

The Pragmatics of Amharic Proverbs on Defects

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Abstract

A proverb is a type of oral saying that plays the pride of people's art and living conditions. It is also deemed to be the instrument of thought as they are employed to tell people the day to day activities of the community. Proverbs are the effects of human experiences and focus on the cultural practices of a community. The main objective of this study is to examine the pragmatics of Amharic proverbs on defects within the frameworks of relevant theory. This study will be used as a motivational factor for other interested scholars who work on Amharic languages. Besides, it will be useful for those learning Amharic as a second language or for those who are passionate about Amhara culture, custom, and language. This study carried out using a descriptive-qualitative research method. The researcher used purposive sampling technique. Semi-structured interview, introspection, and document analysis were used as data collecting tools for this study. Results indicate that the people of Amhara, particularly in the study areas employed various proverbs related to defects such as blind, deaf, crazy, leper, and dwarf. These proverbs harm those who are visually challenged, hearing difficulties, mentally challenged, physical problems, and physically challenged. As a result, the society affects the psychological well beings of those people. Besides, the society uses various proverbs to discriminate and degrade from the community.

Key words: Amharic; defections; Pragmatics; Proverbs

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

Language serves as a communication tool. It is also employed to regulate the community's social life. In other words, a society's culture, norms, religion, and living conditions may all be expressed in any language. It is referred to be a way for people to express themselves. Stated differently, a culture can use language to coexist with other communities. Language allows us to comprehend, communicate, and construct our society. Social relationships and language are closely intertwined. Thus, the term culturally interconnected refers to language (Fergusson, 2000). This suggests that cultural shifts result in linguistic shifts since a society's language directly reflects its cultural norms, attitudes, beliefs, dispositions, worldviews, and social ideals, among other things (Fergusson, 2000).

Proverbs are common phrases that aid in accurately and succinctly expressing thoughts, emotions, and secrets. Since they can be expressed when spoken in any language, they are inherently tied to a language every linguistic community is thought to have its own customs and lexicon. It is common practice in Ethiopia to use proverbs in all parts of the nation. Since proverbs are considered oral traditions that can characterise a nation from historical, socioanthropological, and economic viewpoints, their preservation and dissemination are important to every language culture in the nation. Proverbs are also thought to be manifestations of a society's mindsets and life philosophies. Therefore, those who are able to articulate proverbs appropriately are truly proud of themselves (Amsalu and Dagnachew, 1987).

One of the regional languages with a notable proverbial wealth is Amharic. There are numerous Amharic proverbs that are widely recognised and dispersed throughout the nation. People who are sufficiently versed in proverbs would rather use brief proverbs to convey their joy or sorrow, agreement, or disagreement, empowerment, rejection or acceptance, demand or want, than engage in lengthy conversations. Many people have a great desire to use proverbs that harmonise in order to warn or persuade someone, or even to show ignorance or denigrate them. The exact moment that Amharic proverbs were created or first used is unknown. In a similar vein, neither a single person nor an organization could assume responsibility for its creation or introduction. In actuality, they are oral traditions passed down from one generation to the next.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

I was motivated to explore the pragmatic analysis of Amharic proverbs on defections for both the theoretical and practical reasons. In practical terms, a proverb serves as a way to substantiate your differences with conventional wisdom by implicitly stating something rather than directly using language. Furthermore, because proverbs are implicit rather than explicit means of conveying sets of presumptions about a common idea between speaker and listener, they are considered to be a component of figurative language. When there is uncertainty regarding the mutual information, we can utilise the implicit meaning, which ensures that the hearer and speaker are both in agreement and that the hearer will share the same information with the speaker at the same time (Wisniewski, 2007). Furthermore, proverbs are quick, rhythmic statements that people use to warn, counsel, and critique in a concise manner (Fergusson, 2000).

The researcher was therefore inspired to conduct a pragmatic analysis of the meanings of Amharic proverbs about defections because he is a native speaker of the language.

The researcher read extensively about Austin's (1962) and Searle's (1969) theories of speech acts while pursuing his doctorate in applied linguistics. Austin distinguishes between two categories of expressions. These are: the performative and constative. The first is a constative, which is an experiment with the truth/falsity property. Performative, on the other hand, are people who act rather than possess truth or untruth. The locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts are the three components or elements of performative utterances. Simply put, locutionary speech acts that have occurred.

