to pair sentences with contexts in which they would be appropriate. That is the practical aspects of human action and thought and the study of the use of linguistic signs, words and sentences, in actual situations.

The focus of the current paper is on pragmatic function and meaning and the cultural values. Pragmatic function is the meaning a speaker wishes to convey to the person they are speaking to (the addressee). In simple terms, pragmatics outlines the study of meaning in the interactional context. Pragmatic meaning looks beyond the literal meaning of an utterance and considers how meaning is constructed as well as focusing on implied meanings. According to Thomas (1995) pragmatics considers: the negotiation of meaning between speaker and listener, the context of the utterance, the meaning potential of an utterance. For instance, proverbs have communicative purposes hence need pragmatic reasoning in order to understand them. That is, proverbs are used with a certain communicative aim that transcends their linguistic form and meaning. Proverbs also reflect an implicit typology of patterns of reasoning or argument. Grundy (1995) states that pragmatics has to do with the distinction between what a speakers' word (literally) means and what the speaker might mean by his words. Yule (1996) affirms that pragmatics is concerned with study of meaning as communicated by a speaker (or writer) and

interpreted between a listener (and a reader). Pragmatics is the study of specific types of meaning, like "speaker meaning", "contextual meaning" (Yule, 1996, p.3), "meaning in use", and "meaning in context" (Thomas, 1995, p.1). The study of pragmatics therefore focuses on language and context. Mey (2001) on the other hand maintains that pragmatics studies the use of human communication as determined by the conditions of society. She however observes that context is "a dynamic, not a static concept: it is to be understood as the continually changing surroundings, in the widest sense, that enable the participants in the communicative process to interact, and in which the linguistic expressions of their interaction become intelligible". Belz (2002) advocates that language users should use language learned correctly in different contexts. Thus, comprehending the language in communication depends on the ability to interpret meaning in context. Pragmatic meaning can be viewed from four different contexts, such as physical context, linguistic context, social context and epistemic context.

Relevance Theory

Relevance theory is a framework for understanding utterance interpretation that was proposed by Dan Sperber and Deirdre Wilson (1986/1985, 1995). This theory is used within cognitive linguistics and Pragmatics. Thus, it offers a pragmatic cognitive view on the interpretation of utterances. The relevance theory draw on Grice's (1975) central insight about communication as an inferential process that requires the attribution of speaker intentions, in their formulation of relevance theory. Relevance theory relies on two principles, the Cognitive Principle of Relevance and the Communicative Principle of Relevance.

The Cognitive Principle of Relevance points to the cognitive perspective of the interpretation of utterances. The theory is grounded on the assumption that our minds have evolved in the direction of increasing efficiency and are now set up so that they tend automatically to maximize relevance. According to Moreno (2007) the relevance theory focuses on human communication and is grounded in a view of human cognition that the human mind has evolved in the direction of increasing efficiency. Thus, human cognition tends to be geared to the maximization of relevance and that it is guided by an innate property that searches to interpret utterances with little processing efforts but with the most positive cognitive effects. Relevance is defined as a potential property of all types of input to cognitive processes, and may be assessed in terms of the amount of effort (of perception, memory and inference) it takes to process the input, and the positive cognitive effects the individual may derive from it (where a 'positive cognitive effect' is described as a 'worthwhile difference to the individual's representation of the world', and may include strengthening or elimination of existing assumptions, derivation of contextual implications. Other things being equal, the more cognitive effects an input yields to an individual and the less effort it takes to process it, the higher the degree of relevance of that input to that individual at that time. In summary, the cognitive effects modify existing knowledge and beliefs through three stages; they contradict and eliminate previous assumptions, strengthen existing ones, and by so doing they build new knowledge from existing assumptions. Consequently, the Cognitive Principles of Relevance technically is a device that balances the outcome of cognitive effects and processing effort.

