

**"A STUDY OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN  
THE FORM, FUNCTIONS AND FIGURATIVE  
MEANING OF KISAMIA PROVERBS"**

**BY**

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## DECLARATION

This dissertation is my own original work and has not been presented for a Degree in any other University.

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this project to my parents, Julius and Jenta Maima, my brothers, Hillary and Austin, my sisters Jelica and Juliet for their patience, material and spiritual support throughout the long process of completing my studies at the University of Nairobi.

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## ABSTRACT

This study deals with the relationship that exists between the form, functions and figurative meaning of Kisamia proverbs. The research has the following objectives : to show how the figurative meaning of Kisamia proverbs is realized through the analysis of the linguistic form and functions of the proverbs ; to highlight the use of figurative devices in Kisamia proverbs ; and finally to classify Kisamia proverbs on the basis of social and communicative functions. This project is based on the stylopragmatic model which is derived from both the stylistics and pragmatics fields of study. The researcher will use participant observation and interviews to collect proverbs from Kisamia speakers. The findings of the study show that Kisamia proverbs can be classified on the basis of functions into the following groups: cautionary proverbs, unity proverbs, gender proverbs, kinship proverbs, social decadence proverbs and hospitality proverbs.

Furthermore, the discussion of the research findings reveal that the conveyed meaning in Kisamia proverbs is closely linked to the linguistic form and functions of the proverbs as had been hypothesized. In addition, the researcher also found out that the use of figurative devices was an integral part of Kisamia proverbs.

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# CHAPTER ONE : INTRODUCTION

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Samia are a sub-tribe of the Luyia ethnic group, belonging to the Bantu community of Western Kenya. They speak the Kisamia vernacular which is one of the dialects of the Luyia language as described by Whiteley (1974:21). Among the Samia people, proverbs are used as means of expressing the people's worldview and hence transmitting the society's values and attitudes.

Finnegan (1970: 393) points out that proverbs are short and precise statements which tersely express some kind of truth. Thus, proverbs are used by Kisamia speakers in any communicative situation to convey the speaker's views or beliefs. Therefore, this project aims to investigate the relationship that exists between the linguistic form, functions and figurative meaning of Kisamia proverbs. In this regard, Wales (1989: 183) defines linguistic form as follows:

... a level of language, its structure consisting of the phonological,  
grammatical and lexical patterns which express content or meaning.

The level of form thus mediates between the levels of expression and content.

With regards to the above definition, this study will focus on the grammatical and lexical patterns of Kisamia proverbs, which have a close relationship with the communicative functions and figurative meaning of the proverbs.

Leech (1969: 148 – 152) describes figurative language as an extension of meaning whereby speakers or writers mean more than what they literally say or write. Hence, according to Leech



(ibid: 148 – 152) figurative devices such as synecdoche, metaphor and metonymy are an integral part of figurative language. Leech (1969: 152) posits that the importance of these figurative devices is that they conceal the speaker's thoughts or intentions in a communicative situation. For instance, a speaker can use the metaphor "She has a heart of stone" which when analyzed critically, means that the subject of the sentence is a mean or cruel person according to the speaker's perceptions.

Leech (1969: 150) defines the term synecdoche as follows:

The traditional figure of synecdoche is identified with a rule which applies the term for the part to the whole. This is of little literally interest but is found in proverbs.

For example,

Many hands make light work.

Two heads are better than one.

In the above examples, the two noun phrases, "Many hands" and "Two heads" act as synecdoches which are used as a representation for people. Leech (Ibid:150 – 151) describes a metaphor as the imaginative use of language to describe something or somebody as another subject, in order to show that they have the same qualities and to make the description more forceful. For instance, Leech (1969: 151) illustrates the use of metaphorical language as follows:

Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player

That struts and frets his hour upon stage

And then is heard no more: it is a tale

Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury signifying nothing.

[Macbeth, V.v]

In the above poem, life is metaphorically described as a walking shadow, a poor player and as a tale told by an idiot. Furthermore, Leech (ibid: 152) looks at metonymy as a figure of speech, whereby the name of a referent is replaced by the name of an attribute or of an entity associated with it in some semantic way. Metonymy as a figurative device is common in everyday language. For instance, there is the use of phrases like “the crown” to stand for the monarchy, “the stage” to represent the theatre and “the press” to act as a substitute for newspapers.

Wales (1989) highlights other forms of figurative devices as the following description shows. Firstly, Wales (1989: 235) defines a simile as a figure of speech whereby two concepts are imaginatively and descriptively compared. For example, my love is like a red rose, she is tall like a giraffe, as white as a sheet, and so on. Secondly, Wales (ibid: 349) depicts personification as the assignment of human qualities to inanimate objects. For example, one can talk of “the dancing chairs”, “the singing wind” and “the hungry soil”. Thirdly, symbolism is described by Wales (1989: 445) as a sign whether visual or verbal, which stands for something else within a speech community. Hence, “the cross” can be taken as a symbol of Christianity in modern society. Furthermore, human language can be seen as a symbolic system whereby words stand for referents in the real and imagined worlds.

Fourthly, according to Wales (ibid: 263) irony as a figure of speech is seen when words contradict with the context within which they are used. For example, a speaker may utter the words “what lovely weather” when it is raining. This utterance will be interpreted as ironical

by the hearer. Fifthly, Wales (1989: 402) points out that repetition is an important figurative device, in that when lexical items are repeatedly used in an utterance, they draw attention to their own form and in the process enable the speaker to convey his or her intended meaning.

Fifthly, Myers (1989: 136) describes allusion as a brief reference to a well-known character, event or place in a manner that is implied or explicit. The purpose of using the device according to Myers (ibid: 136) is to share knowledge on certain subjects or issues in an economical way.

Sixthly, hyperbole as a figure of speech is depicted as a rhetorical form of comparison using exaggeration or obvious overstatement for comical or dramatic effect in the words of Myers (1989: 136). Seventhly, Wales (1989) describes imagery as the sense of a mental picture of an object which is evoked in words. Furthermore, depending on the critic this mental picture may or may not involve figurative language, which involves the use of figures of speech such as simile and metaphor by which images are evoked by comparing one referent with another. Lastly, the study of the use of figurative devices in Kisamia proverbs enables one to understand the relationship that exists between the linguistic form, functions and figurative meaning of Kisamia proverbs.

## **1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

A cursory look at the proverbs in the Kisamia language may not unravel the deeper meaning that they convey. Therefore, this study tries to delve into the linguistic form, functions and figurative meaning of Kisamia proverbs.

## **1.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

This study set out to achieve the following objectives:

- (i) To show how the figurative meaning of Kisamia proverbs is realized through the analysis of the linguistic form and functions of the proverbs.
- (ii) To highlight the use of figurative devices in Kisamia proverbs.
- (iii) To classify Kisamia proverbs on the basis of social and communicative functions.

## **1.3 HYPOTHESES**

The hypotheses for this project are as follows:

- (i) The conveyed meaning in Kisamia proverbs is closely linked to the linguistic form and functions of the proverbs.
- (ii) The use of figurative devices is an integral part of Kisamia proverbs.
- (iii) The stylopragmatic model which utilizes both the stylistics and pragmatic approaches clearly accounts for the relationship that exists between the linguistic form, functions and figurative meaning of Kisamia proverbs.

## **1.4 RATIONALE**

It is evident from the literature covered in this project that very little has been done in relation to the study of Kisamia proverbs. In this respect, Oniango (1978:203-211) carried out a study on Kisamia proverbs whereby he listed sixty Kisamia proverbs and gave their translations in English. Oniango (ibid) also explained the figurative meaning of some of the proverbs. The only shortcoming of this study by Oniango (1978), is that the researcher does not explain how the figurative meaning of some of the Kisamia proverbs was deciphered. Furthermore, Oniango (1978) does not give the functions of the proverbs. Hence, my project

aims to fill these knowledge gaps that arise from the research done by Oniango (ibid). Therefore, this study will attempt to describe how the conveyed meaning of Kisamia proverbs is deciphered and also highlight the relationship that exists between the functions, linguistic form and figurative meaning of Kisamia proverbs.

## 1.5 SCOPE AND LIMITATION

This study deals only with one hundred proverbs among the Kisamia speakers. This is a limitation because proverbs from other Luyia dialects will not be dealt with. The proverbs that were collected can be classified on the basis of social and communicative functions. Thus, by using this criterion of classification that is based on functions, Kisamia proverbs can be grouped as follows: cautionary proverbs, unity proverbs, kinship proverbs, social decadence proverbs, hospitality proverbs and gender proverbs.

## 1.6 LITERATURE REVIEW

The following is a review of literature related to Kisamia proverbs. However, other studies that deal with proverbs from other communities will also be dealt with. The reason for this review is that studies that focus on other languages will provide invaluable information, which will be used in the study of the relationship that exists between the linguistic form, functions and figurative meaning of Kisamia proverbs. It should also be pointed out that proverbs from certain communities might be similar due to shared cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Therefore, the repetition of certain proverbs in this literature review should not be perceived as a coincidence.

Oniango (1978) describes the role of proverbs and riddles in the culture of Abaluyia of Kenya. In the study he lists sixty Kisamia proverbs and gives their translations in English. He also explains the deeper meaning of some of the proverbs. For instance,

i). *Otengo olukhwi omwosi yesika emoni.*

(He who fetches fire-wood which emits a lot of smoke must have strong eyes.)

The conveyed meaning is that one must be responsible for the consequences of his act.

ii) *Otacheheranga okhato khala nikhali mibusiba latayo kata mawe anyala yabamo.*

(You may not laugh at a boat which is in deep water (dangerous place) for your mother or father may also be in the boat.)

The deeper meaning is that we should always be sympathetic with our fellow man or woman

iii) *Amafirwedete kaduma musiro lakini bakadola nibukhiyere.*

(What happens in the darkness (at night) is known during the day.)

The proverb teaches us that there is no secret that cannot be known.

iv) *Olwoya silukhamera musikalo dawe.*

(A hair cannot grow in the palm )

This is an expression indicating anything that is impossible.

v) *Wakhaba munini siwaxhanina obusenjo bwefuno.*

(Even if you are a climber, you cannot climb the tip of a spear.)

The figurative meaning is that there is a limit to everyone's abilities.

Nyembezi et al (1963: 51) collected and studied Zulu proverbs. He classified the proverbs according to their functions, that is hospitality proverbs, fortune proverbs, cunning proverbs, friendship proverbs. Nyembezi (ibid:51- 98) used the functions of the proverbs to analyze their meaning. For example, Hospitality proverbs:

vi) *Kuhlonishwana kabili.*

(Respect is mutual.)

When a person respects another, that respect should be reciprocated.

Similarly, when one helps another that help should be reciprocated.

vii) *Imikhomb iyenana.*

(Gifts of meat are obtained in exchange for one another.)

When a man slaughters a beast, he gives others portions of meat so that they may eat also.

Kipury (1983: 148 – 157) groups Maasai proverbs as follows:

(a) Proverbs on religion and paramouncy of God

viii) *Erisio ilmaasai o enkai.*

(Equal are the Maasai and God.)

The conveyed meaning of the above proverb is that if you are a Maasai, you are safe as you are with God.

ix) *Menya enkai enanya tung'ani.*

(God does not eat what man eats.)

This is in terms of thoughts and ideas. God does not base his decisions according to what a man wants. It is often uttered as a rhetorical wish as though to talk with God, so that he can supply what you ardently long for.

(b) Proverbs on kinship relations.

x) *Etung'e sotua te kina.*

(The relation was severed from the beast.)