Illocutionary speech acts are the real actions which are performed by the utterance, where saying is similar to performing, as in wedding, warning, betting, and so on. But the effect of the utterance on the listener is called perlocutionary speech acts (Austin, 1962). Additionally, Searle constructs a speech act theory of constitutive

rules for performing an illocutionary act with certain illocutionary content. Searle agrees with Austin on illocutionary acts but ignores Austin's difference between locutionary and illocutionary acts. Searle identifies between two kinds of rules. These are regulative and constitutive. While the former regulate independently existing forms of behaviour, the latter device new forms of behaviour. As a result, the researcher was highly impressed in Austin's and Searle's speech act theories.

There are lots of works on the phonology, morphology, and syntax of Amharic language. On the other hand, there are few researches on the semantics and pragmatics of Amharic language. For example, "the pragmatics of greetings, felicitations, and condolence expressions in four Ethiopian languages" (Baye, 1997), Endalew (2015) conducted a research on "linguistic violence against women as manifested in sexist Amharic proverbs", "metaphor of time in Amharic" (Derib, 2016), "the semantics and pragmatics of Amharic bəgəna lyrics (2020)", "conceptions of life and death in Amharic" (Gashaw, 2021), Bamlaku, and et al (2023) investigated researches on "the socio-pragmatic analysis of Amharic euphemisms of women, the socio-pragmatic analysis of Amharic euphemisms of sexual organs and sexual acts, and the socio-pragmatic analysis of Amharic euphemisms of death respectively. However, there is no much work done on the pragmatic analysis of Amharic Proverbs on defections as far as the researcher has searched. Due to these reasons, the researcher was motivated to study the pragmatic analysis of Amharic proverbs on defections.

1.3 Objectives of the study

The general objective of this study is to investigate the pragmatics of Amharic proverbs on defects. Whereas, the specific objective of this study is:

- To describe the pragmatics of Amharic proverbs on defections
- To identify the categories of Amharic proverbs on defections

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Concepts on Pragmatics

The study of pragmatics focuses on how language is used, specifically how language communication is related to utterance from and context. As a result, pragmatics is seen as the primary application of language. The pragmatic approach has its own drawbacks. The pragmatic approach has its own drawbacks. The communication goals of speakers and the methods of listeners use to ascertain these goals and behaviours. They are able to comprehend the speaker's intended message (Adegbite, 2000).

The branch of linguistics known as pragmatics examines contextual meaning, or the meaning that a language user intends to convey. According to Finegan

(2008), context refers to According to the setting in which a statement is generated, particularly the words that come before it. This suggests that context is at the heart of a pragmatics discussion. To put it simply, pragmatics is the study of how context affects meaning. All words have meanings that are heavily influenced by their environment. The idea of context needs to be introduced into linguistics and extended to the study of the broad circumstances in which a language is used. Studying any language spoken by a people who have a different culture and live in different circumstances from our own needs to be done in tandem with researching their environment and culture (Malinowski, 1920). A branch of language called pragmatics examines how individuals understand and do communications act in a concrete speech scenario (Finegan, 2008).

2.2 Concepts on Proverb

Conversations can be made softer and more elegant by using proverbs. They are used for entertainment, education, and argumentation. Situations have a significant impact on these usages, ultimately defining their meanings (Morye, 1990). Proverbs are largely cultural distinctive and the product of human experiences. Proverbs are brief, frequently memorized, philosophically significant, and transmitted from one generation to the next. One way to learn about a group of people's cultural background is through a proverb. It displays a people's perspective, attitude, and historical progress. Proverbs are a unique method of regulating social behaviour to guarantee that the interlocutors can understand one another. Instead of being harsh or discouraging, proverbs convey important lessons in a profound way. They convey very important messages in a delicate or moderate manner.

Three qualities define proverbs: they are concise, make sense, and offer a beautiful image. A proverb is a brief, well known statement that passed down from one generation to the next and conveys wisdom, truth, values, and traditional viewpoints in a metaphorical form (Mieder, 2004). Using a fixed phrase in the right context, proverbs allow a particular speaker from a speech group to express shared thoughts or values.

Language statements that depict cultural patterns and systems are called proverbs (Odebunmi, 2008). Proverbs are linguistic tools that are said to be expressed in different ways depending on the culture (Addemeji, 2007). Nothing characterises a culture more clearly than its language, and proverbs are the parts of language that best capture the values and beliefs of a civilisation (Martin, 2015). Every civilisation has proverbs that are part of its popular culture and linguistic traditions.