The second principle of relevance theory is the communicative principle in relevance theory. Sperber and Wilson (1986/1995) draw on Grice's central insight about communication as an inferential process that requires the attribution of speaker intentions, in their formulation of relevance theory. According to this approach inferential communication, or ostensive-inferential communication, involves two layers of intention: (i) an informative intention, which is the intention to inform an audience of something; and (ii) a communicative intention, which is the intention to inform an audience of one's informative intention (Wilson & Sperber, 2004: 611). Thus, communication is understood basically as ostensive communication. Ostensive stimuli (an utterance, a gesture, a thought etc.) provoke the expectation that those stimuli are

optimally relevant according to the innate property of maximization of relevance and thus the stimuli attract the audience attention. An informative is the intention to inform an audience of something (to communicate certain content). Thus, communication is successful if the informative intention of the speaker has been encoded and the audience has inferred the meaning of the message and has developed positive effects with it.

The informative intention and communicative intention of a speaker's utterance is guided by the relevance-theoretic-comprehension heuristic searching for the most cost-effective interpretation of the ostensive stimuli (Wilson & Sperber, 2004: 613):

1. Follow a path of least effort in computing cognitive effects: Test interpretive hypotheses (disambiguation, reference resolutions, implicatures, etc.) in order of accessibility…
2. Stop when your expectations of relevance are satisfied.

In this way, each information should be "relevant" to their addressees. A relevant utterance in this technical sense is one from which many conclusions can be drawn at a low processing cost for the addressee. In other words, the communicator has to use an ostensive stimulus, that is, a stimulus "designed to attract an audience's attention and focus it on the communicator's meaning", which provides evidence that she intends the audience to come to a certain conclusion. The overall task inferring the speaker's meaning may be broken down into a variety of pragmatic subtasks. There may be implicatures to identify, illocutionary indeterminacies to resolve, metaphors and ironies to interpret. All these require an appropriate set of contextual assumptions, which the hearer must apply. The communicative principle of relevance suggests a practical procedure for performing these subtasks and constructing a hypothesis about the speaker's meaning. The researcher will apply the two principles of relevance theory in the interpretations of proverbs with an aim of describing the pragmatic meaning and functions of Borana proverbs.

Research Methodology

Research Design

The study used descriptive research design. Descriptive research design is a systematic subjective approach used to describe life experiences and give them meaning (Kothari, 2004; Creswell; 2012). It entails describing what the data shows and focuses on the present condition (Calmorin, 2007). Descriptive analysis entails the use of raw data that is easy to comprehend, explain, rearrange, organize, and manipulated data to produce descriptive information. The study specifically used ethnography as a method of qualitative study. Ethnography studies proverbs within a given cultural setting. Thus, the study of proverbs was done within the Borana culture that has produced them. The researchers therefore have identified, described and explained the pragmatic meaning and functions of proverbs within the Borana culture.

Participants

The respondents of the study were 50 native speakers of Borana language who were purposively selected in Garbatula sub-county; Isiolo county. This number was enough to give the interviewers the necessary information required for the study. This was in line with Ritchie, Lewis and Elam (2003) who suggest that qualitatively inclined samples should "lie under 50" (p. 84). Moreover, Creswell (2012) states that one can have 20-30 sample size in a qualitative study while Bertaux (1981) suggests fifteen as the smallest acceptable sample. The ages of the participants ranged from 30-80. Ages 60 to 80 were chosen through snowballing sampling. Snowballing was used in the research in situations where the participants (mostly of old age) are either hard to approach or ineligible. This age was important to the study because of the knowledge they had about Borana culture.

Materials and Procedures

The ethnographic study was based on material taped from interviews and focused group discussions. Both participants had experience in Borana language and culture and were versed with the use of proverbs in Borana language. The study also relies on ethnographic literature on Borana language and culture (Bartel, 1983; Cossins, 1983). The researchers elicited proverbs from participants by creating the relevant speech contexts. The researchers collected a corpus of 100 proverbs that were analyzed and draw conclusions from them. The study upheld the ethics of research basing on the guidelines of Mouton (2001: 238, 248). The research was conducted with honesty and integrity. The works of other scholars have been acknowledged accordingly so as to avoid plagiarism. Accountability to those who were interviewed has also been kept. The researcher appreciated a right to privacy including the right to refuse to participate in the interviews. Personal identities of participants were also concealed and only summarized or anonymous quotations were published in the analysis**.**