Used when close relations do not treat each other as such

Their relationship is said to have ceased from the time they were weaned.

xi) *Mamoda amu mshul olenkuputi.*

(I am not a fool because I do not live in the same homestead as my in-laws.)



Living with somebody is a way of giving them a chance to observe your character. The in-laws are the worst type of people to open yourself to since your weak points can be detected and exposed to your disadvantage.

(c) Proverbs of unity.

xii) *Miaru inkishu iking'arana.*

(They do not procure cows those who are not at peace among themselves.)

Unity is essential for victory to be achieved.

xiii). *Meidp Oltung'ani endapana ekiten'enye.*

(A person is not satisfied by the hide of his own cow.)

This proverb justifies the need to acquire property from others as well as working together for the betterment of all.

Burton (1969: 5 – 142) carried out an investigation into the use of proverbs among the communities of West Africa. The languages covered in the study were Wolof, Kanuri, Oji, Yoruba and Efik. He collected over two thousand proverbs from the Western Africa speakers. He translated the proverbs into English, after which he gave an explanation of the conveyed meaning in the proverbs. For example, the following are proverbs collected from the speakers of the Oji language.

xiv). *Voni yonom-a vomfre yanom.*

(If you have no comrades, you do not call for your comrades.)

The above proverb means that you must not count upon means that are not at your disposal. In other words you must not rely on people who are not ready to help you.

xv). *Aboa no n'anom ye no de-a, onvi ne kondmda.*

(Though the beast is daintly , it does not eat its collar – bell.)

This proverb alludes to dogs. Though fond of dainties, they do not eat the ornaments fastened round their necks. The figurative meaning is that even greediness does not rush blindly upon everything nice and attractive.

xvi). *Oponko agyi - mia nea ote no so ongyimie.*

(Because a horse is a fool, he who rides it is no fool.)

The conveyed meaning is that the defects or vices of a dependent are not to be attributed to his or her master

xvii). *Ahine tew empanyin enim-a, enyera.*

(If a string of pearls breaks in the presence of grown-up people, nothing is lost.)

The string of pearls is worn by a child. If it breaks, nothing is lost because those present will gather up the beads; if the child is alone then the pearls would be lost. The proverb means that if prudent people are at hand, they will take action to avert the evil consequences of disaster.

xviii). *Aboa bi do srade-a, osua prako.*

(When an animal fattens, it learns from the pig.)

The deeper meaning of the proverb is that when one is the author and inventor of an art, those who practice it do so in imitation of him.

Norrick (1985: 28) points out that proverbs carry the force of time tested wisdom and the speaker can draw on this authority. Hearers tend to react to the uttering of proverbs as they would to directives from authoritative sources. The weight of traditional or majority opinion inculcates proverbs with authority. A simple statement of fact or belief like “An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure” seems to bear a directive force equal to that of a true imperative like “Look before you leap” in the right context.

Okot P’Bitek (1985: 15 – 24) in his quest to determine the proverbial richness of the Acholi language, classified the proverbs under headings corresponding to the different aspects of social life that they refer to. These are as follows:

(a) Proverbs relating to authority.

xix). *Agoro pe camo kato kulu.*

(Agoro termites do not cross a stream to feed on the other side.)

Each person whatever his status has a limit beyond which his powers become ineffective.

xx). *Agwata ma tek mac oye puku.*

(Hardened gourd is softened by fire.)

When left too long, a gourd becomes hardened and brittle and is not easy to split it into two halves to make it into “water cups” or “plates”. Thus, the speaker’s intended meaning in the proverb is that some people need tough treatment before they can see sense.

xxi). *Ali myero ki okwata.*

(Causing trouble should be left to kites.)

If a human being causes trouble, he is often discovered and held responsible. But kites fly away.

(b) Proverbs about co-operation.

xxii). *Abil abil atyeko kodi.*

(Let me taste finished the seeds.)

This proverb is usually directed against women who use food set aside as seeds or anyone in charge of property belonging to others when he uses small bits of it.

xxiii). *Ciny acel pe kweko ngwing.*

(One finger cannot open the vagina.)

The conveyed meaning of the above proverb is that many people make work easier.

xxiv). *Gipoko pyer ngwen.*

(The two friends share the white ant.)

Very close friends share the smallest things as a sign of their friendship

(c) Proverbs concerning personal qualities, advice and words of wisdom.

xxv) *A cut pep ye ata.*

(Vultures alight when there is some carcass.)

People do not gather in one place for no reason.

xxvi). *Agulu pii to idogola.*

(Water pot breaks near the door.)

Having carried the water all the way from the well, a girl slips and the water pot breaks when she has reached home. It is easy to lose at the end of the race.

xxvii). *Apora bot oneko apwoya*

( Blind copying killed the hare.)

The deeper meaning is that copying others blindly is dangerous.

## 1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study aims to show how the figurative meaning of Kisamia proverbs is realized through the analysis of the linguistic form and functions of the proverbs.

The findings from this research provide invaluable information on the relationship that exists between the linguistic form, functions and figurative meaning of Kisamia proverbs.

## 1.8 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is based on the stylopragmatic model which is derived from both the stylistics and pragmatics fields of study. In this regard, Wales (1989: 437) defines stylistics as the study of style whereby style [ Wales (ibid: 435) ] simply refers to the manner of expression in writing or speaking just as there is a manner of doing things like playing squash or painting. Moreover, Wales (1989: 436) argues that style may vary from situation to situation depending on the medium of communication and the degree of formality of the language used. Thus people can talk of euphuistic style; or the style of augustan poetry. In each case style is perceived as distinctive; in essence the set or sum of linguistic features that seem to be characteristic of a particular text or discourse.

Wales (1989: 437) points out that for many people stylistic meaning or variational value is what distinguishes expressions that on a deep level express the same meaning such as:

- (i) Peter passed away last summer.
- (ii) My Dad kicked the bucket last summer.

The two expressions above allude to a particular person dying even though the two sentences have different literal meanings or what Wales (1989: 277-178) calls the basic conceptual meaning of words. Furthermore, Wales (ibid) points out that in every day exchanges our usual expectations is that literal meanings are the norm and express the "truth". Wales (ibid) has the view that people only look for a non-literal interpretation of an utterance if they cannot otherwise make sense of it. Moreover, Wales (1989: 278) argues that idiomatic usages often cause problems for foreign speakers who may misinterpret the meaning of particular phrases.

Leech (1969: 16) distinguishes three forms of style that is the grand, middle and plain. In this regard, Leech (ibid) uses the analogy of clothing to describe the three styles. Hence the plain

style is described as the working dress for language that is the language used in everyday communication, the grand style as ceremonial dress which refers to the use of creative or poetic language, and lastly the middle style is compared to elegant clothing which simply means the use of formal language which is common in official situations.

Fowler (1966:15) describes how style involves the manipulation of variables in the structure of language or in the selection of optional or latent features. Fowler (ibid) stresses that as a theoretical prerequisite to stylistic study we should assume that there are both constant and variable features within human language as a whole. In this respect, Fowler (ibid) informs us that the constants are the rules of the language which make styles and dialects within one language possible. One constant for English, is the complex set of rules determining the orders and positions in which phonemes can occur. On the other hand, Fowler (ibid) describes variable rules as the rules which vary from one language to another. For example the subject, verb and object order may vary from one language to another depending on the grammatical typology of the language.

Enkvist (1964: 29) posits that style is concerned with frequencies of linguistic items in a given context. To measure the style of a passage according to Enkvist (ibid) the frequencies of its linguistic items at different levels must be compared with the corresponding features in another text or corpus which is regarded as a norm and which has a definite contextual relationship with the passage. For example, in a scientific paper certain zoological terms will be found to have a high frequency while in another scientific paper on Molluscs, the given zoological terms related to butterflies may have low or zero frequencies. However, the two papers in the words of Enkvist (1964: 29) will be termed as having a scientific style due to the high frequency of scientific vocabulary.

Enkvist (1964: 29) describes three ways of measuring the predictability of linguistic terms in a given context. First, there is the classical method whereby literary critics rely upon their



experience or "sense of style" when deciding what expressions are common and what expressions are not. Secondly, the frequencies in each text can be computed directly out of a corpus of texts, for instance with the aid of a computer. The probabilities in different contextual constellations can then be determined with the aid of statistical formulae. Detailed context analysis is a necessary prerequisite for this method. Thirdly, it is possible to give a group of informants a piece of text as a stimulus or frame and then to ask them what linguistic item or items they expect to occur in the given text.

Moreover, one might ask the informants to define the contexts in which a given expression is likely to appear. The number of correct guesses or fulfilled expectations gives a rough measure of the relative predictabilities of the items guessed. Barthes (1971:3) points out that the relationship between content and form is phenomenological. Thus form is taken to be the appearance or dress of content, which is the "reality" or "substance" of form. The metaphors applied to form are thus decorative. Barthes (ibid) posits that the relationship between form and content was experienced as an expressive or alethic relationship: the critic (or commentator) was supposed to establish a just connection between content (reality) and form (appearance), between the message (as substance) and its medium (style); between these two concentric terms (one being in the other) there was presumed to be a warranted relationship. This warranty gave rise to a historical problem: can form disguise content or must it be subjected to it (so that there cannot be a "coded" form).

Ulmann (1964: 100) informs us that in order to describe stylistic resources of a language we have to establish, classify and evaluate its expressive elements. For the student of style, "expressiveness" covers a wide range of linguistic features which have one thing in common: they do not directly affect the meaning of the utterance, the actual information which it conveys. Everything that transcends the purely referential and communicative side of language

belongs to the province of expressiveness, emotive overtones, emphasis, rhythm, symmetry and euphony [ Ulmann (1964:100) ].

The study of expressive language according to Ulmann (ibid), deals with the description of the elements of the linguistic code (or codes) that are endowed with an emotive function, that is elements that serve to express the speakers attitude towards his addressee or to the thing being spoken about. The expressive elements cannot be studied outside of their relation to the distinctive and redundant element of language. They must also be considered with relation to other styles which are emotionally neutral. Saporta (1958:87) stresses that the style of discourse is the message carried by the frequency distributions and transitional probabilities of its linguistic features . Such a view suggests that whereas linguistics is concerned with the description of a code, stylistics is concerned with the difference among the messages generated in accordance with the rules of that code. The analysis of style [Saportsa (ibid)] essentially involves the identification and comparison of the various dimensions along which messages may differ.

Furthermore, Saporta (1958: 91) argues that a given message may deviate form the norm in two ways. First the message may include features that do not occur elsewhere or certain restrictions on messages may be suspended or eliminated. This is usually what is meant by agrammatical or ungrammatical sequences. . Thus certain utterances in poetry, for example, "A rose is a rose" can be accommodated in the English language. The second way in which the message may deviate from the norm according to Saporta (ibid), is in introducing additional restrictions beyond those of the general grammar. The most obvious example is the rhyme scheme in poems. There is no way in which rhyme as opposed to metaphor may by itself be said to be ungrammatical. However, when a feature which is optional (perhaps accidental is a better word) becomes obligatory such a feature is obviously relevant to the style of the

discourse. Occasionally these additional restrictions themselves become optional in certain positions.