2.3 Previous works on Amharic Proverbs

A study on "female disempowerment: some expressions in Amharic" was carried out by Aschalew Bililigne (2012). He gathered a number of Amharic proverbs that highlight

women's lack of agency. Additionally, he examined and explained the Amharic proverbs that discourage women. The research has reached the following conclusions based on his findings. The various Amharic proverbs are used to reinforce patriarchal norms and limit women's social roles.

The research has reached the following conclusions based on his findings. The various Amharic proverbs are used by the Amhara people in general and the society in the studied areas in particular to disparage women. Additionally, the overall goal of the research was to investigate how Amharic proverbs are used in sociocultural contexts to discourage women. In particular, two goals were to describe how literal Amharic expressions are used to demonstrate the gender-biased ideology of the society and to examine how proverbs are used as expressions of female disempowerment.

Yonas Adamu (2015) conducted study on "the Social Implications of Some Amharic Proverbs and their Social Needs for Encouragement" for his journal article. For the Amhara people, receiving praise for our deeds is undoubtedly one of the criteria for leading a fulfilling life. To put it another way, there are numerous proverbs in Amharic that serve different purposes. According to Yonas's (2015) research, there are numerous proverbs that support or characterise multiple people's brevity. As a result, his research suggested that many Amhara residents, especially those in the study areas, use numerous proverbs as sources of motivation.

Mengistu Tefera (1994) in his senior paper investigated the comparative analysis of Amharic Proverbs. There are numerous Amharic proverbs which are spoken in all over the country. Hence, according to Mengistu's findings, those proverbs are employed for various purposes. Besides, he compared the different types of Amharic proverbs based on their functions.

Endalew Assefa (2015) did a research on "linguistic violence against women as manifested in sexist Amharic proverbs". His findings indicate that the linguistic expressions of women in all areas described that women are considered to be degraded by the society because the community believes that women are dependent on men in every aspects. Therefore, these degrading of power and isolating are expressed by proverbs which are ignored by the community for the participation women in providing decision making and in other aspect of their lives. In a nutshell, his findings conclude that proverbs which undermine women show that men are the main decision makers in different areas of their lives. That is to say, women are dependent on men in every situation of their lives.

Endalew's findings also indicate that women of the Amhara society are isolated in all kinds of rights. The community has long established a reality which expresses that such features are by any means belong to men. This is clearly seen in its sexist proverbs. Hence, subjugating

women and gender inequality are the common practices in Amhara society.

Though different scholars conducted various researches on Amharic proverbs, the present study focused on the pragmatics of Amharic proverbs on defects including blindness, deafness, craziness, leper, and dwarfisms.

2.4 Theoretical Framework

Two distinct information-processing techniques based on relevance theory make up communication. The first is an explanation of the hearer's environment to entertain some particular thoughts that the speaker wants to share with the hearer which is then the second device to create representations similar to the hearers (Sperber and Wilson, 1995).

Using these two approaches, Sperber and Wilson (1995) are trying to formulate two main questions. In other words, what is communicated is the first, and how is communication accomplished is the second. Thus, pragmatics assumes that what is communicated is the speaker's meaning which conveys a set of assumptions expressed either explicitly or implicitly. Decoding will therefore, be the main method of achieving explicit communication, while implicit communication is mainly inferred.

Since communication is a matter of degree, certain assumptions may be more or less obvious to an individual depending on whether it is implicit verbal communication or non-verbal communication. I employed Sperber and Wilson's theories for proverb analysis even though they never addressed the study of proverbs because their meaning mostly relies on figuring out the speaker's intention and deducing implicit communication rather than interpreting what is expressed directly.

The relevance theory of Sperber and Wilson (1995) was adopted because the study's focus is on the pragmatics of Amharic proverbs on defects. This theory's primary goal is to extract the most relevant information from the irrelevant. Furthermore, relevance theory is based on two ideas. These are the principles of communication and cognition. Therefore, the Amhara community employs the most pertinent proverbs from the many proverbs by using this idea to this study. If and only if an assumption has some contextual impact in a given situation, it is relevant (Sperber and Wilson, 1995).

Because having some contextual influence is a prerequisite for a proverb's relevance, this definition can be used to analyse proverbs. Here are two outcomes from relevant theory. The cognitive outcomes are the first. When new or recently revealed information interacts with the context, it is regarded as such. It can strengthen a contextual assumption and produce contextual implications when combined with a contextual assumption.

