

Through a Sociolinguistic Lens: Analysis of Luvale Proverbs

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Abstract – This study attempts an analysis of Luvale proverbs from the perspective of Dell Hymes' ethnography of communication. The Luvale are one of the major ethnic groupings in Zambia (Kashoki, 1978). Data for the study were mainly sourced from competent Luvale native speakers in Zambezi District of North-western Zambia namely Kasoka Samusuwa, Kapindula Sayini, and Kutemba Samafu. One published source in Luvale language titled *Ndangwishi Ja Luvale* by H. M. Katawola (1965) was consulted. Other proverbs were collected from the book titled *Zambian proverbs* (1993) by Nyambe Sumbwa. While indicating the typology of the proverbs using Adedimeji's (2003) classification, the twenty (20) selected proverbs are analysed against Hymes' SPEAKING model. The model reveals the context and situation of use of proverbs. Thus, it paves the way for the understanding of Luvale proverbs in the context of English as a second and administrative Language in Zambia.

Keywords: English in Zambia, Luvale language, Luvale proverbs, Zambian ethnic groups, Sociolinguistics.

1. INTRODUCTION

The fact that language and society are interrelated has long been established in linguistic scholarship. Indeed, it has been agreed that language is the mirror of society's culture since it reflects the beliefs and norms of its members. According to Welhelm von Humboldt,

The spiritual traits and the structure of the language of a people are so intimately blended that, given either of the two, one should be able to derive the other from it to the fullest extent [...] Language is the outward manifestation of the spirit of the people: their language is their spirit, and their spirit if their language; it is difficult to imagine any two things more identical" (Cited in Salzmann, 1998, p. 39).

Similarly, Wardhaugh (2010, p. 229) argues that the exact nature of the relationship between language and culture has fascinated, and continues to fascinate, people from a wide variety of backgrounds. That there should be some kind of relationship between the sounds, words, and syntax of a language and the ways in which speakers of that language experience the world and behave in it.

Edward Sapir (1921) also lends his voice to the connection between language and society when he asserts that "language and [society] are intricately interwoven, and are, in a sense, one and the same" (1921, p. 228). Indeed, the connection between the two is deeply rooted. Language performs various functions in the society and the society does the same. If one does not exist, the other will be affected. Language and society have a symbiotic relationship because

“every language is a social product, and every society constitutes itself through language” (Coulmas, 2003, p. 363, cited in Adedimeji (2007, p. 87).

In this regards therefore, the present study will attempt to probe into the language of proverbs and their values on the traditions of the Luvale speaking people of Zambia, using the ethnography of communication purported by Dell Hymes (1974). The study also exposes the reader to various categorisations of proverbs and their ability to transfer Luvale socio-cultural values and heritage.

Data for analysis were mainly sourced from competent Luvale native speakers in Zambezi District of North-western Zambia namely Kasoka Samusuwa, Kapindula Sayini, and Kutemba Samafu. In addition, I used the limited written literature on Luvale proverbs such as *Ndangwishi Ja Luvale* by H. M. Katawola (1965) and *Zambian proverbs* (1993) by Nyambe Sumbwa. I also used the available written literature as well as electronic sources on Luvale people.

2. ETHNO-LINGUISTIC PROFILE OF THE LUVALE

Luvale is one of the major ethnic groupings in Zambia (Kashoki, 1978). It is spoken by the people called Baluvale. Luvale is a tonal language and belongs to the Niger-Congo language phylum and is spoken by the Luvale people of Angola where they are called Luena, and by those of North-Western Zambia (Chongo, 2015).

In Zambia, the Luvale are found in the North-western area, particularly in Chavuma and Kabompo districts as well as the western part of Zambezi River, known to the Luvale as *Yambeji* meaning “place of plenty of water”. As documented by Wele (1993) and Ellert (2005), the Luvale are a matrilineal group of Bantu that migrated from the once famous Kingdom of Mwata Yanvwa in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Aside from north-western Zambia, the Luvale are also found in the watershed highlands of north-eastern Angola and south-western DRC. Wele (1993) further notes that the Luvale, Chokwe, Luchazi and Mbunda are historically closely related to the Lunda and Luyi. However, linguistically and culturally, they have a close relation with the Luchazi and Mbunda.

The Luvale economy is manly agro-fishery based. Agriculture is chiefly centred on staple crops such as cassava (pl. *mikamba*; sing. *mukamba*), yam (pl. *vilingo*; sing. *chilingo*), and peanuts (*vyelu*). Tobacco is grown for snuff, and maize is grown for brewing. Farming and processing of agricultural product is done almost exclusively by women (Chongo, 2015). In order to naturally conserve the land, the Luvale practice splash and burn techniques as well as crop rotation. They also domesticate livestock including sheep, goats, pigs, and chicken. Meat supplement is obtained through hunting, which is exclusively a male activity.

As for their social-political structure, the Luvale are matrilineal and uxorilocal. They live in villages divided into manageable sections, which are governed by family headmen. Chieftainship is restricted to a single clan among the thirteen, that of the *NamaKungu*. All children of female chiefs are therefore chiefs (pl. *vamyangana*; sing. *mwangana*). A child of a male chief is called *Mwana Uta* (‘child of the bow’); and as per tradition, he can never become a *mwangana* (Chongo, 2015).

