A PRAGMATIC ANALYSIS OF EKEGUSII RIDDLES

BY

LINET NYABONYI MAGACHI

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DECLARATION

This project is my original work and it has not been submitted for examination in any other university.

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LINET NYABONYI MAGACHI   **DATE**

This project has been submitted for examination with our approval as the University supervisors.

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DR. ZAJA. OMBOGA   **DATE**

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MR.RAGUTU J M   **DATE**

DEDICATION

To my parents, Magachi, his soul rest in peace and Ellen Siro who treasured education and laid the foundation for my education, you are the best parents in the world,

To my husband Nic, who has given me his support,

To my special sisters Jennifer, Joan and Janet who have always been there for me when I needed them.

To you all I say may the Almighty God bless you. I love you all.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Cognitive effects: Mental changes that take place after an input.

Context: The set of mentally-represented assumptions used   in interpreting given utterance.

Cultural context: The society and its culture

Encyclopaedic entry: Individual's knowledge associated with certain object.

Explicit: Clearly and openly stated.

Implicit: Expressing indirectly.

Literal: The direct interpretation of an utterance.

Metaphorical: An utterance in which one thing is used to designate another.

Pragmatics: Meaning of words and sentences in context.

Processing effort: Mental effort required in processing an utterance.

Relevance: Relating or connecting to each other

Riddle: A phrase that creates confusion or doubt that needs to worked out.

Utterance: An expression in words of ideas, thoughts, and feelings.

ABSTRACT

This research is based on a Pragmatic Analysis of Ekegusii riddles and opines that riddles lay an important role in educating not only children but also adults. Focusing on riddles from the Abagusii community and while contending that riddles fall into different categories among them literal and metaphorical riddles. Primary data for analysis was obtained from a book *Chimbachero Chi'Abagusii* from which fifty riddles were identified and analysed. Anchored in Relevance Theory as its theoretical framework, the paper explored classes into which Ekegusii riddles fall, it also examined the participants in the riddling process and the role of context and cultural information in interpreting Ekegusii riddles. Forty riddles were analysed under Relevance Theory while ten were used as examples. The findings were: first, Ekegusii riddles were identified selected and classified into literal riddles which are understood from the words constituted in them and their simplicity in linguistic and logic form, and metaphorical riddles which are interpreted and understood based on context and cultural knowledge. It also observed that both children and adults take part in the riddling process. Finally, it also found out that context and cultural knowledge play a major in interpreting and understanding Ekegusii riddles.

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1. BACKGROUND TO THE LANGUAGE

Ekegusii is a Bantu language spoken by the Abagusii people of the current Kisii and Nyamira counties. According to the 2009 National Census, Ekegusii language has an estimated number of 2.5 million native speakers. Abagusii people are believed to have migrated from their original homeland in the Congo forest through Uganda and entered Kenya through the western part of Kenya. They are not bordered by their fellow Bantu speakers; but by Nilotic speakers; the Kipsigis to the east, the Lou to the west, and the Maasai to the north.

According to Guthrie (1997), the Ekegusii language is grouped E42 along the KuriaE43, and Logooli E41, in group 40 of zone E, to which most of other Bantu of Kenya and Uganda belong, Whiteley (1960) According to Bosire, (1993:1) and Mecha, (2006:4), there are two dialects, Rogoro and Maate but one orthograph.The Rogoro dialect is spoken in the northern parts of Gusiiland while the Maate dialect is spoken in the southern part. The Rogoro dialect is considered to be the standard form. This language is extensively used at home, social places, and even at rural schools especially in lower primary as a medium of instructions.

1.2. BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The riddle as a form of folklore has long been a subject of considerable interest among folklorists, linguists, and specialists in area studies. Most of the riddle scholarship so far published appears to be long lists of riddles, raw data presented with little or no analysis although there have been a number of excellent treatments of folk riddle. Most of these studies have been primarily concerned with types and varieties of riddles. Moreover on these rare occasions, folklorists have considered formal features of riddles where they have invariably confined themselves to folkloristic form rather the linguistic form. The concern has been the nature of the riddle opening and closing formulae and with the types of semantic opposition discernable in the structure of the riddle content. The formal features of riddle language such as the linguistic aspects of riddles have been largely ignored by folklorists.

Taylor (1951) says that a true riddle consists of two descriptions of an object, one figurative and the other literal, and confuses the hearer who tries to identify an object in conflicting ways. George and Dundes (1963) gave a structural definition of a riddle as a minimum unit for analysis. Dundes (1964) as quoted by Gachanja and Kebaya (2013) states that riddles have all along been marginalized due to a number of reasons that they are childish in nature and enacted, making them primarily for entertainment. This entertainment is understood to be of laughter from the participants as well as the audience hence restricting them to the children affair. Many communities in Kenya and Africa as a whole including Abagusii community consider children to be the primary recipients of riddles because they form part of the games that they play. Finnegan (1970) agrees with the above argument when she observes that most scholars have not given much consideration to riddles as compared to other genres of oral literature because riddles are considered to be a type of art form meant for minor and childish interest. She further shows that riddles, unlike proverbs, are regarded as a preserve for children and a kind of marginal activity presented at special times rather than a universal aspect of human activity and communication. People rarely incorporate riddles in their daily discourse. According to Odaga (1984), a riddle is a short, witty statement or saying, but which lacks the seriousness of a proverb. Bukenya et al (1994) say a riddle is a genre of the short-forms in oral literature which is known for their fixedness of their structural text. Miruka (1999) defines a riddle as a word puzzle in which

familiar objects or situations are referred to in figurative terms for us to work out what is actually meant. This definition demonstrates how riddles are rich language and meaning. In his earlier publications, Miruka observe that riddles present peculiar characteristic of a concept whether those characteristics are physical, behavioural or habitual and requires the unravelling of concealed literal reference. Therefore a riddle is a phrase that creates confusion or doubt and needs to be worked out. Bosire and Machogu (2013) have given a list of Ekegusii riddles and their meaning in "Endabaro, EndabasiaY'Ekegusii"(Ekegusii Dictionary) with no analysis.

According to the above works it therefore asserts that riddles contain certain characteristics that should be studied in order to reveal their richness in terms of language, style and embedded knowledge. Therefore, the study of riddles in Ekegusii is a worthy course as it will add on the existing knowledge on riddles in Oral Literature and Linguistics. Hunt (1994) as quoted in a journal by Gachanja and Kebaya, argues that the way for everybody to study riddles is having a notion that One is because of what he acquired in childhood. He argues that people who consider themselves sophisticated and advanced are actually carrying through life an imaginary background, which they acquired in childhood. Childhood experiences such as riddling processing play a role in shaping an individual's adult life, meaning that riddles must be seen as a part and parcel of every person's life. In this regard, riddles should be an integral part of everybody's life whether young or old.

1.3. STATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

This study endeavours to examine the pragmatic aspects of Abagusii riddles. Preliminary research established that there is little attention on Abagusii riddles by scholars from the community and even outside. While engaging Relevance Theory in the interpretation and understanding of embedded meanings in selected Ekegusii riddles in this study, the study determines, categorizes and contextualizes Ekegusii riddles. It will further establish the role of context and cultural knowledge in interpreting Ekegusii riddles.

1.4. OBJECTIVES TO THE STUDY

1. To identify and categorize Ekegusii riddles into literal and metaphorical riddles.

2. To find out find out whom take part in the riddling process, adults, children or both in Ekegusii riddles.

3. To examine the role of context and culture in interpreting and understanding Ekegusii riddles.

1.5. RESEARCH HYPOTHES

1. Ekegusii riddles fall into literal and metaphorical riddles.

2. Both children and adults take part in the riddling process in Ekegusii riddles.

3. Context and culture play a role in interpreting and understanding Ekegusii riddles.

1.6. JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

Scholarly materials available so far on Ekegusii riddles indicate that there is still need for an in-depth study on Ekegusii riddles in relation to categorization, contextualization and the role of context and cultural knowledge in interpreting Ekegusii riddles. Therefore, this study is a worth course as it will add knowledge on the existing works on Ekegusii riddles.This study is based on a pragmatic analysis of Ekegusii riddles. The study might also provide data for comparison with other languages which will help in making general conclusions and better understanding of riddles.

1.7. SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

Riddle collected from the Abugusii of the western Kenya constitute primary source of data for this study. The study, confines itself to a pragmatic analysis that would of benefit to both oral literature and linguistics. Due to the number of riddles in Abagsusii society and the available time, 50 riddles from the book "*Chimbachero Chi'Abagusii*" will be analysed .The study will be carried in the Rogoro dialect with the assumption that it is considered to be the standard form which is used in print ,media , learning institutions and ,broadcast .

1.8. LITERATURE REVIEW

This section looks at literature review on the Abagusii, review on riddles and literature review on Relevance theory.

1.8.1 Literature on riddles

This study established that there is documentation on riddles; for instance Langacker (1968:80) illustrates that any kind of language is not always appropriate in all situations. In this case when a speaker uses a riddle; she focuses on the culture, context and audience intended bringing out one of their characteristic which is culture- specific. This lays a basis for me to understand how a hearer arrives at intended meaning. Armstrong (2005) supports this view by saying that native speakers of a language can easily know the different uses of riddles based on culture and context. This view makes Ekegusii riddles no exception as it will help in interpreting and understanding Ekegusii riddles by the audience.

In addition studies have also been carried out on riddles by other scholars who among themTaylor (1931) who has done publications in riddles in which among others he has dealt with the form and classification of riddles. George and Dundes (1963) define a riddle as a traditional verbal expression which contains one or more descriptive elements, a pair of which may be in opposition; the referent of the element is to be guessed. Kibera (1987) did an analysis on children's riddles. Tabalia (2011) has also analysed 'Riddles of my Mother'.Gachanja and Kebaya (2013) have done "Pedagogical Aspects of Riddles: A Critical Examination of Abagusii Riddles" In their paper they have demystified the notion that riddles are childish and a

preservation for children by showing their richness not only in style and meaning but also in pedagogy aspects which can be utilized in teaching and learning processes in Kenyan Schools. In their study, aspects such as the use of language in riddle and the influence of the environment in interpreting and understanding the riddle among others are not examined. Miruka (1999) as quoted by Gachanja and Kebaya (2013) defines a riddle as a word puzzle in which familiar objects or situations are referred to in figurative terms for us to work out what is actually meant. In his earlier publication, Miruka has also presented on peculiar characteristics of a concept which require the unravelling of the concealed literal reference. Abuga et al, together with the National Centre for Early Childhood Education (NACECE) of KIE, quoted in the same article have documented Abagusii riddles in a book. Bosire (2013) has also done a collection of Ekegusiiriddles and their meaning. Their literatures have formed a ground on which my research is based as this study has established that there is no interpretation of these riddles other than the documentation.

