

**AN ANALYSIS OF KIKAMBA RIDDLES AND HOW THEY RELATE TO
METAPHOR: A RELEVANCE THEORETICAL APPROACH**

BY

MUNYAMBU MERCY KASANGO

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DECLARATION

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

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Munyambu Mercy Kasango
(Student)

This research project has been submitted with our approval as University supervisors:

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Prof. Helga Schroeder
(Supervisor)

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Prof. Iribe Mwangi
(Supervisor)

DEDICATION

I dedicate this research to my late dad Benedict. I am truly grateful for your unconditional love, time, care, moral and imessurable financial support. May the almighty God rest you in peace.

Special dedication to my mum Angelina for her endless love, support and sacrifices. I have been given one of God's greatest blessings, a phenomenal mother! May God bless.

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DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

Riddle	Refers to a short statement, question or sound that offers a puzzle to be solved
Content	Refers to the solution, answer or referent to the riddle.
Proposition	This is the riddle question.
Metaphor	Refers to the direct comparison of one thing to another without the use of ‘like’, as’ (cf. Eco, 1985; Semino, 2008).
Culture	In this study, it is used in reference to the Kamba people’s way of life, including their norms, traditions and values as reflected in their language (cf. Goodenough, 1957; Wardhaugh, 2002).
Relevance theory	Is a theory of Pragmatics that is based on two relevance principles, which include a cognitive principle which states that human cognition is usually geared towards the maximization of relevance, and secondly, communicative principle which states that utterances bring about expectations of optimal relevance (cf. Sperber and Wilson 1985, 1995, 1998, 2002).
Relevance Theoretic Comprehension Procedure	Refers to a procedure of understanding that is followed in the Relevance Theory to help in the interpretation of an input. It states that one has to follow a path of least effort in computing interpretive hypotheses and stop when his or her expectations for relevance are met (cf. Sperber and Wilson, 1985, 1995, 1998, 2002).
Cultural context	In this study, it is used to refer to the whole body of cultural information that the Kamba have in their minds which helps them understand the metaphors in riddles (Cf. Sperber and Wilson 1986).
Processing effort	Refers to the mental energy required to search for meaning (cf Sperber and Wilson 1986, 1995, 1998, 2002).
Cognitive effects	Refer to the results derived from the mental activation by a stimulus (cf. Sperber and Wilson, 1985, 1995, 1998, 2002).

- Encyclopaedic entry** Refers to the information that a hearer has in mind related to a particular referent (cf. Sperber and Wilson, 1986:231).
- Implicature** Refers to what is assumed to have been communicated by a particular input (cf. Sperber and Wilson, 1986:182).
- Explicature** Refers to a blueprint that once enriched becomes a full semantic proposition (cf. Sperber and Wilson, 1995).

ABSTRACT

This study explored the analysis of Kamba riddles based on content and metaphor. The research further looked at the role Kamba culture plays in the interpretation of metaphors in Kamba riddles. The significant fact about riddles is that the linguistic contextual clues are not always sufficient to interpret all riddles hence the culture of the Kamba provides more context during metaphor comprehension. The interpretation of the metaphorical riddles was based on the Relevance Theory, as proposed by Sperber and Wilson (1986). The riddles have metaphors hidden in them. The riddles can either be transparent, semi-opaque or opaque. In the comprehension of transparent riddles, the respondent gets lots of clues from the constituent of the words in the riddle question which guide to find out the referent. These riddles have a very close meaning to that of the literal thus they are not difficult to comprehend. Secondly, there are semi-opaque riddles. In their interpretation, the respondent gets minimal clues from some words in the riddle question hence there is need to add more activation of context in order to interpret them. The cultural knowledge gives the context which guides the respondent to get a cultural list and a selection criterion. Lastly, there is the opaque riddle category. None of the encyclopaedic entries and assumptions are made accessible by the word or words in the riddle question either separately or in combination. One has to learn it by heart as a new concept or vocabulary and stick to the conventionalized riddle referents.

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 Introduction

The study established different classifications of Kamba riddles. The study further explored how the Kamba culture informs the interpretation of metaphorical Kamba riddles, using the Relevance Theory. This section gives a general overview of the research topic, including; a background to the study, the Kikamba language, problem statement, research questions and research objectives. Furthermore, it demonstrates the rationale for the study, its scope and limitations, literature review, theoretical framework, and research methodology.

1.1 Background to the study

Riddles constitute a very important genre of folk literature. All folklorists agree that the riddle as a genre of folklore is a proper subject to be studied and analysed. Scholars and folklorists from Aristotle to the present days have considered the riddle as an expression of traditional wit and wisdom. The uses and functions of the riddle vary from one culture to another. But one of the commonly shared functions of the riddle is for entertainment and recreation (Lagong, 2012). Riddles are mostly used by children and youth to amuse themselves (Finegan, 1970). Riddles are also educative. They are used to test the knowledge and wit of the person, train the intellect and instil cultural values and attitudes to the participants (Lagong, 2012). In addition, riddles convey “cultural metaphors and terminology” (Kaivola, 2018).

There are diverse ways in which the respondent discovers an answer to a riddle. It can be through deliberation, guesswork or knowing the answer in advance. Riddles are culture-specific and therefore, discovering the correct response to a riddle that is not known in advance requires understanding of the culture. The cultural knowledge provides the clues that help a hearer to solve the riddle. If all riddles were easy to predict, riddling would be unexciting game. Riddles are also believed to develop or strengthen the ego of the riddler, the riddle(s) and the audience present in any riddle contest. Riddling “is a form of competition that has intellectual and social power element and a testing of approval and respect” The riddler possesses the

“power”. He/she has the information necessary to unravel the riddle and the authority to decide if the response given is suitable (Kaivola, 2018).

Different folklorists define riddle differently. Taylor (1951) defines riddle in terms of its descriptive elements. He points out that an object in a riddle can be described literally and figuratively. The figurative is indirectly stated and confuses the hearer as he/she tries to solve it.

According to Bhagwat, the riddle consists of two parts; a question and an answer. In the question, a fact is concealed in the form of a metaphor, while in the answer the hidden meaning is revealed. Concealment thus becomes the most vital function of the riddle (Bhagwat 1965:1). Odaga (1984:113) adds that riddles, like proverbs are short sayings intended to make a person use his wit in unravelling a hidden meaning. Ishegoma (2005:114) defines a riddle as a statement or explanation whose meaning is concealed and the audience use guesswork to unravel it.

Finnegan (1970) observes that the riddle is a childish form intended for children and many scholars have not given much consideration to this genre as compared to other genres of oral literature. Additionally, people rarely incorporate riddles in their daily discourse. It is a marginal activity presented at special times rather than a universal aspect of human daily communication. George and Dundes (1963) add to this view that riddles have all along been marginalized and considered childish in nature.

Bukenya and Odanga (1994) says that a riddle is a genre of the short forms in oral literature known for the fixedness of their structural text and being formulaic. Bukenya et al (1998) add that riddles are said to consist six parts, as follows: The Challenge, the Acceptance, the Riddle, guesses, prize and answer.

Okumu (2000) asserts that riddles not only educate but entertain the audience. They are intellectual and educational resources. The audience is able to create and produce riddles from familiar objects, text and contexts.

The Kamba equivalent of a riddle is *ndaĩ*. Among the Kamba, riddling is more popular among the children and the youth. This practice usually takes place in informal settings, among friends or classmates. Knowledge of the language alone does not determine a person’s capability to unravel a riddle. The knowledge of the context and the ability to see analogies are

more central like other communities all over the world, the Kamba have a rich tradition of riddles. However, little attention has been devoted in terms of documentation and analysis.

Kĩkamba is the language of study. According to Mulatya (2013:2) *Kamba* consists of five varieties namely; Machakos, Makueni, the Eastern-Southern Kilungu, Kitui North and central Kitui variety. Furthermore, Kikamba has three major dialects and these are;

(a) The Masaku or *Kĩmasaku* dialect which is spoken in Machakos County and a large part of Makueni County. It is considered the standard variety.

(b) The Kitui or *Kĩkitui* dialect. This is spoken in Kitui and Mwingi

The *Kĩkitui* is distinguished from the *Kĩmasaku* by the substitution of /nz/ for /nth/ in most cases (Mutiga, 2002:6). For example; earth is *Nzĩ* in *Kĩkitui* and *Nthĩ* in *Kĩmasaku*.

(c) The *Kĩlungu* or *Kĩkĩlungũ* dialect. It is spoken in a small part of Makueni County. However, the present study is based on the Kitui dialect.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Many scholars such as Finnegan (1970), Bukenya and Odanga (1994), Upadhyay (2002), Ishegoma (2005), Gweavanda and Masaka (2008) have studied and classified riddles but not in Kamba. The scanty mention on riddle scholarship in Kamba appears to be a long list of riddles with no established classification nor analysis of the interpretation process for a person to get the correct answer. The riddle being a dynamic genre and capable of being generated and perpetuated, is thus worth scholarly attention. This research undertook a classification of Kamba riddles as well as investigated the role culture plays in the interpretation of metaphorical Kamba riddles using the Relevance Theoretic Approach.

1.3 Research questions

The following research questions were of concern to the present study:

- i. What Kamba riddle classifications exist?
- ii. How is the interpretation of metaphorical Kamba riddles explored?
- iii. Which role does Kamba culture play in the interpretation of metaphorical riddles?

1.4 Objectives of the study

This study aimed to:

- i. Establish how Kamba riddles are classified.
- ii. Explore the metaphorical Kamba riddles interpretation procedure.
- iii. Explain the role of Kamba culture for the interpretation of the metaphorical riddles.

1.5 Justification of the study

The knowledge generated in this study will help the teachers of oral literature in teaching the oral literature of the Kamba especially when teaching topics on riddles. It will also enable the oral literature teachers interpret riddles with ease.

Data from the riddle discourse will be useful to the children in language learning and development. This is due to the fact that riddles involve playing with words and meaning. Besides being entertainment sources, the riddles will serve as avenues of education; education on the environment as well as ones culture.

The knowledge generated from this study will be useful to the linguists and learners in developing logical thinking. This view is supported by the fact that it's cognitively demanding to unravel the meaning in non-literal riddles and hence one's mind has to through meaning searching procedure so as to find the right answer. Consequently, the linguists and young Kikamba speakers will be in a position to interpret the metaphors in Kikamba riddles with ease and compare riddles of different communities.

The research will not only add into the bank of academic knowledge the Metaphors in Kikamba but also serve as a reference to other linguists interested in the Pragmatics study of other classifications of Kikamba riddles not explored or other figures of speech in Bantu languages.

1.6 Scope and limitations of the study

The study sought to explore the Kamba riddles. In specific, the study focused on classification of Kamba riddles according to the accepted typology followed by different linguists. The study

also focused on the process of interpreting metaphorical Kamba riddles in reference to Relevance Theory by Sperber and Wilson (1986, 1995). The study did not focus on literal Kikamba riddles because they are not there. Additionally, the study did not focus on other figures of speech such as metonymy and the hybrid figures of speech such as metametonymies and metometaphors in riddles. The metaphorical ones were analysed using the concepts of context, cognitive effects, processing effort, explicature and implicatures in Comprehension procedure of Relevance Theory. Other tenets of the theory were not being utilised.

The study also focused on Kikamba language only. The research drew data from the *Kitui* dialect of Kitui County. The study was undertaken in Mwingi Central Sub-county. It collected sixty-six riddles for the purpose of data for classification and analysis. The findings were generalized as a representative for the whole population. The study did not go to narratives and songs.

1.7 Literature Review

This section presents the previous literature on Kamba language, riddles and on Relevance Theory.

1.7.1 Literature on Kamba language

This section discusses some previous research on Kamba language and how they have contributed to this study.

Kangutu (2014) carried a research in which he studied how figurative language is effective in communication during Akamba dowry negotiation. His study focused on explaining how the interpretation of figurative language is realized in the Kamba dowry negotiation. The study also clarified how the participants are able to interpret this social-cultural practice in order to arrive at effective communication, hence paving way for marriage to take place. His study is related to the current study because a hearer draws some attributes from the metaphors which in turn help to develop the riddles interpretation hence find the answer to the riddle.

Kitheka (2016) did research on Kamba secular songs. His focus was on functions of hyperboles. The study found that hyperboles used in popular Kamba songs have deeper and hidden meaning and required cultural reference of some terms. Effective understanding of these hyperboles by the listeners enabled them to get the message being conveyed by the singer.

Kilonzi (2017) explored on how culture relates to metaphor and metonymy in Kikamba proverbs based on Relevance Theory. The findings of her research were that the metaphors and metonymies used in Kamba proverbs required cultural knowledge of the Kamba way of life for them to be correctly interpreted. Moreover, the Relevance Theoretic Comprehension Procedure was found to be highly applicable. This information from both studies is useful to the current research because metaphoric riddles in Kamba are not directly stated hence require cultural context, which provide the clues, implicatures and explicatures to correctly interpret them.

In one of the recent studies by Kiamba (2018), Conceptual Metaphor Analysis of Metaphors, Metonymy and their interaction in the conceptual space in Kamba language was carried out. Analysis in the research involved interpreting of structured sentences which are rich in Metaphors, Metonyms, Metametonymies and Metometaphors in Kamba. The research concluded that Metometaphors and Metametonyms, Metaphors and Metonymies play a vital in communication. Her study influences the current one in that some riddles are difficult to understand but the identification of the metaphor is a bridge that help to understand and interpret the given riddles.

In conclusion, the above works contribute to the current study. The audience in a riddling session has to identify metaphors used in the riddles and draw some attributes or clues from the words in the riddle question and correctly interpret the metaphors so as to arrive at the correct riddle answer.

1.7.2 Literature on riddles

According to Leach and Fried (1949), riddles are categorized with proverbs, fables, folktales and myths. They are very common and have been defined in systematic terms over time. Leach (1950:938) states that riddles are basically metaphors. Most Kamba riddles have metaphor as a figure of speech. Taylor (1951), one of the greatest riddle scholars of modern times, defines riddle in terms of the ambiguity which seems to be the most commonly characteristic of the true riddle. He defines “the true riddle or the riddle in the strict sense as a comparison of an object to another entirely different object” or one object is compared to another different object. Taylor adds that a riddle, structurally, consists of two important descriptive elements. One is positive and the other negative. The positive one is metaphorical and the negative one is literal (Taylor 1951). However, according to my research at this stage, Kamba riddles

only have the non-literal description of objects. That is, are metaphoric and confuse the hearer who tries to solve or identify the object.

Georges and Dundes (1963) observed that not all riddles in Taylor's collection matched his definition of a true riddle. As a result, they sought to define the riddle in terms of their structure. That is, the "descriptive elements". Thus, a riddle can be defined as "a 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". They went ahead to classify the riddles into two subsets namely; oppositional and non-oppositional.

According to Bhagwat, the riddle consists of firstly, a question and secondly an answer. In the question a fact is concealed in the form of a metaphor, while in the answer the hidden meaning is revealed and the real purport of the implied sense is fully expressed. Concealment thus becomes the most vital function of the riddle (Bhagwat 1965:1). Similarly, Kamba riddles have the facts concealed in the form of metaphors. However, the first is not always a question. It can be a statement, an incomplete statement or a sound.

Scott (1965) classifies the riddle structurally as "a unit of discourse consisting of an obligatory proposition slot filled by an utterance p and an obligatory answer slot filled by an utterance a" (Scott 1965:69) For him to arrive at this definition, Scott had isolated, defined and classified linguistically the stylistic devices used in Persian and Arabic riddles.

Tristram describes the riddle as "a question, direct or indirect, complete or incomplete, in traditional form whereby the questioner challenges a listener to recognize and identify the accuracy, the unity, the truth in a statement that usually seems implausible, or self-contradictory, but that is in its own peculiar light always true" (Tristram 1974).

Langacker (1968:80) illustrated that any kind of language is not always appropriate in all situations. In his case when a speaker uses a riddle; he or 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 cultural background and context guides a hearer to arrive at the intended meaning.

Kallen and Eastman (1979:418) define a riddle in Kiswahili as a problem that is worked out "through riddle interaction and symbolic activity rather than through consideration of logical processes. It's the knowledge of the riddle that is more important than the ability to work it out".

Abraham and Dundes (1972:143) considered Scott (1965) definition of riddle structure as unsuccessful but acknowledged its importance in classifying the riddles in terms of their distinct characteristics as a genre of oral literature. Abraham and Dundes did not lay emphasis on the structure but rather on the function of riddles as questions that are confusing and test the wits of the people who do not know the answer.

Finnegan (1970) says that riddles belong to the broad category of oral literature 'brief genre' and that the riddle is a childish form intended for children. She categorizes riddles as belonging to the "short fixed forms" intended for play and not for any significant use (Finnegan 1970:426). Finnegan adds that riddles have connection with other types of oral literature such as proverbs, songs and praise names. She further observes that riddles can be easily distinguished by brevity and by their structure. The first part is interrogative and presents the problem while the second part is usually an answer to the riddle. Recognizing the inadequacy of her description, she adds that not all African riddles are like this (Finnegan 1970:414). Kamba riddles share in some of Finnegan's descriptions of a riddle: riddles are common with children and the youth and are used for entertainment.

Afolabi (1976) highlights the procedures which are followed by the audience so as to resolve Yoruba riddles. He points out that for one to arrive at the acceptable answer one has to be imaginative and recognize that the challenger uses language in a non-literal way and also employs analogy. Yoruba riddles are therefore analytical and logical. Kamba riddles share this view because they are non-literal and fall into the interpretation of implicatures.