The communicative outcome is the second outcome of pertinent theory. It clarifies that statements generate expectations or assumptions about their relevance. The

communicator creates an ostensive sensation in this instance. The audience expects the communicator to be giving pertinent information, thus the communicator purposefully draws their attention. In order to aid the hearer in drawing conclusions, the audience searches not only for pertinent information but also for the best relevance (Sperber and Wilson, 1995).

Individuals are able to differentiate between information that is pertinent and irrelevant, as well as between information that is more and less relevant (Sperber, and Wilson, 1995). This does not imply that irrelevant information cannot be explained in order to achieve relevance, since irrelevant information can sometimes be extremely significant.

In actuality, due to the discrepancy between the literal meaning and the context, what is explicitly said in proverbs frequently initially appears unrelated to the context. For instance, when two people are discussing a novel circumstance they must deal with and are unsure about how to accomplish so, one of them says, "when in Rome, do as Romans do (Fergusson, 2000). It may seem non-relevant at first since they are not in Rome or talking about Romans. But, it fulfills relevant because of the familiarity of this proverb and its figurative meaning.

3. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

3.1 Introduction

This part comprises of the methodology and procedure employed in this study, particularly the research design, data source, data gathering instruments and method of data analysis.

3.2 Research design

This study employed a qualitative design. Qualitative in the sense that the didactic significance of the selected proverbs are accounted for, bearing in mind the socio-cultural background of a group of language users whose worldview is wisely projected in the selected Amharic proverbs.

3.3 Data Source

These data were collected through document analysis from different Amharic literatures; such as, text books and dictionaries. From these sources, proverbs were extracted. These proverbs were collected from textbooks by using purposive sampling of data. In addition to these, since the researcher is a native speaker of the language, participant observation and introspection methods of data gathering were used to collect the different Amharic Proverbs.

3.4 Data gathering instruments

Since the researcher is a native speaker of the language, participant observation and introspection methods of data gathering were used to collect the different Amharic Proverbs.

3.5 Methods of data analysis

In a qualitative research design, there are different methods of data analysis including discourse analysis, content analysis, thematic analysis, and comparative analysis. In this study, the data were analysed by their themes, and the researcher tried to find out general ideas from specific facts. Therefore, thematic analysis was used. In this type of analysis, the data collection and analysis take place simultaneously. Even background reading can form part of the analysis process, especially if it can help to explain an emerging theme (Dawson, 2009). Finally, phonemic transcription was used for wider communication.

4. PROVERBS RELATED TO DEFECTS

According to informants' response, maintaining the psychological well-being of those with physical disabilities requires caring and respecting them. Many individuals fear that using harsh words to describe persons who have physical limitations will be harmful or demoralizing. At all times and places, people stop laughing at those people and instead provide them encouragement, support, respect, and caring. The explanation provided by the informants suggests that, people's reluctance to use the names of physically challenged people stems from a mix of feelings of respect for those who live with physical disability and fear of encountering a similar problem. People in Amhara culture think that people are afraid to laugh at someone who is going through a difficult time in life because they think that God will punish them similarly for laughing. They refrain from using derogatory language in relation to this topic as a result.

4.1 Proverbs related to blindness

Words which are related to social defects like calling the word blind in front of a person who has lost his eye's light are believed to be inappropriate in Amhara (Hussen, 2017). Hussen's findings did not express about proverbs which describe the defects of someone who is visually impaired. However, in this study, the people of Amhara in the study locations used various proverbs related to blindness as of the followings:

a. *iwwir iwwirin bikətəl tajajizo gədəl*
blind one who is blind follow together cliff
'Those who follow the blind fall to cliff'.

b. *iwwir jiwəlidu bəiwwir bifərdu*
blind you will give birth by blind damn
'When you damn the blind, you will give birth the blind'.

c. *ba iwwir bet anid ajina birk' nəw*
by blind house one eye endemic is
'One eye is endemic in the blind's community'.