Data Analysis

Qualitative data analysis methods were used in this paper. The data collected was analyzed through thematic analysis. The researcher grouped proverbs in terms of their pragmatic meanings and functions. Data from interviews and focus groups was clustered and categorized in different themes. The relationship between culture and Borana proverbs was also described.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Pragmatic Meanings and Functions of Borana Proverbs

In close relation to the relevance theory pragmatic function is the meaning a speaker wishes to convey to the person they are speaking to (the addressee). More so, human language is important because of the meanings they convey. Without language, human being cannot interact with one another. Therefore, human being must have language for their communication to convey meanings. In pragmatics the meaning closely relates to the interactional context since the meaning of a proverb is beyond the literal meaning of an utterance. According to (Palmer, 1981) meaning of proverbs is their communicative value by virtue of what psychological or social properties of what the linguistic items within the proverb imply. In line with Palmer's thoughts the data collected through interviews and focus groups reflects the following types of pragmatic meaning; explanatory meaning, psychological meaning, and social meaning. Thus, the pragmatic meaning focuses on the implied meaning. This section therefore focuses on the implicit meanings and functions of Borana proverbs in terms of: explanatory meaning, psychological meaning and social meaning.

Explanatory Meaning and Didactic Function of Borana Proverbs

Explanatory meaning of Proverbs or phrases entails proverbs which carry wise words in Borana language. Borana proverbs have a didactic function and they play an important role in human communication. These proverbs aim at teaching subtle lessons of smooth coexistence to people in the society. First, proverbs are considered to be wise sayings that are used to teach and give people advice. They are used to encourage good manners that promote peace. Didactic proverbs warn people to avoid harmful practices, to shirk indolence and embrace diligence. Such proverbs can be semantically interpreted from the pragmatic meaning with a close relation to connotative meaning. Leech (1981) states that connotative meaning associates with the linguistics expression one uses or hears and which is concerned with the real world experiences. Moreover, connotative meaning is peripheral and varies according to culture, historical periods and experience of the individual. Connotative meaning is also indeterminate and open ended for it depends upon the knowledge and beliefs of the speakers and may belong to any

characteristics of the referent, real or imaginary as identifies by the speaker. The data below presents proverbs with explanatory meaning:

Proverb 1*: Itti allatin nyatu wahi ingartu; gurri allatin nyatu wahi ind'agau*
Gloss: An eye that the vultures peck at does not see; an eye that vultures peck at does not hear.
Pragmatic Meaning: This proverb is used to warn people of danger of not listening to a wise advice.
Pragmatic function: It is used in a situation where a person refuses to adhere to appropriate counsel but later faces negative consequences.

Proverb 2*: Obsan qalomani*
Gloss: Patience leads to an honorable position.
Pragmatic meaning: It encourages or motivates a person who is in a problem to continue being optimistic.
Pragmatic function: It is used to motivate a person who is in a problem to continue being optimistic.

Proverb 3: *Warridua dibbe ind'agatu*
Gloss: People who are on the verge of death do not hear the drum beat.
Pragmatic meaning: It warns people of the danger of not listening to wise advice
Pragmatic function: It is used in a situation of people who are found of ignoring wise advice from elders.

Proverb 4: *D'amala inhorani faro male indhegani*
Gloss: *Optimism leads to riches and pessimism leads* to poverty.
Pragmatic meaning: It encourages positive thinking
Pragmatic function: It is used when one wants to exemplify the reward of optimism.

Proverb 1 to 4 above illustrates explanatory meaning of proverbs. Proverb 1 to 4 aim at advising and educating the hearer on what they may face if they would do something. Proverbs 1 to 4 therefore play a didactic function of language that aims at teaching wisdom and sagacity to the hearer in a given context in a more polite way. More so proverb 1 to 4 reflects role of proverbs in language and communications specifically the wisdom they provide in the society. Therefore, Borana proverbs are used as a means of personal interaction. They communicate directly to readers offering warning, suggestions, summary and comments, orders and prohibitions and some scolds. Parents are therefore alerted that the best time to inculcate good social habits in a child is when he/she is young.