Burns (1976) in his research on riddling suggests several functions of riddles as follows: Riddles reflect the environment and concerns of the people instil the cultural values and attitude to the participants and act as educational devices to exercise and train the intellect Riddles are verbal outlet for aggressive feelings and sexual desires. They are also used as devices for mediating conceptual ambiguity and stimulating cognitive re-examination. They play the role of training and exercising intellect as well as promoting unity and group cohesion. Kamba riddles are no exception.

Abuga et al (1987), together with the National Centre for Early Childhood Education (NACECE) of KIE, have documented Abagusii riddles. However, this study has established that there is no interpretation of these riddles.

Bukenya and Odanga (1994) define riddles as clever statements, events, allegories, puzzles, games, appearances and experiences that are spoken, written, seen, touched, felt, imagined,

done and heard. This contribution brings new thinking towards appreciative enquiry into riddling and riddles. Unfortunately, I have not come across riddles that go beyond the statements, allegories, puzzles and games. Bukenya and Odanga (1994) adds that a riddle is a genre of the short forms in oral literature known for the fixedness of their structural text and being formulaic. According to Bukenya et al (1998), riddles are said to consist six parts: The challenge, the acceptance, the riddle, guesses, prize and answer.

Pagis (1996:94-95) points out that there are certain conditions that should be met for any text to be regarded as a riddle. The text must be expressed as a puzzle; it should have participants and their roles as well as clues that are known to the participants. Lastly, the text must have one acceptable response. Among the Kamba, riddling shares this view because a riddle is presented as a challenge and it involves a social function because there is the riddler and the audience or respondent. Although there are several possible answers to a specific riddle informed by the audiences' world view, the riddle always has one possible answer.

According to Miruka (1999:135), a riddle refers to a word puzzle in which states and things we are aware of are stated indirectly for people to work out the speaker's intention. In his earlier publication, Miruka (1994) contends that riddles present distinctive features of certain notions which require the unravelling of the concealed literal reference. These distinctive characteristics could be behavioural, physical or habitual. Miruka (1994:11; 1999:139) provides a helpful description of a riddling cycle in three parts, namely; invitation, response and prize. In the invitation, the challenger indicates that he or she wants to pose a riddle. Many communities have a special statement (opening formula) to do this. Among the Kamba, the opening formula is *kwata ndai*, catch a riddle. In the response, the audience guesses the right answer for the riddle posed. If a correct answer is given, then the riddler acknowledges it and then poses another riddle or another riddler takes over. The process of riddling moves to the third part if the answer given is incorrect. The prize is the last part of the riddling cycle. In this part, if the audience is unable to give the correct answer, then the riddler asks for a prize. The prize varies from one community to another. It could be an animal, a person or a town.

Okumu (2000:72-75) asserts that riddles educate and entertain the audience. He adds that riddles are intellectual and educational resources. The audience is able to create and produce riddles from familiar objects, text and contexts. Harings (1985) adds that new riddles can be created from old ones using the same images and structures. The old ones can be changed depending on the setting. The current study shares this notion because children create new

riddles from the observations they make as a result of influence from their environment. However, I disagree with Okumu's assertion that there is no audience participation in riddling because during riddling among the Kamba, the audience are highly involved.

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 Kamba no exception as cultural knowledge gives clues that guide the audience to develop an interpretation of the given riddle.

Gachanja and Kebaya (2013) carried out research on the pedagogical aspects of riddles. In their study, they pointed out that riddles educate both children and adults. They added that riddles play cultural, social and historical functions in a society. However, their study does not examine the classification of riddles as well as understanding and interpretation of those riddles.

Magachi (2015) carried research on a pragmatic analysis of Ekegusii riddles guided by the Relevance theory. She focused on riddles from the Abagusii and found that riddles play a very crucial role in educating both children and adults. She observed that the Abagusii riddles can be classified into literal and metaphorical riddles, simple and complex, oppositional and non-oppositional as well as according to their type, level of difficulty and form. She also found that context and culture play a major role in interpreting the riddle. This study will borrow a lot of insights from this research on general information about riddles as well as their classification. This study will adopt the metaphorical classification of riddles which has as well being applied by Magachi (2015).

1.7.3 Literature on Relevance theory

Relevance Theory is a theory of communication whose proponents are Sperber and Wilson (1986). Many researches have since been carried out on the Relevance Theory as well as adopted the Relevance Theory in the various interpretations of different languages as well as figure of speech such as like songs, proverbs, riddles and hyperbole. (Kilonzi, 2017) (Njangi, 2013) (Moreno, 2007) (Carston, 2002, 1989) (Koech, 2013) (Kitheka, 2016).

Sperber and Wilson (1986:84-93) argue that the mind stores different kinds of information. The chunks of information stored vary from one person to another and the hearer settles for the most accessible one. Pilkington (1994) adds that poetry is problematic and requires the reader's high mental energy in order to search for the meaning. In search for relevance, the

reader's encyclopaedic world knowledge is exhaustively explored so as to derive the desired effects. In addition, Koech (2013) worked on the language used in selected Kipsigis songs using a lexical pragmatic approach. He examined lexical items that form the nucleus of meaning and analysed their variation as perceived by the audience. The study concluded that lexical items used in the selected songs were a transfer of meaning which acquire activation through encyclopaedic entry that work as weak implicatures in the Relevance Theory.

According to Carston (2002) there is a distinction that exists between "what is expressed by a speaker explicitly and the proposition that he or she implicates. The proposition expressed by an utterance is not fully determined by the meaning of the linguistic expression used to convey it." Her study will be valuable to the current study because Kikamba riddles have hidden meaning that is, use metaphors and metonyms (implicatures) Pragmatics will therefore guide the hearer to ascertain the type of proposition the speaker intends to communicate in order to comprehend the Kikamba riddle and arrive at the intended meaning.

There have been specific studies on humour using Relevance Theory. For instance, Yus (2008:142) points out that implicatures and explicatures are exploited in order to produce humorous effects. Yus, guided by the Relevance theory classifies jokes into four-fold: "Jokes based on the explicit interpretation of the joke or alternative explicit interpretations: Jokes which generate humour from a clash between explicit content and implicit information retrieved from context and jokes whose source of humour lies in the reinforcement of stereotyped background information about the audience's society. Therefore, jokes are based on the audience's responsibility to draw implicit information from context so as to derive implicatures." However, Kihara and Schroder (2012) state that in jokes, the hearer's encyclopaedic world knowledge is violated. Stolarek (2012) In her discussion on literary pragmatics presents some practical applications of relevance theory in literary criticism. She observed that relevance theory is descriptively and explanatorily adequate as a general pragmatic theory. Its account of poetic effects provides a suitable theory of literary communication. She examines the role of a theoretical literary pragmatics within literary studies and concluded that it is important in describing and explaining the communication of poetic effects. She added that implicatures play a key role in interpretation of poetic metaphors in literary communication.

Koech (2013) worked on the language used in selected Kipsigis songs using a lexical pragmatic approach. He examined lexical items that form the nucleus of meaning and analysed their

variation as perceived by the audience. The study concluded that lexical items used in the selected songs were a transfer of meaning which acquire activation through encyclopaedic entry that work as weak implicatures in the Relevance Theory. This study is significant to the current study because interpretation of non –literal Kamba riddles fall under implicatures.

Njangi (2013) carried research on analysis of the comprehension of Ki-Embu idioms guided by Relevance Theoretic Approach. The researcher observed that comprehension of Ki-Embu idioms takes place in different ways in the different types of idioms namely; transparent, semi-transparent, opaque and semi-opaque idioms. With transparent idiom, a person is guided by the constituent words in the idiom. The comprehension is built on the metaphorical extensions of the idiom. In the interpretation of semi-transparent idioms, words give clue and more context is activated to interpret the metaphor guided by words in the idioms. The interpretations of opaque idioms require minimal clues from the word and rely on more context, cultural reference of terms in the idioms and the fact that they are learnt as new concepts. The Relevance Theory guides the hearer to reach at the figurative meaning of idioms. Similarly, in some Kamba riddles words used give clues and others have no clues at all and one has to work on explicatures and implicatures to derive the correct response for the riddle.

Magachi (2015) carried a research on analysis of Ekegusii riddles under Relevance Theory. She found that riddles can be classified into literal and metaphorical riddles. The metaphorical ones were interpreted and understood based on context and cultural knowledge. Guided by Relevance Theory tenets, the study found out that context and cultural knowledge play a major role in interpreting and understanding Ekegusii riddles. Guided by Relevance Theory (Kaula, 2015) studied metaphorical expressions used in selected Mipasho Taarab songs. This theory was used to account for the speaker ‘s meaning. This study concluded that context plays a vital role in interpreting the metaphors used in the songs in addition to the knowledge that is shared between the hearer and speaker. The shared knowledge enables the hearer to infer the meaning of the metaphor correctly Context, explicatures and implicatures are tenets of Relevance theory that guide the current study in the interpretation of non-literal Kamba riddles.

Kitheka (2016) conducted a study on the functions of hyperbole in secular Kikamba songs. The researcher found that the deeper and hidden meanings of the hyperboles need cultural reference of some terms. This finding was explained using the notions of explicatures and implicatures

of the Relevance Theory by Sperber and Wilson (1995). The Relevance Theoretic procedure enabled the listeners of the songs to get the intended meaning and a range of other implications the singer may not have intended to approve but was implied in the utterance of the hyperboles in the songs. Kilonzi (2017) carried out a Relevance Theoretical perspective of how culture relates to metaphor and metonymy in Kamba proverbs. Her study explored how the Kamba culture informs the interpretation of metaphor and metonymy using the Relevance Theory. The data was analysed using Relevance Theory. Her findings were that the metaphors and metonymies used in Kamba proverbs are unique to their cultural setting and require cultural knowledge on the Akamba way of life in order to correctly interpret them. The Comprehension Procedure in relevance was highly useful in the interpretation of metaphor and metonymy in Kamba proverbs. The notions of context, explicatures and implicatures of the Relevance Theory used in Kithekas and Kilonzi's study will be highly applicable in the comprehension procedure of Kamba riddles for they are all non-literal.

1.8 Theoretical Framework

This study uses Relevance Theory as a tool for analysis. The proponents of this theory are Sperber and Wilson (1986, 1995, 2002).

Relevance Theory is a theory of pragmatics that is based on two relevance principles: Cognitive and Communicative principles. The Cognitive Principle states that humans tend to pay attention to a phenomenon or information that is most relevant and available to them whereas the Communicative Principle states that the information offered by the communicator should be relevant enough to be worth the audience's attention in an attempt to process it.

Understanding does not just rely on information communicated through utterances and observable phenomenon but also memories, inferred conclusions and thoughts. Relevance Theory "claims that the expectations of relevance raised by an utterance are precise enough, and predictable enough, to guide the hearer to interpret the speaker's meaning and hence lead to comprehension". (Wilson and Sperber 2002:250).

An input (utterance, sound, sight or memory) is considered to be relevant to a person only if it has a connection with the background information that he or she has to yield a conclusion that matters to him or her. For example, by giving an answer to a question the person has in mind, bringing about an improvement of his or her knowledge concerning a particular topic,

or settling of a doubt the person has. In addition, it could be a confirmation of a suspicion or a correction of a mistaken impression.

1.8.1 Relationship between cognitive effects and processing effort

Cognitive effects refer to the results derived from the mental activation by a stimulus (gesture, thought, an utterance, a notice or test).

Communication takes place when a stimulus connects with a context and is interpreted against the cognitive environment of the hearer so as to yield the desired results.

Types of cognitive effects.

1. Strengthening of old assumptions

Kamau told his wife that one day he will kill her (context). Kamau arrives at home carrying an axe (input). If he lifts the axe in an attempt to clobber her then this would strengthen her assumption that the axe he is carrying is meant to kill her and make a bolt.

2. Weakening and eliminating of old assumptions

If Kamau tells his wife that the axe he is carrying is meant to cut down a tree in their compound, then she will abandon her assumption that she will be killed using the axe.

3. Building of new assumption

The wife will conclude that her husband has brought a farm tool that will be used to bring down a tree in their compound.

Processing effort refers to the mental energy required to search for meaning (Sperber and Wilson 1986, 1995, 2002). The processing effort is affected by factors such as frequency and recency of use as well as the linguistic and logical complexity. Riddles that are frequently and recently used and have linguistic and logical simplicity require less mental energy for a hearer to interpret. The reverse is also true.

Assessment of an utterance's relevance or definition of relevance is therefore based on the comparison between cognitive effects and the processing effort needed to recover those cognitive effects. It states that:

- (i) The greater the cognitive effects of an input to a person the greater the relevance
- (ii) The smaller the processing effort required to derive the cognitive effects the greater the relevance (Sperber and Wilson 2002).

1.8.2 Comprehension procedure

Refers to a procedure of understanding that is followed in the Relevance Theory to help in the interpretation of an input. It states;

- (a) You ought to follow a path of least effort in computing cognitive effects and test interpretive hypotheses in the order of accessibility. The hypothesis may include and not limited to disambiguation, reference resolution and implicatures.
- (b) You ought to stop when your expectations of relevance are met. (Sperber and Wilson 2004:613).

1.8.3 Explicatures and Implicatures

When an utterance is produced by a speaker, the hearer's mind first derives the explicatures because they are stronger and pragmatically enriched. The mind further generates the implicatures and recovers the implicated premises and implicated conclusions. The derivation of explicatures and implicatures is guided by the communicative principle of Relevance. The relevance-theoretic comprehension procedure applies in the same way in a more specific and overall way. Three sub-tasks are involved.

Sub-tasks in the overall comprehension process

- a. Constructing an appropriate hypothesis about explicit content (explicatures) via decoding, disambiguation, reference resolution, and other pragmatic enrichment processes.
- b. Constructing an appropriate hypothesis about the intended contextual assumptions (implicated premises).

- c. Constructing an appropriate hypothesis about the intended contextual implications (implicated conclusion).

These sub-tasks simultaneously occur in the mind and are not sequentially ordered.

Sperber & Wilson (1995:182) define explicatures and implicatures as: “an utterance communicated by an utterance U is explicit (explicature) if and only if it is a development of a logical form encoded by U; an utterance communicated by U which is not explicit is implicit.” It is an implicature. Sperber and Wilson (1986: 182–3) introduced explicature to mean what is communicated clearly and plainly. Carston (2002) identified this with what is said.

An implicature is a new logical form that arises from what a speaker has said. According to Sperber & Wilson (1986) an implicature is “an ostensibly communicated assumption that is solely by the process of pragmatic inference. Implicatures are intended contextual assumptions which function as premises in the inference process and provide the intended contextual implicatures.”

Sperber & Wilson (1986:195) postulates two types of implicature, namely; implicated premises and implicated conclusion. They argue that a two – step procedure is followed so as to develop an implicature from an explicature. The first implicature is referred to as implicated premise whereas the latter is referred to as the implicated conclusion and is usually indirect as shown in example below:

Sheila: let us go for lunch.

Hassan: It’s Ramadan.

The logical premises: people have a meal during the day, that is lunch.

Muslims fast from dawn till sunset during Ramadan

Hassan is a Muslim hence will not eat during the day

The implicated conclusion: Hassan will not go for lunch.

Among the Kamba, some riddles are metaphorical hence they are stated indirectly. Consider the example shown below:

Riddle 1: *Ng’ombe sya mundu ngy’a – mbaiki.*

Cattle of man poor – The Castor-oil plant (*Ricinus communis*)

Poor man’s cattle – The Castor-oil plant (*Ricinus communis*)

The Kamba practice animal husbandry. Cattle is highly valued and treasured by the people not only as source of food but also a symbol of wealth. Traditionally, a person who had many cattle was considered very rich just like it would be to any who had many daughters for they would attract a lot of bride price which was paid by cattle. Poor people, who had no cattle of their own, and thus were unable to obtain any animal fat, prepared oil out of the seeds of castor-oil plant for rubbing into their bodies. The cultural context, in addition to the relevance theoretic comprehension procedure is vital to the respondent for it gives clues which help to arrive at the correct answer to the riddle answer. To begin with, the respondent needs to follow a path of least effort in computing the cognitive effects when retrieving the encyclopaedic entries for some poor man and cattle that are stored in the mind.

Encyclopaedic entries for cattle are;

- (a) They are big.
- (b) Four legged animals
- (c) Are herbivorous.
- (d) Source of meat.
- (e) Source of fat.
- (f) Source of wealth

Encyclopaedic entries for a poor man are;

- (a) Is a human being
- (b) Two legged.
- (c) Has few or no daughters.
- (d) Got no cattle

After a close consideration of the assumptions from the encyclopaedic entries given above, the respondent will eliminate assumptions from entries a-c for a poor man for they are likely to generate impossible referents for the riddle question. Based on the cultural knowledge the respondent already has in mind, the assumption from (d) that a poor man got no cattle fits the criterion of Relevance comprehension procedure for little effort is required to think of it. The assumptions from the encyclopaedic entries a-c for the cattle are weak implicatures and will be eliminated. Similarly, d will be eliminated because cattle is not the only source of meat. The assumption derived from encyclopaedic entry (e) will be considered more accessible for it follows a path of least effort to arrive at conclusion that fat is mostly extracted from the cow's milk hence a person who has no cattle has to get an alternative source. The implicated premises are a poor man, who had no cattle, was unable to obtain any animal fat. Their only alternative was to prepare oil out of the seeds of a castor-oil plant for rubbing into their bodies. As required

by the relevance theoretic comprehension, having arrived at the answer that fits the criterion, the audience will not look further.

1.9 Research Methodology

This section presents the methods that were used in this research study. It outlines data collection procedure, sampling techniques, data analysis and data presentation procedure that were used in this research.