Crystal (1991: 271), describes pragmatics as the study of language from the point of view of the users, especially of the choices they make, the constraints they encounter in using language in social interaction, and the effects their use of language has on other participants in acts of communication. Crystal (ibid) stresses that the field of pragmatics focuses on an area between semantics, sociolinguistics and extra linguistic context. Furthermore, pragmatics is characterized as the study of principles and practices of conversational performance which refers to all aspects of language usage, understanding and appropriateness. In this regard, Levinson (1983: 16-20) presents Grice's theory of non-natural meaning which tries to explain how speakers can use utterances to convey certain beliefs or intentions. For example in the expression, "John kicked the bucket" the intended meaning of the sentence is that "John" the subject in question passed away or died as indicated by the predicate "Kicked the bucket" which is an idiomatic expression. Therefore, the speaker's intended meaning in the above sentence is what Grice (1957) refers to as the non-natural meaning which is not based on convention but on the speaker's perceptions. Levinson (1983: 16 – 20) summarizes Grice's theory as follows:

Grice (1957) distinguished between what he calls natural meaning as in "Those clouds mean rain" and non-natural meaning or meaning – nn equivalent to the notion of intentional communication, Grice gives the following characterization of meaning-nn:

*S* meant-nn *z* by uttering *U* if and only if:

- (i) *S* intended *U* to cause some effect *z* in recipient *H*.
- (ii) *S* intended (i) to be achieved simply by *H* recognizing that intention (i).

Here *S* stands for speaker (in the case of spoken communication; for sender or communicator in other cases); *H* for hearer, or more accurately, the intended recipient; “uttering *U*” for utterance of a linguistic token, that a sentence part, sentence, or string of sentences or sentence parts (or the production of non-linguistic communicative act) and *z* for (roughly) some belief or volition invoked in *H*. Such definition of the theory is likely to be opaque at first reading, but what it essentially states is that communication consists of the sender intending to cause the “receiver” to recognize that the “sender” is trying to cause that thought or action. But crucial for pragmatic Grice’s theory explains how there can be interesting discrepancies between speaker-meaning (Grice’s non-natural meaning) and sentence meaning. For example, “Linguistics is fascinating” said ironically may be intended by the speaker to communicate that “Linguistics is deadly boring”.

The strengths of Grice’s theory of non-natural meaning are as follows: Firstly, the theory deals adequately with the issue of meaningfulness whereby Grice posits that meaningful sentences or expressions convey a belief and meaningless ones do not. Hence, proverbs which are short and precise statements which tersely express some kind of truth, as described by Finnegan (1970: 393) can be classified as meaningful on the basis of Grice’s model.

Secondly, Grice in his theory of non-natural meaning focuses on the speaker’s intentions or intended meaning in an utterance. Therefore, the problem of ambiguity in terms of the interpretation of the utterance is avoided.

Lastly, Grice’s theory of non-natural meaning can be used to clearly explain the relationship that exists between the linguistic form, functions and figurative meaning of Kisamia proverbs.

If Grice's theory of non-natural meaning is applied to the study of Kisamia proverbs, then the sender (S) will use the proverbs to achieve a certain effect 'z' in the hearer which will depend on the hearer's ability to recognize the speaker's intention. In this project the speaker's intended meaning is realized through the analysis of the figurative meaning of Kisamia proverbs. .

Lastly, the stylopragmatic model chosen for this study clearly accounts for the close relationship that exists between the linguistic form, functions and figurative meaning of Kisamia proverbs.

## **CHAPTER TWO : RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **2.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This chapter deals with the research methodologies that were used in the collection of the data in this study. Description of the sample and sampling procedures that were employed in the research will also be dealt with. In addition, problems that were encountered during the fieldwork will be addressed.

#### **2.1. DESCRIPTION OF THE SAMPLE AND SAMPLING PROCEDURES**

Due to the homogeneity of the speakers of the Kisamia language, a small sample of the population was used. This is because the Samia people share common beliefs and customs as well as proverbs.

The proverbs were collected from twelve Kisamia speakers from Diraho village in Busia district of rural Kenya. The ages of the respondents ranged from twenty to seventy years. The respondents were intentionally chosen according to their knowledge of Kisamia culture and their competence in the Kisamia language. Furthermore, the interviewees consisted of seven men and five women. The selection of the sample for this project was determined by three major factors which are age, gender and competence.

Firstly, the choice of respondents whose ages ranged from twenty to seventy years ensured that the researcher collected proverbs that address issues affecting both the youth and elderly.

Secondly, by interviewing both female and male interviewees, the investigator was able to get proverbs that focus on gender which is concerned with the sexual classification of people in society according to status and role.

Lastly, the competence of the respondents in the Kisamia language ensured that the data collected was authentic.

## **2.2 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES**

During the field research, proverbs from the Samia community were collected through participant observation and interviews. The use of participant observation enabled the researcher to observe and also participate in the use of Kisamia proverbs. By interviewing the respondents the researcher was able to get invaluable information, which enabled him to interpret the message conveyed in the Kisamia proverbs. The interviews with the respondents focused on the functions and figurative meaning of Kisamia proverbs. The findings show that Kisamia proverbs can be classified on the basis of functions in the following manner, that is cautionary proverbs, unity proverbs, kinship proverbs, social decadence proverbs, gender proverbs and hospitality proverbs

## **2.3 RESEARCH DESIGN**

In the course of the study, the qualitative research design was employed. Thus, proverbs from the Kisamia community were collected through participant observation and in-depth interviews which were semi-structured. In this regard, the interview schedule for this study was based on the following steps.

Firstly, the researcher aimed to have a representative sample of the target population. In this case, the subjects of the research were homogenous as speakers of the Kisamia language share common beliefs and customs as well as proverbs. Therefore, a small sample of the population was used. The choice of the subjects that were used in the research was determined by the following variables, that is age, gender and competence

The ages of the respondents ranged from twenty to seventy years. The reason for this is that people of various age groups interpret proverbs differently due to their level of experience and maturity. The researcher's choice of both male and female interviewees provided this research with proverbs that focus on gender issues, that is the sexual classification of people in society according to status and role.

Furthermore, competence as a variable, which influenced the choice of the subjects, is described by Crystal (1991:66) as follows:

A term used in linguistics theory and especially in generative grammars, to refer to speaker's knowledge of their language, the system of rules which they have mastered so that are able to produce and understand an indefinite number of sentences, and to recognize grammatical mistakes and ambiguities ...

Therefore, the collection of data from competent respondents, who are competent in the Kisamia language ensured that the collected Kisamia proverbs were authentic.

Secondly, open-ended questions were used whereby the respondents were given the chance to expound on issues. In this respect, the interviewees answered questions on issues regarding the functions and figurative meaning of Kisamia proverbs.

Thirdly, the researcher utilized tape-recording and note-taking as data collection techniques. The in-depth interviews with the respondents were recorded on a tape recorder and later the researcher analyzed the interviewees contributions. Note-taking as a technique of collecting data was used when the researcher was analyzing the collected Kisamia proverbs, with the help



of some of the respondents who were well versed in the customs and believes of the Samia people.

Fourthly, in order to avoid potential problems in the course of collecting data through the use of in-depth interviews. The researcher piloted the interview questions with a small sample of the subjects identified for the study. The interview questions were semi-structured and focused on the following key issues for the study, that is the functions and figurative meaning of the collected proverbs.

Fifthly, before the researcher commenced the interviews with the respondents, he observed the following key steps in the interview schedule. First, the researcher explained the nature of the study and purpose of the interview to the interviewees. This involved telling the respondents how the information collected will be used. Furthermore, the researcher asked for the interviewees' permission to record their contributions in this study. Second, as already indicated the researcher used open-ended questions, which gave the respondents the chance to express their observations on the collected Kisamia proverbs.

Lastly, in regards to the observation schedule, the researcher organized sessions whereby the respondents gave examples of Kisamia proverbs, and in the process there were discussions on the functions and figurative meaning of Kisamia proverbs. Furthermore, in the observation schedule the researcher selected a number of respondents to participate in the discussion of the Kisamia proverbs.

## **2.4 PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED DURING FIELDWORK**

In the course of the study the researcher encountered the following problems. Firstly, some of the respondents insisted on getting gifts before they could participate in the research project. This problem was solved through the use of a mediator who persuaded the interviewees to

share their invaluable knowledge about Kisamia proverbs. Secondly, transcribing the collected proverbs into the first language before translating the data into English was a big challenge. Hence, the researcher had to seek assistance from three respondents who were competent both in English and the Kisamia language.

Lastly, the time available for carrying out the research was too short to enable the researcher to interview more respondents about the functions and conveyed meaning of Kisamia proverbs.

## CHAPTER THREE :DATA PRESENTATION

### 3.0 DATA PRESENTATION

The following chapter will focus on the presentation of the data collected during the fieldwork. Furthermore, the classification and interpretation of the collected Kisamia proverbs, as well as the description of the data analysis procedures used in this study will also be dealt with.

### 3.1 CLASSIFICATION OF KISAMIA PROVERBS

Kisamia Proverbs can be classified on the basis of social and communicative functions. In this respect, the social functions of language refers to the way speakers use language to reflect their world-view as described by Wardhaugh (1986:216). On the other hand, the communicative function of language is described by Crystal (1991:64) as the transmission of information between a source and receiver using a signaling system which in the case of humans the system involved is language.

#### 3.1.1 CAUTIONARY PROVERBS

These are proverbs that give advice or warning to the hearers. They are listed and interpreted as follows.

(I) *Biwakhola munyuma viakhulonde.*

(What you did in the past will follow you.)

The conveyed meaning [ Levinson ( 1983:17) ] of the given proverb is that when a person commits an evil act, the consequence of his or her actions will always haunt him or her. The proverb encourages people to take responsibility for their actions.

(II) *Atakerakirwa yalha nako ebukhwe.*

(Whoever does not accept advice, will do the same at his in-laws.)

The deeper meaning [ Wales (1989:437)] of the proverb is that people who are badly behaved cannot be expected to change when they go out to interact with other members of the society.

(III) *Kenda kala yola eyale*

(The slow one reached for.)

The metaphorical meaning [ Leech (1969:147)] of this proverb is that people who take their time to deal with problems have a higher chance of being successful than those who rush through things as implied by the proverb. This proverb promotes the virtue of perseverance.

(IV) *Otwali khunguli lwakhole khukhubi.*

(Whatever happened to the seeds will happen to the vegetables.)

The proverb conveys the meaning that bad luck does not choose its victim.

This expression has the function of encouraging people especially the youth to be sympathetic and helpful towards their fellow man.

(V) *Njila chaya eyao ibakhomo*

(They are grazing yours must be there.)

If a calamity befalls a community, then no one should assure that they are immune. The proverb teaches us that anything which can harm a neighbour can also harm us.

(VI) *Dondo yafwa dondo yasiukha.*

(Dondo died Dondo resurrected )

The deeper meaning [ Wales ( 1989:437) ] of this proverb can be interpreted to mean that when a person fails in one task. He or she should not lose hope as they may succeed in another.

(VII) *Okwendaya okwotera eyale.*

(When the fire is too hot, you warm yourself from afar.)

It is better to avoid situations that are dangerous or harmful to us. This proverb alludes [ Myers (1989:136)] to the use of common sense when dealing with people who may want to harm us.

(VIII) *Esiakhaya eyaywa omuyaka kukwisire.*

(Whatever an axe cannot do the wind will do it for you.)

The proverb points out that everyone on earth has ranging abilities. Therefore what one person is able to do, his or her friend may not manage.

(IX) *Omukofu akhutusa murina.*

(An old man will remove you from the hole.)

The given proverb warns young people against showing contempt for their elders. This is because the latter may be helpful to the younger people. This is in terms of giving invaluable advice to the young people.

(X) *Namwana oghenda akhira ngina amakesi.*

(A child who walks is wiser than the mother.)

A young person who has experienced difficulties while growing up is more mature than an adult who has led a sheltered life. The proverb emphasizes that age cannot be used to measure a person's maturity.

