USE OF FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE IN OKOT P'BITEK'S

SONG OF LAWINO: A RELEVANCE THEORETIC APPROACH

BY

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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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NYANG'ACHA, D. KIBWAGE   DATE

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

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PROF. OKOTH OKOMBO   DATE

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ABSTRACT

In this study, the relationship between linguistics and literature is highlighted. The study provides some differences, and similarities between linguistics and literature. Two theories of pragmatics (relevance theory, advanced by Sperber & Wilson, and lexical pragmatics, advanced by Blutner) are reviewed. The figures of speech used in *Song of Lawino* are identified, described, and analyzed from a linguistic point of view. The major aim of this study is to use the analytic tools of relevance theory to explain how Lawino's audience understands her figurative use of Language in Okot p'Bitek's *Song of Lawino*. The study aims at demonstrating how a reader with the presupposed cultural background will understand Okot p'Bitek's use of figurative language.

This project is organized into five chapters. Chapter one provides an introduction to the study. It provides: assumptions, operational definitions of key terms, the statement of the problem, objectives, hypotheses, significance, scope and limitations, theoretical framework, literature review, and research methodology. Chapter two presents the different kinds of figures of speech identified in *Song of Lawino*.

Chapter three analyses the figures of speech identified within the parameters of relevance theory. It demonstrates how the writer's intended audience understands the figures of speech identified using the principles of lexical pragmatics which are supported by relevance theory.

Chapter four provides the findings of the study. It is revealed that the context plays a crucial role in the interpretation of the writer's encoded message. The audience considers hypotheses about the writer's meaning in the process of the search for relevance. The hypothesis that satisfies the reader's expectations of relevance is therefore assumed to be the writer's intended meaning. Chapter five provides the summary, conclusion, and recommendations.