There exist two most important rites that every Luvale man or woman experiences in his or her life, these are *Mukanda*, the boys’ circumcision ritual and *Wali*, the girls’ puberty ritual.

The objective of these ceremonies is to turn boys into men and girls into women. As Ellert (2005: 26) observes, from pre-pubescent through to the teens, Luvale boys are inducted into the *mukanda* School in order to prepare them for manhood. And Wele (1993) explains that, the *mukanda*, where the penis surgical operation is performed, is normally held by a single village and other surrounding villages are invited to participate. There are three distinct stages, the first being preparation, which usually begins when a village headman (*chilolo*) or important elder, having reached consensus with the families of young uncircumcised boys, publicly announces that the time for the *mukanda* has come. The candidates are then gathered together at the *mukanda* where they are circumcised. At this stage, the initiator of the *Mukanda* ceremony becomes known as *chijika mukanda* ('planter of mukanda'), and the invocation of the spirits before the *muyombo* tree is done to bless and purify the children who will undergo the operation (Wele, 1993).

The second stage is the seclusion, during which the initiates (pl. *vatundanji*; sing. *kandanji*) are taught skills such as *makishi* (masquerades) making, wood-carving, basketry, blacksmith and other practical skills. They are also allowed to play games and indulge in sports. The curriculum also includes cultural training and instruction in the ancient form of design and calculus known as *tusona*, which is a tradition of ideographic tracings that are made in sand.

The third and final stage is graduation, or *kulovola*, which is marked by various activities as the boys are welcome back into their community, where they are received joyously as newly born and real men. An interesting feature of *kulovola* is the ceremony of symbolic sexual intercourse with *kashinakaji* – a costume that resemble an old woman covered with a blanket who has an enlarged vagina that has been fashioned from a dried calabash. The purpose of this symbolic sexual intercourse – considered as form of masturbation – is to test the virility of each of the initiated boys (Ellert, 2005, p. 27).

The girls' initiation ritual (*Wali*) differs in many respects from that of the boys. According to Wele (1993) and Ellert (2005), while boys are initiated in groups in the bush, girls are initiated individually in the village. Whereas boys are subjected to hard labour and harsh discipline, girls are pampered, sung to, and relieved from doing most daily chores. Boys are circumcised, but girls do not undergo clitoridectomy as in other ethnic groups in West Africa. And Wele (1993) further explains that "Wali is an educational process which a girl who has attained maturity undergoes" (1993, p. 45). The main determining factor to hold *Wali* is the first reported menstrual period by the girl to her grandmother or a close elderly female relative. The purpose of *Wali* is not to enact any physical change in the girls but, to prepare the young girls for their position as women in society (Ellert, 2005, p. 34). Just like the *mukanda* for boys, *wali* goes through distinct stages. First, the preparatory stage then seclusion, and finally the graduation. In the preparation stage, a special shelter known as *litungu* is erected next to a particular type of ficus tree called *muulya*. The second phase is when instruction begins; this is provided by an appointed instructress (*chilombola*) who should have had years of experience in this form of educational process (Wele, 1993). Each girl spends the first day of seclusion making a girdle (*zeva*) that she will wear for the duration of the *wali*. As Eller (2005, p. 37) observes, seclusion lasts between four and six months and includes all aspects of women's work, womanly arts and crafts, with emphasis upon how to please one's future husband sexually and on being obedient and hard-working wife and mother. It should also be mentioned that,

during seclusion, the girl has to observe certain rules such as not running quickly, lying on her stomach and avoiding being slapped on her buttocks. She has also to avoid eating certain types of food such as *mbuli* (barbel) that is believed will cause vagina contraction and wet vagina. Additionally, she has to constantly refrain from contact with fire which is closely associated with life and its absence (coldness) is symbolic of death – only her grandmother kindles the fire for her (Wele, 1993, p. 47). By graduation, the young woman is ready to re-join her family and the community in her newly acquired role.

3. CONCEPT OF SOCIOLENGUISTICS

Various scholars have given different accounts of sociolinguistics as a concept. Hymes (1974) confirm this when he says that “The term ‘sociolinguistics’ means many things to many people, and of course no one has a patent on its definition” (1974, p. 195). Trudgill (1974) sees Sociolinguistics as “the part of linguistics which is concerned with language as a social and cultural phenomenon” (1974, p. 1). It investigates the field of language and society and has close link with the social sciences, especially psychology, anthropology and sociology. David Crystal (2008) sees sociolinguistics as a discipline which “studies language variation and use in relation to the cultural patterns and beliefs of man” (2008, p. 18). McGregor (2009) refers to Sociolinguistics as “the study of the effects of any and all aspects of society including cultural norms, expectations, and contexts on the way language is used and the effects of language use on society” (2009, p. 2).

In the views of Holmes (2008), sociolinguists are interested in explaining why we speak differently in different social contexts, and they are concerned with identifying the social functions of language and the way it is used to convey social meaning. He further observes that examining the way people use language in different social contexts provides a number of information about the way language works, as well as about the social relationships in a community, and the way people signal aspects of their social identity through their language (2008, p. 1). In other words, “sociolinguists deal with the inter-relationship between language and society; they examine how and why people use language as they interact with other members in their society” (Yule, 1996, p. 239).