1.8.2 Literature on Relevance Theory

Many scholars in the field of linguistics have worked on the foundation, development and application of Relevance theory. According to Sperber and Wilson (1986), the principle of Relevance is based on human recognition which is geared to achieving the greatest possible cognitive effects for the smallest possible processing efforts. This means that if an input is more relevant the more cognitive effects it yields., and less relevant the more mental effort it takes to process .Foder, (1989:67) views Relevance theory as an attempt to work out in detail Grice's central claim, that an essential feature of most human communication, both verbal and non-verbal is the expression and recognition of intentions. Grice's claim laid the foundation for an inferential model of communication, an alternative to the classical code model. rice's central claim is that; an utterance is automatically creates expectations in terms of co-operative principle and maxims of quality, (truthfulness),quantity, (informativeness), relation,(relevance),and manner(clarity) which a speaker is expected to observe Grice (1989:368-72). According to Cruse (2004:383-4) the principle of relevance is based on two principles; the Cognitive Principle which states that human cognition is geared towards maximization of relevance, and the Communicative Principle in which communication is not only the information that one wishes to convey, but also the information of the speaker's intention to inform the audience of his intention. In case for the hearer to interpret an utterance, he should follow the path of least effort,

until an interpretation which satisfies the expectation of relevance is achieved; then stops. Cruse further describes Relevance Theory as a Comprehension Pragmatics theory of human communication originally developed by Speber and Wilson. Due to the short comings of Grice's theory, Sperber and Wilson developed a theory of communication in an attempt to explain how human beings communicate with each other.

Jacobson (1995:79) agrees with Grice's central claim that utterances raise expectations of relevance, but disagrees with other aspects of his account which include the need for a Co-operative principle and maxims, the focus on pragmatic processes contributing to implicatures rather than to explicit, truth-conditional content, the role of deliberate maxim violation in utterance interpretation, and the treatment of figurative utterances as deviation from a maxim or convention of truthfulness.

Carston (2002 156) asserts that relevance theory is grounded in the idea that our cognitive systems evolve in the direction of increasing efficiency in which they automatically maximize relevance. He defines Relevance Theory as a post Gricean Pragmatic theory that begins on the question of how hearers bridge the gap between sentence meaning and speaker's meaning. They further add that Relevance Theory offers a way for bridging the gap. Thus, Relevance Theory asserts that an utterance is interpreted within human cognition which is geared towards the maximization of relevance. On the other hand, Sperber and Wilson (2004:270) regard relevance theory as a revised theory contrary to the standard pragmatic model. There is a trade-off between cognitive effects and cognitive effort where the hearer attempts to maximize cognitive effects while minimizing cognitive effort. Cognitive effects are achieved when the speaker's utterance is combined with the existing assumptions to yield new cognitive effects or provide evidence that strengthen an existing belief, contradict and eliminate already existing information. From the foregoing information on Relevance Theory and its approach to speaker's meaning and sentence meaning, the analysis of Ekegusii riddles is made easier.

In addition, Ngoge, (2012), conducted a study on Relevance Theoretical Analysis of Implicatures in Ekegusii Idioms. Njanga, (2013), studied Comprehension of Ki-Embu proverbs using a Relevance Theoretic approach. She looked at how the hearer arrives at the figurative meaning of Ki-Embu idioms. She asserts that a significant fact about idioms is that its comprehension cannot rely on the compositional meaning of the idioms and that more contextual material is needed to

understand them. Soi (2014) has also done a Stylistic and Pragmatic study of Kipsigis Proverbs on which he analysed Kipsigis proverbs using a relevance-theoretic approach.

The above literature lay a foundation on which I base my study on the comprehension of Ekegusii riddles in order for the hearer to arrive at the intended meaning.

1.9. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1.9.1 Relevance Theory

Various scholars have worked on Relevance Theory among them Sperber and Wilson, (1985, 1995, 1998, 2002), and Wilson and Sperber, (2002), who developed Relevance theory as a theory of communication and describe it as an inferential approach to pragmatics. Relevance theorists argue that for communication to take place, the communicated information should attract the hearer's attention in an attempt to process it. Allot (2011) defines Relevance Theory as framework for the study of cognition, proposed primarily in order to provide a psychologically realistic accounts of communication. The theory is based on two principles; cognitive Principle which states that human cognition is geared towards the maximization of relevance and a Communication Principle which also states that, an utterance create expectations of relevance. Optimal relevance also states that, an ostensive stimulus is optimally relevant if:

a) It is relevant enough to be worth the audience's processing effort.
b) It is the most relevant one compatible with communicator's ability and preferences.

Relevance theory is an attempt to work out in details one of Grice's central claims that, human communication, both verbal and non-verbal, is the expression and recognition of intentions, (Grice 1989:67). While developing this claim, Grice laid the foundation for an inferential model of communication; an alternative for the classical code model. The inferential model of communication provides evidence that a communicator encodes her intended message into a signal which is decoded by the audience using an identical copy of the code. According to the inferential model, a communicator provides evidence of her intention to convey a certain meaning, which is inferred by the audience on the basis of the evidence provided. The goal of

inferential pragmatics is to explain how the hearer infers the speaker's meaning on the basis of the evidence provided. (Wilson and Sperber 2002:250)

Relevance theorists share Grice's intuition that utterances raise expectations of relevance not because speakers are expected to obey a Co-operative Principle and maxims of Quality,(truthfulness),Quantity (informativeness),Relation (relevance)and Manner (clarity), or some other specifically communicative convention, but because the search for relevance is a basic feature of human cognition, which communicators may exploit. He claims that the expectations of relevance raised by an utterance are precise enough, and predictable enough, to guide the hearer towards the speaker's meaning and how they contribute to an empirically plausible account of comprehension (Wilson and Sperber 2002:250).

1.9.2 The Cognitive Principle of Relevance

The cognitive principle states that, "human cognition is geared to the maximization of relevance" Sperber (2004:24). This means that, the mind is set in such a way that it automatically attends to the most relevant seeming information.

Relevance being a basic feature to human cognition means that, an input,(a sight, a sound, an utterance, or a memory), is relevant to an individual when it connects with background information he has available to yield conclusion that matter to him such correcting a mistaken impression Sperber and Wilson (2004:56). An input is relevant to an individual when it is processing in a context of available assumption yields positive cognitive effects.

1.9.3Relevance and Communication

The inferential models of communication make the claim that communication contains not only the information that one wishes to transmit, but also the information of your intention to inform the audience of your intention.

Sperber and Wilson point out that communication involves the production of an ostensive stimulus (some intentional behaviour or the trace of it), which catches the audience's attention and which the audience cannot make sense of without assuming that the communicator intended

to convey some information. An ostensive stimulus which can include; a simple gesture, a verbal (sentential or sub-sentential), utterance etc, require some processing effort from the audience.

Considering the Cognitive Principle of relevance, the human cognition system will only attend to information which is relevant and optimal relevance which says that;

An ostensive stimulus is optimally relevant to an audience if:

a) It is relevant enough to be worth the audience's processing effort;
b) It is the most relevant one compatible with communicator's abilities and preferences.

To achieve optimal relevance, the hearer should decoded linguistic meaning; follow a path of least effort, enrich at the explicit level and complement it at implicit level until resulting interpretation meets her expectation of relevance.

1.9.4 Relevance and Comprehension

According to the Communicative Principle of relevance, every ostensive stimulus in effect conveys to the audience the claim that it is optimally relevant. A stimulus is optimally relevant to the audience if it find an interpretation that is at least relevant enough, without having to waste any processing effort.

This activates the comprehension procedures:

a) Follow a path of least effort in computing cognitive effects: Test interpretive hypotheses (disambiguation, reference resolution, implicatures, etc) in order of accessibility.
b) Stop when your expectations of relevance are satisfied (or abandoned) (sperber and Wilson 2004:13)

The relevance theoretic comprehension procedures help in resolving linguistic under determinacies at both explicit and implicit levels.

Relevance theory and its tenets; the Cognitive principle, Communicative principle, and the Relevance-Theoretic Comprehension will be used to show how the hearer arrives at the intended meaning of Ekegusii riddles. For an utterance in this case, a riddle to be relevant, should achieve cognitive effects. For them to be understood, they should ignite the mind to start searching for possible interpretations. If they are not understood, the mind rejects them because no

assumptions are activated meaning no cognitive effects achieved. Moreover, if no appropriate context, a riddle may not be understood.

According to the above discussion, the tenets of Relevance Theory; Cognitive Principle, the Communicative Principle and the Comprehension Procedures will show how the hearer arrives at the intended meaning of Ekegusii riddles. For an utterance,(in this case a proverb, an idiom, or a riddle) to be relevant, it should achieve cognitive effects. For them to be understood, they should ignite the mind to start searching for possible interpretations. If they are not understood, the mind will reject them because there no assumptions activated, meaning no cognitive effects achieved. Again if there is no appropriate context, they will not be understood making an utterance context-based within Pragmatics.

1.10. METHODOLOGY

1.10.1 Data collection and Presentation
This section will look at the research design, the study population and data analysis.

1.10.2 Research design
The research design that will be employed in this study is the descriptive survey. The major purpose of this research design is the description of the state of affairs as they are and involves classification, analysis and interpretation of data.

1.10.3 Study Population
This study identifies and analyses fifty Ekegusii riddles.

1.10.4. Data Analysis
This study will use textual analysis to describe the content of written material on Ekegusii riddles. The Ekegusii riddles will be identified, classified and analysed according to their nature. Then the selected riddles will be qualitatively analysed according to the tenets of Relevance Theory.

1.10.5. Conclusion

This chapter forms an introduction to the study. The background to the study, the statement of the problem, the objectives, the hypotheses, the literature review, the theoretical framework, the scope and limitation, the justification of the study and the research methodology have been presented. This study seeks to do a pragmatic study of Ekegusii riddles by identifying, classifying and analyzing data.

CHAPTER TWO

2.0 RIDDLES

2.1. Introduction

In most African societies, Abagusii society no exception, riddles are a form of art. They are simple and elegant ways to communicate a lot of meaning in few words. Riddles play an important role in the traditions of African speech and conversation. Riddles are rich in terms of language, style and embedded knowledge. In this chapter, I will explore the general information on riddles, definition of riddles, classification of riddles, features and functions and finally the similarities and differences between riddles and proverbs.

2.2. General information and definition of riddles

2.2.1 General information on riddles

Riddles are questions or statements that are intentionally worded in puzzling or misleading ways. They are puzzling statements in form of descriptions designed to make a person use his/her creative ingenuity. Riddles form part of the central aspect of the education system in the Abagusii society and indeed in many other African societies. Thus, they are part and parcel of the many ways through which Abagusii society passes knowledge on to its people in particular the young. The search for solutions to the riddles makes the participants to think widely and widens their knowledge of the surrounding. Ekegusii riddles have varied content, hence making them quite challenging because for one to be able to respond to them successfully, one must be well versed with the knowledge of things in nature and beyond. In the same vein, Ekegusii riddles deal with a range of things drawn the natural world, animals words, crops and human beings; and the responses to these riddles evolve around these categories. Abagusii riddles employ reasoning skills. This reasoning is considered to be the process by which new conclusions are arrived at on the basis of known statements. For instance in the riddle *Oboremo bwaito n'omweremo omweya; totareme totarisie* (Our flat land which we cannot dig or graze,

'Enyancha' (ocean). Land (oboremo) is the known case while the unknown case is the ocean that resembles land that is ocean. The response to this riddle is based on analogy and is justified on the similarities attributed to the two items in question. A flat land and ocean have same features such as being flat and wide thus, one makes an analogous comparison. Ekegusii riddles are analogous in which the comparison proceeds from the case that is usually similar and easy to understand to illuminate on another which is usually less clear. Hence, analogy helps one draw conclusions on items based on their relevant similarities. In this regard, analogical reasoning play an important role in the enunciation of the Abagusii riddles. It is worth nothing that in analogical reasoning, both the similarities and differences should be considered within the riddling context in order to show how relevant they are in arriving at the intended meaning of the riddle in question. Besides analogy, Ekegusii riddles rely on inference. Riddles whose enunciation is on natural features, they call upon inferential reasoning. For instance in the riddle *abana batata abaange bagotara botuko rioka* (father's children who walk at night only) requires the hearer to make inferences on the similarities between father's many children and what walks at night only, and it is a lot.