According to the justification of informants, proverbs related to blindness indicate that how those who are visually challenged people were neglected and were unable to work their activities by themselves without the

assistance of others. For example, the expression in (1a) pragmatically convey negative attitude towards the society because the contextual meaning of this proverb indicates that those who follow the blind fall to cliff and may encounter many challenges in life. That is to say, people who are visually challenged might face a number of obstacles when they walk or do various tasks. Hence, the attitude of the community towards the visually challenged people is not good because the above proverb shows that the blinds are not working many tasks alone. Thus, they face numerous challenges in life. Therefore, the Amhara society of the research areas use the above expression in (1a) to show how the visually challenged people do not perform various works without the assistance of others. In other words, the community believes that visually challenged people are supportable.

The expression in (1b) indicates that the people of Amhara, particularly in the study areas respect and consider the problems of the visually challenged people. That is, when people damn or disrespect the blinds, those who degrade or damn the blinds may face the same kinds of difficulties in life. Hence, the proverb in (1b) used as advising purposes for the society to respect and not to isolate the blinds from the societies because the society believes that those who are visually challenged individuals are damned by God. Hence, when the community ignores them, they will encounter the same kind of problem like the visually challenged people.

The pragmatics of the expression in (1c) is that one who has an eye is by far better than those who are visually challenged people because something is better than nothing. In other words, since the blinds face various problems to work many tasks. The Amhara community, specifically in the research areas use the expression in (1c) to express the problems of someone who is blind.

4.2 Proverbs related to deafness

The stigmatized term *dənk'oro* 'deaf' is the other defection. So, calling *dənk'oro* 'deaf' in public is fearful as well as shameful expression in Amhara culture due to some reasons. It creates social problems because when we call someone as *dənk'oro* 'deaf', it creates psychological problems towards those who are hearing difficulties because it makes them inferior and unhappy. The Amhara society in the study locations uses the following proverbs to describe deafness.

a. *iwwir min ajito; dənk'oro min səmito*
blind what see deaf what hear
'What does the blind see? What does the deaf hear?'

b. *dənk'oro jəsəma ilət jabidal*
deaf hear time crazy
'The deaf became crazy when he heard'.

c. *dənk'or kəmijat'awitəjjn jə misəma jawirajn*
deaf play who hear talk
'Instead of the deaf plays me, it is better to talk with the one who hears'

Those who have hearing difficulties may get discrimination and depression. As a result, they will be caught by other diseases and leads to death. Hence, the Amhara society of the research areas believes that those who have hearing difficulties are different from other people because they use the Amharic proverb as in (2a). This proverb indicates that the community identified those who are visually challenged and hearing difficulties differently. The contextual meaning of this proverb shows that the people discriminate those who have hearing difficulties because they consider them as isolated and unable to communicate with people easily.

The expression in (2b) pragmatically indicates that those who are deaf will be abnormal when they hear. That is, those who have hearing difficulties always do not get much information because they cannot hear properly. However, when they hear the bad news, good news or sudden events, they will be very much sad, happy, and abnormal based on the situations they face. That is when they hear the death of their near relatives, they will be abnormal. Hence, the society uses the expression in (2b) to show how those who have hearing difficulties do not get much information for a very long time. That is why the community consider those who have hearing problems as discriminated and isolated guys because they lost many information.

The expression as in (2c) indicates that those who face hearing difficulties are degraded by the society. Hence, the community says instead of playing with the deaf, it is better to talk with those who can hear properly. So, this expression has a negative connotation to those who do not hear properly.

4.3 Proverbs related to craziness

The stigmatized term *ibd* ‘crazy’ is the other category of defection. According to the informants’ explanation, calling *ibd* ‘crazy’ in public creates uncomfortable to the community. First, culturally, the Amhara people have the habit of respecting abnormal people by using the appropriate expressions because they believe that no one knows what will happen in the future. That is, craziness may happen to the normal persons and to their children. So, people in the study areas fear to call *ibd* ‘crazy’ in public places. In place of this, they use proper and preferable expressions. Secondly, the Amhara people believe that craziness happens with the order of God. So, those who are abnormal persons have got craziness because of God’s order. Thus, it may occur to everybody if God orders. Therefore, the Amhara society uses the following proverbs to express the abnormal people.

- a. *ibd jəjazaw məlik, ajibrəkitim*
 crazy catch appearance not be rich
 ‘The crazy appearance is never being rich’.
- b. *ibd bif’əmit iskə ikulə kən nəw*
 Crazy normal until half day be
 ‘The crazy man may be normal until half day’.