1.9.1 Data collection

The study used primary sources only. The primary source of the data were the informants who included six adults and children. The main source of the data were the adults, but the research included the children because riddles are performed by children. The form one class represented the children because riddles are learnt during form one oral literature lessons. Being a day school, majority are from Mwingi Central Sub-county. The data collection from the children was done through a written tabulation. The researcher had prior informed the learners of the activity and they came with written lists of riddles, their respective meaning and answers and challenged one another during English lesson. The researcher was a participatory observer.

The adult informants ascertained the acceptability and interpretation of the riddles collected from the children. Oral interviews were conducted by the researcher to collect data from the six adults. Four were centrally assembled while two were interviewed separately from their homes. It was assumed that six adult informants were sufficient to provide, interpret and classify sixty-six riddles. The interviews focused on the collection of more riddles and their classification, meaning and interpretation as well as the acceptability and interpretation of the riddles collected from the children informants. During the oral interview, the responses were recorded. The oral interviews were more preferred because some of the adult informants were unable to read and write.

The adult informants were two teachers, three farmers and one business person aged above fifty-five. The researcher relied on her own judgement to choose the first three participants. This purposive sampling technique was time effective. The selected participants recommended other three participants for inclusion in the study. The chain referral process enabled the

researcher to reach some participants who would be difficult to sample. The researcher settled for the aged native speakers because they have a vast knowledge of Kamba riddles.

The study was carried out in Mwingi central sub-county, Kitui County, and using the Kikuiti dialect. The purposive selection of the area was due to the fact that no studies have been conducted in this area on this topic. Besides, *Kikuiti* dialect was chosen because it's the dialect of use in this catchment area. The researcher being a native speaker of the dialect easily understood the riddles and their interpretation. In the research, sixty-six riddles were collected, analysed and the metaphorical ones interpreted. It was assumed that the sixty-six riddles chosen will be considered sufficient enough to generalise the whole of the Kamba riddles.

Lastly, the researcher having been born and brought up in Ukambani has native speaker competence of the language, besides her linguistic knowledge which includes knowledge on literal and metaphorical riddles hence she collected some riddles and sat with the elderly informants to confirm their originality.

1.9.2 Sampling Technique

Six adult informants of Kamba language aged above fifty-five years were sampled through purposive and snowball sampling techniques from Mwingi Central Sub-County, Kitui County. They comprised three men and three women just to ensure diversity. The research was based on assumption that six adult informants were enough to analyse sixty-six riddles. The researcher assumed that age of above fifty-five years was considered enough to have the Kamba language competence. The choice of sixty-six riddles was considered a large enough sample size to provide a true picture of the Kamba riddles in general.

1.9.3 Research Design

The study employed qualitative research design. It gave a description of the state of affairs as they are. It involved firstly, preparing and organising data for example, from transcribed interview notes, recordings and written data tabulations. Secondly, it reduced the data into categories and finally an analysis of the data and interpretation was carried out.

1.9.4 Data analysis

The data collected was written down and transcribed by the researcher. The adult informants helped to ascertain the riddle's acceptability. Using the researchers' linguistic knowledge, the identified riddles were divided into five content-based classes as shown below:

- a) Riddles that deal with Natural phenomena
- b) Riddles that deal with the human body and its attributes
- c) Riddles that deal with animals and insects
- d) Riddles that deal with plants and foods
- e) Things and manufactured objects

The researcher further identified the metaphorical riddles from the five content-based classes.

The metaphorical Kamba riddles were further divided into three groups. Namely;

- (a) Transparent riddles
- (b) Semi-opaque riddles
- (c) Opaque riddles

The semi-opaque riddles were interpreted using the categories of Relevance Theory. That is, context, cognitive effects, processing effort, explicatures and implicatures. The research further highlighted the interpretation process of transparent riddles guided by the same tenets of Relevance Theory.

CHAPTER TWO

CLASSIFICATION OF RIDDLES

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the classification of riddles. Firstly, the general information on riddles is discussed. Secondly, the definition of riddles as well as the performance and riddling conventions of Kamba riddles are dealt with. Thirdly, the riddling process is presented followed by the characteristics of riddles. The functions of riddles and the classification of riddles are then presented thereafter. Finally, the comparison between riddles and proverbs as well as riddles and idioms are discussed. The chapter ends with conclusion remarks.

2.2 General information on riddles

Riddles as a genre of oral literature is found in almost all Bantu ethnic groups in Africa. Among the Kamba a riddle is referred to as *ndaĩ*. Riddles are created from familiar objects in the environment. The objects of traditional Kamba riddles are related to natural phenomena, the human body and its attributes, animals and insects and plants and foods. Due to cultural and environmental changes, many riddles have been coined to reflect new concepts in the environment such as cups, clocks, soldiers and tractors, see the following examples:

Riddle 2:

Aumie mũingo akũĩite kĩswe – Saa.

He/she came from abroad sneering - A clock.

Riddle 3:

Mwana wakwa akusaa ũmwe kwa ũmwe – Mũsyĩ wa Kĩlĩvĩĩ.

My children die one by one – Match sticks.

This means that new concepts are easily assimilated in folklore. Riddles can also be adapted and new ones created as children interact with their peers or relatives in different regions. The riddle is a short art form hence many riddles can be exchanged in a session.

Kamba riddles take the question and answer form. The question takes different forms. It may be an actual question or interrogative, see the following example:

Riddle 4:

Aa masivianisye ũũ makokita ĩndĩĩ? – ngũka na ĩngĩ.

These looking at each other when shall they fight? A wall and another.

A riddle question may also be posed as a statement rather than an interrogative. The statement takes various forms. Firstly, the statement could be an incomplete metaphor. The word in the riddle question is usually an incomplete statement and the respondent gets no clue from the word in the riddle proposition. None of the encyclopaedic assumptions is made accessible by the word. These riddles are usually learnt like a phrase or a new concept. One cannot get its solution if it is not learnt like a phrase or a new concept. See the following examples:

Riddle 5:

Neethiie... - Neethiie mũndii na mũndete mayotanĩa muunyĩ wa ũsekiĩ.

I found... - I found *Mũndii* and *Mũndete* (imaginary dwarf spirits) under the shade of a grass blade!

Riddle 6:

Woo... - Wookĩla mbio nyanya wĩĩtwe nĩ ĩtema ya ndaa

You almost... You almost jumped eight high fences on being choked by a louse liver.

This riddle is not only used for entertainment but mainly to ridicule fearful people.

The incomplete metaphor statement takes various answers that have only been fixed by the community. Such riddles are not easy to unravel for a person not acquainted to Kamba culture.

Riddle 7:

Nesaa... - Nesaa kwosa nyamũ ngĩmĩta mũsivi nĩyove.

I almost – Picked a snake thinking it is a belt to tie yourself.

Nesaa... - Nesaa kwosa nguu ngũmĩta nzio.

I almost... - I almost took a tortoise thinking it's a grinding stone.

Secondly, the statement could be a negative one. In a negative statement, the negative part of the riddle gives a clue to the audience solving the riddle.

Riddle 8:

Īkanda yaasa ĩtova ngũ – Nzĩa.

A long rope that cannot tie firewood – road.

The second part contradicts the first part because a long rope should best be used to tie a bundle of firewood rather than fail to. The audience has to identify the analogy concealed here for a rope doesn't just imply a rope.

Riddles can also appear in idiophonic form (Finnegan 1970)

They are delivered as sounds as shown in the following examples;

Riddle 9:

Kũũ no ng'o na kũla no ng'o – Kĩvĩndu.

Here is *ng'o* and there is *ng'o* – darkness.

Darkness is universal. It falls at the same time in every part of Ukambani. Kamba riddles can be delivered as sounds, statements or interrogatives.

2.3 Definition of riddles

According to Miruka (1999:135), a riddle refers to a word puzzle in which states and things people are aware of are stated indirectly for people to work out the speaker's intention. In his earlier publication, Miruka (1994) contends that riddles present distinctive features of certain notions which require the unravelling of the concealed literal reference. These distinctive characteristics could be behavioral, physical or habitual. According to Bukenya and Gachanja (1996), a riddle is a problem which cannot be straightforwardly understood or elucidated.

Bukenya and Odanga (1994) describes a riddle as a genre of the short forms in oral literature known for the fixedness of their structural text and being formulaic.

Chesaina (1994:14) defines riddles as "... puzzles or word play". This definition shows that riddles involve two main aspects namely, reasoning as implied by puzzles and recreation as indicated by play.

2.4 Performance and riddling Conventions of Kamba riddles

In traditional Kamba society, riddles were told by grandmothers and mothers to children and youth. Riddling also took place among siblings. Riddling took place around a cooking hearth located in the Kamba traditional grass-thatched round house, known as *mũsonge* or *ĩkurũ*. Riddling took place most typically in the evening just before supper as a way of passing time

and keeping children occupied and awake. It was also a form of night time entertainment and a test of intelligence. It was unethical to perform riddles during the day for it was believed that a misfortune might befall the participants. The logic behind this restriction is that riddling being a social activity might distract the children from their chores and encourage laziness. Riddles are thus, unlike proverbs regarded as a kind of marginal activity reserved for special times rather than a universal aspect of human activity and communication.

Riddles can be performed as an independent activity. They can also be performed among children and peers as they play or perform their chores as well as prelude to storytelling as curtain raisers. A riddling session requires two groups or two participants in order to be complete. In the Kamba community the performance includes both the adults and children.

The riddler announces the beginning of riddling by saying '*kwata ndai*' meaning catch/receive a riddle. The riddlee or the audience responds '*Nakwata*' meaning I receive/catch it. After this formulaic opening has been observed, the riddling session commences. The challenger then poses the riddle for the respondent(s) to unravel. If the respondent guesses the right answer to the riddle, the challenger acknowledges it and poses another riddle or another challenger takes over. If the respondent(s) fail to get the correct answer after many trials they concede defeat. The challenger reveals the correct answer only after the respondent has offered a payment. The prize is usually hypothetical and could range from a village, a person or an animal. Object which are socially unacceptable are turned down by the challenger. In order to be able to offer the challenger a suitable prize, children need to possess sound geographical knowledge of surrounding and distant villages and towns, as well as a good understanding of the value and use of the objects that they give.

Sometimes riddling among the Kamba took the form of a competition between groups of children. The adults played the role of judges. The winning group was normally awarded an imaginary prize (often a cow or some property). The fact that riddling is a group activity is in itself a socialization process. Children learn to relate with one another. Giving of the prizes also motivates children to come up with more challenging riddles rather than those already memorized.

2.5 The riddling process

Bukenya and Gachanja (1996), outlines six stages in riddle performance: The challenge, the acceptance, the riddle, guesses, prize and answer.

- a) The challenge: It is from the challenger, signifying that he/she desires to set forth a riddle.
- b) The Acceptance: The audience accepts the invitation or challenge.
- c) The Riddle: This is the question. It is in the form of a figurative statement, an ideophone or a puzzle.
- d) Guesses: The audience or respondent make guesses as to what the answer should be.
- e) A Prize: The challenger asks for a prize if the respondent is unable to decipher the right answer.
- f) The Solution: The challenger reveals the correct answer to the riddle once he/she has accepted the given prize from the respondent.

Miruka (1999) summarizes the six parts by dividing the riddling process into three. Namely;

- i. The invitation which consists of invitation, acceptance and the riddle.
- ii. The response. This stage comprises of the guesses. The audience guess the right answer to the riddle. If the answer is correct, the challenger acknowledges it and poses another riddle or another challenger takes over. If the answer is incorrect, the riddling moves to the third stage.
- iii. Prize: The challenger demands a prize and gives the solution to the riddle.

With regard to performance of Kamba riddles, the six stages are observed as elaborated in the following example.

KAMBA	ENGLISH
i. CHALLENGE Challenger: <i>Kwata ndaĩ</i>	Receive a riddle
ii. THE ACCEPTANCE Respondent: <i>Nakwata</i>	I receive it
iii. THE RIDDLE Challenger; <i>Kavisĩ mavĩndĩ mwita</i>	A small pot filled with bones
iv. GUESSES	

Respondent: <i>Kĩkuu</i>	A gourd
Challenger: <i>Eka</i>	No
Respondent: <i>ĩvu</i>	Stomach
Challenger: <i>Eka</i>	No
v. PRIZE	
Challenger: <i>Nenga ngo'mbe</i>	Give me a cow
Respondent: <i>Inakunenga Mĩkundu</i>	I give you <i>Mĩkundu</i>
vi. ANSWER.	
Challenger: <i>Ũsũngĩo nĩ Kanywa.</i>	The answer is a mouth.

However, the six stages are not observed if the respondent gives the right answer to the riddle as shown below:

KAMBA	ENGLISH
i. CHALLENGE	
Challenge: <i>Kwata ndaĩ</i>	catch a riddle
ii. THE ACCEPTANCE	
Respondent: <i>Nakwata</i>	I catch it
iii. THE RIDDLE	
Challenger: <i>Mũndũ ũtindaa kũthi na ndathũmũa!</i>	A person who remains in one spot although travelling and does not rest!
iv. ANSWER	
Respondent: <i>Kĩseve!</i>	wind
Challenger: <i>Nĩwoosa</i>	you got it right.

The wind is likened to a person who without resting travels across the land. It seems to stir up the tree tops and yet the wind has passed on.

2.6 Characteristics of riddles

First, the riddle form is based on the question and answer format (Finnegan, 1970; Chesaina, 1997). Moreover, it is potentially solvable from the information included in the question, if the riddlee is able to determine the witty devices for confusion employed to frame the riddle. In turn, the information necessary to discern the witty devices are found entirely by virtue of participation in a cultural system. The children have to be very keen observers of their

surroundings primarily because such knowledge is necessary for one to successfully respond to riddles (Miruka, 1999; Gwaranda and Masaka, 2008; Gachanja and Kebaya, 2013).

Finally, the riddle act must, like all folklore, have a conventional locus within a particular tradition and within a performance context (Green and Pepicello, 1979).

2.7 Functions of riddles

The uses and functions of the riddle vary from one culture to another. But one of the commonly shared functions of the riddle is for entertainment and recreation (Finnegan, 1970; Ajayi, 1990; Bukenya and Gachanja, 1996; Miruka, 1999; Lagong, 2012; Gachanja and Kebaya, 2013). Entertainment value of riddles rise from the humour presented in them as well as in the array of objects they refer to and how the community perceives those objects (Miruka, 1999), see the following example:

Riddle 10:

Uuwi –Nĩ kĩmbu kĩkwalwa nĩ waĩko.

Uuwi - A chameleon being pained by circumcision wound.

This riddle would evoke much humour and laughter among the children at the imagination of a chameleon sounding a cry of pain as a result of having undergone circumcision and the wound gets so painful. Chameleons being wild animals do not go through initiation hence this would evoke a lot of laughter among the children at such an imagination.

Riddles whose answers are considered taboo words may evoke laughter among Kamba children, also:

Riddle 11:

Syomwilu matongunĩ – Mũino wa nyonyi.

Syomwilu in Sodom Apples plants – faeces from a person who has eaten food made of cow green peas leaves.

Ideally when a person eats food made of cow peas leaves (*nyonyi*) he excretes very black faeces. It is a taboo in Kamba society to mention words such as the human excretion as well as human private parts in general. In a riddling session, the mentioning of such taboo words may evoke laughter among the audience. This is the only time such taboo words can be said freely.

Riddles enhance observation of objects in the surrounding. A riddle's object of reference is derived after a careful observation of the environment. Therefore, in order to decode a riddle, the respondent has to critically evaluate the objects and concepts in the environment and select the one with the most distinctive features (Miruka, 1999). Shona children have to be very keen observers of their surroundings primarily because such knowledge is necessary for one to successfully respond to riddles (Gwaranda and Masaka, 2008). The Kamba are no exception because answers to riddles are also based on nature and objects and organisms within the ecosystem such as animals, insects and birds. Consider the following example:

Riddle 12:

Mũsikalĩ wĩ ngovia ndune – mũthia wa ikonge.

A soldier wearing a red cap- sharp tip of a sisal leaf.

Sisals plants consists of rosette sword or spear shaped leaves that have very sharp red coloured tips. One must be observant to conclude that indeed it's the red tip of every sisal plant that is equated to a cap; which is usually worn on a person's head just like the tips are at the end of a sisal leaf.

African riddles also provide a significant educational value (Nakene, 1943; Beuchat, 1957; Blacking, 1961; Ishumi, 1980; Ishegoma, 2005; Lagong, 2012; Gachanja and Kebaya, 2013). According to Ajayi, (1990) riddles serve as a means of education and test of imagination. Lagong (2012) opines that riddles are used to test the knowledge and wit of the person, train the intellect and instill cultural values and attitudes to the participants. To add on, riddles train children to think quickly and critically (Nakene, 1943; Ishegoma, 2005) as well as reason deeply (Nakene, 1943).

Riddles also enhance memory among the children (Beuchat, 1957; Miruka, 1999; Ishegoma, 2005). Riddles have fixed answers which are memorized and reproduced whenever this particular riddle features. One of the ways Children master answers to riddles is by recall. It's easier to remember an answer to a riddle that has been said over and over. There is usually little debate as to the rationality of the already fixed answer. Memorization of riddles does not imply that riddles are irrational. The challenge is coined after careful observation of the environment.

From this observation, the distinctive features that characterize that object or concept are selected (Miruka 1999).

In a similar way, Ishumi (1980) argued that riddles could be equated in function to present-day psychological tests that assess knowledge and creativity in associating, differentiating and establishing cause-and-effect.

A related assertion on the educational value of African riddles was discussed by Beuchat (1957) who said that riddles combine recreational and educational needs to a certain level hence providing an exercise in intellectual skill and quickness of wit and a test of memory.

In a similar way, Gwaravanda and Masaka (2008), opines that posing of riddles is more than just a mere game that takes place between individuals or groups. Riddles sharpen the mind and train the participants to think quickly. They also serve as useful teaching method.