(XI) *Khateta yambula embolu.*

(The one who doesn't kill gets the rotten one.)

A person who is lazy in a community will find it hard to succeed in his or her endeavours. The expression [ Ulmann (1964:100)] discourages laziness, which is considered a vice in most African communities.

(XII) *Khalimi khalai khakhonia wanagwe khumukutu.*

(The sweet tongue made the hyena to sleep on the doorstep.)

The metaphorical meaning [ Leech (1969:147) ] of this proverb is that when a person uses his or her intelligence they can overcome their enemies. The proverb is directed at young people so as to persuade them, to use their wit instead of relying on brawn to solve problems.

(XIII) *Esina dume siatia khalekhale.*

(What will sprout is seen early.)

Great people always start to develop their abilities and talents early on in life. The expression has been used as an encouragement for parents to nurture their children's abilities when the latter are still young

(XIV) *Okuteka mafulama sikwita.*

(What traps on its back doesn't kill.)

People who are not eager to work hard always end up as failures. The proverb is used as a warning for young people who are lazy.

(XV) *Anina esirama biola yekha.*

(Whoever climbs the roof must come down.)

This proverb is used against leaders who are cruel to their subjects. The expression [Ulmann (ibid) ] warns them that one day they may lose their power and hence end up being at the mercy of the people they oppress.

(XVI) *Abasebe banyekana ebari.*

(Fools abuse each other wherever they are.)

Members of a community who always fight each other, cannot be expected to work together without any confrontation taking place.

(XVII) *Otachekhera okhato khali ebusiba okotwanga esirimo.*

(Don't laugh at a sinking boat; you don't know what is inside.)

Problems which are thought to affect only one person can affect the whole community. This proverb is useful in teaching people about the importance of having empathy for others.

(XVIII) *Esinafwe silondonga esinasite.*

(Whatever that will die, will follow the one that will kill it.)

The proverb warns people against following others blindly. The reason for this is that not all our friends are good as others may have hidden plans to harm us.

(XIX) *Siwima omuyele yakhasilie nari omukhulundu.*

(What you deny a child he or she will eat in future.)

Parents need to give their children the space to learn about the world. In this context, parents who always want to control their daughters' movements are warned that this may be detrimental to their future in terms of making correct decision when they are adults.

(XX) *Yicha khumenya sikhukhinda khulekana.*

(Come we stay ends up in separation.)

The above expression warns us that people who rush into unions with the opposite sex which they are not prepared for end up getting disappointed if the unions do not work.

(XXI) *Okhukherakira akhira okhweyola amamondo.*

(The one who advises you is better than anyone who borrows money from you.)

The above proverb teaches us that people who are ready to help us, are better than those who only want to acquire things from us.

(XXII) *Endalo chiakhira obwoya bwe engombe.*

(Days are more than the hide of cows.)

The conveyed meaning [Leech (ibid:17)] of the given proverb is that a person who lives for a long time is better than a fellow rich man. This is because the Samia believe that people become wise as they grow older which is more important than amassing wealth.

(XXIII) *Obukofu nengabo.*

(Old is wisdom.)

People who are older are considered mature and experienced. Thus they are able to give invaluable advice to the young people. Therefore, the youth should not disregard their elders according to the above proverb.

(XXIV) *Owokutaba kwaye siakuleka.*

(A smoker does not disregard his pipe.)

We should learn to value people who are close to us. The proverb teaches us not to take people, who are close to us for granted.



(XXV) *Khamulilo khabwera abwene.*

(A spark gets extinguished immediately.)

The conveyed meaning [Levinson (1983:17)] of the above proverb is that one person cannot tackle a problem on his or her own. The proverb encourages people to be united in society.

(XXVI) *Omusala muterere kuninangwa nende owakumanya.*

(A slippery tree is climbed by one who knows it.)

The speaker's intended meaning [Levinson (ibid:16)] is to point out that if a person wants to solve a problem, he or she should seek advice from an experienced person.

(XXVII) *Esiduyu yabolela abiriro mbwe olukendo silibwa.*

(The hyena told the mourners that the journey does not end.)

The conveyed meaning of the proverb is that life is filled with obstacles which people should strive to overcome, as clearly described in the predicate of the sentence.

(XXVIII) *Otatebanga sibalima khungila.*

(Do not question what is planted on the foot path.)

The deeper meaning [Wales (1989:437)] of the given proverb is simply that people should not worry about what the future holds, as nobody knows his or her destiny. The proverb encourages young people to be optimistic about the future.

(XXIX) *Esimba lifwla mukobi lieliasio*

(A Mongoose dies due to the fault of another)

The deeper meaning of the proverb is that people who have friends who are badly misbehaved can easily be led astray by the latter. The reason for this can be attributed to the influence our friends have on us.

(XXX) *Akhalubi khalai khacha akhandi.*

(The good small basket was used again.)

The speaker's intended meaning [ Levinson (1983:16) ] in the given proverb is that people should not disregard others because of their size. The proverb teaches us that the abilities that an individual has cannot be judged on the basis of his or her body size.

(XXXI) *Otasangalila okaba anyala yakhukaba esikumba.*

(Do not be happy about the giver, he can give you a bone.)

The speaker's intended message in the above proverb is that not everyone who is willing to help us is genuine in their intentions. Thus, people need to be cautious about individuals who pretend that they want to help them and yet they intend to cause harm.

(XXXII) *Otala esero notabona omwana.*

(Do not lay the hide before you see the unborn one.)

The deeper meaning of this proverb is that we should not make plans for things that have not materialized, as we may get disappointed if they do not happen. This proverb encourages people to be patient.

(XXXIII) *Omuyere nalila oluyembe omuberese.*

(If a child cries for a razor blade, give it to him )

Parents should allow children to learn from their mistakes. If the parents do this, then the children will grow up into good and responsible adults.

(XXXIV) *Engira sibolelanga okenda.*

(The road does not direct the traveller.)

The proverb teaches us that everyone has his or her own destiny in their hands. Thus, people should strive to make the correct decisions in life so that they can achieve the goals that they have set.

(XXXV) *Ouma omwana atuma etango.*

(A childless person sends his or her thighs.)

People who are self-reliant are able to depend on themselves when dealing with challenges that face them. Therefore the moral teaching [ Ulmann ( 1964:100) ] of the proverb is that we are better off being independent rather than dependent.

(XXXVI) *Okidimbisa kumulinda.*

(Unfinished work will always wait for you.)

People who are lazy are warned that other people will not assist them in carrying out their responsibilities. Hence, they should leave their laziness and work hard so as to be accepted by the society in general.

(XXXVII) *Esirukha siongene sielanga esiembiro.*

(Whatever runs on its own thinks it's the fastest.)

Individuals who think that they are best in whatever they do, are reminded by the proverb that there might be other people who are better than them. Thus, the proverb teaches people that they should be humble if they want to be respected by others.

(XXXVIII) *Otemere kuwemerekho.*

(You are cutting what you are standing on.)

The proverb warns people against disregarding others who have helped them in the past. The reason for this is that the same people who are disregarded may be helpful to the particular individual in the future.

(XXXIX) *Yatulakho ngomubeki.*

(He left empty handed like a barber.)

The conveyed meaning of the proverb is that we should not expect to benefit from everything we do. The proverb teaches us that not all tasks are rewarded.

(XL) *Omukhulu kubitanga yakwabita.*

(A stream passes through its original path.)

The proverb is directed at young people, who due to one reason or another adopt foreign cultures and in the process they forget their own background. The intended meaning is that no matter how hard anyone tries he or she cannot run away from their heritage.

(XLI) *Olonda embako ahira olonda omwami.*

(Who follows a hoe is better than the one who follows a leader.)

People who work hard to support themselves can depend on themselves. On the other hand, those who are lazy always depend on others. The proverb thus teaches people to value hard work instead of being sycophants.

(XLII) *Ekhwi chebula ekokhe.*

(Firewood produces ash.)

The speaker's intended meaning [Levinson (1983:16)] in the proverb is that good people will always engage in positive actions while bad people will carry out negative acts. The proverb points out that people will always produce what is in their hearts and minds.

(XLIII) *Sebulandai yalekha omukwano enyuma.*

(He who goes in peace leaves peace behind.)

People who treat their neighbours well, will in turn get the same treatment. The proverb teaches us that people will react to us according to how we behave, when they meet us.

(XLIV) *Lero Luno.*

(Today is the day.)

Whatever is destined to occur, will always take place. The proverb alludes [Myers (1989:136)] to the belief among members of the Samia community that every individual has his or her day of performing great deeds in the society.

(XLV) *Efula yekanyirisa omwayi.*

(The rain pleaded with the herdsman.)

The deeper meaning [Wales (1989:437)] of the proverb is that people should learn to heed the advice that is given by others. The proverb encourages young people to listen to the wise counsel of their elders.

(XLVI) *Okisa malwaye amarire kakhubule.*

(Whoever hides sickness the symptoms will reveal him.)

The deeper meaning of the above proverb is that no one can keep a secret forever. Therefore, people who think that they can hide things from others should be aware that their folly may be exposed

(XLVII) *Odeba omutwe nio okukinga.*

(Whoever worries about the head carries it.)

The speaker's intended meaning [Levinson (1983:16)] is that everyone has his or her own problems. Hence, a problem can only be solved by the person who is experiencing the particular problem

(XLVIII) *Okhusandia akhuta alayi.*

(The one who torments you puts you in a better position.)

In order for people to succeed in life, they have to endure and overcome obstacles that come in their way. The proverb encourages young people to persevere difficulties in order to make it in life.

(XLIX) *Esibikhe nesirie enyanga indi.*

(What is kept can be eaten on another day.)

The conveyed meaning [ Levinson (1983:17) ] in the given proverb is that people should learn to save for the future. For instance, if a farmer harvests a lot of crops from his or her farm, then the farmer should strive to store food for future use

(L) *Engwe nenjalaba niyakheta nirira adiyu.*

(A leopard is fierce but when it kills a prey it eats in secret.)

The deeper meaning [ Wales (1989:437) ] of the above proverb is that not everyone who fights for the rights of others, has the interests of the latter at heart. In other words, people will always strive to cater for their own needs.

(LI) *Owambere ekulo amanya amba nyanga yino.*

(The one who gave me yesterday will give me today.)

If a person helps you, when you are in problems. Then it is most likely that the particular person will help you again. The proverb encourages young people to be helpful when they meet needy people.

(LII) *Amakesi mangi kakera eriaka lio ngema libwao.*

(Many ideas made the prey to get away.)

The conveyed meaning of the proverb is that when people are disunited, they cannot solve problems. This will be evident in the way the people will quarrel and fight each other before they agree on a common course of action.

(LIII) *Mba akhasinde khatakhina ombuboka.*

(There is no great task that has no end.)

The proverb points out that everything on earth has a beginning and also an end. Therefore, young people are encouraged to work hard in school, so that they can become successful people in society at the end of their schooling.

(LIV) *Esimba orisukuna nesero riayo.*

(You throw the mongoose with its skin.)

The deeper meaning [Wales (1989:437)] of the above proverb is that when a person wants to stop indulging in bad behaviour, then he or she should also avoid friends who have bad influence on him or her. This proverb aims to foster good behavior among the youth.

(LV) *Okhinda khufwa khukhera wabona akolukano.*

(A long life makes one to see wonders.)

The speaker's intended meaning is that the elderly people in society are more experienced and wiser than the young people. Therefore, the youth should heed the advice of their elders, who are more experienced in the ways of the world.

(LVI) *Obwa muriato abuyesa.*

(If one gets out of a boat, it becomes lighter.)