In content riddles can include just about every sphere of natural and human life, and vary according to the preoccupations and customs of the society in which they are told. An understanding of the point of a riddle thus often depends on the knowledge of a particular society. In performing Ekegusii riddles, it requires a challenger and a respondent or an audience. It is the challenger who 'throws a riddle to a respondent and they are required to give an answer or unveil the riddle. There is also turn-taking in a riddling session where one contestant presents a riddle to an opponent, and vice versa (Nadwa & Bukenya, 1983; Finnegan 1970).This applies to Ekegusii riddles. Riddles have an opening formula which signals the beginning of a riddling session or to alert someone into a riddling session. Accordingly, the performance of riddles is guided by understood rules. For example, Ekegusii riddles are mostly performed at night as a form of social norm, the reason being time should not be wasted; which is meant to train children to observe time-lines and activities, and not to forget the chores they have been given. In Abagusii community, if the riddler is not able to answer a riddle, an imaginary token is given to the riddlee who can accept or reject, and if he accepts the answer is given. Riddles make an important contribution to children's full participation in the social, political, and economic life of Abagusii society especially by fostering critical thinking and transmitting indigenous knowledge.

2.2.2 Definition of riddles

Riddles are expressed briefly and concisely although they are rarely incorporated in daily discourse. Finnegan (1970), & Njoroge, (1984) defines a riddle as "a statement, question, or phrase that has a double meaning. It can also be described as a puzzle to be solved.' In oral literature, a riddle is a genre of the short form; it commonly follows a definite stylistic pattern of riddling-it can be rhyming or non-rhyming. According to Odaga (1984) a riddle is a short, witty statement or saying, but which lacks the seriousness of a proverb with hidden meaning like a proverb. Bukenya et al (1994) says that a riddle a genre of the short-forms in oral literature known for the fixedness of their structural text, and being formulaic.

According to Miruka (1999) defines a riddle as "a word puzzle in which familiar objects or situations are referred to in figurative terms for us to decipher what is actually meant."

2.2.3 Classification of riddles

Different scholars have classified riddles in different ways: for instance, Bukenya et al (1983) have classified riddles broadly by their answer and image that is according to their function and syntactic structure.

2.2.3.1 Functional approach

This approach classifies riddles on the basis of their answer. It is seen as the denotational classification which deals with insect life, birds, furniture, people, utensils, technology, circumcision, plants, wild animals, domestic animals, fish, region, sea, stars, moon, sun, sound or rainbow. For example,

1) Challenger: Eeri yane kemwama n'obonyoru ekare korisia ekegoro igoro.

> (My kemwama bull is grazing on top of a hill)

Respondent: Enda emwamu y'omotwe.

> (A black lice)

Many riddles need a double process to solve them, for the analogy in the initial statement may not be immediately obvious; therefore the solver must first select the salient features of the object or situation mentioned, and then go on to identify a similar object. The image of this riddle can better be understood if we bear in mind that there are many black animals in a forest.

2.2.3.2 Syntactic Approach

Under this approach riddles are classified as being either syntactically simple or complex.

a) The simple riddle

The simple riddles have the riddle image cast in a statement or two and usually requires a phrase or one word answer. The riddle image might be cast in a plain statement, question form, conditional sentences, a positive or negative statement or a hypothetical sentence. Consider the following riddles;

1) Positive comparison: For example,

2) Challenger: Enyomba yane tebwati gesieri.

(My house does not have a door)

Respondent: Rigena ri'engoko.

2) Comparison in the comparison: For example,

3) Challeger: Kaa gento ki, eng'ombe na ng'ina mori?

(Which thing, a cow and mother to calf)

Respondent: Orogena narwo eng'ombe na ensio n'ero emori.

(The big stone for grinding is the cow while the small is the calf)

3) The when-(then) formula: For example,

4) Challenger: Kaa gento ki, gekorwa nka kere ncharea, gekoirana kiaigotire goika Omonwa?

(Which thing leaves home hungry, when back, it full to the mouth)

Respondent: Enyongo egochierwa rooche. Yairwa ere enyomo, yairanigwa eichire.

(A pot for fetching water, taken to river empty then brought back full)

4) A full of B: For example,

5) Challenger: Enyomba yane tebwati gesieri

16

(My house does not have a door)

      Respondent: Rigena ri'engoko.

(An egg)

5) Constructive Framing by Adverbials of place: For example,

      6) Challenger: Ime enusi, isiko amanoti.

(Inside coins, outside notes)

      Respondent: Egetuma kere n'amasakara.

(A maize cob with its covering)

6) Double Denial Formula: For example,

      7) Challenger: Ekenyamagoro ane, kiarinire ekenyamagoro ane, kiaganyire ekenyamagoro ane.

(A four-legged has climbed a four-legged waiting for a four-legged)

      Respondent:Ekemoni kiarinire emesa igoro kiaganyire embeba.

(A cat has climed on a table waiting for a rat)

7) Numerical Paradox: For example,

      8) Challenger: Kaa gento ki, kegosoka kiagendera amagoro ane, gekorwao kiagendera abere, omorio oye kiagendera atato?

(Which thing when it comes out, walks on four legs, then two legs and later on three legs)

     Respondent: Omwana k'aboirwe, nigo akwagurera amaru abere n'amaboko abere. Okoba omonene, ogendera amagoro abere.Okogota moono, ogendera amagoro abere n'enyimbo.

(When a baby is born, he/she crawls, then walks on two legs, then later on old age, he/she walks on two legs plus a walking stick)

8) Paradox mensural: For example,

      9) Challenger: Ninki kebwate amagoro ane getari kogenda?

(Which has four legs but cannot walk)

Respondent: Emesa.

(A table)

9) Far away-Here:

10) For example, Challenger: Ndigereria ngootebie.

(Look at me, I tell you)

Respondent: Egetabu.

(A book)

10) Intermediate Activity: For example,

11) Challenger: Kaa gento ki, kegosia mobaso na botuko

(What grinds during the day and at night?)

Respondent: Ensa.

(clock)

11) The Nominatives Absolutus Formula: For example,

12) Challenger: Kaa mogaaka ki, oikaransete nyomba, chimbuche chiaye chikare gotara isiko?

(The old man is seated in the house but his grey hair is loitering outside)

Respondent: a) Omorero, noro omogaaka ore nyomba

b) Erioki, nario chmbuche chikare gotara isiko.

(Fire is the seated old man and smoke is the grey hair loitering outside)

12) Attribute Formula: For example,

13) Challenger: Kaa gento ki, gekoriera omnwa giasookeria rikere?

(Which thing feeds through the mouth and removes through the waist)

Answer: Posho mill.

13) Alliterative Phrase and Adverbial of place: For example,

14) Challenger: Ime enusi, isiko amanoti.

(Inside coins, outside notes)

Respondent: Egetuma kere n'amasakara.

(A maize cob with its covering)

14) The kenning formula: For example,

15) Challenger: Siomasiomia nabirooche.

('Siomasiomia' is seeing them)

Respondent: Omoibi.

(A thief)

15) The Nominal-and-Verb Formula: For example,

16) Challenger: Ara egesero toriere chinsobosobo.

(Spread a hide we eat wild berries)

Respondent: a) Erioba, nario egesero.

b)Ching;enang'eni, nachio chinsobosobo.

(The sky is the hide and stars are the wild berries)

16) The privative (caritive) Formula: For example,

17) Challenger: Kebwati imbaba ko gekoiruruka, kebwati monwa ko gekoroma.

(It does not have wings but flies, does not have but bites)

Respondent: Ebunduki.

(A gun)

17) Two-member Antithetical Formula: For example,

18) Challenger: Chisani ibere chireng'aine.

(Two equal plates)

Respondent: Ense na igoro.

(The earth and the sky)

19

a) The Complex Riddles

This kind of riddles have their riddle image cast in more than two sentences. Its answer requires an explanation which has to be given in more than one sentence.

George & Dundes (1963:113) cited by Finnegan (1970) also classifies riddles according the following features:

2.2.3.3 Literal/Metaphorical

This type of riddles is also divided into:

a) Literal

These types of riddles are not difficult to understand and to translate as their meanings can be easily inferred from the meaning of their constituents. Their meanings have a very close meaning to that of the literal meaning of the words making them up.   For example;

19) Challenger: Siomasiomia nabirooche.

('Siomasiomia' is seeing them)

Respondent: Omoibi.

(A thief)

b) Metaphorical

These are the type of riddles which cannot be understood from their literal meaning and require cleverness and careful thinking in order to arrive at intended meaning. For example;

20) Challenger: Tata ogure n'egoti yaye.

(Father has fallen with his coat)

Respondent: Ritoke riagechirwe.

(A banana which has been cut)

The analysis for the above riddle implies that once a man dies and he never married, he dies with everything he owns as he does not leave behind any offspring.

2.2.3.4 Non-oppositional/Oppositional

a) Oppositional

This type consist of riddles with more than one descriptive element, in turn, may be oppositional. Consider this example;

21) Challenger: Ninki kebwate amagoro ane getari kogenda?

(What has four legs but cannot walk)

Respondent: Emesa.

(A table)

b) Non-oppositional

This are riddles with no oppositional descriptive elements. For example;

22) Challenger: Naigure Kwamboka okwanora amao.

(Have heard Kwamboka folding skins)

Respondent: Embura Ekogukura.

(Thunders of rain)

This type of riddles is also divided into:

a) Antithetical
b) Private
c) Casuals

According to Bukenya & Odaga (1994) riddles can be classified in different ways-according to their types, level of difficulty, and form.

2.2.3.5 According to type:

a) Enigmas

These types of riddles have their solution expressed metaphorically, and it requires cleverness and careful thinking for its solution. They are mysterious and difficult to understand.

Consider this example;

23) Challenger: Kaa gento ki, chieng'ata mok'Oroko?

(Which thing starves itself as Oroko's wife?)

Respondent: Emonyo ase enda yaye ebwatanerete n'egekuba, nigo are anyereere buna omonto bwetingete n'orokini.

It implies metaphorically to those people who starve themselves despite working hard as ants.

c) Conundrum

This type of riddles is a question, usually involving a trick with words that asks for fun. Colloquially it is used to refer to a seemingly unanswerable question or the like; it is technically a riddle with a pun for an answer (Oxford Advanced Dictionary 2006).

For example,

24) Challenger: Kaa gento ki, mmmmmmma?

(Which thing, mmmmmmma)

Respondent: Omosunte obetete igoro na nse.

(Heavy darkness)

2.2.3.6 Level of difficulty

Riddles can be classified based on their level of difficulty as:

a) Simple

A riddle is said to simple when its answer is simple. Consider this;

25) Challenger: Enyomba yane tebwati gesieri.

(My house does not have a door)

Respondent: Rigena ri'engoko.