This educational value in African riddles has been contrasted sharply by Finnegan's view that riddles are a discourse of childish interest meant merely for entertainment and amusement and that it is not for serious taking (Finnegan, 1970:426). This assertion underrates the significance of this kind of literal genre which plays an important role in a child's educational and intellectual development and skills and knowledge transfer in Africa (Finnegan, 1970).

Other modern researchers like Ishegoma (2005) have expressed that African riddles and other oral traditions such as legends, proverbs and myths can also be used formally in schools to teach certain disciplines such as languages, geography and history.

In Kenyan Schools, the integrated approach has effectively been implemented into modern education curricula. This intergrated approach makes learning more meaningful, relevant, entertaining and attractive to young learners.

In addition, riddles convey "cultural metaphors and terminology" (Kaivola, 2018).

Riddles represent an important asset for children's fuller participation in the social, cultural, political, historical and economic life of African communities (Ishegoma, 2005). They also facilitate aesthetic appreciation among children, especially in rural areas where majority of Kamba people reside.

2.8 Classification of riddles

Riddles are of various types. Riddles are found on every topic related to the life of people. Different scholars from different cultures have presented the classification of riddles differently. Some have shared similarities not only in Africa but beyond. Some existing riddle classifications are on the basis of form, level of difficulty, question type, riddle type, content/latent image or solution and syntactic structure.

2.8.1. Riddles classified according to content

Most of the Scholars on Hindi riddles have presented the classification of riddles in Hindi, mainly based on their content (Upadhyay, 2002). They relate to agriculture, nature, animals and birds, food items, parts of the human body, domestic appliances and miscellaneous.

- a) Riddles related to Agriculture. Agriculture is the main source of human life. They include grain produced by Agriculture, useful and important agricultural tools and equipment of irrigation, production of food and flowers. People in the village set up use the sweet potato so much in their riddles for it's a common source of livelihood among the poor.
- b) Riddles related to nature mainly include sun, moon, stars, sky, mountain, lightning, Day-Night, shadow, thunder and dew.
- c) Riddles related to animals and birds. Animals from different places such as land, water, air are among them. Insects are also included.
- d) Riddles related to food. These riddles are related to the food items and fruits.
- e) Riddles related to domestic appliances. They include household materials which are regularly used in day to day life.
- f) Miscellaneous riddles. Riddles concerned with modern goods such as train and telephone fall under this category. Any other thing falls under this category too.

Gwaravanda and Masaka (2008) classified Shona riddles based on their answers (content). The classes presented in the research included natural phenomena, the human body, crops and other foods, the zoological world, utensils and objects.

- a) Riddles based on natural phenomena. Riddles based on natural phenomena were those whose answers reflect aspects of the universe. Such included the moon, stars, galaxies,

mountains, rivers, wind and light. They require the child to observe his or her surroundings.

- b) Riddles based on the zoological world. The solutions were based on animals, birds and insects and the behavioural patterns of animals to train reasoning skills.
- c) Riddles based on crops and other foods. They consist of riddles whose solutions are based on crops and other foodstuffs available in the Shona society such as crops, pumpkins and milk.
- d) Riddles based on the functions of the human body. Some answers to the riddles were based on the structure and functions of the human body such as teeth, back of one's head and eyes.
- e) Riddles based on utensils and other objects. Answers to riddles in this category were based on objects that are used in the Shona society as utensils or instruments. The child must be familiar with the functions of objects such as doors, drums, stoves, smoking pipes and axes. On the basis of these objects, the child must be able to link the objects or instruments.

In another study, Taylor (1951) classified English riddles based on content. The research study based the riddles on comparisons to:

- a) Several animals
- b) A living creature
- c) A person
- d) Several persons
- e) Plants
- f) Things

Nakene (1957: 128-138), Blacking (1961:11-32), Beuchat (1957: 145), Khumalo (1974: 193-226) and Ishegoma, 2005 have classified riddles based on the solutions (content). There classes fall under the following five categories:

- a) Riddles that deal with Natural phenomena

- b) Riddles that deal with the human body and its attributes
- c) Riddles that deal with animals and insects
- d) Riddles that deal with plants and foods
- e) Riddles that deal with domestic and social life

2.8.2 Classification of Kamba riddles based on content

The content classification of riddles was presented by Nakene (1957: 128-138), Blacking (1961:11-32), Beuchat (1957: 145), Khumalo (1974: 193-226) and Ishegoma, 2005. In this research, five classes of content-based riddles are adopted, that is class (a), (b), (c) and (d). The research further proposes a new class of content-based riddles, the things and manufactured objects class, to represent all riddles which are based on objects, either manufactured, for example, a clock, matchbox and a short (a kind of cloth); or non-manufactured things such as calabash, gourd and pot.

Therefore, the proposed five content-based classes of Kamba riddles are shown below:

- a) Riddles that deal with Natural phenomena
- b) Riddles that deal with the human body and its attributes
- c) Riddles that deal with animals and insects
- d) Riddles that deal with plants and foods
- e) Things and manufactured objects

All Kamba riddles are metaphoric because they work on resemblance and comparison. They have transfer of the source in order to get encyclopedic entries. Within the metaphors, there are sub-categories based on level of difficulty in the selection and interpretation process. To begin with, there are transparent riddles which got many clues. In addition, there are semi-opaque riddles which got some clues from some words in the riddle question and also the Kamba cultural context. Lastly, there is an opaque riddle category. There are no clues from the constituent words or phrase for the interpretation of the riddle. One has to learn it by heart as new concepts or vocabulary. The audience strictly sticks to the conventionalized riddle referents. These sub-categories are fitted in the content-based riddles given below:

2.8.2.1 Riddles that deal with natural phenomena

Several of the Kamba riddles collected and analysed during this research had their riddle answer related to the natural phenomenon. The natural phenomenon refers to all phenomena that are not artificial, for example darkness, sun, moon, natural light, earth, clouds, water, rivers and earthquakes. In this research, the following Kamba riddles collected had their answers based on the natural phenomena.

Riddle 13:

Okaa kyoko na kwatuka ayĩnũka – Sua.

Comes morning and nightfall goes back – sun.

Comes in the morning and goes back when it's dark – sun.

Nature gives clues for the interpretation of this transparent riddle. Its only the sun that is seen (rises in the morning) and goes back(sets) in the evening.

Riddle 14:

Nũmbĩw'aa ãndĩ ndũbonaa – Nzeve.

Hear me but not see me – wind.

You hear me but you cannot see me - the wind.

Nature gives clues for the interpretation of this transparent riddle.

Riddle 15:

Mũndũ ãtindaa kũthi na ndathũmũa! - Kĩseve!

Person remains travelling and never rests! – Wind!

A person who keeps travelling and does not rest! – Wind!

The wind is likened to a person who without resting travels across the land. It seems to stir up the tree tops and yet the wind has passed on. This is an example of semi-transparent riddle. Remains travelling gives a clue towards the interpretation of the metaphor.

Transparent riddle.

Riddle 16:

Ndavye mũndũ ũkaa akĩtũlanga matĩ – sua.

Me tell a person comes breaking to pieces bushes and trees – sun.

Tell me a person who is in the habit of coming breaking to pieces bushes and trees – sun.

In the dry season, many trees and bushes shed their foliage, the grass is dried up, the whole landscape is looking dreary and unattractive.

Semi-opaque metaphoric riddle.

Riddle 17:

Mũĩ wavalũka ithyonze tukeananwa – yũa.

Tree when it falls all of us reduced to same size – Famine.

A tree when it falls all of us are reduced to the same size – Famine.

When a tree falls down from a natural cause, the Kamba believed that all women of the neighborhood gather on the spot to secure a supply of firewood, and no one has a better right than anyone else, because uncultivated land is a common ground. This is an example of semi-opaque riddle.

In a familiar way, when a famine strikes and spreads over the region, it makes all people suffer without discriminating among them.

Riddle 18:

Ndavye mwanake waitũ mũseo mũno na ndavwikika ngua – mwaki.

Tell me youth ours handsome very and he cannot be wrapped in garment – fire.

Tell me the youth in our village who is very handsome and but impossible to wrap a piece of cloth round – fire.

This is a semi-opaque riddle. There are some clues from the riddle question which guide its interpretation process.

Riddle 19:

Taa witũ – mwei.

The lamp ours – the moon.

The lamp is ours – the moon.

Lamps are used at night as source of light. Similarly, the moon, which is a natural source of light at night is likened to a lamp for it illuminates. This riddle can easily be interpreted for the word ‘the lamp’ and its function gives clues towards proper interpretation of the riddle question. This is a good example of transparent riddle.

Riddle 20:

Masee ma asa meanene - ĩtu na nzĩ.

Gourd shells of father equal - Earth and sky.

Father’s gourd shells of the same size – Earth and sky.

This should be considered an opaque riddle.

2.8.2.2 Riddles that deal with human body and its attributes

During this research study, several Kamba riddles had their answers based on either a human, human body part or any other attribute of the human body. The following riddles collected in this research study have been classified under human body and its attributes.

Riddle 21:

Nathi Yatta oyu na nasyoka – metho.

Gone Yatta now and back – The eyes.

I have gone to *Yatta* now and come back - The eyes.

“*Metho*” is the eyes. “*Itho*” is the singular. *Yatta* is an area between Machakos and Kĩtui Counties. From Kitui, one has a view of the Yatta wilderness. It only needs a change in the direction of a person’s gaze, and one instantly “returns” from the place one has viewed. It only the eyes that “go” to such a distance in an instant.

This a transparent riddle. Nature gives clues for the interpretation of this riddle question.

Riddle 22:

Kovokovo – Ngove.

Kovokovo – Eyelashes.

Opaque riddle. No clue given in the word. The respondent has to learn it by heart.

Riddle 23:

Mwana wakwa endaa kila mūthenya – ìvu.

Child mine wants every day – Stomach.

My child keeps wanting every day – stomach.

This is a semi-opaque riddle for the action keeps wanting gives some information for the interpretation of the riddle.

Riddle 24:

Sūsū mūī... - Sūsū mūī walyūlaa mūthanga ūkatwika mbisū!

Grandmother clever... – Grandmother clever shapes clay to cooking pot!

Clever grandmother who molds clay into a pot! This is one of those riddles where you have to complete the metaphor.

Traditionally, women were endowed with the work of molding earthenware pottery but not all of them were versed in the art. The women who had mastered this art were viewed as skillful.

This is an opaque riddle. No clue given in the word. The respondent has to learn it by heart.

Riddle 25:

Mūndū mwendaa nake na ndakwīaa mūthūmūie – Kyuu.

Man you walk with and don't tell you let us rest – The Shadow.

Who is the man you walk along with in the road and does not say to you "let us rest" – One's own shadow.

This is a transparent riddle. There are many clues for the interpretation of this riddle question.

Riddle 26:

Ūndū ū ndwitonyeka – Mwanake na mwītu maīng'ie nzānī.

This is not possible – A young man and a girl have stopped in the path.

This behavior cannot be tolerated. In Ukambani it is considered the worst of bad form when a young man and a girl stop and speak to each other. If anyone sees them, the girl's father had to pay a bull and the young man fined as well.

This is an opaque riddle. There are clues for the interpretation of this riddle question.

Riddle 27:

Melasya na ndĩvunaa – Mata.

Swallow and never get full - Saliva.

I swallow but I don't get full – Saliva.

This is a transparent riddle. There are clues for the interpretation of this riddle question. The answer is easily accessed because biologically one has to keep swallowing saliva even when not eating. This background knowledge added to its recency of use also plays a key role in the interpretation.

Riddle 28:

Neethĩe.... - Neethiie mũndii na mũndete mayotania muunyi wa ũseki!

I found - I found "mũndii" and "mũndete" (imaginary dwarf spirits) under the shade of a grass blade!

This is an opaque riddle. There is no single clue for the interpretation of this riddle question. One has to learn it by heart and strictly stick to the conventionalized riddle referents.

Riddle 29:

Kavisũ mavĩndĩ mwĩta – kanywa.

A tiny pot filled with bones – mouth.

This is a semi-opaque riddle.

Riddle 30:

Ndavye kyanda kitang' alaa kiw'u – metho.

Me tell the water ditch the one never comes to dry.

Tell me the water ditch where the water never dries up – the eyes.

All minor water-courses dry up, as everyone knows, in the dry season.

This is an example of a transparent riddle.

2.8.2.3 Riddles that deal with animals and insects

This class of riddles has been adopted to represent those Kamba riddles whose answer fall under the animal and insects. In this research, the following Kamba riddles have been classified under the animal and insects class.

Riddle 31:

Nesīla vaa na ngūa ĩnziũ – Nzingii.

I have passed through here dressed in black clothes - Black ants.

Semi-opaque riddle. The words 'dressed' and 'black clothes' give clues for the interpretation of this riddle question.

Riddle 32:

Mwĩtu wa mwenyu nĩkĩng'ei na ang' eaa mbua yauwa – Kĩkwae.

Your sister is a thief and steals during the rainy season – Guinea fowl.

This is a semi-opaque riddle because some of the words such as a 'thief' and 'rainy season' give clues for the interpretation of this riddle question.

Riddle 33:

Kalĩma kaseo katavandwa mboso! - Ngathĩ ya ng'ombe!

The little hill beautiful that is not sown beans – the hump of a cattle!

A beautiful little hill, on which one cannot plant beans.

The fields of the Akamba are generally situated on hill slopes. The hump carried by their cattle is to their eyes a beautiful hillock and its flesh is considered a great delicacy.

This is a semi-transparent riddle because the words ‘beautiful hill and ‘cannot be planted’ give clues for the interpretation of this riddle question.

Riddle 34:

Kalūkūngū mūingo? - nzana ĩsembee mwana.

Dust on the ridge? - A monitor lizard running for its child.

“ka” is a prefix used before the noun to show diminutive.

No clue is given in the riddle question hence its opaque.

Riddle 35:

Kaveti kanini kakĩlitye mwenyu kuua – Nzũkĩ.

Woman small surpasses your mother cooking - The bee.

A small woman who surpasses your mother in cooking - A bee.

Lots of clues are given in some words hence it’s a transparent one.

Riddle 36:

Mũndũ ũ wongasya syana kũũ – ngũkũ.

Person this let’s suckle children foot – The hen.

The person feeds her children with her foot – hen.

This riddle is derived from the fact that it’s the hens habit to feed their chicks by scratching the ground for worms, grains and other edible materials. Traditionally, most people did not feed their chickens but left them to scratch and find their own food.

Clues given in some words makes this riddle a semi- opaque one.

Riddle 37:

Ngũkethya mwethya ũkaketheka –Mũthwa.

I greet work gang it returns greeting- The white ants.

I give greetings to the work gang who return the greetings - The white ants.

This is an opaque riddle. The gang and the action of greeting give information that helps to derive the encyclopedic entries for its interpretation.

Riddle 38:

Mwĩĩtu wa ũmau mũseo ũminaa andũ na ndanenaa - Ng'ombe.

Daughter of grandfather beautiful who makes an end of the people and cannot speak-cattle.

A beautiful daughter of grandfather who finishes off the people and is dumb - cattle.

Transparent riddle.

Riddle 39:

Mwanake mũseo mũno ũtakwatĩka ngingo – nzoka.

A young handsome very who cannot be grasped round the neck - a snake.

A handsome youth whom you cannot grasp round the neck-a snake.

Transparent riddle.

2.8.2.4 Riddles that deal with plants and foods

This class of riddles has been adopted to represent those Kamba riddles whose answers fall under the plants and foods category such include maize, beans, ugali, Sodom apple, castor-oil plant, bananas and banana plant, cowpeas and poppy fruits among others. The following Kamba riddles have been classified under the plants and foods content-based classification.

Riddle 40:

Mwĩtu wa asa otaa mwaki na mbau – mbemba.

My sister warms herself by her ribs – Roasted maize.

Maize being roasted. Ideally maize being roasted is turned about by the sides. This is a transparent riddle because the words 'warms' and 'ribs' give clues for the interpretation of this riddle question.

Riddle 41:

ĩia kaayaa! - Kalilũ kew'ie mũtĩnĩ!

Behold that one! - A ripe banana on a tree!

In this opaque riddle, the words used give no clue to aid in the interpretation of this riddle question.its learnt by heart.

Riddle 12:

Mūsikalī wi ngovia ndunĩ – Mũthia wa ikonge.

A soldier with a red cap – sharp end of a sisal leaf.

This is a transparent riddle.

Riddle 42:

Mũndũ mũthwii wĩũtee wanzĩa! – Kĩtongu.

A rich person on the road side! – Sodom Apple.

Kĩtongu is common plant in Kĩtui, Makũenĩ and Machakos Counties. Its botanical name is *Solanum Campylacanthum*, usually covered with very many yellow fruits called *ndongu*. It is a metaphor for a rich person in that it grows and produces fruits continuously. This is a semi-opaque riddle.

Riddle 43:

Ndata ya Mũnyiva yĩ makundo kenda – Yĩiũ.

Stick of *Mũnyiva* has knots nine - Banana plant.

Mũnyiva's walking stick has nine knots - Banana plant.

This is an opaque riddle.

Riddle 44:

Kĩĩma kĩĩsawa na mbwaa! - Ngima!

A hill on which one climbs with finger tips! - Ugali!

The staple food of the Akamba is called *Ngima*. Swahili name is “Ugali” and it is normally eaten with beef or chicken mixed with “*kunde*”.

This is a transparent riddle for its constituent words which give lots of clues to ease the processing effort in its interpretation. Also consider the following riddle used in chapter one.

Riddle 1:

Ng'ombe sya mundu ngy'a – mbaĩki.

Cattle of man poor – The Castor-oil plant (*Ricinus communis*).