If a person has a problem, and he or she seeks help from others then the problem can be solved. The proverb emphasizes the need for cooperation in society in dealing with common challenges.

### 3.1.2 UNITY PROVERBS

Proverbs on unity deal with how people work together in the society to achieve common goals.

The researcher has therefore presented a list of the collected unity proverbs together with their interpretation. This is shown below:

(LVII) *khuyasire alala nga amake.*

(We co-operate together like termites.)

The deeper meaning [ Wales (1989:437) ] of the given proverb is that members of a community who are united are able to succeed in their endeavours, while those who are not united will fail.

(LVIII) *Fingulu sichibukananga nabandu babukananga.*

(Mountains never meet but people meet.)

Mountains are inanimate objects which cannot be moved from one place to another. Thus, the conveyed meaning of the given proverb is that people from various backgrounds can work together regardless of their differences.

(LIX) *Mulala simundu babiri nabandu.*

(One is not people but two are people.)

In this proverb, the speaker points out that where there are two or more people then issues can be discussed. Hence, the deeper meaning of the proverb is that a person cannot exist alone in society as he or she will eventually have to seek the help of other members of the community.

(LX) *Eyubala babiri yiba yesikire amabere.*

(If you give birth to two children, you are assured of milk.)

The expressed meaning [ Ulmann (1964: 100) ] of the above proverb is that people who have relatives cannot be lonely, as the latter will always be there to keep them company. On the other hand, a person who does not have a family will always feel lonely as there will be no one to console them in times of grief.



(LXI) *Wekhuba yibarira oti bamba.*

(You can meet people and think they are rejoicing yet they are crying.)

The speaker's intended meaning in the proverb is that people who pretend to be better than others may end up being worse off. For instance, a person who boasts about his wealth may turn out to be a big liar who owns nothing.

### 3.1.3 KINSHIP PROVERBS

Kinship proverbs focus on issues relating to family relationships. With this in mind, the following is an interpretation of the collected kinship proverbs.

(LXII) *Engu yaambi yikhula yakhulekhi olwande.*

(A hyena that is familiar will eat you half way.)

The deeper meaning [ Wales (1989:437) ] of the proverb is that people who are close to you may plot for your downfall, but when it comes to the execution of their evil scheme, they may not have the courage to finish you. The proverb teaches young people about the importance of blood relations.

(LXIII) *Wanambwa sialilekha omusokonyali kwangina.*

(The dog does not leave its mother's behaviour )

The metaphorical meaning [ Leech (1969:147) ] of the above proverb is that people will always behave according to the way they were brought up by their parents. Therefore, adults who had strict parents will most likely have good manners, while those adults who were raised by wayward parents may turn out to be social misfits

(LXIV) *Ochaowabwe suomuberekha.*

(A person is going to his house is not sent.)

This proverb warns people [Umann (1964:100) ] against interfering in the business of others. In this regard, people should be left to carry on with their day-to-day activities without being disturbed by nosy neighbours.

(LXV) *Mama akhulanga aba akhubwene.*

(When your mother calls you she has seen you.)

The conveyed meaning in the given proverb reveals that it is only our parents who can point out the faults in our characters. Hence, people should learn to respect and obey their elders, who in the African community are viewed as guardians

(LXVI) *Esimba yikona abakwana.*

( Twins sleep in the same cottage.)

This proverb encourages people to foster strong bonds in their families. Therefore, people who are related to each other through family ties should learn to work and live together without fighting each other.

(LXVII) *Nambula mwikho ayamba omwicha.*

(The one without a relative gets a friend.)

The intended message [ Levinson ( 1983:16) ] of the above proverb is that people should be friendly with each other. The reason for this friendship is that unity can only be achieved in a community if the people living in that community, are ready to treat each other as friends and not as enemies.

(LXVIII) *Olinga nga esinde ederwa.*

(You look like solitary grass.)

The deeper meaning of the given proverb is that people who are mean in society are always lonely. This is because no one wants to associate with a person who is selfish, and who does not like to share his or her things with others.

(LXIX) *Wakhaya mama nenda baba orikenda mbwera.*

(You hate your father and mother you will walk till sun set.)

The deeper meaning of the given proverb is that young people who disobey their parents always end up as failures in life. Thus, people should learn to respect and observe what their elders tell them.

(LXX) *Otakerakirwa yacha nako ebukwe.*

(The person who does not heed advice goes with bad behaviour to his in-laws.)

People who are not ready to change their behaviour are warned by this proverb, that their bad ways will one day bring them great shame and embarrassment.

(LXXI) *Esibulao sisita lwikho.*

(What is not there does not stop relations.)

The deeper meaning of this proverb is that close ties in a family cannot be broken by trivial things. For instance, a person cannot end his relations with his in-laws just because the latter are not rich enough.

(LXXII) *Namusala mudidi kukhurira muchindi.*

(A small tree grows among others.)

Small children are brought up in close-knit communities. Therefore, the speaker's intended meaning [ Levinson (1983: 16) ] is that a person's behaviour is largely determined by the way he or she was brought up.

(LXXIII) *Makhino mabi siketa obwicha.*

(A bad dance does not kill friendship.)

The deeper meaning of this proverb is that strong family bonds cannot be broken by minor differences. The proverb encourages family members to strengthen their ties.

### 3.1.4 SOCIAL DECADENCE PROVERBS

Social decadence proverbs address matters of morality in society. In this regard, the following is a presentation of the proverbs that deal with immorality in society.

(LXXIV) *Embwa njibi yekula omukongo.*

(A thieving dog hurts its back)

The metaphorical meaning [Leech (1969:147)] of the given proverb is that people who engage in crime eventually come to regret their actions. Therefore, a person who steals may end up in prison or even worse he or she may lose his or her life.

(LXXV) *Echiabangi chichira mucho omwami.*

(That which belongs to the many goes to the great one.)

The conveyed meaning (Levinson (1983:17)) in the above proverb is that people who have power in society, in this case the leaders of the community will always benefit from the sweat of those that they lead.

(LXXVI) *Okhuba nolia akhuba mao nobona.*

(Whoever gives you something to eat, beats your mother in your presence.)

The speaker's intended meaning [Levinson (1983:16)] in the use of this utterance is to show us that people who are always willing to help us, may just have the intention to manipulate us.

(LXXVII) *Okhuchuvanga yakhwekane.*

(The one who incites your will deny you )

The deeper meaning of this proverb is that people who encourage us to engage in negative acts usually disown us, when we get into trouble because of our bad behaviour. Therefore, the proverb teaches us to avoid bad company.

(LXXVIII) *Okalilenge mbu ne mundu khane nengwe.*

(He thought he was a person yet it was a hyena.)

The conveyed meaning in the above proverb is that people are not always good. The reason for this is that people who we consider to be close friends may end up betraying us.

(LXXIX) *Omundu mukata abachira embako.*

( A lazy person blames his or her tools.)

The metaphorical meaning of the proverb is that people who are unsuccessful in life always try to find people to blame for their predicament. The proverb warns people against shifting blame when they fail in life.

### 3.1.5 GENDER PROVERBS

Proverbs on gender deal with the sexual classification of people in society in terms of status and role. In this regard, the following are gender proverbs from the Samia community.

(LXXX) *Nikhukhira nekwi khukhira nende ekokhe.*

(If I have more firewood, I will have more ash.)

The deeper meaning of this proverb is that women, who are industrious are able to look after their families. This means that they are able to look after the needs of their families well.

(LXXXI) *Linda bunyite yalia nabakeni.*

(The person who waits for food to cool eats with visitors.)

The deeper meaning of the proverb is that people who are lazy will always be held in contempt by the rest of the community. The proverb encourages people to be hardworking so that they are not ridiculed by other members of society.

(LXXXII) *Mumukunda esikoingogo sisikosamo.*

(In a garden you cannot miss a piece of broken pot.)

The speaker's intended meaning in this proverb is that not everyone in the society is morally upright as one may expect. Hence, a person should be surprised if they meet people, who do things that are contrary to the social norms.

(LXXXIII) *Epusi niriturure embeba esangala.*

(If the cat goes out, the mouse will be happy.)

The conveyed meaning of the proverb is that a wife will lead the home when the husband is not there. The proverb encourages married couples to respect the role each partner plays in marriage.

(LXXXIV) *Nalukhwi luwetenyere lukhuniere omwosi.*

(The firewood that you collect will produce smoke.)

The deeper meaning of this proverb is that women who are hardworking will always succeed in their roles as mothers, wives and cooks.

### **3.1.6 HOSPITALITY PROVERBS**

Hospitality proverbs are concerned with the friendly and generous treatment and entertainments of people in a society. Therefore, the researcher has presented the following interpretation of hospitality proverbs from the Kisamia community.

(LXXXV) *Mulimba akhila omutekusi*

(The one who gives is better than one who is mean.)

The speaker's intended meaning in the given proverb is that a person who is generous is treated more favorably than the one who is mean.

(LXXXVI) *Omunyu kworeka nikwo kuwikutera.*

(The soup that you ignore can satisfy you.)

The conveyed meaning of the given proverb is that we should not take people who are close to us for granted. This is because they may be helpful to us in times of need. The proverb is used to encourage young people to value friendship and honesty.

### **3.2 DATA ANALYSIS PROCEDURES**

The collected Kisamia proverbs were transcribed in the first language before being translated into English. Thereafter, the proverbs were interpreted to get their meaning and relevance to the study. This was achieved through in-depth interviews and discussions carried out with the respondents who were conversant with Samia culture. The interviews and discussions focused on the conveyed meaning and functions of Kisamia proverbs.

## CHAPTER FOUR : DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

### 4.0 PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

The data collected in the field through participant observation and interviews with respondents from the Samia community is presented and discussed in this chapter. Furthermore, the analysis of the Kisamia proverbs will be grounded in the stylopragmatic model which is derived from both the stylistics and pragmatics fields of study.

### 4.1. DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

The following discussion will focus on the form, functions and figurative meaning of a selected number of Kisamia proverbs. Hence, the researcher will aim to establish the relationship that exists between the functions, form and conveyed meaning of Kisamia proverbs using the stylopragmatic model.

#### 4.1.1 Cautionary Proverbs

The aim of these proverbs is to give advice or warning to the hearers. Cautionary proverbs aim to encourage members of the community to adhere to the accepted social norms in the society. Therefore, a detailed list of all the collected cautionary proverbs from the Samia community is given in the appendix.

(i) *Olwali Khunguli lwakhole Khukhubi.*

(Whatever happened to the peas will happen to the kales.)

In the Samia community, both “khunguli”(peas) and “khukhubi” (kales) are vegetables that are eaten by the members of the community. Therefore, what happens to one vegetable in this instance, is what will happen to another vegetable. The principal here is that what affects one thing may also affect another thing. In the given proverb the two noun phrases that is



“Khunguli” (peas) and “Khukhubi” (Kales) are used as metonymys [ Leech (1969:152) ]. Therefore, the two vegetables are associated with members of the community and hence used as a substitute name for the referents in the given context. The noun phrase, “Khunguli” (Peas) and “Khukhubi” (Kale) which act as subject and object respectively in the above sentence [Wales ( 1989:183) ] are used by the speaker to demonstrate how misfortune can befall anyone in society. The conveyed meaning [ Levinson ( 1983:17) ] of the proverb is therefore that bad luck does not choose its victim. Thus, the proverb has the function of encouraging people especially the youth to be sympathetic and helpful towards their fellow man. Metaphorical language [ Leech (1969:151) ] is evident in the given proverb through the use of inanimate objects. In this case, as already mentioned there is the use of two inanimate objects that is “Khunguli” (Peas) and “Khukhubi” (Kales) to describe the human population. The basis for the use of the metaphorical languages is to conceal the speakers intended meaning, which in this regard is to warn people that misfortune can affect anyone in society as clearly described in the proverb.