The awareness of social factors will influence the choice of appropriate ways of speaking in different fashions. As Coulmas (1997, p. 47) observes, sociolinguistics explores the variation in languages associated with social phenomena such as the social group to which speakers and hearers belong. The primary concern of sociolinguistics scholarship is to study correlations between language use and social structure. It attempts to establish causal links between language and society; asking what language contributes to making communities possible and how communities shape their language by using them. From these different accounts, it is obvious that language and society are key terms in sociolinguistics.

4. TOWARDS THE DEFINITION OF PROVERBS

There are as many definitions of proverbs as there are scholars in this field. This is because proverbs vary considerably depending on the culture of a given society. Grzybek (1994), as cited by Onyemelukwe and Ogbechie (2014, p. 172), asserts that there is no single

comprehensive definition of proverb. Grzybek assertion is valid in the light of some of the definitions I have put forward. The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2010) defines proverb as "a well-known phrase or sentence that gives advice or says something that is generally true." In the same breath, Meider (1985) defines proverb as a "phrase, saying, sentence, statement or experience of the folk which contains above all wisdom, truth, morals, experiences, lessons and advice concerning life and which has been handed down from generation to generation (1985, p. 117). Similarly, Akporobaro (2006) indicates that "proverb is an aphorism, a wise saying, based upon people's experience and is a reflection of the social values and sensibility of the people" (2006, p. 69). Lamidi (2008) posits that a proverb is a witty saying which captures the logic, culture and observations of a people (2008, p. 61). Malunga and James (2004) believe that "proverbs are simple and often short statements with deep meaning. [...] They are guidelines for individual, family and village behaviours" (2004, p. 2). In the same vein, Finnegan (2012, p. 383) observes 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." In the same breath, Okpewho (1992) defines a proverb as "a piece of folk wisdom expressed with terseness and charm. The 'terseness' implies a certain economy in the choice of words and sharpness of focus, while 'charm' conveys the touch of literary or poetic beauty in the expression" (1992, p. 226).

According to Shipper (1991, p. 1), a proverb has a concise artistic form evaluative and conservative function in the society. It is the cream of a language. As to Kerschen (2012), proverb is regarded as "short statement that teaches a lesson or gives practical advice" (2012, p. 13). In the words of Akinmande (2005) as cited in Akinmande (2012, p. 129), "a proverb is a metaphorical horse in popular and approved saying which carries one beyond the surface meaning of a saying, to discover the truth of ideas; it is an in-depth, carefully selected provocative thought which either commands, advises, rebukes or warns a person or thing to which it is applied." Similarly, according to the Yoruba of Nigeria, "Proverbs are the horses of speech" meaning that in the event where communication gets lost, proverbs are used to retrieve it (Schipper, 1991, p. 1). Schipper's idea is succinctly apparent in the following Igbo proverb which says, "Proverbs are the palm-oil with which words are eaten" (Oha, 1999, p. 87), meaning that proverb help to accelerate the smooth sail of words through the throat.

The foregoing shows that there are as many definitions of proverbs as there are scholars. However, based on the few definitions given above, proverbs could be conceptualised as any wise saying or epigram that converts the central idea in a given context, objectively and truthfully. A proverb is, therefore, a form of language with a special structure and meaning that cannot be easily altered.

5. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study employs Dell Hymes' (1974) ethnography of communication as its theoretical base. As Holmes (2008) posits, this is "an approach to analysing language which has been designed to heighten awareness of culture-bound assumptions" (2008, p. 365). Ethnography of Communication is "concerned not simply with language structure but with language use, with rules of speaking . . . the ways in which speakers associate particular models of speaking, topics, or messages forms, with particular setting and activities" (quoted in Coulthard, 1977, p. 30).

The thrust of Ethnography of Communication is to portray how the conventions of language use, its forms, relate to aspects of social behaviour. Adeyanju (1998), cited in Adedimeji (2007, p. 92), conceived Hymes' ethnography of communication as "a speaker's knowledge of what variety of language to use in what situation, how to vary style with the audience addressed, when to speak or remain silent." In this regards, Hymes (1974) posits that in order to speak a language correctly, one needs not only to learn its vocabulary and grammar, but also the context in which words are used. He also claims that there are various factors that influence communication. For the sake of convenience, he uses the acronym SPEAKING for the various factors he deems relevant in understanding how a particular communicative event achieves its objectives. The acronym is highlighted as follows:

S- Setting and Scene: The former refers to the time and place in which the speech takes place, whereas the latter refers to the abstract psychological setting or the cultural definition of the events (formal or informal, serious or festive). E.g. Specific greetings in different societies have their distinctive settings and scenes. Congratulatory messages and jokes are not usually concurrent with the setting of a funeral.

P- Participants: This refers to the parties involved in the communication (speaker and audience). These may be speaker-hearer, addresser-addressee or sender-receiver. Participants are influenced by their age, social status, education, gender, role and role relationship such as mother-daughter, teacher-pupil, etc. as they engage in communication.

E- Ends refer to the purpose, goals and outcomes of the speech. All speech acts serve certain ends whether intended or unintended.

A- Act sequence: This is the actual form or content of speech and order of an event. This represents the exact words used and how they are used, and how what is said relates to the present topic of discussion. For instance, in English, there are many ways of greeting such as (Hi; Hello; Good morning; Good day; How are you doing? How are you? etc.), but the choice of each act sequence is influenced by different ends or interpretations.