(An egg)

b) Complex

These are structured in a single sentence or two and the answer is also short, which is usually a phrase or a word. However, it is important to remember that, some riddles (even of a single sentence) are catches, difficult to comprehend, and requires fast discovery of the issues rather than exactly searching for a referent. Consider this example;

26) Challenger: Ekenyamagoro ane, kiarine ekenyamagoro ane, kiaganyire ekenyamagoro ane.

(A four-legged, on top of a four-legged, timing a four-legged)

Respondent: Ekemoni kiarine emesa igoro kiaganyire embeba.

(A cat on top of a table, timing a rat)

On the other hand, a riddle is also considered complex;

1) When it is with more than two sentences
2) When its answer is an explanation with more than one sentence (Njoroge, 1984).

2.2.3.7 Form

Riddles can also be classified according to their form. Riddles are implicitly or explicitly interrogative mainly framed with the purpose of confusing or testing the mental acuity and wit of the guesser. They present actions and objects by selecting some salient traits, and they are powerful (Finnegan, 1970).

Nandwa & Bukenya (1983) say that riddles render themselves into the following classes:

1) Riddles children like to deal with at home/schools which are the most vulgar ones; Consider this example,

>>> 27) Challenger: Tokagenda obogeni n'omosani one, agatiga egetambaa ekerogo igoro.

>>> Respondent: Enkene.

>>> (Hookworm)

2) Riddles which children engage in at home/school which would be socially acceptable; consider the following example,

>>> 28) Challenger: Etaya etakorima ko maguta choi.

>>> (A lamp that does not go of despite not having kerosene)

>>> Respondent: Risase.

>>> (sun)

3) Riddles which are analogically used by adults either to advice or ridicule other people. For example;

>>> 29) Challenger: Nachire mbwatie.

>>> (Have gone, follow me)

>>> Respondent:Esindani egoteebia eusi.

>>> (A needle telling a thread)

Abagusii people advanced their members to work together as unit in order to accomplish a task or succeed.

2.2.4 Parts of Riddles

According to Bukenya et al (1998) Riddles are said to consist six parts, as follows:

a) The Challenge

   It comes from the riddler, indicating that he/she wants to propose a riddle.

b) The Acceptance

   The audience accepts the Challenge.

c) The Riddle

   It is in the form of a figurative statement, a suggestive sound or a puzzle.

d) Guesses

   The audience or recipient guesses the right answer for the riddle.

e) A 'Prize'

A prize is demanded by the riddler from the audience if they cannot unravel the puzzle.

f) The Solution

The right answer to the riddle is given by the riddler after receiving the appropriate prize.

2.2.5 Functions and features of riddles

Riddles are dialogic/dyadic contests (Nadwa & Bukenya, 1983, Finnegan 1970); and the performance requires a challenger, a respondent and an audience. Riddles are seen as basically for children though adults also take part in them and cause humour, which is a social feature. According to Miruka (1999) riddles are for entertainment, recording history, commentary on human life, instrument for linguistics, environmental and scientific educationare. Finnegan (1970) also notes that riddles are…."the special domain of children to be for entertainment rather than serious consideration.

2.3 Riddles and Proverbs

This section will look at the definition of proverbs, similarities between proverbs and riddles, and differences between riddles and proverbs.

2.3.1 Definition of Proverbs

Different scholars have defined proverbs in various ways; Finnegan (1970) says that a proverb is "a saying in more or less fixed form marked by shortness, sense and salt and distinguished by the popular acceptance of the truth tersely expressed in it."According to Nadwa & Bukenya (1983), a proverb is "a short pithy statement containing folk wisdom." In addition, Sunkuli & Miruka (1990), say "a proverb is a terse, compact, pithy statement of popular wisdom accepted as an expression of truth," Accordingly, African proverbs provide a rich source sof information on indigenous value systems.

From the above definitions, a proverb therefore, is a brief and fixed statement full of wisdom, truth and meaning.

2.3.2 Similarities Riddles and proverbs

Riddles and proverbs are closely related as metaphorical form. Among some people riddles may be particularly closely connected with proverbs, either explicitly or by allusion, so that either the

answer or even both parts o the riddle are sayings accepted in other contexts as proverbs. In addition, some riddles and proverbs may be differentiated only by the context in which they are used. They are reproduced as ready made speeches which people know and accept their existence. Both riddles and proverbs are expressed briefly and concisely and based on observation of nature (Finnegan 1970). Ekegusii riddles and proverbs have similarities. Consider the examples below.

Proverb: Binto mbing'ora nsagasaga bikwanga.

(Hurry, hurry has no blessings), and the riddle,

Challenger: Siomasiomia nabirooche.

('Siomasiomia' is seeing them)

Respondent: Omoibi.

(A thief)

The proverb and riddle above were both used by Abagusii people to give advice to their members. They were both for caution as to be careful with some people and how they did their things.

2.3.3 Differences between riddles and proverbs

Riddles are readily distinguishable by their question-and-answer form and their brevity. They can be either questions with double meaning, or conundrums/enigmas. In either case, they leave the recipient guessing while on the other hand; proverbs are sayings with moral value, and a lesson in them expressing common-sense truths.

2.4 Conclusion

This chapter has observed that Ekegusii riddles form part of the central aspect of education in the Abagusii community. Thus, they are part and parcel of the many ways through which the Abagusii community impart knowledge on its people especially the young. It has also identified different categories into which Ekegusii riddles fall. Finally, it has observed that there are similarities and differences between Ekegusii riddles and Ekegusii proverbs.

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 CLASSIFICATION OF RIDDLES

3.1 Introduction

According to Finnegan (1970) riddles can be classified into oppositional/non-oppositional and literal/metaphorical. This study will adopt the literal and metaphorical classification for Ekegusii riddles and the classification will be discussed below. In each case the study discusses how the hearer arrives at the intended meaning.

3.2 Classification of riddles

In this study the Ekegusii riddles identified by the researcher have been classified into literal and metaphorical and will be discussed below.

3.2.1 Literal riddles

Like already said before, literal riddles are not difficult to understand, interpret and to translate, because their meanings can easily be inferred from the meaning of their constituents. This type of riddles has a close meaning to that of the literal meaning of the words they constitute. They need less processing effort as their words are commonly and frequently used. In terms of linguistic they easy to interpret and logically, they are easy to process.

Consider the following examples,

1) Challenger: Enyomba yane tebwati gesieri.

   (My house does not have a door.)

   Respondent: Rigena ri'engoko.

   (An egg)

In the encyclopaedic entry it is known that a house must have a door and the analogy in the initial statement may not be immediately obvious, therefore the solver must first select the salient features of the object or situation mentioned, and then go on to identify a similar object. The response to the above riddle is simple and straight forward-an egg. Therefore, it is evident that

the riddle points to the aspect and or vice of individualism the use of 'yane' in the Abagusii community. This is so because an individual implied herein as the owner of the house is given primacy in the riddle as he/she is depicted as the only one allowed owning the house. The riddle further expresses dangers that come as result of the negation of the traditional practices among the Abagusii people. According to Abagusii community, individual ownership was unheard of since communal life was practiced. Thus, the riddle laments the loss of communal life in the community as individualism in the society encourages selfishness which is highly regarded as a vice. The community encourages sharing among its members for it is not only a virtue but also fosters unity and belonging. This riddle therefore requires less processing effort as the words, linguistically and logically, the riddle is simple.

2) Challenger: Siomasiomia nabirooche.

    ('Siomasiomia' is seeing them)

Respondent:Omoibi

    (A thief)

'Siomasiomia', according to Abagusii people is a name given to a person who moves from one person's house to another, checking and monitoring people' things so that he/she can steal or borrow them and it is a common word. This was a behaviour discerned by the community as the community expected its members to behave responsibly. Therefore to interpret this riddle, the hearer uses less processing effort because the words in it are common and frequently used, and in terms of linguistic and logic, the riddle is simple.

3) Challenger: Nigo giachire nonde bwensi amakia aya.

    (It is loved by anybody nowadays)

Respondent: Chibesa.

    (Money)

This riddle can easily be understood from the literal meaning of the words making it up. The solver will only figure out the object with such features and the answer 'money' is taken literally. In interpreting the riddle, the hearer requires less processing effort because the structure is simple linguistically and logically and words making it up are commonly and frequently used. The community discourages love for money as it can lead to discerned behaviour such as stealing.

4) Challenger: Ninki kebwate amagoro ane getari kogenda?

      (What has four legs, but cannot walk?

  Respondent: Emesa.

      (A table)

The image of an object with four legs is inferred in the encyclopaedic entry of the solver with the salient features 'four legs and cannot walk', then the right answer is arrived at. The answer 'table' is also taken in its literal form because the meanings of the constituent words connect with the actual meaning of the riddle. Therefore the hearer uses little processing effort because the words are common and simple.

5) Challenger: Enyomba yane nigo ebwate egesigisa ekemo gioka.

      (My house has only one pole)

  Respondent: Oboba.

      (Mushroom)

The riddle above contains words that are familiar due to their frequency and recency in use as well as being logically and linguistically simple. The features indicated in the riddle 'my own house with one pole' resembles that of a mushroom as well as individual ownership which was not allowed in Abagusii community as the community encouraged sharing among its members. In addition, context also helps in the comprehension process. This enables the hearer use less processing effort in interpreting the riddle.

6) Challenger: Nominyoka togoikera.

      (Even if you run, you cannot reach it)

  Respondent: Omorengari.

      (A shadow)

Literally when one moves or runs, the shadow does too and therefore there is no way one can reach it. This riddle therefore indicates that it can be understood from the literal meanings of its constituents and the answer 'shadow' is also taken literal. The encyclopaedic entry of the utterance will be activated together with the background information; the processing of the riddle

by the hearer will be simple. This is because the words in the riddle are common and easy. Abagusii people discourage their members against going after or chasing things which are not achievable.

> 7) Challenger: Etaya etakorima ko maguta choi.
>
>> (A lamp that does not go off despite not having kerosene)
>
> Respondent: Risase.
>
>> (Sun)

This riddle is literal because it can be easily understood and translated from its constituents. The solver infers the salient features of the object mentioned in his encyclopeadic entry, and then identifies a similar object as the answer to the riddle. In interpreting the riddle, the hearer will take into consideration the commonness and simplicity of the structure plus background information.

> 8) Challenger: Abana b'Omare nigo bakoragera marara.
>
>> (Omare's children eat while asleep)
>
> Respondent: Amage y'enyoni.
>
>> (Nestlings)

The literal meaning of this riddle is children who never work but happen to eat. In the encyclopaedic entry of Abagusii it is known that their children are supposed to be hard working and take part in community work. It is understood that only birds (nestlings) which feed on what people have worked on. They never go out to work, but feed on what is readily available. The hearer uses background information to arrive at the meaning of the riddle.

> 9) Challenger: Chisani ibere chirengaine.
>
>> (Two identical plates)
>
> Respondent: Ense na igoro.
>
>> (The earth and the sky)

When this riddle is uttered, the salient features of the identical objects are inferred in the encyclopaedic entry of solver, and then identify similar objects with the same features. The

answer 'the earth and the sky are both flat as plates and are directly opposite. The hearer requires less processing effort and background knowledge to get to the intended meaning of the riddle.

10) Challenger: Kemuguri okare rogito.

('Kemuguri' at the edge)

Respondent: Omwongo.