(ii) *Dondo yafwa Dondo yasiukha.*

( Dondo died Dondo resurrected.)

In this proverb the name “*Dondo*” can be used to symbolize [ Wales (1989:445) ] any member of the community. The significance of this is that in life as indicated by the proverb an individual will pass through several phases. In other words, there is time to die and there is also the time to resurrect, which metaphorically means your soul leaving your body. The noun phrase “*Dondo*” which acts as the subject of the sentence is used as a synecdoche [ Leech (1969:150) ] The reason behind this is that the noun “*Dondo*” which is the name of a person is used as a representation for the members of the speech community. This is clearly emphasized through the repeated use of the noun phrase, “*Dondo*”

which is a substitute referent for the people in the community. The clause “*Dondo yasiukha*” (Dondo resurrected) alludes [ Myers (1989:136) ] to overcoming one’s obstacles, as the act of resurrecting is considered an extraordinary feat in the Samia community.

The deeper meaning [ Wales (1989:437) ] of the proverb can therefore be interpreted to mean that when a person fails in one task, he or she should not lose hope as they may succeed in another. From this interpretation it is evident that the proverb is used to encourage people to persevere in all their endeavours and not to get discouraged.

(iii) *Khalimi khalai khakonia wanangwe khumukutu.*

(The sweet tongue made the hyena to sleep on the doorstep.)

The tongue is used by people to communicate. In this regard, a person who knows how to communicate with others will always succeed in his or her endeavours. The reason for this is that people will always listen to speakers who are persuasive in their talk.

The synecdoche, “*Khalimi khalai*” (The sweet tongue) which is the subject of the above proverb is used as reference to a person who is persuasive with his or her talk. On the other hand, the object of the sentence which is the noun phrase, “*wanangwe*” (Hyena) symbolizes “evil people” whereby the noun “hyena” had negative connotations of greed, dishonesty and laziness among Kisamia speakers. The figurative meaning of the proverb is that when a person uses his or her intelligence they can overcome their enemies. The proverb is directed at young people so as to persuade them to use their wit instead of relying on brawn to solve problems.

(iv) *Otachekhera akhato khali ebusiba okotwanga esirimo.*

(Don’t laugh at a sinking boat ; you do not know what is inside.)

Members of the Samia community use small boats as a means of transport when they are travelling or going out to fish in order to earn their livelihood. Therefore, many people use the

boat in their day to day activities. Hence, a boat accident can happen to anyone in the community. The noun phrase, "*Akhato khali ebusiba*" ( a sinking boat) symbolizes a predicament that may befall someone. In this context the speaker's intended meaning [ Levinson (1983:16) ] is that a community cannot ignore the suffering of its members. The conveyed meaning is clearly emphasized in the predicate of the sentence, which is "*Okotwangwa esirimo*" (you do not know what is in). This predicate alludes to the unpredictable nature of life, whereby problems which are thought to affect only one person can affect the whole community. This proverb is useful in teaching people about the importance of having empathy for others.

(v) *Endalo chakhira obwoya bwe engombe.*

(Days are more than the hide of cows )

The expressed message in the above proverb [Ulmann (1964 :100) ] is that the number of cows in the community cannot be compared to the passage of time. The reason behind this is that the passage of time which is represented by days is infinite or in other words it cannot be measured. On the other hand, people can still measure the number of cattle in the community. Furthermore, cows which are living things are mortal and hence have an end in contrast to time which has no limit.

The noun phrase "*Endalo*" (Days) is a synecdoche which represents the passage of time while the noun phrase "*Obwoya bwe engombe*" (The hide of cows) represents wealth that is owned by an individual. Thus, the conveyed meaning of the proverb is that a person who lives for a long time is better off than a fellow rich-man. This is because the Samia believe that people become wiser as they grow older which is more important than amassing wealth

(vi) *Omusala muterere kuninangwa nende owakumanya.*

(A slippery tree is climbed by the one who knows it.)

The speaker's intended meaning in the given proverb is that [ Levinson ( 1983 :17) ]

it is not easy for a person to climb a tree if he or she is not an experienced climber. In this regard, people who are poor in climbing trees may get serious injuries if they fall down from a tree. Therefore, tree climbing should be left to skilled people who are able.

The subject of the proverb that is the noun phrase, "*Omusala muterere*" (a slippery tree) symbolizes the challenges a person may face in life. Thus, the speaker's intended meaning is to point out that if a person wants to solve a problem, then he or she should seek advice from an experienced person.

(vii) *Esiduyu yabolela abiro mbwe olukendo silibwa.*

(The hare told the mourners that the journey does not end.)

Among the Samia people, the hare which is a very small animal is considered to be a very clever animal by the way it is able to outwit its enemies. Furthermore, the hare is a common protagonist in kisamia folklore where it is described as possessing the wit to defeat its main enemies in the animal kingdom.

There is the use of personification [Wales (1989: 349) ] in the above proverb, whereby the subject of the sentence, "*Esiduyu*" (The hare) is assigned human qualities. In this regard, the hare which is considered to be a clever animal is described as having advised mourners. The conveyed meaning of the proverb is that life is filled with obstacles which people should strive to overcome, as clearly described in the predicate of the sentence.

(viii) *Otatebanga sibalima khungila.*

(Do not question what is planted on the footpath.)

People who are walking along a footpath should not worry about what is growing in their path. This is because by being worried they will get distracted in their goal which in this case is to finish their journey and reach their destination on time.

In the above proverb, life is metaphorically [ Leech (1969: 151) ] described as “*Khungila*” (Footpath). The reason for this description is that life just like a footpath is filled with many obstacles. Therefore, the conveyed meaning of the given proverb is simply that people should not worry about what the future holds, as nobody knows his or her destiny. The proverb encourages young people to be optimistic about the future.

(ix) *Otala esero notabona omwana.*

(Do not lay the hide before you see the unborn one.)

Men who prepare in advance the hide on which their new born baby will lie on are warned against doing this. The reason for this warning is that they may be greatly disappointed if the expected baby is not born on the day they had planned for.

The main clause of the given sentence in this case “*Otala esero*” (Do not lay the hide) alludes [Myers (1989:136) ] to a person making plans about future events. Therefore, the speaker’s intended meaning in the above proverb is that we should not make plans for things that have not materialized as we may get disappointed if they do not happen.

(x) *Yatulakho ngomubeki.*

(He left empty handed like a barber.)

The metaphorical message of the given proverb is that the person who shaves others cannot carry to his home the hair he or she has shaved from the heads of other people. The hair is useless to the barber as he or she cannot eat a person's hair.

The simile, "*Ngomubeki*" (Like a barber) is used as a comparison between a person who gets nothing from performing a task and a barber who can not take hair as payment after shaving a person. The conveyed meaning [ Levinson ( 1983:17) of the proverb is that we should not expect to benefit from everything we do.

(xi) *Omukhulu kubitanga yikwabita.*

(A stream passes through its original path.)

A stream will always pass through its original path even after a long dry spell where there was scarcity of rain water which resulted in the death of crops and animals.

The noun phrase, "*Omukhulu*" (a stream) alludes to a person's life. The conveyed meaning of the proverb is that no matter how hard anyone tries; he or she can't run away from their heritage. The proverb is directed at young people, who due to one reason or another adopt foreign cultures and in the process forget their own background.

(xii) *Olonda embako ahira olonda omwami.*

(Who follows a hoe is better than the one who follows a leader.)

People who farm are able to support themselves as they are able to plant various foodstuffs and thus support their families. In contrast, people who are lazy and only hope for handouts from others always lead a difficult life.

In the given proverb, the act of working is metaphorically described as, "*Olonda embako*" (Following a hoe). On the other hand, sycophancy is also metaphorically depicted as, "*Olonda omwami*" (Following a leader). The conveyed meaning of the proverb can be interpreted as follows: People who work hard can support themselves while those who are lazy always depend on others.

(xiii) *Ekhwi chebula ekokhe.*

(Fire wood produces Ash.)

The expression “*Ekhwi chebula ekokhe*” alludes to uniformity. In this context, the speaker points out that when you burn firewood you will only get ash and nothing else. Thus, the speaker’s intended meaning [ Levinson (1983:16) ] in the proverb is that good people will always engage in positive actions while bad people will carry out negative acts.

(xiv) *Efula yekanyirisa omwayi.*

(The rain pleaded with the herdsman.)

If there is no rain in the society, then there will be a draught which will affect everyone in the community. The draught in this context will lead to the death of animals and crops.

The result of this will be that people will suffer from hunger and many of them will die.

There is the use of personification in the given proverb, whereby the subject of the proverb, “*Efula*” (The rain) is described as having pleaded with the herdsman. In this regard, the deeper meaning of the proverb can be analyzed to mean that people should learn to heed advice given by others. The proverb encourages young people to listen to the wise counsel of their elders, who just like the rain are invaluable to the community in terms of their experience and wisdom.

(xv) *Odeba omutwe nio okukinga.*

(Whoever worries about the head carries it.)

The noun phrase, “*Omutwe*” (The head) is used as a metonymy [Leech (1969:152) ], which refers to a person’s problems or worries. Everyone in society has a head which they use to think and solve problems. In this context, the head is associated with the problems that

preoccupy people's minds. Therefore the conveyed meaning of the proverb is that everyone in the world is faced with different challenges.

(xvii) *Esimba orisukuna nesero riayo*

(You throw the Mongoose with its skin.)

The object of the above proverb, the noun phrase, "*Esimba*" (Mongoose) alludes to something that is undesirable or bad. In this case if a person kills a mongoose, he or she will throw it away with its skin because of the bad smell it produces. Therefore, the speaker's intended meaning is that when you want to stop indulging in bad behaviour, then you should also avoid the friends who influence you to behave badly.

#### 4.1.2 Unity Proverbs

Proverbs on unity deal with how people work together in the society to achieve common goals. Unity proverbs aim to promote social cohesion in the society. In this regard, a comprehensive list of proverbs on unity collected from the Samia community is given in the appendix.

(xviii) *Khuyasire alala nga amake.*

(We co-operate together like termites.)

There is the use of a simile [ Wales (1989:235) ] in the given proverb, whereby members of a community are compared to termites. This comparison is in terms of communal work whereby termites work hard to build the mounds in which they live in. Thus, the deeper meaning of the proverb is that members of a community who are united are able to succeed in their endeavours while those who are not united will fail.

(xix) *Engulu sichibukanangũ nabandu babukananga.*

(Mountains never meet but people meet.)

The synecdoche [ Leech (1969:150) ], "*Engulu*" (Mountains) is used as a representation for the countries, from which various people come from. In this context mountains are inanimate



objects which cannot move from one place to another. Therefore, the conveyed meaning of the above proverb is that people from various backgrounds can work together regardless of their differences.

(xix) *Mulala simundu babiri nabandu.*

(One is not people but two are people.)

The subordinate clause, “*Babiri nabundu*” (Two are people) alludes to social interaction between people. In this context the speaker points out that if there are two or more people, then issues can be discussed. Hence, the conveyed meaning of the proverb is that a person cannot exist alone in a community as he or she will eventually have to seek the help of other members.