K- Key or emotional tone. It refers to the tone, manner, or spirit in which something is said. To put it differently, key means the tone or manner in which a textual message is delivered. This imparts and provides cues on interpretations. Whether one is serious, sarcastic, light-hearted, authoritative, detached or not, would be marked by the key employed, which includes nonverbal aspects of communication. According to Wardhaugh (1998), "when there is lack of fit between what a person is actually saying and the key that the person is using, listeners are likely to pay more attention to the key than to the actual content" (1998, p. 243). In other words, the key should be reflective of the topic for communication. Where the key does not match what a person is saying, people would pay attention to the key. For instance, in the English proverb "actions speak louder than words", there is a justification that *key* may be more important than *act sequence* in communicative events.

I- Instrumentalities: It has to do with the choice of channel or medium for passing the message. Instrumentalities include such variables as oral and written forms, formal and informal patterns, standards and non-standard varieties, etc. A speaker might use a casual register with many dialectical features or might use a more formal register and careful grammatical standard forms. For instance, in traditional ceremony meeting or gathering where English is spoken, the orator could switch to vernacular to explain the significance of the ceremony to the audience or just

for the sake of those who cannot get the meaning in English. It is possible to use different instrumentalities during a single verbal exchange of a considerable length by switching from writing to speaking, quoting a proverb and code switching between different languages.

N- Norms of interpretation of what is going on. These refer to the specific behaviours associated with communication and how these behaviours are viewed. In other words, these are the norms or rules that govern speaking, and they vary from one setting to the other. For instance, among the Luvale, proverbs are the prerogatives of the elders and when a young person wants to use proverbs, especially where there are elders, s/he begins with the norms or hedges like “our ancestors say that . . .”, “our ancestors were not wrong to teach us that . . .”, “the proverb of the elders says that . . .”, “according to the Luvale . . .” Also, in the Western culture, eye-contact is considered important to achieving communicative ends, while in some African cultures like that of the Luvale or Lunda of Zambia, eye-contact, especially between the young and the old may be an offensive norm on the part of the young.

G- Genre or type of event refers to the precise type of utterance, such as poems, proverbs, stories, anecdotes, lectures, prayers, etc. Of course, the occasion determines the genre. In a festive mood for instance, one is expected to use songs that would reflect the mood while in the council of elders meeting among the Luvale of Zambia for example, proverbs are used richly to embellish speech and to establish the speaker’s “Luvaleness”, that is a sense of belonging to the Luvale people and culture.

The Hymes’ SPEAKING model explained above is a useful tool for the analysis of language within the sociolinguistic framework. It allows anyone who is interested in analysing any aspect of language the opportunity to look not only into vocabulary, competence, and correctness but also the context that warrant such language use. However, it is worth noting that not every utterance in a speech must have all the eight elements of Hymes’ SPEAKING model. In other words, as Adedimeji (2007) observes, “if communication is considered to be a bicycle wheel with the speaking formula its spokes, the absence of one or two in a given context does not render the wheel useless; the communication/analysis will still [continue]” (2007, p. 94). For instance in a soliloquy, a person may not talk to another person. Also, the same person may just talk for the sake of talking not because s/he has a specific objective to attain; one such example is singing.

6. ANALYSIS OF SELECTED PROVERBS

In what follows, my data is presented as act sequence in Luvale and translated into English to allow for a proper interpretation. I should also mention that the English translations provided are glosses and should be handled with utmost care. The analysis and typology are given below, after which other ethnographic features of SPEAKING follow.

DATUM 1

ACT SEQUENCE: *Kupeza chamulumbi apezelavali na ngimbu.*

Lit. Trans: “When a simpleton finds something, he finds it for those with axes.”

Meaning: A man without tools or some capital (in case of business), will never succeed in life. Like other African people, the Luvale believe that possessing an axe and a spear symbolizes

manhood; since they enable one not only to defend himself against any kind of danger, but also to venture in economic activities such as clearing a piece of land for cultivation or cutting a tree in order to reach a bee hive for honey.

PARTICIPANTS

Addresser: village members or clan's men.

Addressee: a lazy man or probably an apprentice hunter.

SETTING: Place and time: in evening, in the palaver hut - *Zango*.

Scene: At a gathering, a man is urged to work hard if he has to succeed in life or to avoid being exploited by others.

END: Didactic. The proverb teaches and encourages hard work for individuals' own benefit and that of the community.

KEY: Urging and sober tone.

DATUM 2

ACT SEQUENCE: *Wazangile makonde kachi muvaseza mungundu?*

Lit. Trans.: "If you wanted bananas could you have left them in the abandoned village?"

Meaning: One should think carefully before taking an action. The proverb teaches men not to take hasty and un-considered decisions, especially over matters of divorce as well as caring for the children even after divorcing their mother. Such a man may be denied a share of his daughters' bride-price on account of his having neglected them.

PARTICIPANTS

Addresser: elderly male member of a village council.

Addressee: A tribe's man.

SETTING: Place and time: probably in the late afternoon, at a village council meeting.

Scene: Rebuking an inconsiderate person who doesn't think through before making a decision.

END: Advice to unwise man.