(Pumpkin)

Literally according to the Abagusii culture, pumpkins are planted next to the edge in order for them to get support from the edge (fence) because they are clippers. Therefore in the encyclopaedic entry of the solver, features of such object will be inferred and identified then the right answer is arrived at because the word 'Kemuguri' is a name given to anything with a shape of that of a pumpkin. Pumpkin is a kind of local food that the Abagusii people are encouraged to eat.

11) Challenger: Kinde aa ninde Getembe-Eberen'gererio bire are.

(Am here at the same time at Getembe)

Respondent: Eberen'gererio bire are.

(Thoughts)

Literally in the encyclopaedic entry of Abagusii it is inferred that a person cannot be in two places at the same time, therefore a situation of these features has to be identified in order to arrive at the right answer for this riddle. Accordingly, 'Getembe' was understood by Abagusii people to be a common place, a far place and a town (the present Kisii town) important to them. Therefore the answer 'thoughts' was arrived at literally because of the literal meaning of the words of the riddle. The hearer uses less processing effort to get the intended meaning.

12) Challenger: Enchera nere sukunyuma bwone, korende tinya koyerora.

((There is a road behind my homestead, but I have never seen it)

Respondent: Ekiongotira.

(Medula oblongata)

The hearer takes the path of least effort by considering the interpretation that comes into his/her mind of something that exists within his/her premises, which he/she has never used. The utterance is activated leading to the meaning of the riddle which is medulla oblongata.

13) Challenger: Kaa ngori ki ntaambe , noringora etakoera?

   (Which long rope even if you unfold, it will never end?)

   Respondent: Enchera.

   (Road)

The words in the above riddle are common and easy to interpret and understand making their processing easy and simple because they are words used in daily conversations. In the encyclopaedic entry of Omogusii, it is understood that there is no long rope which even if you unfold will never end. Therefore a similar object with such features is inferred then identified for the answer. The riddle was meant to encourage Abagussii people never to give up when doing a task as there could be fruits at the end of it all.

14) Challenger: Kaa nyomba ki, etagoutwa?

   (A house in which fire is never lit)

   Respondent: Embera.

   (A grave)

Abagusii refer a grave as a house where the dead are put to rest. A grave is never lit fire since the dead person doesn't perform any activity. Literally this riddle is taken to mean a grave as the salient features of the riddle suggest with the help of background knowledge of a grave as a house. The meanings of the words in the riddle can easily connect with the meaning of the riddle.

15) Challenger: Omukungu nyamaboko atato.

   (A woman with three hands)

   Respondent: Eriko.

   (A fire place)

A woman (omokungu) in Abagusii environment is known as a cook who prepares food in a fire place with three stones. Therefore the solver of the riddle will infer in his encyclopaedic entry

the meaning of the constituents of the riddle literally because he/she has the background information of the role of a woman in Abagusii community which was to prepare meals for the family. This makes the interpretation and understanding of the riddle simple and straight forward.

16) Challenger: Onsinini Onsinini kononchanda.

(Very minute but itchy)

Respondent: Ensona.

(Flea)

Literally a flea is small and troublesome; therefore the solver infers the features then identifies the animal from the meanings of the words in the riddle which connects with the actual meaning of the riddle. Therefore, the hearer uses less processing effort as the words are common and frequently used. Linguistically and logically, they are also simple. In the riddle, it is evident that the riddle points out to those small things, problems or people that could be underrated but cause harm. The people of the community needed to be careful with.

17) Challenger: Abana ba tata abaange, bagotara botuko rioka.

(Father's many children, walk at night only)

Respondent: Ching'nang'eni chia igoro chikomesa botuko rioka.

(Stars shining at night only)

Literally this riddle can be understood from the meanings of its constituents as the salient features can directly be connected to the answer 'stars'. Relating the meaning of the constituent words with the meaning of the riddle is easy. This makes it to require little processing effort in interpreting it.

18) Challenger: Nachire gosooka isi   mko, nanyorire nyang'era.

(I have gone outside and I found nyang'era)

Respondent: Omosunte o obotuko.

(Darkness in the night)

This riddle is literal because there is direct connection between the meanings of the constituents and the actual meaning of the riddle. According to Abagusii people the word 'nyang'era' refers to anything black. This is a culture-specific item enabled by background information for the interpretation of the riddle.

19) Challenger: Tangatanga Bonchari, Kamagambo, Nairobi mboeto.

(Wander all over Bonchari, Kamagambo, and Nairobi)

Respondent: Omokungu omotari. Rirogo.Riraya.

(A prostitute woman)

This is a literal riddle because its meaning can be understood and interpreted from its constituent. The riddler will infer the salient features directly from the words in the riddle and identify the person with such features who is a prostitute as the correct answer. Abagusii never allowed such a practice as it was unbecoming and a woman was supposed to settle and take care of her family. Accordingly, Abagusii people believe that only women are called prostitutes as men are allowed to have more than one woman. The riddle requires less processing effort because the words are common and simple.

20) Challenger: Siomasiomia nabirooche.

('Siomasiomia' is seeing them)

Respondent: Omoibi.

(A thief)

'Siomasiomia' is a name given by the Abagusii community to a person who liked moving from one house to another, checking and monitoring people's things which was a practice discerned by the community. It was a common and simple word which was used often and frequently as a way of educating its people against such a vice. This makes the riddle to require little processing effort so as to get to the intended meaning by the speaker.

3.2.2 Metaphorical riddles

This type of riddles as already mentioned is mysterious and difficult to understand from their literal meanings as they are metaphorically expressed and require cleverness and careful thinking in order to understand and interpret them. The meaning of these riddles is totally different from the meaning of its parts. It is impossible to infer the actual meaning of the riddle from the meaning of its constituents because o the presence of items having cultural meaning. These culture specific items have a great influence on comprehensibility o the riddles.

Consider the following

21) Challenger: Aa! to!-Oboterere

(Aa to!)

Respondent: Oboterere.

(Slipperiness)

This riddle is metaphorical in the sense that there is no relationship at all between the meaning of the items of this riddle and the actual meaning of the riddle. It is not easy to interpret this riddle to mean 'slipperiness', as there is no connection with the words 'aa! to!'. However, with the cultural reference and context of 'aa! to!' which means a sound made once a person is undergoing some difficult moment, Abagusii people are be able to get the figurative meaning of this riddle.

22) Challenger: Abagaka baikarasete n'abang'ina bakoirwana.

(Old men seated, old women struggling)

Respondent: a) Amagena a rooche, naro abagaaka.

b) Amache agoeta naro abang'ina bakoirwana.

(Stones in the river are the seated old men and flowing water are the old women)

It is difficult to infer the actual meaning of this riddle from the meanings of its constituents because the meanings are not related. There is no connection between 'old men and stones', and 'old women and water', but the riddle has cultural reference in which according to Abagusii

people, women move about doing most of the work at home while men do little work. Therefore, with this cultural information, the hearer will interpret the riddle and arrive at intended meaning by the speaker.

23) Challenger;Abamura mbare mwabo batato. Oyomo obwate chitorobini, n'oyonde obwate endege n'oyonde obwate amariogo. Nyatorobini agapima akarora ase omoiseke akarwarete. Nyandege akababogoria gochiao. Nyamariogo akaa omoiseke eriogo akagwena. Bono ning'o oraire omoisekr oyio?

(There are three brothers, one has a microscope, another one has a plane, and the other one has medicine. The one with a microscope saw where there was a sick lady, the one with a plane took them there, and the one with medicine gave her and she got well. Now who will take the lady?)

Respondent: Ise oramoire.

(The father will take her)

There are three brothers involved in this riddle and the answer 'the father' cannot easily be reached at because it does not appear among the constituents of the riddle. Therefore, the solver must be clever and think carefully in order understand and interpret the riddle. This is a complex riddle which requires more processing effort and the image in the answer is indirect. Culturally, according to Abagusii people, there are those things which belonged to the father for instance, land which their sons had no right over unless he transfers ownership.

24) Challenger: Ara egesero toriere chinsobosobo.

(Spread a hide we eat wild berries)

Respondent: a) Erioba, nario egesero.

b) Ching'enang'eni nachio chinsobosobo.
(The sky is the hide and stars are the wild berries)

36

This riddle contains items which are culture-specific 'hide and chinsobosobo' and there is no connection in meaning between items 'hide and sky, and chinsobosobo and stars' therefore making it difficult to understand and interpret.

25) Challenger: Etinga nyamasenyete.

(Posho mill of rough flour)

Respondent: Ekeumbu ki'amandegere amete.

(An anthill with mushroom)

The meanings of the constituents o this riddle cannot be connected with the actual meaning of the riddle therefore making the understanding and interpretation o the riddle

26) Challenger: Kaa gento ki, getagosika para ya Mosongo?

(Which thing that does not respect the road of a white person)

Respondent: Eguto ekorema ande onsi, nonya n'epara igoro.

(Antbear digging anywhere even on the road)

This riddle is metaphorical in nature in the sense that the actual meaning of the riddle does not connect with the meanings of its words. The salient features bring out a metaphorical image which needs culture and context for its understanding and interpretation. 'Mosongo' (a white person) in Abagusii situation, was a respected person, therefore a thing not respecting the road of a Whiteman, was a bad behavior. It was a warning to those people who had the behavior of not respecting other people's things. It was a behavior discerned by Abagusii people. It was also a warning to other people to be careful with such people.

27) Challenger: Kaa mogaaka ki, ogotengera mwaye oka; osiomeria gesieri, koirana?

(Which thing dances in his house, peeps at the door, and goes back?)

Respondent: Oromeme rokona konyegera monwa ekero okona gokwana.

(A tongue moving about as one talk)

The salient features of this riddle 'dances, peeps, and gets back' does not bring out the actual meaning of the riddle. One has to be clever and think carefully in order to get the metaphorical image of the riddle. According to Abagusii people there are those things which were confined to the community or family and needed not to be taken outside or shared by people outside the community or the family. These things needed confidentiality as they could put the community or family in danger. Therefore, this riddle requires more processing effort and cultural information for its interpretation.

28) Challenger: Kaa mote ki, ogosicha mambia, marogoba ebisicha biaroroka?

(Which tree flowers in the morning, and in the evening withers?)

Respondent:a) Echiro Nero omote,

b) Ogoichora mambia, nakwo ogosicha mambia

c) Abanto bagocha echiro nabwo ebisicha.

(A market is the tree, being full in the morning is the flowering, and the people are the flowers)

The literal meanings of the constituents of this riddle do not connect with the actual meaning of the riddle. Therefore one needs to create a metaphorical image in his encyclopaedic entry in order to get the right answer for the riddle. The above riddle was used by Abagusii people to warn their members against things which were attractive but never lasted longer like a tree whose flowering period never lasted for ever despite looking nice and attractive. The use of a tree and its flowering has been used symbolically to mean those things which do not last long. This makes the riddle to require more processing effort in order to arrive at the intended meaning of the riddle.

29) Challenger: Kemunto ongosire.-Amarwa.

(Kemunto has scared me-Alcohol.)

Respondent: Amarwa.

(Alcohol)

This riddle is metaphorical in the sense that the salient feature does not imply the meaning of the riddle. The answer 'alcohol' and 'Kemunto' the name of a person do not connect in meaning at all. According to Abagusii, the name 'Kemunto' is good but the person named may be bad as alcohol is bad. This riddle refers to those things that may look good outwardly, but have negative effect like alcohol does. Abagusii people are warned against such things as alcohol.