Traditionally, a person who had many cattle was considered very rich just like it would be to any who had many daughters for they would attract a lot of bride price which was paid in form of cattle. Poor people, who had no cattle of their own, and thus were unable to obtain any animal fat, prepared oil out of the seeds of castor-oil plant for rubbing into their bodies.

Riddle 45:

Tania kaũ thome – ng’ola na mũtumia

Separate the fight in the village square – the beard-tweezers and the old man

Ng’ola is a small pincer-like instrument with which the beard is plucked out. When the men have nothing to do, they engage themselves into pulling out the hairs of their beards which is a painful business. Therefore, the procedure is likened to a fight. When all the hairs have been pulled out, the “fight” is settled out. Similarly, the hairs of the eyebrows are removed in the same manner but using a smaller kind of tweezers known as *ngose*. An opaque riddle this is.

2.8.2.5 Things and manufactured objects

The Kamba riddles have been found to include the above new class of riddle which is a combination of riddles that deal with domestic and social life with Taylor (1951) class of things. Therefore, in this research, a thing and object content-type class is presented. The objects in the answer to these riddles are either manufactured, for example, a clock, matchbox and short (a kind of cloth); or non-manufactured things such as calabash, gourd and pot as shown below:

Riddle 3:

Mwana wakwa akusaa ũmwe kwa ũmwe – Kĩlĩvĩĩ.

Child mine dies one by one- Match sticks.

My children die one by one – Match sticks.

Transparent riddle.

Riddle 46:

Katumbĩ mwende – silingi.

Three-legged stool loved.

A loved three-legged stool – A coin.

Transparent riddle.

Riddle 47:

Mūsũngũ aumie ũlaya ekwete ĩvose – kĩkombe.

White left abroad holding akimbo - cup.

A white came from abroad holding akimbo - A cup.

Transparent riddle

Riddle 48:

Kĩveti Kĩkalĩle ivĩla itatũ! - Mbisũ!

Woman sitting stools three - cooking pot!

A woman sitting on three stools! - A Cooking pot!

“mbisũ” is a cooking pot. When cooking it rests on three hearthstones.

Semi-opaque.

Riddle 49:

Mũthoni Mũambanĩ – Mwatũ.

In-law at baobab-beehive.

An in-law at baobab tree – beehive.

Mũthoni is a Kamba word meaning In-law and is highly respected among the Kamba. The beehive is mostly put on baobab tree because they are strong, and their branches are wide enough to put the beehive.

Semi-opaque riddle.

Riddle 50:

Nĩna eĩtu makwa atatũ na ũmwe atevo ndiya – Maiko.

Have daughters mine three and one not there I cannot eat – Hearthstones.

I have my three dear daughters, when one is absent I cannot eat – Hearthstones.

Semi-opaque riddle.

Riddle 51:

kazĩ katoseka – Kalĩma.

on ground thing not picked – A hole.

It's on the ground but cannot be picked – A hole.

Transparent riddle.

Riddle 52:

Vuluku ndalika veleke ãndĩ veleke noalike vuluku – kĩvulĩ na Mbisũ.

Vuluku cannot enter *veleke* but *veleke* can enter *vuluku* – A serving spoon and a pot.

Vuluku cannot enter *veleke* but *veleke* can enter *vuluku* – A serving spoon and a pot.

This transparent riddle is derived from the observation of commonly used household tools.

This background knowledge makes the answer very accessible to the hearer.

Riddle 53:

Kĩveti kyamina mũũnda na ndũkwona nyaĩĩ! – Kĩondo.

Woman finish garden and see not footprints - Traditional basket.

A woman finished garden and no footprints! - Traditional basket.

Riddle 54:

Kasoni kaiũ ke maa me mwĩyo – Mbisũ.

Bird black with intestines sweet – A pot.

A black bird that has sweet intestines – A pot.

The above two semi-opaque riddles are derived from the observation of commonly used household item. that is, a traditional basket and a pot respectively. This background knowledge makes the answer very accessible to the hearer.

Riddle 55:

Ni ngũkũna ãvĩsĩ vokĩle ãngĩ – kĩwa.

I beat boy rises another – Sugarcane.

I beat a boy and there rises another - Sugarcane.

In the place where a ripe piece of sugarcane has been cut off, new ones soon grow up. Similarly, even if some boys are beaten for a particular form of mischief, it usually does not take long before others come along and repeat the offence.

Opaque riddle. No clues.

Riddle 8:

Īkanda yaasa ĩtova ngũ – nzĩa.

A long rope that cannot tie firewood – road.

Transparent riddle.

Riddle 56:

Mũthui athuaa ũtukũ na kwakya akĩtwika ngy'a – kyũũ.

Rich man rich at night and day time become poor – the cattle kraal.

Rich man who is usually rich in the night, when it gets light he becomes poor – the cattle kraal.

In the mornings, the cattle are taken out for grazing and it is only in the evenings they are driven into the Kraal again.

Riddle 57:

Mũthui athuaa mũthenya na kwatuka akĩtwika ngy'a – kĩtindio.

Rich man rich day time and night becomes poor – a place where the cattle rest outside the village.

A rich man rich during day time and when it gets dark he becomes poor – a place where the cattle rest outside the village.

Kĩtindio is only utilized in the afternoon. In the evenings, the cattle are gathered into their kraal, which is within the village thorn fence.

Riddle 58:

Syavulana kitindionĩ na ndũmanya yaku – Mai ma mbũi.

They mix at resting place and can't know yours – droppings of goats.

They commingle on the resting place and you do not know yours – the droppings of the goats.

Traditionally, the goats and sheep were driven to a place outside the village, so as to rest in the shade of the trees during the hottest part of the day. *Kitindio* is derived from the word *kūtinda* which means to stay. If a number of owners have the animals in the same spot, they cannot tell from whose animals the droppings on the ground originate

The above three riddles are semi-opaque riddle. Cattles are highly valued among the Kamba. This background knowledge helps the respondent derive many clues from the riddle questions which guide their interpretation.

2.8.3 Classification based on Form

Form based classification has been discussed by several researchers including Finnegan (1970), and Ishegoma (2005) in his analysis of Haya riddles.

2.8.3.1 Ishegoma's form-based riddle classification

In his analysis of Haya riddles, Ishegoma (2005) identified four main forms of riddle classification based on syntactic structure. These classes include; Simple sentence type, Compound sentence type, One-word type and Phrase type riddles. These classes fit in the case of Kamba riddles.

In the simple sentence type riddle, the question part of the riddle consists of a statement containing a cryptic description of the object to be guessed. What is generally described in this type of riddle are types of behaviour, personal characteristics and appearance, work processes, the sounds of certain animals, and parts of the human body and their attributes (Ishegoma 2005). A typical example would be:

Riddle 21:

Nathi Yatta oyu na nasyoka – metho.

Gone Yatta now and back – The eyes.

I have gone to *Yatta* now and come back - The eyes.

“*Metho*” is the eyes. “*Itho*” is the singular. *Yatta* is an area between Machakos and Kitui Counties. It only the eyes that “go” to such a distance in an instant.

In the compound-sentence type riddle, the question part of the riddle consists of more than one statement, the second statement often providing an explanation or amplification of the first. Consider the example below;

Riddle 32:

Mwĩtu wa mwenyu nĩkĩng'ei na ang'eea mbua yauwa – Kikwae.

Your sister is a thief and steals during the rainy season – Guinea fowl.

In one-word type riddles, the question and solution are each composed of one word only. For instance,

Riddle 22:

Kovokovo – Ngove.

Kovokovo – Eyelashes.

Lastly, in phrase type riddles, the question part normally consists of a possessive phrase. Consider this example below;

Riddle 50:

Nĩna eĩtu makwa atatũ na ũmwe atevo ndiya – Maiko.

I have my three dear daughters, when one is absent I cannot eat – Hearthstones.

2.8.3.2 Finnegan's form-based riddle classification

Finnegan (1970) builds on riddle classification based on form by suggesting Simple riddles, tone and ideophonic riddles. Simple riddles are mostly in form of a statement or phrase denoting a well-known object. The language employed is less disguised. Consider this example:

Riddle 51:

kazĩ katoseka – Kalĩma.

It's on the ground but cannot be picked – A hole.

Consider this other example;

Riddle 13

Okaa kyoko na kwatuka ayĩnũka – Sua.

Comes in the morning and goes back when its dark – sun.

In these simple riddles, then, some generalization or some image is suggested, and the answer involves pointing to the particular object implied. The answer here is the name of the object indicated, often just one word, and the analogy is one of meaning the respondent must recognize the similarity of situation, character or behaviour in the statement and its answer. This type seems to be the most common African form. In the tone riddles, the analogy involved is not of meaning but of rhythm, sound, or tone, often with a longer reply. Or the analogy may take the form of tone resemblance between question and reply. In these riddles, occurring in languages in which tonality is a significant feature, the question and answer are marked by identical or similar tonal patterns. In the case of ideophonic riddles the proposition consists of one word or a phrase. It's usually an ideophone which suggests the answer to the riddle through just its sound. Ideophonic riddles are culture – specific. The acoustic analogy in the proposition is easily recognizable by members of this culture because the ideophone is derived from the linguistic systems of the people's language; which they are already familiar with. They are hardly understood and make little sense to people unaccustomed with the Kamba culture. There are several riddles based on imitation of sounds that are common among the Kamba as suggested below:

Riddle 59:

Kungulu kangala makũmbĩnĩ? - Mũtwaano wa mbĩa

Kungulu kangala in the granary - A wedding of rats.

Kungulu is an onomatopoeic word for noise in the granary.

Traditionally, the Kamba used the granaries as storehouses for their harvested farm products as well as for their calabashes and gourds. They were built above the ground to keep the stored food away from animals and the rats. Noise in the granary was an alarming alert that the granary had been invaded by the rats; who are destructive and could mess up with the food items stored in the granary. Consider the example below:

Riddle 60:

Seh! - mũkuva watonya kĩhangathĩnĩ.

Seh! - A needle stabbed the sand.

The question (*Seh!*) imitates the sound made by a needle dropping point first into the sand.

Consider this other example below;

Riddle 61:

Aa! – *Nĩ kamũtumĩla kakunda ĩĩa ya thano.*

Aa! – an old man who has drunk a little milk in the dry season.

The sound (*Aa*) usually suggests the man's intense thirst and his enjoyment of the milk.

An additional riddle includes the one shown below;

Riddle 62:

Tu na tu - ndĩĩ na mũthĩ.

Tu na tu - mortar and pestle.

A mortar is a hollowed-out tree trunk made from hard wood while the pestle is a heavy long club-shaped wooden object. These implements are used for grinding medicinal herbs and milling by pounding. Before the introduction of flour making and maize pounding machines in Africa, the Kambas used wooden pestles and mortars to pound dry maize, millet and sorghum grains and dried cassava into flour. To add on, the Kamba did not take dry whole grain maize and preferred *mũthokoi* (maize without the husks) they therefore would put some dry maize in the mortar and some water was added to soften it then wooden pestle was used to do the pounding. The split maize was cooked like rice '*nzenga*' Pounding could take about one hour and was commonly carried out by two women who did it in turns as they sang to make work lighter and faster. Therefore, *Tu* and *tu* suggests the sound made by the pestle and mortar when pounding or grinding. Today mortars are still very popular in the rural areas in Ukambani and have a range of uses.

2.8.4 Classification based on riddle structure

Georges and Dundes (1963) distinguished categories of riddles based on Oppositional or non-oppositional and metaphorical or literal.

2.8.4.1 Oppositional Riddles

In oppositional riddles, the first descriptive element (question) and the second descriptive element (resolution or answer) do not appear to form an integral whole or unit. The incongruity or the opposition is contained within the question and the referent provides the answer.

For example:

Riddle 33:

Kalīma kaseo katavandwa mboso! - Ngathĩ ya ng'ombe!

A beautiful small hill on which one cannot plant beans! - The hump of a cow!

“Ngathĩ” is a hump.

Riddle 63:

Wooka na mūeni na wamūtia nza - Ngitĩ.

You came with a visitor and left him outside - a dog.

The first part of the riddle conflicts with the second in that one cannot come with a visitor and yet decide to abandon him/her. Kambas are known to be very hospitable hence this brings out the contradiction. The solution depends on the metonymy whereby a ‘a visitor’ equates ‘a dog’. Dogs make good guards. They dissuade thieves and intruders Their ideal place is outside the house so that they can bark and growl loudly to scare away or restrain intruders. They also bark to alert the people when anything unusual is detected.

2.8.4.2 Non-oppositional Riddles

In non-oppositional riddles, the riddle question has two descriptive elements, which consist of a topic and a comment. The two elements are compatible and non-conflicting. The topic and the comment are completely congruent. (Georges & Dundes, 1963), for instance:

Riddle 54:

Kasoni kaiũ ke maa me mwĩyo – Mbisũ.

Translation: A black bird that has sweet intestines – A pot.

2.8.4.3 Literal riddles

The answer is identical to the topic of descriptive elements in the question. The answer can easily be guessed. In the following example, the answer to the riddle can easily be inferred based on a cultural context through observation. Consider the example below:

It is yellow inside, green outside – pumpkin.

2.8.4.4 Metaphorical Riddles

In this category, the riddle answer and the question are different. The answer to the riddle is provided by the metaphorical relation between the riddle question and the referent. The answer to the riddle is indeed incongruous. Therefore, the respondent has to identify or see the literal base for the metaphors in order to provide the correct response, see the following example:

Riddle 35:

Mũndũ ũũ wongasya syana kũũ – ngũkũ.

Person this let's suckle children foot – the hen.

This person feeds her children with her foot – hen.

This riddle is derived from the fact that the habit of the hen to feed their chicks by scratching the ground for worms, grains and other edible materials. Traditionally, most people did not feed their chickens but left them scratch and find their own food. Today, many households in the rural set up still do so.

With such background information the respondent needs to activate encyclopedic entries for animals that feed their young ones while standing, which are usually stored in their mind.

They are as follows;

- (a) Hen
- (b) Cow
- (c) Goat

After considering the available assumptions within the context, the respondent will derive the following implicated premises;

- (a) The hen feeds its chicks by scratching the ground for worms and grains

(b) The cow, lets calf suckle for the bladder is located between the back feet

(c) The goat, lets the kid suckle for the bladder is located between the back feet

(b, c) will be considered impossible implicature since animals do not use their feet to scratch when feeding their calves and kids. Assumption (a) will be highly accessible, hence worth the hearers processing effort. It is therefore less costly and more beneficial for the hearer to derive this assumption that is capable of generating the relevant interpretation of the riddle question. The correct referent is a hen.

2.8.5 According to degree of difficulty

In this classification, the riddles are classified in relation to their level of difficulty. Maranda (1971) and Bukenya and Odanga (1994) classified riddles based on this classification.

2.8.5.1. Maranda's classification based on degree of difficulty

In terms of structure, Maranda (1971) classified Finish riddles in terms of levels of difficulty. This class consists of simple, compound and string riddles.

Simple riddles contain only one metaphoric image or idea and one answer. In simple riddles the referential relationships are usually to things which are available to them in the surrounding whether they are animals or plants or fruits or things of daily use. Consider the example below:

Riddle 19:

Taa witũ – mwei.

The lamp ours – the moon.

The camp is ours – the moon.

Lamps are used at night as source of light. Similarly, the moon, which is a natural source of light at night is likened to a lamp for it illuminates. This riddle can easily be interpreted for the word 'the lamp' and its function gives clues towards proper interpretation of the riddle question.

Compound riddles deal mainly with more than one metaphorical image and contain multiple referential associations to reach the answer, for example:

Riddle 52:

Vuluku ndalika veleke ñdĩ veleke noalike vuluku– k̄vulĩ na mbisũ.

Vuluku cannot enter *veleke* but *veleke* can enter *vuluku* – A serving spoon and a pot.

In string riddle type, the image consists of a list of terms, and the answer is given after the list of images.

Without fingers, points,
without hands, strikes,
without feet, runs. - Clock.

Wingless flies,
toothless bites. - Bullet.

Is mouthless and tongueless,
speaks;
earless, and without hearing,
hears;
knows all languages of the world,
its mouth answers quickly,
you cannot see it,
you cannot reach it. – Echo

2.8.5.2 Bukenya and Odanga Classification based on level of difficulty

Bukenya and Odanga (1994) presented two classes of riddles based on level of difficulty, namely simple and complex riddles

A riddle is said to simple when its answer can easily be inferred. For example:

Riddle 64:

Nyumba ñte mũomo – Ñthae

A house without a door – An egg

Complex riddles are structured in a single sentence or two. They are difficult to comprehend and require fast discovery of the issues rather than exactly searching for a referent. The answer is short and is given as phrase or a word. A riddle is also considered complex if it has more than two sentences and its answer given as an explanation in more than one sentence (Njoroge, 1994), see the following example:

Riddle: A four-legged on top of a four-legged, timing a four- legged)

Answer: A cat on top of a table, timing a rat (Magachi, 2015).

2.8.6 Bukenya and Odaga Classification based on riddle type

In addition to level of difficulty-based riddle classification, Bukenya and Odaga (1994) put forth riddle classification according to riddle type. These two types are the Enigmas and Conundrum.

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

Conundrum riddle 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). Conundrum riddles are mysterious and puzzling. They play on or manipulate words.

2.8.7 Classification based on question type

Riddles can also be classified according to the question type. That is, statement or interrogative. Riddles are implicitly or explicitly interrogative (Finnegan 1970; Bukenya and Odaga (1994). They are mainly framed with the purpose of confusing or testing the mental acuity and wit of the guesser.

Riddles always take the form of a question and answer. However, they can also take the form of a statement. In the statement riddle, the question, which is not an interrogative at all, is posed in a way which describes an action as a hint to the answer. For instance:

Riddle 40:

Mwĩtu wa asa otaa mwaki na mbau – mbemba.