KEY: Serious and sarcastic tone.

DATUM 3

ACT SEQUENCE: *Sonyi yayindende yaneha sonyi yayinene.*

Lit. Trans.: "A small embarrassment causes a big one."

Meaning: A person who embarrasses another over a minor issue is likely to find himself in much bigger trouble or embarrassment as days go by.

PARTICIPANTS

Addresser: An elderly man.

Addressee: Unsympathetic person (male).

SETTING: Place and time: probably during day time, at the village palaver-hut.

Scene: Cautioning message.

END: Rebuking. Teasing a person for his lack of sympathy and foresight.

KEY: A rebuking and mocking tone.

DATUM 4

ACT SEQUENCE: ***Kutulika ngoma kuunda muchima, vapuka kaveshi kwingila ufukuko.***

Lit. Trans.: “Putting up a bee hive is to be patient; bees do not enter the hive at night.”

Meaning: Success or wealth does not come overnight; it requires patience and hard work. A similar teaching is in this English saying: ‘*Rome was not built in a day.*’ This proverb seems to be particularly relevant to people entering the world of business, as well as those who embark on some kind of reform.

PARTICIPANTS

Addresser: Father, an old person.

Addressee: Son, a young person.

SETTING: Place and time: in the evening, at the family’s house, probably around a fire.

Scene: advise or encourage a young man/woman who is in a hurry and wants to see the results of his/her efforts instantly or acquire wealth overnight. The proverb urges people to be patient in order to get satisfactory result of what they want done.

END: philosophical and didactic.

KEY: urging and serious tone.

DATUM 5

ACT SEQUENCE: ***Phwevo ly a ndumba wutama lunga lyove akwate nyama, pwevo ly a mwata hola mukanwa lunga lyove atunge limbo.***

Lit. Trans.: “Lion’s wife be calm so that your husband catches game; chief’s or head-man’s wife hold your mouth so that your husband build a village.”

Meaning: Gossip and lies are detrimental to peace, harmony, and unity of a village. The Lunda people have a similar teaching that says: *Mutondu kufukama wudi namafu* (“For a tree to bend it needs to have leaves that will make it heavy”) implying that the value of a village depends on the number of its people it has, for there cannot be a village without people.

PARTICIPANTS

Addresser: Council of elders (males).

Addressee: Village chief’s wife.

SETTING: Place and time: in the evening at village the council meeting.

Scene: The proverb serves as an advice to a village chief’s wife to live in harmony with the subjects for they are the ones who make the chief/king respectable.

END: advice to the wife of a newly chosen village headman or village chief.

KEY: serious tone.

DATUM 6

ACT SEQUENCE: ***Zomboka mungowa, mukanwa kamukwenu muthu kaveshi kuzombokamoko.***

Lit. Trans.: “You can jump over a fallen log, not out of another person’s mouth.”

Meaning: It dangerous to ignore or neglect someone’s advice. When someone who often ignores other people’s advice gets into trouble, he will be reminded of not heeding advice or warning from others.

PARTICIPANTS

Addresser: An old man, father.

Addressee: A young man, son.

SETTING: Place and time: in the evening, in an old man’s house.

Scene: A young man who ignored elders’ mediation and advice and went ahead divorcing his wife, for example. The consequence of his action is so devastating that he cannot bare it anymore; he therefore goes back to the old man for advice.

END: To rebuke a young man for ignoring elders’ words of wisdom.

KEY: Serious tone.

DATUM 7

ACT SEQUENCE: ***Khunyi janjamba jakulichavila ivene.***

Lit. Trans.: “Firewood for cooking an elephant is gathered by the elephant itself.”

Meaning: A self-imposed problem. This adage indicates that very often a person’s trouble is self-imposed and that, once in trouble, s/he does not deserve any sympathy.

PARTICIPANTS

Addresser: An elderly person

Addressee: A young person or child.

SETTING: Place and time: village council gathering; in the late afternoon.

Scene: A child or young person who never heeded other people’s advice is faced with an impassable situation and the people he ignored are making fun of him as a way of reminding him never to disregard elders’ advice.

END: Rebukes and criticises a person for having caused trouble to himself or herself. It could be that such a person used to steal or was adulterous.

KEY: Serious tone.

DATUM 8

ACT SEQUENCE: ***Phoko yahwa yapangiza ikwavo.***

Lit. Trans.: “A finished knife is the one that is used to make others.”

Meaning: A person who is educated or knowledgeable about something should help educate or look after those coming after him. In other words, a person who is trained or has knowledge

should help others become like him. Here a teacher or a young adult is reminded about the need to be responsible; to assist his/her pupils or siblings to become as knowledgeable as s/he is.

PARTICIPANTS

Addresser: Father.

Addressee: Oldest son.

SETTING: Place and time: homestead; after the evening meal.

END: The proverb is didactic, it teaches young ones especially, to be mindful of others and helping them if they can.

KEY: The tone of the proverb is requesting and cordial.

DATUM 9

ACT SEQUENCE: *Linoka asumina wina kukuma.*

Lit. Trans.: “A snakes bites because the hole has ended.”