Psychological Meaning and Functions of Borana Proverbs

Pragmatic meaning of proverbs can also be explained in terms of psychological meaning**.** Psychological meaning is the meaning of a sentence in which it denotes the psychological quality of someone. The data collected also reflected proverbs that denote the psychological qualities of someone as shown below:

Proverb 5: *Huqon darba alati, muyon dua dirsa alati*
Gloss: The weak cow will blame whoever pushes it for its fall; the weak woman will blame her husband's death for her downfall.
Pragmatic meaning: To downplay excuses of lazy people.
Pragmatic function: It is used in shaming lazy people who always blame others for their failure.

Proverb 6: *Gowa man it naaqi, qaro fuulit debisi*
Gloss: Lead a fool into the house but just show the path to the wise
Pragmatic meaning: Describes the qualities of a foolish person in the society.
Pragmatic function: It is used in a context where you want to show a fool can't understand from a given hint but a wise person could connect very fast.

Proverb 7: *Qaro nafi illa*
Gloss: The body of a wise man has eyes.
Pragmatic meaning: It describes the qualities of a wise man.
Pragmatic function: It is used in a context where you want to emphasize on how a wise person behaves because he/she is always cautious.

Proverb 5 to 7 describes the qualities of someone. Proverb 5 *Huqon darba alati, muyon dua dirsa alati (*The weak cow will blame whoever pushes it for its fall; the weak woman will blame her husband's death for her downfall) describes the qualities of a lazy person in terms of a weak cow and weak woman. The connotative meaning of the word cow does not mean the hearer is a cow but may behave like a weak cow or woman. This proverb is thus used to discourage lazy people of the vice and stop them from blaming others of their failures. Proverb 6 on the other hand describes the qualities of a fool *Gowa man it naaqi, qaro fuulit debisi (*Lead a fool into the house but just show the path to the wise). This proverb is mocking the foolish in the society especially for being short sighted. Finally proverb 7 Qaro *nafi illa (*The body of a wise man has eyes) describes the qualities of a wise person as a fore sighted person and who is always cautious. The proverb describes a wise person as cautious, watchful and a vigilant person. Proverb 6 and 7 show that the Borana society encourages people to be foresighted. The proverbs encourage the virtues of the society.

Social Meaning and Functions of Borana Proverbs
The third type of Pragmatic meaning of proverbs is social meaning**.** Social meaning is a word or a sequence of words signifying the social status of someone which is different from its actual meaning or different from the connotative-referential meaning. Social meaning reflects the social context of a word. In this case, the meaning of a word is related to the situation in which an utterance was used. A meaning of a word reflected the social circumstances of the use of a linguistic expression. For example, some words may inform us about the regional and social background of the speaker. In the same way, some stylistic usages let us know something of the social relationship between the speaker and the hearer.

Proverb 8: *Idjiru idi inyatani*
Gloss: While relatives exist, one cannot eat the Sodom apple.
Pragmatic meaning*:* Importance of family relations.
Pragmatic functions: It is used in a context of telling a person that you cannot get a problem when you have family or relatives

Proverb 9: *Hiyes Aad'daltet jiba*
Gloss: A poor man is detested by his own mother
Pragmatic meaning*:* Reveals how society upholds social status.
Pragmatic function: It is directed to poor people that they don't have anybody for support.

Proverb 10: *Warri Abba daab kessuma inteesisu*
Gloss: A house hold in which the owner is kept standing has no room for the guest to sit.

Pragmatic meaning*:* Warning people against disrespecting the head of a family or an elder.
Pragmatic function: It is used in a step where a family does not respect their own person hence such people do not have room for outsiders.

Proverb 11: *Lon ado na inhijemne abbo nat yama jeal'ani*
Gloss: The cow requested to see the owner before being killed.
Pragmatic meaning: The proverb emphasizes on importance of ownership.
Pragmatic function: It is used to advise people who do not take ownership seriously because unlike human beings, cows take ownership as significant.