30)Challenger:Mosubati omwabo Chacha, nong'ainia boire nabo nkogochanchania.

(Sister to Chacha, even if you are clever I will make you cry)

Respondent: Enchara egoteebia omonto ekoria.

(Hunger telling a person)

This riddle cannot be interpreted literally as its constituents do not mean what the riddle itself means. One has to think carefully before getting the answer. It has a hidden meaning as it implies a situation which defeats everybody for instance 'death' is very challenging and no one easily overcomes it. Even hunger is challenging as no one can stand it and even makes other to steal. The above riddle was used by Abagusii people to encourage their members to be hardworking to avoid such situations as of missing food in the home.

31) Challenger: Nachire mbwatie.

(Have gone; follow me)

Respondent:Esindani egoteebia eusi.

(A needle telling a thread)

When one hears this riddle uttered, he/she must first create a metaphorical image in his/her encyclopeadic entry in order to identify objects with similar features in which one object leads and the other follows. This is because the meanings of the words of the riddle do not directly connect the actual meaning of the riddle. The riddle implies those things that work together in order to accomplish a task. 'Nachire mbwatie' has been used symbolically to mean going or working together. Abagusii people used this riddle to encourage their members to work together

or as unit and it is through that unity they succeeded. Working as an individual according to Abagusii implied failure. The strength of the Abagusii society was founded on communal welfare based on co-operation and unity among its members. If communal life was not cherished, it can lead to collapse of the community.

32) Challenger: Mokogoti ntweke nainche ngotweke-Amatimbo agoturunkania ebiborongose bi'esike.

(Last born help me put on the head, as I help you too)

Respondent: Amatimbo agoturunkania ebiborongose bi'esike.

(Beetles rolling cow-dung rolls)

This riddle contains culture-specific item which cannot be easily understood and there is no connection between the constituents and the actual meaning of the riddle. This makes it difficult to understand and interpret therefore requiring cleverness and careful thinking.

33) Challenger: Nimbwate omosigari otari korusia gobia kagokora emeremo.

(I have a policeman who does not remove his cap when he is working)

Respondent: Omosumari.

(A nail)

When this riddle is uttered the hearer must create the image of these features in his encyclopaedic entry then identify an object with similar features for an answer. The meanings of the constituents of the riddle do not connect with the actual meaning of the riddle. This riddle according to Abagusii implies those things or people who were meant to perform particular kinds of work or job. No any other person could be allowed do it, for instance cultural practices such as circumcision.

34) Challenger: Ng'a ngonke. Ninki?

(Give me I suck)

Respondent: Orokore okobwata kwanywera amarwa.

(A local straw for taking brew)

This is a metaphorical riddle because the meanings of the words of the riddle do not connect with the actual meaning of the riddle. This kind of riddle can only is understood in context as in the case where people are taking the local brew using 'orokore' a local straw. Cultural knowledge will help the hearer to interpret the riddle and get to the implied meaning.

35) Challenger: Sindake omonywa.

('Sindake omonywa)

Respondent: Ekiage gekobekwa endangera.

(Granary for storing food)

This riddle is not easy to understand because it contains culture-specific items and do not connect with the actual meaning of the riddle. One has to think carefully in order to identify the object with these features for an answer. The items are not easy to translate therefore require more processing effort.

36) Challenger: Nachire gokuna omwana obande okure.

(Have touched somebody's child, has died)

Respondent: Enyongore ko yakunirwe, nigo ekweringania yakira kiri.

(A millipede once touched, it folds itself and stays still)

This riddle cannot be understood from the literal meanings of its constituents as the meanings do not connect with the actual meaning of the riddle. The above riddle implies that behavior of pretence which was discerned by Abagusii people. The community warned its members against such behaviour for example pretending to be sick to avoid working as such behavior affected the progress of the community.

37) Challenger: Omoiseke nyaikobu iseera.

(A lady with a good naval)

Respondent: Omotienyi.

(Moon)

There is no connection between a lady with a good navel and the moon. This makes the riddle difficult to understand and interpret because the meanings of the words of the riddle do not mean the actual meaning of the riddle. The solver has to be clever and carefully think in order to come up with the right answer. The riddle implies those things which were treasured by the community or were delicate and needed good care. Abagusii people encouraged their members to take good care of those things that were delicate as a navel.

38) Challenger:Omokungu nyabisero binge, k'abana   nse akwareria.

(A woman with many skins, but lays her children on the ground)

Respondent: Risosa nigo rire n'amato amange, korende emiongo nse ekobera.

(A pumpkin plant has many leaves, the the pumpkins grow on the ground)

The salient features of this riddle are not easy to understand and interpret as the meanings of the constituents of the riddle do not connect with the actual meaning of this riddle. This riddle implies those people with many things but cannot make proper use of them and make their family or children suffer. The community of Abagusii discouraged such practices as they affected their members.

3.3 Difference between the different types of riddles

The difference between literal riddles and metaphorical riddles is that literal riddles are not difficult to understand and interpret because their meanings can easily be inferred from the meanings of their constituents. One is able to infer the salient features of the object or situation

mentioned in the riddle and relate them to the words used in riddles literally and then identify similar objects or situation for answers.

Consider the following examples;

39) Challenger: Abana ba tata abaange, bagotara botuko rioka.

(Father's many children walk at night only)

Respondent: Ching'enang'eni chia igoro chikomesa botuko rioka.

(Stars shining at night only)

This riddle can easily be understood and interpreted from its constituents literally.

On the other hand metaphorical riddles are not easy to comprehend and interpret as they carry metaphorical sense that cannot be known through common use and their words. This riddle implies those natural things that took place or happened particular times or sessions.'Abana ba tata abaange, bagotara botuko rioka' have been used symbolically to mean, 'stars shining at night only. The interpretation of this type of riddles need context and culture as some of their items are culture-specific in order to reach at the intended meaning.

This is illustrated in example below;

40) Challenger: Ongori nyariasa-Ekiage kie rinyoro.

(Ongori without teeth)

Respondent: Ekiage kie rinyoro.

(A granary)

The above riddle cannot be literally understood and interpreted as the constituents 'Ongori and nyariasa' cannot be related to the answer 'granary' literally as they mean different.

3.4 Riddling Session among Abagusii

A riddle session is normally introduced by an incantation that is call-and-response. The call-and-response is based on contrasts. The second part of each phrase is either an exposition of a desired situation that is a pleasant correlation with the first part of the phrase, or an undesired situation that contrasts with what prevails in the first part of the phrase. This can be illustrated as below.

Challenger:	Getendawili	Riddle! Riddle
Respondent:	Tenga	Yes
Challenger:	Tata ogure n'egoti yaye.	Father has fallen with his coat.
Respondent:	Ritoke riagechirwe.	A banana which has been cut

The riddling session among the Abagusii reveal that there is close-knit social fabric that is enhanced between the challenger and the respondent. Besides, riddles can go a long way in developing an individual's cognitive, moral, social sense and hence equipping her/him with lifelong skills. In this regard, participants become more sociable and are learn to embrace skills such as co-operation, teamwork and develop a sense of togetherness. Riddles employ much of their resources from the immediate environment and other resources in the social surrounding in their linguistic codification and depict various technological, social, economic and political advancements that the community has kept over time. Thus, in the creative and figurative use of language to depict these advancements, the participants get to learn various developments in their society. All these spheres form important aspects in the learning process among both children and adults as they can gain more knowledge from either the riddle precedent or the sequent. In this regard, we have shown that riddles play an important role not only in imparting knowledge but also in improving one's memory and reasoning ability.

In addition riddling in Abagusii community was an important source of entertainment. This session was commonly done in the evening after the evening meal, when all the activities of the day had been completed, ready to go to sleep. The elders remained quiet and only intervened when there is contradiction over the instructions of the thrown riddle or solution to it. Elders play the role of judges as they are vast in riddles and can tell whether a riddle is well constructed or not, or whether a given solution is right or wrong. By way of educating the young ones, an elder

would throw a riddle that the children may not find a solution to it and in this case none could a prize. The elder will just provide the solution to the riddle. The riddling session also took place in schools whereby it was part of learning, which the teacher also took the role of a judge as elders did. It helped in the improvement of communication skills.

From the foregoing, it is clear that learning is overtly and covertly an adjunct to the riddling process among the Abagusii and many other African communities. Deduction in riddles relies in the knowledge that can be acquired directly and indirectly from the riddles. These heavily rely on the analogy and inferential skills of both the challenger and respondent(s).

3.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, the study has found out that Ekegusii riddles can be classified according to Finnegan (1970). The riddles have been classified into literal and metaphorical riddles. Under the literal category, the study has identified, translated and analysed twenty Ekegusii riddles. In the metaphorical category, the study has indentified, translated and analysed eighteen Ekegusii riddles. The chapter has also looked at the difference between the literal and metaphorical riddles. The chapter has also observed that riddles are essentially crucial in sharpening the mind and the thought processes of the participants. It is evident that through riddles, people learn important truths about life though disguised as a game. Participating in riddling process helps one to learn more about life and the social surrounding and in this way; one is able to develop a sense of intellectual satisfaction. It took place both at home and in schools. Teachers and elders played the role of judges in determining the right answers and instructions to the thrown riddles. They also rarely threw riddles to the young ones.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 APPLICATION OF THE THEORY

4.1 Introduction

The chapter aims at applying the relevance theory in the interpretation of Ekegusii riddles. It analyses the comprehension of Ekegusii riddles using context, cognitive environment, cognitive effects and relevance-theoretic comprehension procedure.

According to Relevance Theory, what is relevant to one individual is not relevant to another. The Cognitive Principle of Relevance states that: Human cognition tends to be geared to the maximization of relevance. The human mind picks automatically what seems to be relevant ignoring other stimuli in the environment which are not relevant. Relevance is assessed in terms of, context, context-cognitive environment, cognitive effects and the processing effort. When a speaker makes an utterance, he/she chooses words that best describe what is in his/her mind. While on the other hand the hearer expects to hear what is going to be relevant to him/her. In relevance theory, utterances raise expectations of relevance not because speakers are expected to obey a co-operative principle and maxims, but because relevance is basic feature of human cognition. Human cognition system automatically picks what is relevant and ignores what is not because of the connection between context and cognitive effects.

In this case when it comes to the use of riddles, context, context-cognitive environment and cognitive effects come into play. To start with, contexts can be what precedes the riddle and what will follow. It can also be the physical environment of the utterance so that the speaker considers whether it is the right setting for a riddle to be used in terms of who it is being spoken to. For example the speaker will consider the age, origin and sex among other factors that might affect interpretation and understanding of the riddle. In relevance theory, relevance under context is emphasized. Secondly, there must be a mutual cognitive environment for a speaker and a hearer to understand each other when using a riddle. Cognitive environment in this include, experience

one has, norms and values of the society, cultural knowledge, education acquired, belief system etc, which the hearer and the speaker must have in common. A mutual cognitive environment is normally shared among the members of the same culture. The cognitive environment will form the background in the interpretation of the riddles so as to get to the intended meaning. This is so because riddles borrow much from the culture of a community. The cognitive environment is what combines with the context to yield cognitive effects.