Meaning: There is a limit to every person’s patience and/or endurance. The logic behind this proverb is that a snake tries to avoid confronting man by entering a hole in the ground; but when man digs up the hole to where the snake is, the reptile has no choice but to strike back. This saying is a good advice to rulers or leaders who should know that, taking bad measures or decisions would lead to un-pleasant reactions from the people they lead. The proverb can also serve as a warning to a husband who is fond of abusing his wife for she may violently react someday.

PARTICIPANTS

Addresser: An elderly man.

Addressee: An inconsiderate person or husband who says and does anything to hurt others or his wife.

SETTING: Place and time: family home; anytime of the day.

Scene: A young man who was beating his wife the previous day who, in self-defence fought him back, reports the matter to an elderly person who uses this proverb as a caution to other men.

END: The proverb is didactic in nature, it teaches people, particularly men to exercise restraint in whatever they say or do to women.

KEY: A serious and cautioning tone.

DATUM 10

ACT SEQUENCE: *Hanjikila wevwa hikila wakuta.*

Lit. Trans.: “Talk to a person who can listen and cook for a person who can be satisfied.”

Meaning: It implies that one should give advice only to those who appreciate it. Although the proverb requests one to stop wasting his time advising someone who does not seem to heed what he is told; its use usually has the impact of making most of those present at the scene seriously think about the given advice.

PARTICIPANTS

Addresser: An elderly man.

Addressee: An adult person (man/woman) who constantly advises his relative but the latter disregards the advice.

SETTING: Place and time: late afternoon at the elders' court.

Scene: One person is complaining to another about his relative who does not take heed of whatever advice he is given.

END: Didactic. Advising a person to stop wasting his time advising someone who does not seem to take heed of what he is told.

KEY: Harsh tone.

DATUM 11

ACT SEQUENCE: *Ngeji tambuka mwenyembo ayoye.*

Lit. Trans.: “Let there be a visitor and the owner of the village will live. Alternatively, the proverb signifies “Welcome visitor so that the host can survive.”

Meaning: The help our ancestors received from their visitor (which indeed can still be seen today) was varied and included gifts, valuable information, physical labour, etc. all of which contributed to the well-being of their hosts. This can explain the hospitable nature of Africans, particularly the Luvale. In this individualistic and selfish modern world, as Africans, we are reminded that far from being exploiters, visitors are actual contributors to the fulfilment of their hosts' requirements during their stay.

PARTICIPANTS

Addresser: Parents.

Addressee: Children.

SETTING: Place and time: in the evening at the family house probably after dinner.

Scene: A person acknowledges the assistance rendered to him by his visitor.

END: Teaching children about how people should behave toward visitors and treat them well. The proverb encourages people to welcome visitors with open hands and be goods and hospitable to them because they are a blessing and not a burden to the host as one might think; moreover, they are not there to stay.

KEY: To emphasize the need to welcome visitor. This is one important tenets in Luvale culture.

DATUM 12

ACT SEQUENCE: *Usoko kumeso kumuchima kole.*

Lit. Trans.: “Though a friendly expression is on his face, there is danger in his heart.”

Meaning: Some people look very good and friendly yet in their hearts they may be harbouring dislike and hatred for others.

PARTICIPANTS

Addresser: An elderly man or parent probably the father.

Addressee: Young people/Children.

SETTING: Place and time: homestead; in the evening when family gathers around a fire.

Scene: From his long years of experience, the father urges his children to always be cautious whenever they are dealing with people they don't know so well. This caution is based on the fact that old people have good judgement.

END: Used when cautioning a person about dealings with someone he does not know too well because, the other person's outward show of friendship may be different from his thoughts and/or intentions.

KEY: Serious tone of caution.

DATUM 13

ACT SEQUENCE: ***Hasushila vavavulu hazowa.***

Lit. Trans.: "A place where many people urinate is always wet."

Meaning: Very often, when there is a problem, people gather to discuss it, each one giving his/her opinion; eventually, a solution to the issue will easily be found because people had worked together. This is similar to the English proverb that states: "when spider webs unite, they can tie up a lion." This proverb communicates the importance of unity and collaboration in tackling problems together, no matter how big.

PARTICIPANTS

Addresser: An elderly man.

Addressee: A selfish and bossy person man.

SETTING: Place and time: in the morning, during work in a communal garden. Traditionally, in Luvale culture, sometimes people take turn helping till every one's field or garden.

Scene: Encouraging a person to call upon others to help him find solution to his problem.

END: This proverb teaches people the need for consultation when confronted with problems.

KEY: Advisory tone.

DATUM 14

ACT SEQUENCE: ***Njamba afwila makunga kuvula.***

Lit. Trans.: "An elephant dies because of many spears." *Same idea as in datum no. 13.*

Meaning: Like an elephant who requires many spears to be killed, a big task or problem can only be accomplished /solved by many people. This is basically similar to the English saying: "Many hands make light work." Indeed, a big problem (elephant) can easily be solved (killed), when people join hands (spears). Similarly, it is not possible to crash a louse with a single finger. This apparently difficult task will be lighter when several people work in unison.

PARTICIPANTS

Addresser: Council of elders

Addressee: A lone/solitary man who thinks he can do without others' help.

SETTING: Place and time: at the elders' palaver (*Zango*); probably in the afternoon.

Scene: This proverb is used to advise a person to call upon others for help so as to make his task lighter.