Proverb 9 *Hiyes Aad'daltet jiba* (A poor man is detested by his own mother) reveals how society upholds social status and it's directed to poor people that don't have anybody for support. Proverb 9 addresses the plight of the poor in the society. The poor man in the society is described as having any support from even his/her close relative such as the mother. Proverb 10 *Warri Abba daab kessuma inteesisu* (A house hold in which the owner is kept standing has no room for the guest to sit. on the other hand). This proverb means that we should give respect to the elders of the family. In the Borana culture respect to the elders is paramount and if anyone has to succeed in future they must respect the head of the families and elders. Proverb 11 *Lon ado na inhijemne abbo nat yama jeal'ani* (The cow requested to see the owner before being killed) emphasizes on importance of ownership and is used to advise people who do not take ownership seriously because unlike human beings, cows take ownership as significant.

Proverb 1 to 11 provides the three aspects of pragmatic meaning of the proverbs which are addressed to the hearers covering explanatory, psychological and social meaning. The hearers are expected to do or understand what the speaker means within a given context.

How Borana Culture is Reflected in Borana Proverbs

According to Kramsch (1998) language is a central aspect of culture. Language in other words expresses and represents culture. Language is used to reveal cultural practices, knowledge and attitudes, together with beliefs and emotions which are basic forms of culture. Proverbs is one mean through which culture is reflected since they are culturally built. The data collected first revealed the Borana beliefs about God, death and fate as shown in proverb 12 and 13 below:

Proverb 12: *Nam duu, dubbi indone*
Gloss: A man dies, but his words live forever.
Pragmatic meaning*:* showing significance of leaving behind a legacy in one's life
Pragmatic function: It is used in a context where a person dies but leaves behind something that everybody needs to copy.

Proverb 12 above shows belief in life after death and proverb 13 below shows belief in fate as given below:

Proverb 13: *Gani bir d'abran jiha, gani itdemani dukana.*
Gloss: The last years are in the moonlight, the years to come are in the darkness.
Pragmatic meaning: It religiously shows that one's fate is unknown
Pragmatic function: It is used when you advise people that tomorrow is not granted as yesterday was already gone and it's content was known. So choose your direction wisely.

Proverb 14 is metaphoral as it describes God as truth while proverb 15 shows him as the provider:

Proverb 14: *D'uga waeli Waaqa*
Gloss: God is the companion of truth.
Pragmatic meaning: Virtue of truth
Pragmatic function: It is used in a context where people do not believe what you are saying but something coincidentally happens and revealed that you are actually telling the truth

Proverb 15: *Dukubi iyeesa, mada biriensa*
Gloss: A poor man's ailment is like a wild animal's wound.
Pragmatic meaning*:* God is the only assistance for poor people
Pragmatic function: It is used in motivating poor people that help comes from God.

The data collected shows that Proverbs are a reflection of Borana culture. The findings are in line with Mieder (2004) who states that proverbs carry the national philosophy of a given society. The proverbs provide wisdom on abstract ideas such death and fate (Proverb 12 and 13). The Borana people also believe that God is truth (proverb 14) the provider of the poor (Proverb 15). The proverbs above shows how the Borana. The proverbs collected show that proverbs are a reflection of cultural values of Borana society by condemning vices such as laziness, selfishness, hypocrisy and betrayal as shown in proverb 16 to 20 below:

Proverb 16: *Dubbi qamna, hujji gamnat irjira*
Gloss*:* its more pleasing to hear of someone busy with work, than hearing of them busy handling dispute.
Pragmatic meaning: discouraging laziness in the society
Pragmatic function: It is used to disperse who are idling and making useless stories.

The proverb encourages devotion and hard work and despises laziness. The Borana people are pastoralists and they encourage people to practice it. Proverbs are also used to express admiration of those who accept the social-cultural values of a society and criticize and warn those who are deviant (Cf. Bascom, 1965). The proverbs below condemn vices in the society.