(xx) *Wekhuba yibarira oti bamba.*

(You can meet people and think they are rejoicing yet they are crying)

Irony [ Wales ( 1989:263) ] as a figurative device is clearly shown in the above proverb, whereby people who are assumed to be happy and rejoicing are found to be mourning. The speaker’s intended meaning in the proverb is that people who pretend to be better than others may end up being worse off.

### **4.1.3 Kinship Proverbs**

Kinship proverbs focus on issues relating to family relationships. Kisamia speakers use kinship proverbs to promote family ties in the community. In this respect, a full list of kinship proverbs is given in the appendix.

(xxi) *Engu yaambi yikhula yakhulekha olwande.*

(A Hyena that is familiar will only eat you half-way)

The given noun phrase, “*Engu yaambi*” (a hyena that is familiar) alludes to close relatives. The conveyed meaning of the proverb is that people who are close to you may plot for your downfall, but when it comes to the execution of their evil scheme, they may not have the courage to finish you. The proverb teaches young people about the importance of blood relations.

(xxii) *Mama akhulanga aba akhubwene*

(When your mother calls you she has seen you)

The subject of the proverb, “*Mama*” (mother) is used in this context to symbolize the elderly people in the community. The reason for this is that it is only our parents who can point out the faults in our characters. The significance of this symbolism is that older people are associated with wisdom and experience. Therefore, the deeper meaning of the proverb is that people should learn to respect and obey their elders, who in the African community are considered to be guardians.

(xxiii) *Esimba yikona abakwana.*

(Twins sleep in the same cottage.)

The noun phrase, “*Abakwana*” (Twins) alludes [ Myers ( 1989: 136) ] to a family set up, whereby people who are related to each other by birth live together. The conveyed meaning of the proverb is that people who are from the same family should maintain close ties with each other.

(xxiv) *Namusala mudidi kukhura muchindi.*

(A small tree grows among others.)

People usually grow small trees where the soil is fertile so that the trees can grow into big trees which can be used for their timber

In the given proverb, the noun phrase, “*Namusala*” (small tree) is used to symbolize a small child, who in this context is described as being brought up in a close-knit community. It is therefore clear that the speaker’s intended meaning is that a person’s behaviour is largely determined by the way he or she was brought up.

(xxv) *Makhino mabi siketa obwicha.*

(A bad dance does not kill friendship.)

Two friends dancing together cannot end their relationship because one of them cannot dance. Thus, good friends cannot quarrel over trivial matters. There is the use of allusion in the given proverb, whereby the noun phrase, “*Makhino mabi*” (a bad dance) alludes to the conflict that may arise between close friends. The deeper meaning of this proverb is that strong family bonds cannot be broken by minor differences. The proverb encourages family members to strengthen their ties.

#### 4.1.4 Social Decadence Proverbs

Proverbs that focus on social decadence aim at highlighting matters of morality in society. Social decadence proverbs are used in the Samia community to instill proper behaviour in the members of the community. With this in mind, a list of the collected proverbs on social decadence is given in the appendix.

(xxvi) *Okalilenge mbu ne mundu khane nengwe.*

(He though he was a person yet it was a Hyena.)

The hyena is a wild animal which is associated with vices such as greed and laziness.

Therefore, the noun phrase, “Hyena” is used to allude to evil people. In this context the hearer is being warned to be wary of bad people. The conveyed meaning of the given proverb is that people who are close to you may turn out to be dangerous and untrustworthy. The proverb aims at encouraging young people to keep good company.

(xxvii) *Enyende ndala yobosa olwoba.*

(One jigger made the mushroom to rot.)

Jiggers are small parasites which infect mushrooms. If they are not controlled,

they can destroy the whole plant. The subject of the sentence, “*Enyende*” (One jigger) acts as a synecdoche which is a representation of a person with bad behavior. The speaker’s intended meaning is to point out that a bad person in any social group, may end up misleading the rest of the members.

(xxviii) *Nangombe dwasi ekendera omunyira.*

(A bad cow is taken to the market to be sold.)

If a cow is sick, the farmer will have no alternative but to sell it.

In the above proverb, the noun phrase, “*Nangombe dwasi*”, (Bad cow) symbolizes deviant behaviour in society. Thus, the deeper meaning of the proverb is that people who do not adhere to social norms run the risk of becoming social outcasts.

(xxix) *Bakhukaba engota nawe ori khusiaku.*

(They want to give you a bunch of bananas but you only require one banana.)

The synecdoche, “*Engota*” (bunch of bananas) is used in the above proverb to represent a person’s wealth, in the form of farming land. The figurative meaning of the proverb is that people who are corrupt always try to amass more wealth than they actually require.

#### 4.1.5 Gender Proverbs

Proverbs on gender deal with the sexual classification of people in society in terms of status and role. A comprehensive list of gender proverbs has been given in the appendix.

(xxx) *Mumukunda esikoingogo sisikosamo.*

(In a garden you cannot miss a piece of broken pot.)

When a person walks through a garden he or she cannot fail to find broken pieces of pots as women in the Samia community usually throw broken pots into their gardens.

The noun phrase, “*Mumukunda*” (Garden) alludes to the society in general while the noun phrase “*Esikoingogo*” indirectly refers to a young lady who is badly behaved. The speaker’s intended meaning in this proverb is that not everyone in the society is morally upright as one may expect. Hence, a person should not be surprised if they meet people, who do things that are contrary to social norms.

(xxx1) *Nalukhwi luwetenyere lukhuniera omwosi.*

(The firewood that you collect will produce smoke.)

The only way a person can light a fire so as to cook is by collecting enough firewood which they can use for cooking. The clause, “*Nalukhwi luwetenyere*” (The firewood that you collect) alludes to the industrious nature of women. Therefore, the deeper meaning of this proverb is that women who are hard working will always succeed in their roles as mothers, wives and cooks. The proverb is mainly directed at young women so as to encourage them to develop the virtue of diligence.

(xxxii) *Epusi niriturire embeba esangala.*

(If the cat goes out, the mouse will be happy.)

Cats always chase mice. Therefore, in the absence of the cat the mice are able to play.

In this proverb the noun phrase, “*Epusi*” (Cat) alludes to the man who is the head of the family, while the noun phrase, “*Embeba*” (mouse) alludes to the woman who in this context is the wife. The conveyed meaning of the proverb is that a wife will lead the home when the husband is not there.

#### 4.1.6 Hospitality Proverbs

Hospitality proverbs are concerned with the friendly treatment and entertainment of people in a society

(xxxiii) *Mulimba akhila omutekusi*

(The one who gives is better than one who is mean)

The noun phrase, “*Mulimba*” (The one who gives) alludes to the virtue of generosity. On the other hand, the noun phrase “*Omutekusi*” refers to people in society who are mean. Therefore, the speaker’s intended meaning in the given proverb is that a person who is generous is treated more favourably than the one who is mean.

(xxxiv) *Omunyu kuworeka nikwo kuwikutera.*

(The soup that you ignore can satisfy you more.)

The soup that people ignore during mealtime may turn out to be the best.

In the above proverb the noun phrase “*Omunyu*” (soup) alludes to close friends. The conveyed meaning of the given proverb is that we should not take people who are close to us for granted. This is because they may be helpful to us in times of need. The proverb is used to encourage people to value friendship and honesty.

## 4.2. SOCIAL AND LINGUISTIC FUNCTIONS OF KISAMIA PROVERBS

Proverbs in the Kisamia community have various functions as indicated in the discussion of the findings. These functions can be classified into two broad groups that is social and linguistic. In this regard, the social functions of Kisamia proverbs can be described as follows: firstly, Kisamia proverbs are used as a medium through which, the society passes on its moral values to the younger generation. Therefore, Kisamia proverbs are used to instill in young people virtues like honesty, diligence, obedience, perseverance, generosity, friendship and forgiveness. Furthermore, the speakers employ the proverbs so as to discourage vices like laziness, greed, jealousy, disobedience and theft

Secondly, proverbs enable members of the community to make sound judgment on their life and issues that affect them. This is clearly shown in the use of cautionary proverbs, which aim to advise or warn the hearers. Thus, proverbs, which convey social norms in society have a great influence on the way people act in the Samia community.

Thirdly, Kisamia reflect aspects of a people’s culture. Therefore, the analysis of Kisamia proverbs is able to give a clear picture of the cultural practices of the Samia people. In this

case, the analysis of the collected proverbs shows that the Kisamia speakers belong to an agrarian society that practices farming and herding of cattle. In addition, the community is also patriarchal whereby the man is viewed as the head of the family and hence the breadwinner, while the women are described as homemakers and mothers in the community.

Finally, proverbs reflect the speaker's social identity. In this study, the discussion of the findings shows that the proverbs were collected from a rural community that values virtues like diligence, honesty, generosity, obedience and friendship. Furthermore, the proverbs also showed that the Samia speakers are not greatly influenced by modern lifestyles, whereby symbols of modern living such as television, radios, vehicles and telephones are not mentioned in the proverbs.

On the other hand, the linguistic functions of Kisamia proverbs can be depicted as follows: first, proverbs enable speakers to be creative in the use of language. This creativity is clearly shown through the use of figurative devices as evident in most of the collected proverbs in this study. Some of the figurative devices that have been used in the Kisamia proverbs are similes, metaphors, synecdoche and personification which helps the speaker to mean more than what they literally say or write.

Second, the use of proverbs improves the art of collocation among the speakers. Thus, the Kisamia speakers are able to collocate lexical items in Kisamia proverbs so as to effectively pass on their message. Third, proverbs are a means through which a speaker can acquire oratory skills. The reason for this is that proverbs make language to be flowery and forceful. Thus, a speaker who uses proverbs is able to attract the hearer's attention and hence transmit his or her virtues to the audience.

Lastly, proverbs stimulate critical analysis of speech by the hearers. In this regard, the hearer has to use his knowledge and experience of the Kisamia language, so as to analyze the speaker's intended meaning in the proverbs.

# **CHAPTER FIVE : SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

## **5.0 SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following is a presentation of the summary, conclusions and recommendations reached for this study.

### **5.1 SUMMARY**

This study deals with the relationship that exists between the form, functions and figurative meaning of Kisamia proverbs. The research had the following objectives : to show how the figurative meaning of Kisamia proverbs is realized through the analysis of the linguistic form and functions of the proverbs; to highlight the use of figurative devices in Kisamia proverbs; and finally to classify Kisamia proverbs on the basis of social and communicative functions

This project was based on the stylopragmatic model which is derived from both the stylistics and pragmatics fields of study. The strengths of this model are that it deals adequately with the issue of meaningfulness whereby Grice (1957) in his theory of non-natural meaning posits that meaningful sentences or expressions convey a belief and meaningless ones do not. Hence, proverbs which are short and precise statements which tersely express some kind of truth as described by Finnegan (1971:393), are classified as meaningful on the basis of the stylopragmatic model. Furthermore, the theory focuses on the speaker's intended meaning in an utterance and not the hearer's interpretation. Therefore the problem of ambiguity is avoided in the interpretation of the proverbs.



In the collection of the data, one hundred Kisamia proverbs were collected from twelve Kisamia speakers. The ages of the respondents ranges from twenty to seventy years. The methods of data collection that were used by the researcher were participant observation and interviews with the respondents. The collected Kisamia proverbs were first transcribed in the first language before being translated into English.

The findings of this study show that Kisamia proverbs can be classified on the basis of function in the following manner, that is cautionary proverbs, unity proverbs, gender proverbs, kinship proverbs, social decadence proverbs and hospitality proverbs. The discussion of the research findings shows that the conveyed meaning in Kisamia proverbs is closely linked to the linguistic form and functions of the proverbs.