END: The proverb is didactic for it teaches cooperation among people. The proverb could also be used to remind a lone hunter that he sometimes needs other hunters' help to kill or skin a big animal such as an elephant.

KEY: Giving advice.

DATUM 15

ACT SEQUENCE: *Lunga mangana, chizandamo chamokomoko*

Lit. Trans.: "Man is his mind and not his dressing."

Meaning: This mainly concerns young women who want to get married. Do not choose a husband merely because he dresses very nicely or drives a posh car; rather choose a good hearted and reasonable man. This is similar to the English saying: "Fine feathers do not make fine birds."

PARTICIPANTS

Addresser: An elderly woman who was once duped or witnessed a fellow woman being disappointed by a man who appeared attractive and dissent.

Addressee: A young woman desperate for marriage.

SETTING: Place and time: mid-morning, in the village open area or probably at someone's house where young and elderly women gather to pound cassava or millet while chatting and gossiping.

Scene: In the village; a mother is advising her daughter(s) to be careful when choosing potential life partner.

END: Mother or elderly woman's advice to a young woman who in searching for a man to marry lest she get into trouble or be disappointed.

KEY: Serious and cautionary tone.

DATUM 16

ACT SEQUENCE: *Kulomba chamukulwane kutala.*

Lit. Trans.: "The way an elderly person begs for something is by looking."

Meaning: If a young man is eating and an elderly person is nearby, he/she will not ask him for a share but will express his/her intention just by looking at the young man. The latter will therefore feel sympathy and share whatever he is eating with the elderly person, because it is culturally shameful or unacceptable for elders to ask from the young persons.

PARTICIPANTS

Addresser: Elderly person, probably the father/mother

Addressee: Young person or child.

SETTING: Place and time: at a family house; evening time before the evening meal.

Scene: Parents advising children that culture requires that they look after their parents in their old age; it is their duty to ensure that they provide them with what they need and not wait to be reminded or to be asked.

END: To remind/teach young people to care for the aged in society including their parents, for doing so will attract blessings from parents. Additionally, this serves to set a good example for grandchildren to follow.

KEY: Serious tone. Frustration expressed by elders toward young people, especially those enjoying modern life, not to neglect their parents' welfare.

DATUM 17

ACT SEQUENCE: ***Kuwaha cha mutopa mutulo muli uleko.***

Lit. Trans.: "A smoking pipe looks very clean outside, yet it is very dirty inside." *Same idea as in datum No. 15.*

Meaning: One cannot judge the real worth of a thing from its attractive exterior. This proverb is in line with the English expression: "All that glitters is not gold". The proverb is often used in marriage relationships. It means that a beautiful woman is not always perfect, she could be lazy, ill-tempered or wicked. In other words, beauty is deceitful. This proverb serves as a warning to men that they should not be deceived by the outward appearance of a women, implying that beautiful women make men suffer. It is evident from the proverb that beauty in women has negative connotations, and that men should not be seduced by it.

PARTICIPANTS

Addresser: Father cautioning son over choice of a woman to marry.

Addressee: Young man/son ready to get married.

SETTING: Homestead family gathers after the evening meal or probably at the village-palaver hut (*Zango*).

Scene: The philosophy communicated here is that women are dangerous creatures. Despite their beautiful appearance, women could be likened to a snake that is poisonous and causes excruciating pain when it bites. Also in this proverb, a woman is depicted as a trouble-maker and very dangerous. The implication of the proverb is that a woman by nature is unreliable, and by virtue of this, she can "hook up" with any man she chooses to have sexual relationship with. The proverb thus exclusively ascribes a psychological trait to women without compelling evidence for it.

END: The proverb warns men not to be deceived by women's outward appearance, implying that beautiful women make men suffer. It is evident from the proverb that beauty in women has negative connotation, and that men should not be seduced by it.

KEY: Serious and warning tone.

DATUM 18

ACT SEQUENCE: ***Tukana kulutwe kanda mutukana nyimako***

Lit. Trans.: "Curse the future, do not curse the past."

Meaning: If you leave a place do not curse the people to the effect that you will never return to that place; you may happen to meet the same people later or be forced to return to that place. To put it differently, when you want to go and build your own village or settle elsewhere, do not curse the people you have been living with because things change. You may think you will never meet again neither will you need them, because some day when the situation at your new settlement gets bad, you will fail to return to your previous village or when you decide to return who is going to welcome you? Similarly, when you are climbing a tree, do not curse or despise those that remains down the tree because, if it happens that in the process of your climbing you step on a weak branch and fall down, you will have nobody to help you.

PARTICIPANTS

Addresser: Village elderly men.

Addressee: A man who is unhappy with his relative and thinks they excessively interfere in his private life be it marriage or social; he then decides to leave his the village to settle elsewhere.

SETTING: Place is village open court/area. It could be in the early hours of the day.

Scene: A man is leaving his village to settle far way with his family while cursing his relatives and the entire village.

END: Advising one to be considerate of the people he is leaving with for no one knows the future, he may need them in future since life is unpredictable. The implication is that, if you are wealthy for instance, do not despise the poor, they may help you in other ways sometimes.

KEY: Philosophical, harsh and serious tone.

DATUM 19

ACT SEQUENCE: *Kajila wahya mukanwa kutunga uswa chamuhona.*

Lit. Trans.: “A bird that sings too much fail to make its nest.”