My sister warms herself by her ribs – Roasted maize.

Maize being roasted. Ideally maize being roasted is turned about by the sides.

Riddle 65:

Ndũlĩsa mũkakai – ũlii wa ũta.

You cannot climb *mũkakai* tree – a bow string.

Mũkakai is a type of tree that is very thin and slippery. It is compared to a string of a bow because it is also too thin.

Interrogative or question riddles are posed through actual questions. For example:

Riddle 41:

Ikaũ kaala? - Kalilũ komĩe mũtini.

What is that? - It's a dry banana on a tree.

2.9 Riddles and Proverbs

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

2.9.1 Definition of Proverbs

Proverbs are frequently used in a wide variety of situations. They have been defined in different ways by different linguists.

Finnegan (1970) defines a proverb as a short-fixed saying that is widely accepted as an expression of truth in a brief way.

According to Nadwa & Bukenya (1983), a proverb is a terse, short statement that expresses general wisdom.

Meider (1985:119) adds that a riddle is a popular short statement full of wisdom, moral and traditional views as well as truth in an implicit way. Proverbs are memorized and dispensed from one generation to another. Miruka (1999) notes that proverbs belong to the realm of language. Language itself is part of the social culture.

Chesaina observes that proverbs employ word economy so as to facilitate quick communication and lay emphasis on the immediacy of the advice conveyed through it. Some proverbs even consist of two or three words in the original language (Chesaina 1997: 35– 6).

From the above definitions, a proverb can be understood or defined as, a short, terse and relatively invariable statement full of wisdom, truth and meaning and is dispensed from generation to generation.

2.9.2 Similarities

Both proverbs and riddles are characterized by brevity. Some consist of three words and are compact (Miruka, 1999). That is why they are classified under short forms in folklore.

Both proverbs and riddles can employ figurative language to express meaning. When a person observes a situation in life and wants to pass judgment on it, he/she compares it to a conventional or custom established situation. This is achieved through use of proverbs rather than comment on it directly.

Vai nzaũ yanasya ĩsyukoni kelĩ.

No bull mows along broad road to a water source twice.

There is no bull that mows along the broad road leading to the water source twice.

In this proverb, a bull is used metaphorically to refer to a person in power or authority. Such a person is being reminded that he or she is in power for a time and needs to treat his or her subjects well (Kilonzi, 2017).

Proverbs and riddles have a shared structural similarity. Both genres have two general types, oppositional and non-oppositional.

(a) Oppositional

Proverb:

Mũndu wa kĩtai avĩsaa nĩ ngima yĩeye nza.

Person of ill fate burns by ugali slept outside.

An ill-fated person gets burnt by ugali that has been outside overnight. This proverb statement embodies two contradicting ideas. Ugali that has been outside overnight is usually very cold and it is ridiculous how it can burn someone. This kind of ugali is used in this proverb to

metaphorically refer to a completely harmless situation (Kilonzi, 2017). Alluding to the two phenomenon causes no difficulty in comprehension and interpretation because the people are familiar with such occurrences.

Riddle 33:

Kalīma kaseo katavandwa mboso! - Ngathĩ ya ng'ombe!

A beautiful small hill on which one cannot plant beans! - The hump of a cow!

“*Ngathĩ*” is a hump. The riddle question has two contradicting statements. A beautiful small hill is contradicted by the second part that no one can plant beans. Therefore, an unexpected effect occurs in the riddle.

(b) Non-oppositional

Proverb:

Mwĩĩ nĩ ĩlaa.

A human body is a flower.

A flower is metaphorical of the beauty and the ability to die unexpectedly of a human body. (Kilonzi, 2017). There is no contradiction between a flower and a body. Just like a flower is beautiful and can die unexpectedly so is a human body

Riddle 21:

Nathi Yatta oyu na nasyoka – metho.

Gone Yatta now and back – The eyes.

I have gone to *Yatta* now and come back - The eyes.

“*Metho*” is the eyes. “*Itho*” is the singular. *Yatta* is an area between Machakos and Kĩtui Counties. From Kitui, one has a view of the *Yatta* wilderness. It only needs a change in the direction of a person’s gaze, and one instantly “returns” from the place one has viewed. It only the eyes that “go” to such a distance in an instant. Thus this riddle is non oppositional because the first element; I have gone to *Yatta* doesn’t contradict the second one; and came back. They are logical and bring out the anticipated effect

2.9.3 Differences

The purposes of riddles and proverbs differ. Riddles are basically associated with children's amusement and socialization whereas the proverbs are considered to be of more serious use applied in everyday conversations by the elders for they carry wisdom.

Riddles have a formal formula for performance and follow certain conventions. Riddling process requires at least two people or two groups. One poses the question while the other solves or attempts to solve it. On the other hand, proverbs are informally infused in speech.

Structurally, the proverb takes the statement format whereas the riddle takes the question and answer format,

Riddle 66:

Kyalo kīte nzyoko! - Kīw'u kī usĩnĩ!

A journey with no return! – Running river water!

Explanation: “*Kīw'u*” is water. “*Usĩ*” is river. Running river water never returns!

Proverb:

Kakuthu kaseo kayaa mũtĩ ũtemwa.

A nice bush cannot lack a good branch to be cut.

This metaphorical proverb was used among the Akamba on people looking for marriage partners. A nice bush is metaphorical of a person with a good character. Thus, a person with a good character can make a good spouse.

2.10 Riddles and idioms

Idioms and idiomatic expressions have been defined differently by different scholars.

According to the Oxford Learners English Dictionary, (8th Edition 2010:7440) an idiom is defined as a group of words whose meaning is independent of the meanings of the individual words. In a similar way, Pei and Gaynor (1954:95) defines an idiomatic expression as an expression that has its own meaning that is incompatible with or different from the meaning of the sole words that constitute it. Newmark (1988:10) states that idioms are contextual and

cultural based. An idiom is therefore learned and used as a single unit (Palmer, 1976:79-80). According to Wales, (2011), an idiom typically means a string of words or phrase which is distinct to a specific language hence not easy to render into a different language. The meaning of the constituent words does not determine the idiom's meaning. Idioms are fixed semantically and syntactically (Wales, 2011).

Based on the different definitions of an idiom, the researcher can deduce a definition of an idiom as 'A phrase whose meaning is independent of the meanings of the individual elements that make it.'

2.10.1 Similarities

Both riddles and idioms are short forms.

The meaning of opaque and pure idioms is totally different from the meaning of its parts. It is difficult to infer the actual meaning of the idiom from the meaning of its components because of the presence of culture specific items which have a great influence on the comprehensibility of the idiomatic expression. In a similar way, it is difficult to comprehend complex, enigmatic and opaque riddles because the questions give the respondent no clues.

The answers to literal and simple riddles can easily be inferred. Similarly, the meaning of transparent and literal idioms is easily inferred from the meaning of their constituents hence they are usually not difficult to understand and translate.

A semi-opaque idiom is the equivalent of semi-opaque metaphorical riddle in that their constituent words give minimal clues that aid in the interpretation of the metaphor.

There are grammatical and syntactic restrictions of idioms. A speaker or a writer cannot substitute words even if those words are synonyms, delete some words from the expression, modify the grammatical structure of the idiom, add comparative forms of some words nor change it to passive form. Any of these would lead to destruction or change the meaning of the idiom. Similarly, the answer to a riddle is fixed; they are community specific and accept no replacement even if it is a synonym.

There are some cases where a riddle has more than one possible referent. For example, incomplete metaphor riddles in Kamba. Even in such cases, one is only allowed to choose the answers that are conventionalized by the society.

2.10.2 Differences

Idioms are expressions that are only understood as a whole not by analyzing its constituent parts. For example, “kick” “the” and “bucket” are the individual words that won’t help someone understand that “kick the bucket” means to die. On the other hand, the words used in some riddle question give clues to the audience as they try to unravel the riddle. For instance, I t’s green outside, it’s red inside-. The colours give clues to the answer ‘watermelon’ based on close observation of the environment basically on plants and food (fruits).

Idioms are incorporated in speech formally or informally while the riddle is a reciprocal genre carried out by two active performers before narration as a curtain- raiser or as an autonomous activity.

2.11 Conclusion

This chapter was divided into ten sections. The first four dealt with general information on riddles, definitions, performance and conventions as well as the riddling process in Kamba riddles. This helps in giving a clear picture of what exactly riddles are. The characteristics and functions of riddles were also discussed to help to recognise and distinguish riddles from other related short forms.

The chapter also looked at riddle classifications put forth by different scholars. Upadhyay (2002) classified Hindi riddles according to content. Also, Gweavanda and Masaka (2008) classified Shona riddles according to their content. Taylor (1951) as well classified English riddles based on content. Nakene (1957: 128-138), Blacking (1961:11-32), Beuchat (1957: 145), Khumalo (1974: 193-226) and Ishegoma, 2005 have also classified riddles based on content.

Ishegoma (2005) and Finnegan (1970) classified riddles according to form, that is, simple sentence type, compound sentence type, oneword type and phrase type; simple, tone and ideophonic riddles respectively

Bukenya and Odanga (1994) and Maranda (1971) classified riddles based on their degree of difficulty, that is, simple and complex; simple, compound and string riddles respectively.

Also, Bukenya and Odanga (1994) put forth another riddle classification based on riddle type. that is, Enigmas and conundrums.

Further, Bukenya and Odanga (1994) and Finnegan (1970) added new classification based on question type, that is, statement form and interrogative form.

George and Dundes (1963) classified riddles according to structure (oppositional vs non-oppositional, literal vs metaphorical riddles).

This study will adopt two categories of Kamba riddles classification, namely Content based riddles and Metaphoric riddles.

CHAPTER THREE

INTERPRETATION OF METAPHORICAL KAMBA RIDDLES

3.1 Introduction

This chapter interprets riddles based on content and riddles based on metaphor. All riddles are implicatures whether strong or weak implicatures. The linguistic contextual clues are not always sufficient to interpret all riddles hence the culture of the Kamba provides more context during metaphor comprehension. The interpretation of the metaphorical riddles is based on the Relevance Theory, as proposed by Sperber and Wilson (1986).

Section 3.2 presents the interpretation of metaphoric Kamba riddles based on Relevance theory where we see semi- opaque metaphorical riddles based on natural phenomena, human body and its attributes, animals and insects, plants and foods, things and manufactured objects. Section 3.3 discusses the interpretation of transparent metaphoric riddles. The chapter then concludes with section 3.4.

3. 2 Interpretation of semi-opaque metaphorical Kamba riddles based on the Relevance theory

This section discusses how the Kamba culture informs the interpretation of the metaphors in Kamba riddles, based on the Relevance Theory, as proposed by Sperber and Wilson (1986). To be able to interpret the metaphors in Kamba riddles correctly, the hearer not only uses Kamba culture as the context but also the Relevance Theoretic Comprehension Procedure.

3.2.1 The concept of culture

Nippold (2006) points out that linguistic context provides the hearer with the information needed to access the correct interpretation. However, the word clues are not always enough to capture the meanings of all figurative expressions. Thus, cultural background and knowledge of the world serve as a backdrop to the hearer in comprehension of riddles.

Yagiz and Izadpanah (2013:953-57) argue that language and culture are intertwined in an extricable manner. They further added that the two are connected so closely to each other that learning a new culture is usually intertwined in an intricate way with learning a new language. According to Scarina (2010) as quoted by Yagiz and Izadpanah (2013), the knowledge of

linguistic features only is not enough for a successful intercultural communication. Such knowledge has to be supported by an actual awareness of socio-cultural context, norms and conventions in which a communicative situation occurs. She further added that people come to comprehend culture not just as information concerning different people and their particular practices but also as a contextual framework used by people to be able to exchange meaning when communicating with others and through which they are able to comprehend their social world (p.324). As a part of culture, ideologies are expressed in the clearest way in language Izadpanah and Yagiz (2013) added.

The findings of a study conducted by Siyanova-Chanturia et al. (2011) suggested that non-native speakers as compared to native speakers more slowly processed figurative expressions in a story context, compared to how they processed literal utterances. This showed the importance of cultural knowledge in the interpretation of figurative language including riddles.

According to Xiangyang (2016), language and culture shape each other. He referred to language as a container of culture because human knowledge and experience is stored in language, which is in turn shaped by culture.

3.2.2 The concept of metaphor

Kovecses (2002) states that a metaphor is a mental process in which one domain of knowledge is understood in terms of another. Metaphors have a source domain (B) which is the physical, basic and uncomplicated accessible entity and a target domain (A) which is more abstract and a less accessible entity. Therefore, a metaphor is a symbolic language system in which an indirect connection is made between two dissimilar things that have something in common.

According to Cruse (1986:41) metaphors are part of figurative language. The meaning communicated by use of a particular word or phrase differs from the linguistically encoded or literal meaning assigned by the grammar. A metaphor induces the audience to view a thing, a person or a process as being like something else by applying the former linguistic expressions which are normally employed in references to the latter. Therefore, a metaphoric riddle is far from the literal one and require cleverness and careful thinking as well as context and relevance theoretic procedure in order to arrive at the correct riddle referent.

This research only carried an analysis of content based metaphorical riddles by relating them to the Kamba culture and subjecting them to the relevance theoretic comprehension procedure to bring out their interpretation as discussed below:

3.2.3 Metaphorical riddles based on natural phenomena.

The natural phenomenon refers to all phenomena that are not artificial, for example darkness, sun, moon, natural light, earth, clouds, water, rivers and earthquakes. In this research, the following metaphorical Kamba riddles collected had their answers based on the natural phenomenon. Consider the example below as used in chapter two:

(15) *Mũndũ ũtindaa kũthi na ndathũmũa! - Kĩseve!*

Person remains travelling and never rests! – Wind!

A person who remains travelling and does not rest! – Wind!

The words used for encyclopaedic entries are ‘remains travelling and does not rest’. Encyclopaedic entries for items that remain travelling and does not rest in the Kamba cultural context are;

- (a) Flowing water
- (b) Wind

These encyclopaedic entries would produce assumptions such as:

- (a) Flowing river water remains moving and does not rest. This assumption will be excluded because not all rivers are permanent hence at certain points it will stop flowing (rests).
- (b) The wind without resting travels across the land. It seems to stir up the tree tops and yet the wind has passed on. This cultural knowledge enables the hearer to use little processing effort to achieve cognitive effects. The keen observation of nature enables the respondent easily arrive at the interpretation that the wind is likened to a person who without resting travels across the land. So, the listener can conclude that the answer to the riddle is wind.

Consider another example:

(16) *Ndavye mũndũ ũkaa akĩtũlanga matĩ – sua.*

Me tell a person comes breaking to pieces bushes and trees – sun.

Tell me a person who is in the habit of coming breaking to pieces bushes and trees – sun.

The words used for encyclopaedic entries are the verbs ‘comes, breaking into pieces’ and ‘the nouns bushes and trees’. Encyclopaedic entries for what comes breaking into pieces are;

- (a) Thunder

- (b) Raids
- (c) Inter clan fighting

Once the salient features are identified in the encyclopaedic entry of the riddlee, a set of assumptions are inferred as shown below;

- (a) Thunder, destroys not only the bushes and trees but also destroys and kills people and animals. The respondent eliminates it for it does not just destroy plants alone. The verb comes also eliminates this clue because thunderstorms do not habitually occur in Kamba culture. It is only once in a while when heavy rains fall.
- (b) Raids, although they are destructive do not affect the plants but rather the cattle which are mostly the target anytime raids take place.
- (c) Inter-clan fighting leads to breaking down or killing of people, raiding of cattle and driving off women rather than the plants.

Once the hearer has eliminated these assumptions for they don't derive the required cognitive effects, he/she uses more processing effort and cultural context to arrive at the correct interpretation. So, the reader has to open another entry. In the dry season, many trees and bushes shed their foliage, the grass is dried up, the whole landscape is looking dreary and unattractive. Thus, the hearer makes a guess that the riddle refers to the sun.

3.2.4 Metaphorical riddles based on the human body and its attributes

During this research study, several Kamba riddles had their answers based on either a human, human body part or any other attribute of the human body. The following metaphorical riddles collected in this research study have been classified under human body and its attributes. Consider this example:

(29) *Kavisũ mavĩndĩ mwĩta – kanywa.*

A tiny pot filled with bones – mouth.

The concept encoded by the words “a tiny pot and bones” gives access to a variety of encyclopaedic entries as follows;

Encyclopaedic entries for tiny pot are

- (a) Has an opening
- (b) Holds things put in it

(c) Made of clay

The following set of assumptions will be implicated from the above encyclopaedic entries

(a) A tiny pot has an opening through which contents are put.

(b) Holds edible contents

(c) Made of clay. This will not be considered for not all pots are made of clay.

Encyclopaedic entries for bones are;

(a) White coloured

(b) Are hard

The cultural background gives the clues that help to form the given set of assumptions. The respondent has to be observant in order to correctly identify items that have opening in which similar things are held. This riddle needs more processing effort so as to solve it. The skull, which a big bone will not be considered because it has no opening. The mouth will be considered for its accessible entries. The mouth has the teeth which resemble bones. In line with the relevance theoretic comprehension procedure, the respondent will stop processing at the interpretation that a tiny pot metaphorically stands for a mouth. The hearer has to stop once the answer mouth is reached for the bones resemble the teeth.

3.2.5 Metaphorical riddles based on animals and insects

This class of riddles represent those Kamba riddles whose answer fall under the animals and insects such as cattle, ants, bees, sheep, snakes, and wasps. In this research, the following metaphorical Kamba riddles used in chapter two have been classified under the animal and insects class as shown below:

(67) *Kalīma kaseo katavandwa mboso! - Ngathĩ ya ng'ombe!*

Small hole beautiful cannot be planted beans! - the hump of a cattle!