Proverb 17: *Fonfed itand'acha inyaatani*
Gloss: One does not eat swollen glands to appease a strong desire for meat
Pragmatic meaning*:* Exposes greediness in the society
Pragmatic function: Used in a context where a person makes a rush decision for desire of acquiring material gains.

Proverb 18: *Galatan gati injenne, a chuman bad injenne*
Gloss: I did not ask for a payback for a generous act, nor did expect it to disappear altogether.
Pragmatic meaning: significance of appreciation in the society
Pragmatic function: It is used is in a context where you remind a person that he/she should be grateful.

Proverb 19: *Wooinjed'ini, woojed' iwarabesati*
Gloss: do not say woo, say woo, the hyena taught people the correct way to howl.

Pragmatic meaning*:* to portray imperfection
Pragmatic function: It is used in a context where one who tries to correct the others is not better than the same person/Hypocrisy.

Proverb 20: *Nami wanjed'e, wanbir injire, wan birjitun bekhil.*
Gloss: One should understand what happens in one's absence be relating to what used to happen in one's presence.
Pragmatic meaning: Portrays betrayal in the society
Pragmatic function: It is used when a friend to be trusted betrays you and you caught him/her red-handed.

Proverbs 17 to 20 above are mainly used as a tool of enculturation of the values of Borana society. The Proverbs reflect the values and the morals that the Borana culture upholds. The above proverbs are used as disseminators of traditional wisdom, knowledge and apparent truth. According to Miruka (1994) proverbs serves as a reflectivbe devices and carries codified wisdom that has accumulated over years of pleasing and annoying experiences. Borana proverbs further reflect the cultural behavior and practices that are carried out through the medium of language, whether this is verbal or non-verbal as shown in proverb 21 and 22 below:

Proverb 21: *Taa alkan galt it barisifatani*
Gloss: That which occurs at night will wait dawn.
Pragmatic meaning: Highlighting cultural practices
Pragmatic function: It is used when something happens at night, it's resolved during the day.

Proverb 22: Waan namitok it fidamu, to kit fidamu indandau
Gloss*:* The conditions that one can comfortably live with, might be unacceptable to another.
Pragmatic meaning: reveals the importance of diversity
Pragmatic function: It is used in a context where you want to share the differences in cultural practices by different communities.

Proverb 21 and 22 are used as a mean of expressing culture practices and values.
Borana society is a society that appreciates cultural diversity. Proverb 23 to 125 further illustrates how the Borana wisdom is codified in proverbs:

Proverb 23: *Wan lafit didan lafit ch'lchan didan*
Gloss*:* food that is rejected at one place is accepted in another.
Pragmatic meaning: value attachment to something.
Pragmatic function: To justify that what some people value, others find it valueless.

Proverb 24: *Waaga jete kara kesa inchiisin. Culture/God*
Gloss: Do not rely, on God, and sleep on the road.
Pragmatic meaning: Significance of personal responsibility or duty.
Pragmatic functions: Used in advising people to do what they are able to rather than relying on God for everything.

Proverb 25: *Arki tokochi nafindiqu*
Gloss: one hand alone cannot wash the body.
Pragmatic meaning: used to emphasize the importance of unity.

Pragmatic meaning*:* used in a situation where people are disunited and there is a need for them to join hands.

Through focused groups the participants agreed that Borana proverbs are generally expressions of advisory proverbs and are also based on religious belief.

Conclusion

The current study was designed to analyze Borana proverbs from a pragmatic perspective, a case of Garbatula Sub-County, Isiolo County, Kenya. The study concludes that proverbs have multifunctional values and that they are highly context dependent because they have different meanings in varied contexts. Thus the study concludes that pragmatic meanings and functions of proverbs are context independent. The Borana proverbs are ubiquitous and they are part and parcel of Borana people. The study also concludes that Borana proverbs are unique and also universal. The study also concludes that Borana proverbs reflect people's experiences, life and culture. Thus, proverbs play a crucial role in showing a part of a culture of people. The Borana proverbs collected in the study show the values of Borana people and their culture pattern. The study also concludes that proverbs of all languages demonstrate a closer resemblance to one another in terms of their structure than they do in aspects of their semantics.

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