Meaning: In order to obtain anything one has to work hard for it. The implication of this proverb is that success is the result of hard work and determination. The English equivalent could be “Where there is a will there is a way.”

PARTICIPANTS

Addresser: Parents.

Addressee: Children.

SETTING: At the family house.

Scene: The time is probably in the evening after returning from work in the family garden, children gather around their parents to listen to life stories and traditions.

END: Teaching children the need for hard work and determination in order for one to succeed or get what s/he wants.

KEY: Philosophical and didactic tone.

DATUM 20

ACT SEQUENCE: *Sambanjinga, linga mwalinga mukwenu*

Lit. Trans.: “Do what your neighbour does.”

Meaning: If your neighbour does good things to you, you should reciprocate; if s/he does an evil act to you, you also do the same to him/her. The proverb could be similar to the English saying “*A tooth for a tooth.*”

PARTICIPANTS

Addresser: elderly people.

Addressee: Young men.

SETTING: In the evening, at the village court (*Zango*).

Scene: Reciprocalation is allowed and encouraged.

END: Teaches the necessity for people to assist others in need whenever they can and is similar to this English saying: “One good turn deserves another.”

KEY: Philosophical and didactic.

7. DISCUSSION

The preceding analysis of selected Luvale proverbs has shown that the *Setting* has place (physical) and time (temporal) components. The *physical settings* or places where the proverbs are used are mainly two: the open palaver-hut called *Zango* (with the slightly highest frequency of 9 proverbs or 45%) and the home (8 proverbs representing 40%). The third physical setting is the village open area (with 2 proverbs, representing 10%). The fourth one is the communal garden or farming area (with only 1 proverb, representing 5%). It should be mentioned that, the fact that the highest number of proverbs occurs in the open palaver-hut is due to its traditional importance. Located in the centre of the village, this shelter is the men’s meeting place where weighty matters of the people are settled, cases are judged with the help of elderly councillors, and boys listen to the wisdom of the elders, learn the ways of Luvale culture and tradition. It is also a place where men can savour the traditional skilful rhetoric such as folktales including proverbs, riddles, to mention just a few. I should also add that The Luvale people, like many other Zambian groupings, regard the palaver shelter and the home as the nucleus of society. These places therefore, serve mainly as the focus of proverbial exchanges. Normally, there is more interaction at home in the morning (before leaving for the day’s work) and in the evening (at the end of day’s work); but most proverbs (65% of data) feature in the evening.

The *temporal setting* has three proverbs (15%) used in the morning, two during day time (representing 10%), two (representing 10%) in the afternoon, and 13 (representing 65%) in the evening, and none (0%) applicable to the night.

For *Participants*, the analysis reveals that eight addressers and addressees are found with varying frequencies of occurrence. The addressers are parents: father (6 proverbs), elderly men (7 proverbs), elderly woman (1 proverb), council of elders (3 proverbs) and clan’s men (2 proverb). Like most African cultures, the Luvale consider elders as custodians of proverbs, this explains the higher frequency attributed to the older participants such as parents (6 proverbs) and elders (11 proverbs). In the addressees category, the highest frequency is attributed to children and young men who accounts for (18 proverbs), husband (1 proverb), and

village chief's/headman's wife (1 proverb a well). The highest frequency attributed to the young people is due mainly to the fact that they are the focal point around whom most proverbs evolve.

The *Ends* are as diverse and varied as their occurrences advising, rebuking, teaching, moralizing, and philosophical. The *Act sequences* are twenty in the analysed data functioning to instruct and teach, persuade, as well as serve rhetorical functions. The *Keys* are mainly in seven categories: 10 occurrences of serious tone, 3 instances of advisory tone, 3 instances of philosophical tone, 2 occurrence of harsh tone, and 3 instances of request. The remaining ING elements are general to the data: sourced through the written *instrumentality*, appropriately used and effectively interpreted as expected by *norms*, and belonging to the single *genre* of proverbs.

8. CONCLUSION

From the foregoing, it is discovered that sociolinguistics is a veritable analytical linguistics framework which studies the relation between language, culture and society. It is also discovered that Dell Hyme's Ethnography of Communication theory is a veritable sociolinguistic tool useful for effective analysis of language use in sociolinguistic studies. Since proverbs are aspects of culture, this study has proved the inextricable link between Luvale proverbs, an aspect of Luvale language, and Luvale people's culture and world view. Particularly Hyme's SPEAKING model allows for the analysis of data sociolinguistically and arrive at the meanings of Luvale proverbs and their sociolinguistic implication. Setting and scene take care of the physical and temporal aspects of the context of use of the proverbs. That the proverbs are used in appropriate sociolinguistic context partly means that there is no pragmatic failure. Participants allow us to know those who use proverbs. Thus the study reveals that children do not make use of proverb in speech, or at least when talking to elders; and women sparingly make use of proverbs. "End" enables us to understand the intentions and effects of the art sequence while "key" explains the tone which is serious in a greater percentage of the data.

On typology, I can conclude from the analysis that Luvale proverbs are more didactic and rhetorical than analytical and epistemological. The Luvale use proverbs more to advise, request, warn, caution, reprimand and for urging purposes. This underscores the wisdom imbued in most oral forms of African cultural tradition.

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