The small beautiful hill that is not sown with beans! – the hump of a cattle!

A beautiful little hill, on which one cannot plant beans. “ka” is a prefix used before Kamba nouns to show diminutive. The words “small beautiful” and “not sown” give some clues to help interpret the riddle question.

Encyclopaedic entries for a small beautiful hill are:

Hill slopes

Thereafter, the hearer will activate the following from the given encyclopaedic entry.

Hill slopes are considered attractive and ideal for crop growing.

The fields of the Akamba are generally situated on hill slopes. Being crop farmers, these places are considered ideal for crop farming. Placing this assumption in the cultural context it would be considered impossible not to be planted with beans.

The hearer will further consider other encyclopaedic entries for items that resemble a beautiful hill but cannot be sown with beans as follows:

- (a) Flowing river water
- (b) Anthill
- (c) Hunchback

Water waves showing river water resemble a hill and dreaded for its dangerous. This makes it impossible to be considered beautiful for it can cause death if someone dared to sow.

The anthill is a doorway to a series of tunnels and nests for the termite colonies. The anthill cannot be considered attractive or beautiful to the crop farmers for where the termite host appears no crops grow. This cultural knowledge makes this implicature an impossible one to consider. Similarly, a person with hunchback is not beautiful. It is a form of deformity.

More processing effort is required so as to derive the desired cognitive effects. So, the reader has to pen the processing efforts again and look for another item that fits the description 'beautiful hill. The hearer might then think of a hump of a cattle, because in the Kamba culture the hump of a cattle is considered beautiful. The respondent will stop processing at the interpretation that a beautiful hill is metaphorically used and the answer could be that the implicated conclusion is the hump of a cattle because it resembles a small hill. The hump of cattle is beautiful hillock and its flesh is considered a great delicacy by the Kamba.

Consider another example:

(38) *Mwĩitu wa ũmau mũseo ũminaa andũ na ndanenaa - Ng'ombe.*

Daughter of grandfather beautiful who makes an end of the people and cannot speak-cattle.

A beautiful daughter of a grandfather who finishes off the people and cannot speak - cattle.

Cultural context evokes encyclopaedic entries for “a beautiful thing or object that cannot speak” and “finishes the people” in the correspondent’s mind as shown below.

Beautiful things that cannot speak

- (a) Sun
- (b) Stars

Finishes people

- (a) Sun
- (b) Famine

(c) Raids

The sun is considered beautiful due to its attractive rays at sunrise and sunset. However, this is contrasted by the fact that the sun is not anyone's daughter and when it is too hot the crops end up drying. It generates the required relevance to a certain extent for it finishes off nature but does not finish off people.

The stars look beautiful as they glow and twinkle and do not inflict any harm to the people hence will be an impossible implicature. The respondent will further consider the assumptions from the encyclopaedic entries on what finishes people.

Having eliminated the sun, the hearer further eliminates famine because it led to death of livestock and people, a phenomenon that is not pleasing or attractive at all.

Raiding is highly accessible. Traditionally, there were incessant cattle raids between the Kamba and her neighbours, the Somali. There would be fighting thereby involved which led to loss of lives and carrying of women. Raids derives high cognitive effects. This cultural knowledge helps the respondent to identify the metaphor hidden in the riddle question. A beautiful daughter of grandfather therefore is metaphoric of the cattle which are highly valued by the Kamba people and would be a lot of fighting thereby involved and loss of lives as well as the women who were forcefully driven off by the Somali.

3.2.6 Metaphorical riddles based on plants and foods

This class of riddles has been adopted to represent those Kamba riddles whose answers fall under the plants and foods category such include maize, beans, ugali, Sodom apple, castor-oil plant, bananas and banana plant, cowpeas and poppy fruits among others. The following Kamba riddles have been classified under the plants and foods content-based classification. Most riddles based on this class are transparent. Consider the following example of a semi-opaque riddle.

(42) *Mũndũ mũthui wĩũtee wa nzĩa! – Kĩtongu.*

A rich person on the road side! – Sodom Apple.

In line with such background information, the hearer will activate the following encyclopaedic entries for a rich person;

- (a) Is a human being
- (b) Two legged.
- (c) Got no cattle
- (d) Has many children and especially daughters.

The hearer will go a step further to compute these assumptions on a cost-benefit analysis, eliminating the ones with a high processing cost as this means a higher potential to generate irrelevant interpretations. The impossibility of the implicatures in (a-c) above renders them unworthy of the hearer's processing effort. This is because a human being is not found at the road side. The hearer has to open another encyclopaedic entry stored in his/her mind relating to plants and rich.

(a) Mango plants

(b) Baobab trees

(c) Sodom apple

Those in (a) and (b) are possible answers for they grow at road sides. However, they are considered weak implicatures because they do not grow and produce fruits continuously hence the most highly accessible and worthy the hearer's processing effort is (c). *Kītongu* is common wild plant in Kītui, Makūenī and Machakos Counties. Its botanical name is *Solanum Campylacanthum*. It is usually covered with very many yellow fruits called *ndongu*. It grows and produces fruits continuously. Cultural knowledge also makes this assumption more accessible in that sodom apple is commonly used in marriage context where the newly wed are encouraged to sire children like sodom apple. The hearer will stop processing the possible interpretations after getting the interpretation that Sodom apple is a metaphor for a rich person in that it grows and produces fruits continuously. Thus, the riddle referent is Sodom apple.

3.2.7 Metaphorical riddles based on things and manufactured objects

The objects in the answer to these riddles are either manufactured, for example, a clock, matchbox and short (a kind of cloth); or non-manufactured things such as calabash, gourd, kraal and pot among others as shown below:

(54) *Kasoni kaiũ ke maa me mũyo – Mbisũ.*

A black bird with sweet intestines – A cooking pot.

To interpret this riddle question, the respondent should first identify the clue words in it and contextualize it culturally. The respondent needs to activate all the encyclopaedic entries for a 'black bird' and 'sweet intestines' within the Kamba cultural context then subject the available assumptions to the relevance theoretic comprehension procedure. The encyclopaedic entries that would be activated for a black bird include;

- (a) Ndundulu, an Owl
- (b) *Īkūlakūli*, bird
- (c) *Īkoso*, bird
- (d) *Ngunguu*, raven bird

The riddlee will then subject these given set of assumptions to the relevance theoretic comprehension procedure. His/her consideration of the possible interpretations will be on a cost-benefit basis. This criterion is powerful enough to exclude all but one single interpretation that fits the criterion as discussed below;

Assumptions (a) for a black bird will be less accessible to the hearer because an owl is stereotypically associated with bad omen hence cannot be eaten. (b, c, d) though the birds are black and edible, they are not eaten by the people. Once the weak implicatures are eliminated, the hearer has to follow a path of food and black. The following encyclopaedic entry will be opened;

Muu, black berry fruit.

This encyclopaedic entry derives the assumption a black berry which is black and is edible got a seed which are not edible hence has no sweet intestines. This riddle requires more processing effort to arrive at the required riddle answer. The hearer gets a clue from the culture on other items that relate to food and black.

A cooking pot.

The respondent arrives at the implicature a cooking pot which is black, and the contents contained in a pot are delicious. Before the invention of modern *jikos*, the Akamba used the three-stoned *jikos* to light a highly flamed fire using firewood as source of fuel. The soot produced makes the pot so black. With this in mind, the hearer arrives at the implicated conclusion that a cooking pot has tasty food. The speaker implicitly uses a black bird to metaphorically refer to a cooking pot which is the answer.

Consider the following example of a semi-opaque riddle whose solution also refers to a thing:

(60) *Mūthui athuaa ūtukū na kwakya akītwika ngy'a – kyūū.*

Rich man rich at night and day time become poor – the cattle kraal.

Rich man who is usually rich in the night, when it gets light he becomes poor – the cattle kraal.

The hearer has to first consider the context of this riddle question, which is the cultural background knowledge about a poor and a rich person. To interpret this riddle question, the respondent needs to activate the encyclopedic entries for both a rich and a poor man.

The encyclopedic entries for a rich man are;

- (a) Is a human being
- (b) Hardworking
- (c) Owns many children especially daughters
- (d) Got a lot of cattle

The encyclopedic entries for a poor man are;

- (a) Is a human being
- (b) Has few or no daughters
- (c) Two legged
- (d) Lazy
- (e) Got no cattle

The assumptions from the encyclopedic entries a-c for a rich man will be considered weak implicatures because a rich man remains to be a human being and cannot be considered another creature at night. Similarly, people are not actively involved at work at night for they go to rest. Hardworking will not be highly accessible. Even at night, a person with many daughters will still be considered rich irrespective of whether they are in his household or they are married. Lastly, a man who owns many cattle is considered very rich. It is only in the evenings they are driven into the cattle kraal again after grazing. This idea of many cattle symbolising richness can only be accessed because of the Kamba cultural belief system. This riddle also requires the transfer of the most accessible entry for a poor man. A-D will not be considered for they will not generate the required relevance for a person who is poor during the day. The latter is more accessible and requires the least processing effort based on the high value placed on the cattle. Guided by this cultural knowledge the respondent would conclude that a poor man has no cattle. In the mornings, the cattle are taken out for grazing hence the cattle kraal is empty till evening when they would be driven back. Having worked the double solving process, the respondent arrives at the implicated conclusion that a poor man during the day and rich at night is the cattle kraal. He/she will stop the processing for relevance has been met.

3.3 Interpretation of transparent metaphorical riddles based on Relevance Theory

In comprehension of transparent riddles, one is guided by the constituent words in the riddle because they have a close meaning with that of the figurative meaning. That is, the literal meaning of words contributes many clues to riddle comprehension. The study also found that most transparent riddles are based on food and plants as well as on things and manufactured objects. Consider the examples below from the two categories:

3.3.1 Riddles based on foods and plants

The solution in this category of riddles is based on food and plants in the Kamba cultural context as mentioned earlier on. Clue words are provided by the words *warms* and *ribs*. Consider the following example used in chapter two.

(40) *Mwĩtu wa asa otaa mwaki na mbau – mbemba.*

My sister *warms* herself by her *ribs* – Roasted maize.

Maize being roasted. Ideally maize being roasted is turned about by the sides.

The comprehension of the above riddle is made easier because the question gives clues through the words ‘*warms*’ and ‘*ribs*’ that give clues for the interpretation of this riddle.

Encyclopedic entries for what *warms* and *ribs* are;

- (a) Girls and their mothers and grandmothers during storytelling
- (b) Cooking pots
- (c) Pots when being hardened
- (d) Roasted maize

The assumptions derived from the activation of these encyclopaedic entries are;

- (a) Girls and their mothers and grandmothers during storytelling. This will be eliminated because their whole bodies are exposed and not just the sides.
- (b) Cooking pots will be eliminated based on the common understanding that the bottom is the one that heats up rather than the sides for it’s the bottom that sits on the cooking hearthstones.
- (c) Pots when being hardened are usually laid and set alight. They are then put into positions on their sides with the mouths of most of them facing outwards. They are

covered with grass and fierce fire is lit. This cultural knowledge further helps the respondent to eliminate this assumption for fire is lit all round rather than the sides.

- (d) The latter assumption is considered as the riddle referent. Ideally maize being roasted is turned about by the sides; just like an animal or a person's ribs are at the sides of the stomach. The respondent uses little processing effort to achieve this required cognitive effects for maize is easily accessed for its not only eaten after being roasted but is also used to prepare maize flour for preparing *ugali* and is used in preparation of *githeri*, a staple food among the Kamba.

The transparent riddle shown below as used in chapter two has its referent based on food. The nouns finger tips and hill and the verb climbs guide the hearer to arrive at the riddle referent.

(44) *Kĩĩma kĩĩsawa na mbwaa! - Ngima!*

A hill on which one climbs with finger tips! - Ugali!

In this riddle, the constituent words finger tips and hill and the verb climbs give clues to ease the processing effort in its interpretation.

Encyclopaedic entries for a hill include;

- (a) River water waves
- (b) Anthill
- (c) Hump of cattle

Encyclopaedic entries for what is climbed with fingers tips include;

- (a) Roasted maize
- (b) Ugali

Some assumptions derived from the encyclopaedic entries of a hill will not be accessed. Flowing river water is considered dangerous and cannot be climbed. Anthill cannot be climbed for it's the entrance of the white ants as they move to their termite host underground. The anthill is a deposition of the extra soil removed when the colony is preparing its host. Similarly, the hump of cattle cannot be eaten without being cut and roasted hence the hill would have been brought down and eaten as pieces rather. Additionally, roasted maize which is eaten by getting the grain from the maize comb by use of one's fingers is not considered for it forms no hill. They are weak implicatures.

Traditionally, Ugali, is eaten using ones' hands. It's the staple food of the Kamba and is called *Ngima*. Swahili name is "Ugali" and it is normally eaten with beef or chicken mixed with "*kunde*". Being a staple food makes it so familiar and frequently used by the people. This

cultural knowledge makes the respondent use least processing effort to arrive at a conclusion that ugali is the answer because it resembles a hill and is usually eaten by use of a person's finger tips. The respondent will stop processing when he/she arrives at this conclusion.

The example of a transparent riddle below requires less processing effort to derive the desired cognitive effects based on the fact that the phrase poor man's cattle provide lots of clues.

(1) *Ng'ombe sya mundu ngy'a – mbaiki.*

Cattle of man poor – The Castor-oil plant (*Ricinus communis*).

Poor man's cattle – The Castor-oil plant (*Ricinus communis*).

The Kamba practice animal husbandry. Cattle is highly valued and treasured by the people not only as source of food but also a symbol of wealth. Traditionally, a person who had many cattle was considered very rich just like it would be to any who had many daughters for they would attract a lot of bride price which was paid by cattle. Poor people, who had no cattle of their own, and thus were unable to obtain any animal fat, prepared oil out of the seeds of castor-oil plant for rubbing into their bodies. The cultural context, in addition to the relevance theoretic comprehension procedure is vital to the respondent for it gives clues which help to arrive at the correct answer to the riddle answer. To begin with, the respondent needs to follow a path of least effort in computing the cognitive effects when retrieving the encyclopaedic entries for some poor man and cattle that are stored in the mind.

Encyclopaedic entries for cattle are;

- (a) They are big.
- (b) Four legged animals
- (c) Are herbivorous.
- (d) Source of meat.
- (e) Source of fat.
- (f) Source of wealth

Encyclopaedic entries for a poor man are;

- (a) Is a human being
- (b) Two legged.
- (c) Has few or no daughters.
- (d) Got no cattle

After a close consideration of the assumptions from the encyclopaedic entries given above, the respondent will eliminate assumptions from entries a-c for a poor man for they are likely to generate impossible referents for the riddle question. Based on the cultural knowledge the

respondent already has in mind, the assumption from (d) that a poor man got no cattle fits the criterion of Relevance comprehension procedure for little effort is required to think of it. The assumptions from the encyclopaedic entries a-c for the cattle are weak implicatures and will be eliminated. Similarly, d will be eliminated because cattle is not the only source of meat. The assumption derived from encyclopaedic entry (e) will be considered more accessible for it follows a path of least effort to arrive at conclusion that fat is mostly extracted from the cow's milk hence a person who has no cattle has to get an alternative source. The implicated premises are a poor man, who had no cattle, was unable to obtain any animal fat. Their only alternative was to prepare oil out of the seeds of a castor-oil plant for rubbing into their bodies. As required by the relevance theoretic comprehension, having arrived at the answer that fits the criterion, the audience will not look further.

3.3.2 Riddles based on things and objects

Solutions to these riddles are based on things or objects which are either manufactured or not. Consider the following examples of transparent metaphorical riddles used in chapter two.

(48) *Mũthoni Mũambanĩ – Mwatũ.*

In-law baobab – beehive.

An in-law at a baobab tree – beehive.

In the Kamba culture, in-laws are avoided and treated with outmost care and respect. The baobab is a massive tree used for various purposes. To correctly solve this riddle, the riddlee will first activate the encyclopaedic entries for an In-law and a baobab tree stored in the mind as follows:

In-law

- (a) Human being
- (b) Highly respected

Baobab tree

- (a) Got big sized branches and stem
- (b) Bears fruits
- (c) Tall
- (d) Holds beehives

The above information is then contextualized culturally by the respondent. The second encyclopaedic entry for an in-law 'being highly respected' is easily accessed. If a man happened to meet an in-law, he was supposed to keep a distance and allow the in-law to pass first. If the road was too narrow, one had to literally go almost to the fence when giving way. Encyclopaedic entries a-c for a baobab tree are considered impossible because they do not match with respect. The latter is considered more relevant guided by cultural context. The Akamba beehive (*mwatu*) is a barrel made from a hollowed-out log. Traditionally, the possession of beehives was an essential part of the tribal culture as is the possession of cattle and goats. Certain trees are favored for placing hives, the foremost being the *muamba* (baobab). The baobab is deservedly identified as a premier honey tree because its size is so massive to hold several hives compared to other tree types. Any tree may be used if it is considered suitable and large enough but hives are never placed in trees sacred to the ancestral spirits (*aiimu*). African bees are well-known for their fierceness. People and large animals have been stung to death. The hives are frequently put in quite inaccessible places. The Akamba, accordingly, treat their beehives in a special manner and avoid where they are hanged just like in –laws are avoided and treated with outmost care and respect. This background knowledge is useful to the riddlee in his/her attempt to solve the riddle.

Following a path of least effort, the hearer will stop processing once he or she arrives at the implicature that an in-law stands for a beehive, which is commonly hanged on the baobab tree due to many of its advantages. The riddle thus cautions a person against bees which are fierce and dangerous insects and that their inhabitants should be dreaded lest calamity befalls him/her.