The expression in (3a) indicates that the society believes that the crazy individuals do not give any function. Thus, the community calls them valueless whether they are handsome or good-looking. As a result, the Amhara society in the study locations considers the crazy guys as non-functional to the community. In other words, the mentally challenged people are degraded by the community whether they are handsome or beautiful on the eyes of the society because the mentally challenged individuals may spoil their beauty or good looking. Hence, the community cannot trust the mentally challenged people because they do not know what they do and what they think. As a result, the Amhara society believes that the mentally challenged people devastate their physical appearance within a short time. That is why they use the expression as (3a).

The pragmatic meaning of the expression in (3b) is hopelessness. That is, the people do not trust those who are mentally challenged individuals. That is why the society uses the Amharic proverb such as (3b) to show how they are hopeless about the abnormal people. Hence, the people call those who are abnormal as half day normal and half day abnormal. That is, it is a sign of warning to the society not to believe the mentally challenged people.

4.4 Proverbs related to leper

Leprosy is one of the other types of physical impairment. In Amhara culture, saying *k’omat’ a* ‘leper’ in public is unacceptable in Amhara culture because the Amhara society believes that calling this expression is deemed to be shameful and it is a sign of degrading and disrespect. Hence, the community employs the following proverb to describe leper.

k’omat’omata k’omat’ a *kalalikəw; gabito jifətəfital*
 leper leper not say enter everywhere
 ‘Unless you say ‘leper’ directly, he will enter to everywhere’.

The expression in (4) indicates that calling *k’omat’ a* ‘leper’ is advisable in the community because this expression such as *k’omat’omata k’omat’ a* *kalalikəw; gabito jifətəfital* ‘unless you say ‘leper’ directly, he will enter to everywhere’ is a means of rejecting those who are lepers. This proverb indicates that *k’omat’ a* ‘leper’ is an isolated and stigmatized defect. Therefore, the pragmatic meaning of this expression shows that those who are lepers are isolated from any kinds of social activities because the society considers them as inactive in everything.

4.6 Proverbs related to dwarfisms

Dwarf is one of the other types of physical impairment in the studied areas. Another type of defection is to refer to *dinik* ‘dwarf’. In Amhara culture, there are two motivating factors that the expression *dinik* ‘dwarf’ in public is considered as degraded. Primarily, this expression is the source of disagreement. That is, when someone calls *dinik*

‘dwarf’ directly, it is the cause of conflict between people. Finally, they may lose their irreversible life. Secondly, using the expression directly such as *dinik* ‘dwarf’ is the cause of social isolation. In other words, when people call those physically challenged people directly as *dinik* ‘dwarf’, they think it as scolding and degrading. The society uses the following proverbs to insult or degrade those who are dwarf.

a. *at'ir səw bajikora nəfas bəwəsədəw*
short man not proud wind take
'If the dwarf is not proud, he/she will be taken by wind'.

b. *at'ir səw anitu sajibaljarədədʒal*
short man ɻisəwə not call elder
'The short man becomes elder without getting dignity'.

The expression in (5a) indicates that the short people are disrespected by using this expression because the society thinks that the dwarves are snobbish and boastful because they use this as resection mechanisms. Hence, the pragmatics of the expression in (5a) is that the dwarves become prideful to be respected by the society. Otherwise, they will be disobeyed by the community. Therefore, to get respect from others, the dwarves should be prideful.

The expression in (5b) indicates that the dwarves are getting elder without calling yours because the society believes that the dwarves are always young and the people cannot identify the elder and the youth ones. Hence, in Amhara culture, the expression in (5b) is used to undermine the dwarves because the attitude of the society towards dwarves is negative.

5. CONCLUSION

Amharic is clearly one of the indigenous African languages which is rich in proverbs. There are many Amharic proverbs that the people express their feelings, emotions, sadness, happiness and others in every situation. Using short constructive and expressive proverbs instead of making a long dialogue is a common choice of many people in Amhara. Hence, the people of Amhara in the study areas use various proverbs to warn advice, neglect, and support or discourage.

This study investigated the pragmatics of Amharic proverbs on defections within the framework of relevance theory. Hence, there are various categories proverbs including proverbs of blindness, deafness, leper, craziness, and dwarfisms. Therefore, the pragmatic meanings of such expressions revealed that those proverbs express the unpleasant expressions which people used to express when they are in bad feelings, anger, and create offensiveness to the audiences. Besides, the Amhara community uses various proverbs on defections such as blindness, deafness, leper, craziness, and dwarfisms to discriminate from the society.

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