The researcher also found out that the use of figurative devices is an integral part of Kisamia proverbs. Hence, from the analysis of Kisamia proverbs the following figures of speech can be identified. These are synecdoche, metaphors, metonymy, similes, personification, allusion, irony and repetition.

Lastly, the study reveals that the conveyed meaning in Kisamia proverbs is closely linked to the linguistic form and functions of the proverbs.

## **5.2 CONCLUSIONS**

The following conclusions were reached on the basis of the discussion that was carried out in this project.

Firstly, the research findings show that the figurative meaning of Kisamia proverbs is realized through the analysis of the linguistic form and functions of the proverbs.

Secondly, the use of figurative devices is an integral part of Kisamia proverb as evident from the discussion of the research findings. In this respect, the following figures of speech can be identified that is personification, similes, metonymy, synecdoche, metaphors, irony, allusion and repetition.

Thirdly, Kisamia proverbs can be classified on the basis of social and communicative functions. This classification gives the following groups of Kisamia proverbs, that is kinship proverbs, social decadence proverbs, hospitality proverbs, unity proverbs, gender proverbs and cautionary proverbs.

Finally, this study was able to show that there is a close relationship between the form, functions and figurative meaning of Kisamia proverbs.

### **5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

This research focused on the relationship that exists between the form, functions and figurative meaning of Kisamia proverbs. However, the study did not address other forms of oral literature where there is an interrelationship between the linguistic form, functions and figurative meaning. Therefore, the researcher proposes that a study should be carried out with the aim of investigating the form, functions and figurative meaning of Kisamia oral poetry using the stylopragmatic model. The study should also aim at classifying the collected songs on the basis of social and communicative functions.

## APPENDIX (KISAMIA PROVERBS)

### CAUTIONARY PROVERBS

These are proverbs that give advice or warning to the hearers. They are listed below:

1. *Nambwano changwa munyuma.*

What you did in the past will follow you.

2. *Atakerakirwa yaca nako ebukhwe.*

Whoever doesn't accept advice will do the same at his in-laws.

3. *Kenda kala yola eyale.*

The slow one reached far.

4. *Olwali khunguli lwakhole khukhubi.*

Whatever happened to the seeds will happen to the vegetables.

5. *Njila chaya eyao ibakhomo.*

They are grazing yours must be there.

6. *Dondo yafwa Dondo yasiukha.*

Dondo died Dondo resurrected.

7. *Okwendaya okwotera eyale.*

When the fire is too hot you warm yourself from afar.

8. *Esiakhaya eyaywa omuyaka kukwisire.*

Whatever an axe cannot do the wind will do it for you.

9. *Omukofu akhutusa murina.*

An old man will remove you from the hole.

10. *Namwana oghenda akhira ngina amakesi.*

A child who walks is wiser than the mother.

11. *Khateta yambula embolu.*

The one who doesn't kill gets the rotten one.

12. *Khalimi khalai khakhonia wanangwe khumukutu.*

The sweet tongue made the hyena to sleep on the doorstep.

13. *Esina dume siatia khalekhale.*

What will sprout is seen early.

14. *Okuteka mafulama sikwita.*

What traps on its back doesn't kill.

15. *Anina esirama biola yekha.*

Whoever climbs the roof must come down.

16. *Abasebe banyekana ebari.*

Fools abuse each other wherever they are.

17. *Otachekhera akhato khali ebusiba okotwanga esirimo.*

Don't laugh at a sinking boat; you do not know what is in.

18. *Esinafwe silondanga esinasite.*

Whatever that will die will follow the one that will kill it.

19. *Siwima omuyele yakhasilie nari omukhulundu.*

What you deny a child he or she will eat in future.

20. *Yicha khumenya sikhukhinda khulekana.*

Come we stay ends up in separation.

21. *Okhukherakira akhira okhweyola.*

The one who advises you is better than anyone who borrows from you.

22. *Endalo chiakhira obwoya bwe engombe.*

Days are more than the hide of cows.

23. *Obukofu nengabo.*

Old is wisdom.

24. *Owokutaba kwaye siakuleka.*

A smoker does not disregard his pipe.

25. *Khamulilo khabwera abwene.*

A spark gets extinguished immediately.

26. *Omusala muterere kuninangwa nende owakumanya.*

A slippery tree is climbed by the one who knows it.

27. *Esiduyu yabolela abiriro mbwe olukendo silibwa.*

The hare told the mourners that the journey does not end.

28. *Otatebanga sibalima khungila.*

Do not question what is planted on the footpath.

29. *Esimba lifwla mukobi lieliasio.*

A Mongoose dies due to the fault of another.

30. *Akhalubi khalai khaeha akhandi.*

The good small basket was used again.

31. *Otasangalila okaba anyala yakhukaba esikumba.*

Do not be happy about the giver, he can give you a bone.

32. *Otala esero notabona omwana.*

Do not lay the hide before you see the unborn one.

33. *Omuyere nalila oluyembe omuberese.*

If a child cries for a razor blade, give it to him.

34. *Engira sibolelanga okenda.*

The road does not direct the traveller.

35. *Ouma omwana atuma etango.*

A childless person sends his or her thigh.

36. *Okudimbisa kumulinda.*

Unfinished work will always wait for you.

37. *Esirukha siongene sielanga esiembro.*

Whatever runs on its own thinks it is the fastest.

38. *Otemere kuwemerekho.*

You are cutting what you are standing on.

39. *Yatulakho ngomubeki.*

He left empty handed like a barber.

40. *Omukhulu kubitanga yikwabita.*

A stream passes through its original path.

41. *Olonda embako ahira olonda omwami.*

Who follows a hoe is better than the one who follows a leader.

42. *Ekhwi chebula ekokhe.*

Firewood produces ash.

43. *Sebulandai yalekha omukwano enyuma.*

He who goes in peace leaves peace behind.

44. *Lero luno.*

Today is the day.

45. *Efula yekanyirisa omwayi.*

The rain pleaded with the herdsman.

46. *Okisa malwaye amariro kakhubule.*

Whoever hides sickness the symptoms will reveal him.

47. *Odeba omutwe nio okukinga.*

Whoever worries about the head carries it.

48. *Okhusandia akhuta alayi.*

The one who torments you puts you in a better position.

49. *Esibikhe nesirie enyanga indi.*

What is kept can be eaten on another day.

50. *Engwe nenjalaba niyakheta nirira adiyu.*

A leopard is fierce but when it kills a prey it eats in secret.

51. *Omwambere ekulo amanya amba nyanga yino.*

The one who gave me yesterday will give me today.

52. *Amakesi mangi kakera eriaka lio ngema libwao.*

Many ideas made the prey to get way.

53. *Mba akhasinde khatakhina ombuboka.*

There is no great task that has no end.

54. *Esimba orisukuna nesero riayo.*

You throw the Mongoose with its skin.

55. *Okhinda khufwa khukhera wabona akolukano.*

A long life makes one to see wonders.

56. *Obwa muriato abuyesa.*

If one gets out of a boat, it becomes lighter.

## UNITY PROVERBS

Proverbs on unity deal with how people work together in the society to achieve common goals.

57. *Khuyasire alalia nga amake.*

We co-operate together like termites.

58. *Engulu sichibukananga nabandu habukananga.*

Mountains never meet but people meet.

59. *Mulala simundu babiri nabandu.*

One is not people but two are people.

60. *Eyubala habiri yiba yesikire amabere.*

If you give birth to two, children you are assured of milk.

61. *Wekhuba yibarira ot bamba.*

You can meet people and think they are rejoicing yet they are crying.



## KINSHIP PROVERBS

Kinship proverbs focus on issues relating to family relationships.

62. *Engu yaambi yikhula yakhulekha olwande.*

A hyena that is familiar will only eat you halfway.

63. *Wanambwa sialilekha omusokonyalo kwangina.*

The dog does not leave its mother's behaviour.

64. *Ochaowabwe suomuberekha.*

A person who is going to his house is not sent.

65. *Mama akhulanga aba akhubwene.*

When your mother calls you, she has seen you.

66. *Esimba yikona abakwana.*

Twins sleep in the same cottage.

67. *Nambula mwikho ayamba omwicha.*

The one without a relative gets a friend.

68. *Olinga esinde ederwa.*

You look like solitary grass.

69. *Wakhaya mama nenda baba orikenda bwera.*

You hate your father and mother you will walk till sun set.

70. *Otakerakirwa yacha nako ehukwe.*

The person who does not heed advice goes with bad behaviour to his in-laws.

71. *Esibulao sisita lwikho.*

What is not there does not stop relations.

72. *Namusala mudidi kukhurira muchindi.*

A small tree grows among others.

73. *Makhino mabi siketa obwicha.*

A bad dance does not kill friendship.

### **SOCIAL DECADENCE PROVERBS**

The following are proverbs that address matters of morality in society.

74. *Embwa njibi yekula omukongo.*

A thieving dog hurts its back.

75. *Echiabangi chichira mucho omwami.*

That which belongs to many goes to the great one.

76. *Okhuba nolia akhuba mao nabona.*

Whoever gives you something to eat beats your mother in your presence.

77. *Okhuchuvanga yakhwekane.*

The one who incites you will deny you.

78. *Okalilenge mbu ne mundu khane nengwe.*

He thought he was a person-yet it was a hyena.

79. *Omundu mukata abachira embako.*

A lazy person blames his or her tools.

80. *Enyende ndala yabosa olwoba.*

One jigger made the mushroom to rot.

81. *Oria sididi otatundukha.*

Eat less so that you do not burst.

82. *Evingi vye sialo nevibwa.*

Most of the things in the world do not last for long.

83. *Nangombe dwasi ekendera omunyira.*

A bad cow is taken to the market to be sold.

84. *Olure olokhulwakho lurekania balala.*

The millet on the boundary causes fights between neighbors.

85. *Bakhukaba engota nawe ori khusiaku.*

They want to give you a bunch of bananas but you only require one banana.

86. *Ochaka obukhwe khuwabona abasemi.*

When you start paying your dowry that is when you get to know about rumourmongers.

87. *Engokho yerukha nende amala kayasie.*

The chicken ran away with the intestines of another.

88. *Makada momu kafuntra olukendo.*

Dry Bamboo sticks become heavy during a long journey.

89. *Yotamenya sorirao obukeni.*

Where you don not live you cannot eat the leftovers.

90. *Omwenye enjala yakuwa mumuriro.*

The hungry one fell in the fire.

91. *Obusera bunasambe omwana buhaobubi.*

The porridge that will burn the child is not good.

## **GENDER PROVERBS**

Proverbs on gender deal with the sexual classification of people in society in terms of status and role.

92. *Nikhukhira nekhwi khukhira nende ekokhe.*

If I have more firewood, I will have more ash.

93. *Linda bunyite yalia nabakeni.*

The person who waits for food to cool eats with visitors.

94. *Demberesa okeke.*

Sweet-talk to marry.

95. *Mumukunda esikoingogo sisikosamo.*

In a garden you cannot miss a piece of broken pot.

96. *Epusi niriturire embeba esangala.*

If the cat goes out, the mouse will be happy.

97. *Nalukhwi luwetenyere lukhuntera owmosi.*

The firewood that you collect will produce smoke.

## HOSPITALITY PROVERBS

Hospitality proverbs are concerned with the friendly and generous treatment and entertainment of people in a society.

98. *Mulimba akhila omutekusi.*

The one who gives is better than one who is mean.

99. *Obusuma bwa mwarukhwa ngene mamawo sobuba omwicha.*

The food meant for your stepmother should not be given to your friend.

100. *Omunyu kworeka nikwo kuwikutera.*

The soup that you ignore can satisfy you.

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