Thirdly, the processing effort is required to process a given riddle. According to relevance theory, the process effort required to process a given utterance determines its relevance hence its use. The processing effort is the mental energy required for interpreting and understanding an input. The processing effort is affected by the following factors.

a) Recency of use: the more recently a word, a concept, a sound, a syntactic construction or a contextual assumption has been used, the less processing effort is required.

b) Frequency of use: the more often a word, a concept, a sound, a syntactic construction or contextual assumption is used, the less the processing effort is required to process it.

c) Linguistic complexity: the more linguistically complex a word, a phrase, a syntactic or phonological construction is the more processing effort it requires.

d) Logical complexity: negative expressions such as impossible, doubt etc require more processing effort.

To relate this to riddles, its recency and frequency in use, and its linguistic and logical simplicity will require less processing effort. The reverse is also true because riddles come in different forms. Sometimes the language of riddles is archaic and certainly often apparently meaningless words (Finnegan, 1970). Similarly, some are logically and linguistically complex whereas others are not. In relevance-theoretic terms, other things being equal, the greater the processing effort required, the less relevant the input will be. In addition for the hearer to arrive at the speaker's intended meaning, he/she must follow a specific comprehension procedure as stated below.

a) Follow a path of least effort in considering interpretations in order of accessibility.

b) Stop when your expectation of relevance is satisfied.

In following the relevance-theoretic comprehension procedure, the hearer must understand what was the speaker's explicit and implicit meaning as well as his intended context for him to arrive

at the intended meaning. In this case the hearer takes the speaker's utterance and processes it to a level that his expectations of relevance are satisfied or abandoned.

Finally, the cognitive effects which are the mental changes that take place once an utterance has been made are ignited. According to Sperber and Wilson (1995), an input (a sound, a sight, an utterance, a memory) is relevant to an individual when it connects with background information he has available to yield conclusions that matter to him/her which could be answering a question, confirming a suspicion, settling a doubt, improving his/her knowledge on a certain topic or correcting a mistake. In addition an input is relevant to an individual when processed in context of available assumptions yields a positive cognitive effect. A positive cognitive effect is a true conclusion, and a false conclusion is not worth processing. Relevance is also a matter of degree, where all inputs might be relevant but with different degrees hence what makes an input worth picking out from many potential inputs that may have relevance, is the ability of human cognitive system to pick out an utterance that is potentially relevant at any particular time.

From the above discussion, it can be summarized that members of Abagusii community need context and cognitive environment in order to yield positive cognitive effects in interpreting and understanding their riddles.

4.2 Comprehension of Ekegusii Riddles

This section will look at the overview of Ekegusii riddles and how comprehension of such riddles takes place.

4.2.1 Overview of Comprehension of Ekegusii riddles.

The following are the general factors guiding the comprehension of Ekegusii riddles.

-Clue from words used in the riddle.

-Processing effort.

-Context under which the riddle is used.

-Minimal or no clue from words used in the riddle.

-Cultural reference of terms used in the riddle.

-Learnt like a phrase as a new concept.

Generally if the hearer needs to understand and comprehend Ekegusii riddles, he/she must take the above factors into consideration. For instance for the hearer to comprehend literal riddles, he/she gets clue from the words used in the riddle because the constituent words have a close meaning to that of the actual meaning of the riddle. They also require less processing effort because in terms of recency of use, the words are commonly used in daily conversations. In terms of frequency, these riddles are used often. These riddles are also linguistically simple as the words are every day words. In terms of logical comprehension, they are easy to process. Therefore it can be deduced that the processing effort required to interpret a given riddle determines its commonness and simplicity. This means that to understand the hearer will understand a riddle which contains words that are familiar due to their recency and frequency in use as well as being linguistically and logically simple. In addition, context also plays an important role in the comprehension process especially in the metaphorical riddles.

4.2.2 Comprehension of Ekegusii Riddle in detail

Unlike in sentences whereby understanding the dictionary meaning of the individual words making up the sentence leads to the understanding of the actual sentence, the meaning of some riddles in not that way. For a hearer to understand a given riddle he/she must combine context, stimulus and cognitive effects in order to arrive at the speaker's intended meaning for using that riddle. It should also be understood that understanding riddles in one language does not necessarily mean understanding riddles from other languages. This is because riddles are based on context and culture and since culture varies from one community to another, riddles from other cultures other than the hearer's are difficult to comprehend.

The sub-section below will illustrate how a riddle is processed in the mind, making use of the relevance-theoretic process in the two categories in order for the hearer to arrive at the intended meaning by the speaker. It will explain why some riddles require less processing effort, making them literal while other riddles require more processing effort hence terming them metaphorical. The comprehension process is also meant to show the fact that a hearer can only understand a riddle if he/she is equipped with the background information with which to understand it.

4.2.2.1 Comprehension of Literal riddles

Literal riddles are not difficult to interpret and understand because their meanings can be derived from the constituents making them up. The words in these riddles can guide the hearer to arrive at the intended meaning by the speaker as the meanings of the words connect with the actual meanings of the riddles. Comprehension of these riddles would proceed the same way as the comprehension of any utterance. Following a path of least effort, the hearer takes the encoded concepts as the starting point for finding the speaker's intended meaning. A consequence of taking the path of least effort is that he/she often finds his/her expectation of relevance satisfied after considering only a subset of encyclopaedic assumptions associated with the encoded concepts. This means that these riddles have a high salient (i.e. immediately accessible) interpretation which is relevant in the expected way and being the only interpretation that the hearer can reasonably chose, abandoning all other interpretations. Thus, the first satisfactory interpretation is the only satisfactory interpretation. (Sperber and Wilson, 2002).

According to Relevance Theory these riddles require less processing effort to arrive at their intended meaning. Consider the following examples that were discussed in chapter three.

1) Challenger: Enyomba yane tebwati gesieri.

(My house does not have a door.)

Respondent: Rigena ri'engoko.

(An egg)

This riddle requires little processing effort because in terms of how recency of use, it is commonly used. In terms of frequency, it is used often. This riddle is also linguistically simple in that it is every day words. Logically, it is easy to process and comprehend. In this case what the hearer does is to connect the salient features in riddle to a similar object and arrive at the actual meaning of the riddle which is 'an egg'.

2) Challenger: Enyomba yane nigo ebwate egesigisa ekemo gioka.

(My house has only one rafter.)

Respondent: Oboba.

(Mushroom)

The riddle above is easy to interpret and understand because the hearer will derive the actual meaning of the riddle from the string of the utterance. The words in the riddle are common and easy to translate and process in order to arrive at the intended meaning by the speaker. This riddle requires less processing effort as the salient features in the riddle connect to the real answer.

3) Challenger: Tangatanga Bonchari, Kamagambo, Nairobi.

    (Wander all over Bonchari, Kamagambo, and Nairobi.)

  Respondent: Omokungu omotari. Riraya.Rirogo.

    (A prostitute woman)

This riddle is not difficult to interpret because its meaning can be derived from the constituent of the utterance. The words in the riddle can guide the hearer to find the image in it then identify the person with such features who is 'a prostitute' which is the intended meaning by the speaker. The literal meaning of the words in the riddle connect with the actual meaning of the riddle. Therefore, the riddle requires less processing effort. From the cultural knowledge, the hearer understands that a woman is not allowed to move from one place to another, so the moment one does that she is referred to as a prostitute. In addition, traditionally according to Abagusii people men are never referred as prostitutes as they are allowed to marry more than one wife.

4) Challenger: Nigo gianchire nonde bwensi amkia aya. Ninki?

    (It is loved by anybody nowadays.)

  Respondent: Chibesa.

    (Money)

In following the path of least effort, the hearer will take into consideration the salient features mentioned in the riddle and then identify a similar object. The riddle requires little processing effort as the words in it are easy to interpret and understand as they are commonly and frequently used and are linguistically and logically simple.

5) Challenger: Etaya etakorima ko maguta choi.

    (A lamp which does not go off despite not having kerosene)

Respondent: Risase.

(Sun)

The hearer takes the path of least effort by considering the interpretation that first comes into his/her mind. In his/her mind, the encyclopaedic entry of the utterance is activated which are the salient features in the riddle' 'a lamp which does not go off despite having no kerosene'. With the help of background knowledge, the hearer will start selecting the features in the riddle and then he/she identifies a similar object which gives light but does not use any kerosene. The hearer will arrive at the answer 'sun' which is the intended meaning by the speaker.

6) Challenger: Omokungu nyamaboko atato. Ninki?

(A woman with three hands)

Respondent: Eriko

(Fire place)

Following a path of least effort, the hearer sees the link between what is linguistically encoded in the riddle and the issue of a woman having three hands. With the help of background knowledge, the hearer will begin selecting the features in the riddle and associate them with an object with three things which is a fire place with three cooking stones. According to Abagusii people, cooking is a woman's chore therefore the riddle associates a fire place with a woman. This riddle therefore requires less processing effort.

7) Challenger: Ninki kebwate amagoro ane getari kogenda?

(What has four legs but does not walk)

Respondent: Emesa

(A table)

In interpreting the meaning of the riddle above, the hearer considers the features in the riddle in his /her encyclopaedic entry and starts associating them with a similar object. From the background knowledge of knowing that legs are for walking, the hearer achieves cognitive effects which will lead him/her to a table as the intended meaning by the speaker. This riddle requires less processing effort because the words in it are commonly and frequently used in daily conversation. In terms of linguistic complexity, it is simple and easy to process logically. In

addition, the object with those features is also common to Abagusii people as it is used on a daily basis.

8) Challenger: Abana b'Omare nigo bakoragera marara.
   (Omare's children eat while sleeping)
   Respondent: Amage y'enyoni akoragererigwa egeswa marara.
   (Bird's nestlings being fed while sleeping)

The hearer in interpreting the meaning of the above riddle takes into consideration a situation in which off springs are fed without being involved in working or searching for food. With the help of background information of knowing that birds feed on what people have worked on and their nestlings are brought the food without going out for it, then processing the intended meaning becomes easy.

9) Challenger: Ande onsi ase ngochia goika getunye.
   (Any where I go it must follow me)
   Respondent: Omorengari oo.
   (Your own shadow)

The hearer takes the path of least effort by activating the utterance in his/her encyclopaedic entry of an object which follows a person wherever he/she goes. With the background knowledge, the hearer begins selecting the features of this object and then identifies the object 'your own shadow' which is the intended meaning by the speaker.

10) Challenger: Nachire gosooka isiko, nanyore nyang'era.
    (I have gone out and found 'nyang'era)
    Respondent: Omosunte o botuko.
    (Darkness in the night)

The riddle above requires less processing effort because the meanings of the words in it connect with the actual meaning of the riddle. Secondly, the words are easy to understand as they are commonly and frequently used. They are also linguistically simple and in terms of logic they are easy to process. Finally with background information of the word 'nyang'era' which refers to anything black, the hearer arrives at the intended meaning of the riddle.

4.2.2.2 Comprehension of Metaphorical Riddles

In comprehension of metaphorical riddles, one gets no clue from the words of the riddle. None of the encyclopaedic assumptions made accessible by the words in the string (separately or in combination) help in arriving at the speaker's intended meaning. This type of riddles requires more processing effort, context and cognitive environment in order to arrive at the speaker's meaning. They have no clue to guide into their interpretation, so one needs to have cultural references of some of the words so as to get the intended meaning by the speaker. These riddles can be learnt as phrases or new concepts. This is because the meanings of the words in the riddles have no relationship with the actual meaning of the riddles.

