

ABSTRACT

Proverbial metaphors are useful resources for communicating known truths about life in a given community. Most African proverbial metaphors, however, make reference to customs and situations that might be unfamiliar to some language users especially young people. On the basis of this background, this study employed image schemas to interpret Ekegusii proverbial metaphors that allude to young people. The research was anchored within descriptive research design. Primary data was collected from four Ekegusii respondents of an advanced age of at least seventy years old through an interview schedule. The collected data were then subjected to the Metaphor Identification Procedure Vrije Universiteit (MIPVU) in which four annotators were used to identify Ekegusii proverbial metaphors. Seven Ekegusii proverbial metaphors that refer to young people were identified through MIPVU. The identified proverbial metaphors were then subjected to the FORCE and CONTAINER schemas and their subsidiary schemas for analysis. The paper reveals that there are norms and customs regarding young people that are conveyed through Ekegusii proverbial metaphors. In addition, image schemas are fundamental in explaining the role, place, and cultural expectations of young men and women in Gusii. The study concludes that proverbial metaphors are useful tools of communication, and should be interpreted using Cognitive Linguistics paradigm. Article visualizations:

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