Consider the following examples discussed in chapter three.

    1) Challenger: Aa to!

        (Aa to!)
      Respondent: Oboterere.
        (Slipperiness)

In interpreting the above riddle, the hearer requires more processing effort because the words in the riddle have no connection with the actual meaning of the riddle. First the hearer assumes the utterance is relevant to him/her in relation with the Cognitive Principle of Relevance. From his/her cognitive environment, he/she knows that this riddle is associated with a person undergoing some challenge which in this case is slipperiness caused by rain which he/she needs to overcome. With the help of context, the hearer arrives at the intended meaning by the speaker.

   2) Challenger: Abagaaka baikaransete n'abang'ina bakoirwana.
         (Men seated while women are struggling)
    Respondent: a) Amagena a rooche, naro abagaaka.
         b)Amache agoeta naro abang'ina bakoirwana

        (Stones in the water are the men seated and flowing water are the women)

54

The words in the riddle above have no connection with the intended meaning of the riddle. To interpret the riddle, the hearer requires seeing the connection between what is linguistically encoded which is complex with the seated men and struggling women. More processing effort, context and cultural knowledge are required for the hearer to arrive at speaker's meaning. According to Abagusii culture, it is also known that men never do much work as their women are the ones who move about doing most of the work in the home.

3) Challenger: Kaa gento ki, getagosika para ya Mosongo?

    (Which thing that does not respect the road of a white person)

Respondent: Eguto ekorema ande onsi, nonya n'epara igoro.

    (Antbear digging even on the road)

This riddle requires more processing effort and context in order to arrive at the speaker's meaning. The meaning of the constituent words do not guide in arriving at the intended meaning as they mean differently from the actual meaning of the riddle. The implied meaning of this riddle is a warning to those people who do not respect other people's things especially somebody's wife. According to Abagusii people it was a warning to those people who never respected other people's things and to the others to be careful with such people. It was a behavior discerned by the community.

4) Challenger: Kaa mote ki, ogosicha mambia, marogoba ebsicha biaroroka.

    (Which tree flowers in the morning and in the evening, it withers)

Respondent: a) Echiro, nero omote

    b)Egoichora mambia, nakwo ogosicha mambia

    c)Abanto bagocha echiro nabwo ebisicha

    (A market is the tree, being full in the morning is the flowering and the people are the flowers)

The answer to the riddle is not fixed, and demands creativity on the part of the hearer. A logical comparison of the things mentioned in the riddle is required. In addition, linguistically this riddle is complex, therefore requiring more processing effort. The meanings of the words too in the riddle do not have any connection with the actual meaning of the riddle. In comprehending this riddle, the hearer requires context and general wisdom in order to recognize the metaphorical

image in it. Culturally the implied meaning of this riddle is a warning to Abagusii people to avoid attractive things which do not last longer.

5) Challenger: Mosubati omwabo Chacha, nong'ainia boire nabo nkogochanchania.

   (Sister to Chacha even if you are clever, I will challenge you)

Respondent: Enchara egoteebia omonto ekoria.

   (Hunger telling the person it is challenging)

The processing of this riddle is difficult because the meanings of the words in it do not have any relationship with the actual meaning of the riddle. In context, it means that there things in life which happen to us and even if we are as strong as what, they must affect us. For example death, when it happens to us, it affects greatly. No one can stand it. Hunger is also challenging as it can even make one to steal. Therefore, Abagusii people used this riddle to encourage their people to be hardworking in order to avoid such situations as missing food in the family which is basic. Therefore, for the hearer to interpret this riddle he/she requires context and cognitive environment in order to get at the speaker's meaning.

6) Challenger: Enchera ya Nyamoniambo onde tana koyeeta, n'ere bweka.

   (Nyamoniambo's road has never been passed by anybody, only him)

Respondent: a) Eusi y'oronyambobe, nero enchera.

   b)Oronyambobe, narwo Nyamoniambo.

   (The spider's web is the road and the spider is 'Nyamoniambo')

This is a complex riddle which requires more processing effort in order to arrive at the intended meaning by the speaker. The hearer first activates the encyclopaedic entries of the specific-culture based concepts such as 'Nyamoniambo'. It is linguistically and logically complex and the meaning of its constituent words have no relationship with the actual meaning of the riddle which is the spider and its web. The riddle implies personal things which are intimate and are not supposed to be shared by anybody especially a wife according to Abagusii culture.

7) Challenger: Kemunto ongosire.

   (Kemunto has scared me)

Respondent: Amarwa.

   (Alcohol)

In interpreting this riddle, the hearer needs to take into consideration the feature mentioned in the riddle 'ongosire' and the use of the name 'Kemunto' which is a woman's name because they do not connect the actual meaning of the riddle 'amarwa (alcohol)' The literal meaning is 'Kemunto has scared me' and the implied meaning is 'alcohol', they have no connection. This makes the riddle to require more processing effort so as to get the speaker's meaning. Whatever scares according to Abagusii is something bad, such as alcohol which is also bad in the context of Abagusii.It is women who prepare alcohol in Abagusii community. These are things that may look good but have negative effect. With all the above contextual assumptions, the hearer is able to arrive at the intended meaning by the speaker.

8) Challenger: Tata ogure n'egoti yaye.

        (Father has fallen with his coat)

Respondent: Ritoke riagechirwe

        (A banana which has been cut)

According to the above riddle, there is no connection between the meanings of the words in the riddle and the intended meaning by the speaker. This makes the riddle to require more processing effort, context and cognitive effects to interpret it.

9) Challenger: Kaa bamura ki batato oyomo ataiyo, babere tibagokora meremo?

        (Who are the three boys once one is not there, the two cannot work)

Respondent: Amaiga a riko.

        (The three cooking stones)

In interpreting the riddle above, the hearer requires to take into consideration the communal way of life among the Abagusii people. It is clear that the item (abamura batato meaning three boys) in the riddle depict working in pairs if one is absent, the remaining items cannot work on their own. Failure to recognize the pairing of items implies failure to recognize the unity that exists in them. The items work as unit and it is this unity that makes them succeed. This riddle above symbolically foregrounds communal life. This implies that the community urges its members to work together as a unit since working as an individual implies failure. The strength of Abagusii community was founded on communal welfare based on co-operation and unity among its members. With the help of cultural knowledge which is unity among the Abagusii people for

developmental purposes and context, the hearer is able to arrive at intended meaning by the speaker.

10) Challenger: Ara egesero toriere chinsobosobo.

   (Spread a hide we eat wild berries)

Respondent: a) Erioba, nario egesero.

   b)Ching'enang;eni nachio chinsobosobo.

The riddle above requires more processing effort because the meanings of the words making it up do not have any relationship with the actual meaning of the riddle and are culture-specific. This culture items are 'egesero and chinsobosobo' which need cultural knowledge for their interpretation.

4.3 Conclusion

In this chapter, the study has established that Ekegusii riddles can be termed as being literal and metaphorical in nature. The analysis has been carried out in relevance-theoretic terms because the use of a riddle is the matter of human cognition hence the relevance theory was used. It is suggested in this study that for one to use a riddle, he/she must find it relevant to him/her. This is reflected in the Cognitive Principle of Relevance which states that Human cognition is geared towards maximization of relevance. Secondly, the relevance of an input in this case a riddle depends on the effort required in processing it, context, background information and cognitive effects it achieves. The combination of all these factors determines the interpretation of these riddles.

The relevance-theoretic comprehension procedure was also used in the interpretation of some of the riddles in their categories. It was based on following a path of least effort by considering interpretations in order of accessibility and stopping when one's expectation of relevance is satisfied. It has been established that to interpret literal riddles, the hearer requires less processing effort based on the clue from the words used in the riddles while metaphorical riddles require more processing effort based on context and cultural information.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 Introduction

This chapter provides a summary of the findings which will lead us to the conclusion and recommendation of this study. This study aimed at analysing Ekegusii riddles in the book 'Chimbachero Chi'Abagusii'. Fifty riddles were analysed. The study was carried out using the principles of Relevance Theory. This study sought to achieve three objectives. The first objective was to identify and classify Ekegusii riddles. Secondly, was to establish whether children, adults or both participate in the riddling process. Thirdly, it was to examine the role of context and cultural information in interpreting Ekegusii riddles.

5.1 Summary

The findings of the study reveal that the fifty Ekegusii riddles can be classified into literal and metaphorical riddles. The study used the principles of Relevance Theory (the cognitive and communicative principles) in showing how the hearer interprets and understands Ekegusii riddles. The study observed that in this cultural context, riddles involve both social and natural phenomena. Most of them are designed in form of statements and questions. They are concerned with selected images of natural phenomena, objects, roles, and structures of some social institutions. The items of the riddles are presented in both literal and metaphorical forms. Literally, the riddles are interpreted from their words and their simplicity in linguistic and logic. Metaphorically, they are expressed symbolically in line with the value system of Abagusii. They are interpreted and understood in the basis of context and background information. Riddles are also based on analogy based on similarities such as size, shape, status and colour.

Riddles play an important role of educating not only children but also adults. They are often used to pass information and wisdom of human experience from the old generation to the young generation. Though children's riddles receive not only a technical instruction, but also all ways of information regarding the natural and social environments. Thus, indicating that riddles are a source of communicative innovations of forefathers of countless generations. Both children and adults take part in the riddling process. In addition, the study observed that, context and cultural information were required in the interpretation and understanding of Ekegusii riddles. The hearer was guided by the principle of Relevance Theory in interpreting and understanding the context and arriving at the intended meaning of Ekegusii riddles. Through the relevance theoretic

comprehension procedure, the hearer used a path of least effort in deriving the actual meaning of Ekegusii riddles. The hearer also stopped when his expectation of relevance is satisfied. The study established that the principles of Relevance Theory, cultural information and processing effort were necessary for the hearer to arrive at the intended meaning of Ekegusii riddles by the speaker.

5.3 Conclusion

Riddles form part of folk culture, especially language which is manipulated by the question in order to confuse the respondent. Riddles are framed using phenomena within a given environment, meaning that effective communication depends on the shared knowledge between the speaker and the hearer. They are used for different purposes which include entertainment, teaching of lesson and prove of intelligence. This study aimed at analysing the pragmatic aspects of Ekegusii riddles. First, the study identified and classified fifty Ekegusii riddles in the book 'Chimbachero Chi'Abagusii'. Secondly, examined the participants in the riddling process whether children, adults or both. Finally the role of context and cultural knowledge in interpreting Ekegusii riddles. Studies on riddles among Abagusii still need further consideration in the face of modern society. This study attempted to fill the gap at least to some extent.

5.4 Recommendation

The findings from this study clearly indicate that riddles are culture and environment bounded. This boosts the need to select the values in riddles and adapt them to the present context. Following this logic of argument, riddles have a clear reference to the modern society in enhancing the intended knowledge, skill and attitude. In this framework, the need to preserving and transposing riddles deserve great recognition from everybody. This study used Relevance Theory to analyse Ekegusii riddles which helped the researcher to identify the pragmatic aspects of Ekegusii riddles. As no theory can exhaustively handle a given phenomena, it is recommended that further studies can use other theories such as the Critical Discourse Analysis in order to get other perspectives on riddles. Also further studies can analyse other aspects in riddles.

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