Consider another example:

(8) *Īkanda yaasa ĩtova ngũ – Nzĩa.*

Rope long cannot tie firewood – road.

A long rope that cannot tie firewood – road.

The adjective long and the verb 'tie firewood' are clue words from the riddle which provide encyclopaedic entries as shown below.

Encyclopaedic entries for long items

- (a) String
- (b) Belt
- (c) Sisal

- (d) Fallen tree
- (e) Snake
- (f) River

Cultural knowledge guides the hearer to eliminate some encyclopaedic entries for some long items above that can tie. Therefore, encyclopaedic entries a-c will be eliminated because they are not compatible with the information encoded in the second part of the riddle question.

Encyclopaedic entries for long and cannot tie items are:

- (a) Fallen tree
- (b) A snake
- (c) A river
- (d) A road

A snake, though long cannot tie firewood as it is venomous and highly dreaded by the people hence it will not be considered. Similarly, a fallen tree will be eliminated. Even though long its not flexible to tie firewood.

To choose from a river and a road, the hearer will require more processing effort because both are compatible with information that is encoded in the riddle question. They are both long and have wave-like shape which resembles a rope. The hearer will further look for a single general criterion that is powerful enough to exclude one. The road is considered for its frequently used. It was also conventionalised by the community as the riddle referent. A long rope, therefore, is a metaphor for a road.

3.4 Conclusion

This chapter has carried analysis of Kamba riddles based on content. The research has further shown that Kamba cultural context plays a significant role in the interpretation of metaphors in the selected transparent and semi-opaque Kamba riddles based on the Relevance Theory, as proposed by Sperber and Wilson (1986). The transparent riddles have a very close meaning to the literal ones. In their comprehension, just like in any utterance, the respondent follows a path of least effort in decoding the encoded concept. A consequence of taking the path of least effort is that the respondent often finds his expectation of relevance satisfied after considering only a subset of encyclopaedic assumptions associated with the encoded concepts. According to Relevance Theory these riddles require little processing effort to arrive at the required riddle answer. The semi-opaque riddles require more clues from the cultural knowledge of the Kamba culture in the selection process. In the interpretation of the opaque riddles, the respondent does

not get any clue from the constitute words. Since none of the encyclopaedic assumptions are made accessible by the words used, more context is activated to arrive at the metaphor. Consequently, they are the most difficult when it comes to comprehension and are usually learnt like a new concept or vocabulary. In nutshell, there is an interplay of Relevance Theory and context during metaphor comprehension in transparent and semi-opaque riddles.

CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter provides the summary, conclusion and recommendations of the study.

4.2 Summary

This research study sought to establish how Kamba riddles are classified, explored the metaphorical Kamba riddles interpretation procedure and lastly, but not the least, it sought to explain the role of culture for the interpretation of the metaphorical Kamba riddles. The results of the study revealed that riddles play an important role of educating not only children but also adults. Besides, they entertain and are often used to pass information and wisdom of human experience from the old generation to the young generation. To add on, riddles provide information to the children about the environment. The study also pointed out that the riddling process observes a certain convention in the Kamba community besides presenting the relationship that exist between riddles and other figurative expressions such as proverbs and idioms.

The study found out that Kamba riddles fit into different riddle classifications put forth by different Scholars. The study further proposed a classification of Kamba riddles based on content. The study found that most Kamba riddles are metaphorical. Some metaphors hidden in the riddles were easily recognized, others were not very difficult while others were very difficult to interpret. In the interpretation of the metaphorical riddles, Tenets of Relevance Theory and Kamba culture were found effectively adequate in the interpretation of transparent and semi-opaque riddles. These tenets included: context, processing effort cognitive effects, comprehension procedure, implicatures and explicatures. This research found out that cultural knowledge gave the context which guided the respondent(s) to get a cultural list and a selection criterion so as to arrive at the correct referent. Thus, culture plays a key role for it interacts with the theoretic comprehension procedure in metaphorical riddle interpretation. The research addressed the given research objectives as outlined above.

4.3. Conclusion

The study was based on the analysis of Kamba riddles. These riddles were sampled from six adult informants and from one student during oral literature lessons. The research studied riddle classifications put forth by different scholars. This study has carried out a categorisation of Kamba riddles according to their content. The solutions to riddle questions include every sphere of natural and human life, and vary according to the preoccupations and customs of the society. They are based on natural phenomena, human body and its attributes, animals and insects, plants and foods, things and manufactured objects. The study found out that most Kamba riddles are metaphoric because they work on resemblance and comparison. They have transfer of the source in order to get encyclopedic entries. Metaphors are hidden in the riddles. Within the metaphors, there are sub-categories.

To begin with, there are transparent riddles. In their comprehension, the respondent gets lots of clues from the words which are made easy by use of implicature. These riddles have a very close meaning to that of the literal one. They are not difficult to comprehend because the constituent of the words in the riddle question can guide to find out the referent. Secondly, there are semi-opaque riddles. In the comprehension of semi-opaque riddles, the respondent gets minimal clues from some words in the riddle question hence there is need to add more activation of context in order to interpret them. The cultural knowledge gives the context which guides the respondent to get a cultural list and a selection criterion. Lastly, there is the opaque riddle category. None of the encyclopaedic entries and assumptions are made accessible by the word or words in the riddle question either separately or in combination. One has to learn it by heart as a new concept or vocabulary for context does not help in the interpretation of these riddles. The audience strictly sticks to the conventionalized riddle referents.

The current study has identified opaque, semi-opaque and transparent Kamba riddles. However, the research has only analysed the semi-opaque and transparent category of metaphoric Kamba riddles guided by the Relevance Theory and Kamba culture. The Relevance Theoretic Comprehension Procedure was found to be applicable in their interpretation, in addition to the context but not independently.

4.4 Recommendation for future work

The study used Relevance theory to analyse the metaphorical based Kamba riddles. We therefore recommend that future research should be done using different theories. For instance, a lexical pragmatic analysis of Kamba riddles or a cognitive semantic study of Kamba riddles.

Riddles and idioms are closely related short genres therefore it would be exhilarating to conduct research on the comprehension of Kamba idioms.

A related research can also be carried using a different classification. For example, classification according to form as suggested by Ishegoma (2005) and Finnegan (1970) or according to level of difficulty as suggested by Bukenya and Odanga (1994) and Maranda (1971).

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Appendix

The Kamba Riddles, Translation and Meaning

Riddle 1:

Ng'ombe sya mundu ngy'a – mbaiki.

Cattle of man poor – The Castor-oil plant (*Ricinus communis*).

This is a transparent riddle.

Riddle 2:

Aumie mũingo akũĩte kĩswe – Saa.

He/she came from abroad sneering - A clock.

Riddle 3:

Mwana wakwa akusaa ũmwe kwa ũmwe – Mũsyĩ wa Kĩlĩvĩtĩ.

My children die one by one – Match sticks.

This is a transparent riddle.

Riddle 4:

Aa masũvĩanisye ũũ makokita ĩndĩ? – ngũka na ĩngĩ.

These looking at each other when shall they fight? A wall and another.

Opaque riddle.

Riddle 5:

Neethĩe... - Neethĩe mũndii na mũndete mayotanĩa muunyĩ wa ũseki!

I found... - I found *Mũndii* and *Mũndete* (imaginary dwarf spirits) under the shade of a grass blade!

Riddle 6:

Woo... - Wookĩla mbio nyanya wĩtĩtwe nĩ ĩtema ya ndaa.

You almost... You almost jumped eight high fences on being choked by a louse liver.

This is an opaque riddle used mainly to ridicule fearful people.

Riddle 7:

Nesaa... - Nesaa kwosa nyamũ ngĩmĩta mũsivi nĩyove.

I almost – Picked a snake thinking it is a belt to tie yourself.

Nesaa... - Nesaa kwosa nguu ngũmĩta nzio.

I almost... - I almost took a tortoise thinking it's a grinding stone.

This is an opaque riddle.

Riddle 8:

Ĩkanda yaasa ĩtova ngũ – Nzĩa.

A long rope that cannot tie firewood – road.

Transparent riddle.

Riddle 9:

Kũũ no ng'o na kũla no ng'o – Kĩvĩndu.

Here is *ng'o* and there is *ng'o* – darkness.

This is an opaque riddle.

Riddle 10:

Uuwi –Nĩ kĩmbu kĩkwalwa nĩ waĩko.

Uuwi - A chameleon being pained by circumcision wound.

This is an opaque riddle.

Riddle 11:

Syomwilu matongunĩ – Mũino wa nyonyi.

Syomwilu in Sodom Apples plants – faeces from a person who has eaten food made of cow green peas leaves.

This is an opaque riddle.

Riddle 12:

Mũsikalĩ wĩ ngovia ndune – mũthia wa ĩkonge.

A soldier wearing a red cap- sharp tip of a sisal leaf.

Riddle 13:

Okaa kyoko na kwatuka ayĩnũka – Sua.

Comes morning and nightfall goes back-sun.

Comes in the morning and goes back when it's dark – sun.

Nature gives clues for the interpretation of this transparent riddle.

Riddle 14:

Nũmbĩw'aa ãndĩ ndũbonaa – Nzeve.

Hear me but not see me – wind.

You hear me but you cannot see me - the wind.

Nature gives clues for the interpretation of this transparent riddle.

Riddle 15:

Mũndũ ãtindaa kũthi na ndathũmũa! - Kĩseve!

Person remains travelling and never rests! – Wind!

A person who remains in one spot although travelling and does not rest! – Wind!

Nature gives clues for the interpretation of this transparent riddle.

Riddle 16:

Ndavye mũndũ ũkaa akĩtũlanga matĩ – sua.

Me tell a person comes breaking to pieces bushes and trees – sun.

Tell me a person who is in the habit of coming breaking to pieces bushes and trees - sun.

In the dry season, many trees and bushes shed their foliage, the grass is dried up, the whole landscape is looking dreary and unattractive.

Riddle 17:

Mũtĩ wavalũka ithyonze tukeananwa – yũa.

Tree when it falls all of us reduced to same size –Famine.

A tree when it falls all of us are reduced to the same size – Famine.

This is an example of semi-transparent riddle.

Riddle 18:

Ndavye mwanake waitũ mũseo mũno na ndavwikika ngua – mwaki.

Tell me youth ours handsome very and he cannot be wrapped in garment – fire.

Tell me the youth in our village who is very handsome and but impossible to wrap a piece of cloth round – fire.

This is a semi-opaque riddle. There are more clues from the riddle question which guide its interpretation process.

Riddle 19:

Taa witũ – mwei.

The lamp ours – the moon.

The camp is ours – the moon.

This is a good example of transparent riddle.

Riddle 20:

Masee ma asa meanene - ĩtu na nzi.

Gourd shells of father equal - Earth and sky.

Father's gourd shells of the same size –Earth and sky.

Riddle 21:

Nathi Yatta oyu na nasyoka – metho.

Gone Yatta now and back – The eyes.

I have gone to Yatta now and come back - The eyes.

A transparent riddle.

Riddle 22:

Kovokovo – Ngove.

Kovokovo – Eyelashes.

Opaque riddle. No clue given in the word. The respondent has to learn it by heart.

Riddle 23:

Mwana wakwa endaa kĭla mũthenya – ĩvu.

Child mine wants every day –Stomach.

My child keeps wanting every day – stomach.

This is a semi-opaque riddle for the action keeps wanting gives some information for the interpretation of the riddle.

Riddle 24:

Sūsū mūũ... - Sūsū mūi walyūlaa mūthanga ũkatwika mbisū!

Grandmother clever... – Grandmother clever shapes clay to cooking pot!

Clever grandmother who molds clay into a pot!

Opaque riddle.

Riddle 25:

Mündũ mwendaa nake na ndakwīaa mūthūmūie – Kyuu.

Man you walk with and don't tell you let us rest – The Shadow.

Who is the man you walk along with in the road and does not say to you “let us rest” – One's own shadow.

This is a transparent riddle. There are clues for the interpretation of this riddle.

Riddle 26:

Ūndũ ũ ndwitonyeka – Mwanake na mwĩtu maũng'ie nzĩanĩ.

This is not possible – A young man and a girl have stopped in the path.

Opaque riddle.

Riddle 27:

Melasya na ndĩvunaa – Mata.

Swallow and never get full -Saliva.

I swallow but I don't get full – Saliva.

This is a transparent riddle.

Riddle 28:

Neethĩe.... - Neethiie mũndii na mũndete mayotania muunyi wa ũseki.

I found - I found “*mũndii*” and “*mũndete*” (imaginary dwarf spirits) under the shade of a grass blade! Opaque riddle.

Riddle 29

Kavisũ mavĩndĩ mwĩta – kanywa.

A tiny pot filled with bones – mouth.

Opaque riddle.

Riddle 30

Ndavye kyanda kitang’alaa kiw’u – metho

Me tell the water ditch the one never comes to dry.

Tell me the water ditch where the water never dries up – the eyes

All minor water-courses dry up, as everyone knows, in the dry season. Its transparent.

Riddle 31:

Nesĩla vaa na ngũa ĩnziũ – Nzingii.

I have passed through here dressed in black clothes - Black ants.

Semi-opaque riddle. The words ‘dressed’ and ‘black clothes’ give clues for the interpretation of this riddle question.

Riddle 32:

Mwĩtu wa mwenyu nĩ kĩng’ei na ang’eea mbua yauwa – Kĩkwae.

Your sister is a thief and steals during the rainy season – Guinea fowl.

This is a Semi-opaque riddle because some of the words such as a ‘thief’ and ‘rainy season’ give clues for the interpretation of this riddle question.

Riddle 33:

Kalĩma kaseo katavandwa mboso! - Ngathĩ ya ng’ombe!

The little hill beautiful that is not sown beans – the hump of a cattle!

A beautiful little hill, on which one cannot plant beans.

This is semi-opaque riddle because the words ‘beautiful hill and ‘cannot be planted’ give clues for the interpretation of this riddle question.

Riddle 34:

Kalũkũngũ mũingo? - nzana ĩsembee mwana.

Dust on the ridge - A monitor lizard running for its child.

“ka” is a prefix used before the noun to show diminutive. No clue is given in the riddle question hence its opaque.

Riddle 35:

Kaveti kanini kakĩlĩtye mwenyu kuua – Nzũkĩ.

Woman small surpasses your mother cooking - The bee.

A small woman who surpasses your mother in cooking - A bee.

Clues given in some words makes this riddle a transparent one.

Riddle 36:

Mũndũ ũ wongasya syana kũũ – ngũkũ.

Person this let’s suckle children foot – The hen.

The person feeds her children with her foot – hen.

Clues given in some words makes this riddle a semi-opaque one.

Riddle 37:

Ngũkethya mwethya ũkaketheka –Mũthwa.

I greet work gang it returns greeting- The white ants.

I give greetings to the work gang who return the greetings- The white ants.

This is an opaque riddle.

Riddle 38:

Mwĩĩtu wa ũmau mũseo ũminaa andũ na ndanenaa - Ng’ombe.

Daughter of grandfather beautiful who makes an end of the people and cannot speak-cattle.

A beautiful daughter of grandfather who finishes off the people and is dumb-cattle.

Transparent riddle.

Riddle 39:

Mwanake mūseo mūno ūtakwatīka ngingo – nzoka.

A young handsome very who cannot be grasped round the neck - a snake.

A handsome youth whom you cannot grasp round the neck-a snake.

Transparent riddle.

Riddle 40:

Mwītu wa asa otaa mwaki na mbau – mbemba.

My sister warms herself by her ribs – Roasted maize.

Maize being roasted. Ideally maize being roasted is turned about by the sides.

This is a semi-opaque riddle because the words ‘warms’ and ‘ribs’ give clues for the interpretation of this riddle question.

Riddle 41:

īia kaayaa! - Kalilū kew’ie mūtīnī!

Behold that one! - A ripe banana on a tree!

This is an opaque riddle.

Riddle 42:

Mūdū mūthwii wīūtee wanzīa! – Kītongu.

A rich person on the road side! – Sodom Apple.

This is a semi-opaque riddle.

Riddle 43:

Ndata ya Mūnyiva yī makundo kenda – Yīiū.

Stick of *Mūnyiva* has knots nine - Banana plant.

Mūnyiva’s walking stick has nine knots - Banana plant.

This is an opaque riddle.

Riddle 44:

Kũma kũsawa na mbwaa! - Ngima!

A hill on which one climbs with finger tips! - Ugali!

This is a transparent riddle.

Riddle 45:

Tania kaũ thome – ng'ola na mũtumia.

Separate the fight in the village square – the beard-tweezers and the old man. This is an opaque riddle.

Riddle 46:

Katumbĩ mwende – silingi.

Three-legged stool loved.

A loved three-legged stool – A coin.

Transparent riddle.

Riddle 47:

Mũsũngũ aumie ũlaya ekwete ĩvose – kĩkombe.

White left abroad holding akimbo-cup.

A white came from abroad holding akimbo - A cup.

Transparent riddle

Riddle 48:

Kĩveti Kĩkalĩle ivĩla itatũ! - Mbisũ!

Woman sitting stools three! - cooking pot!

A woman sitting on three stools! - A Cooking pot!

“mbisũ” is a cooking pot. When cooking it rests on three hearthstones.

Semi - opaque.

Riddle 49:

Mũthoni Mũambanĩ – Mwatũ.

In-law at baobab-beehive.

An in-law at baobab tree – beehive.

Transparent riddle.

Riddle 50:

Nĩna eĩtu makwa atatũ na ũmwe atevo ndiya – Maiko.

Have daughters mine three and one not there I cannot eat – Hearthstones.

I have my three dear daughters, when one is absent I cannot eat – Hearthstones.

Semi-opaque riddle.

Riddle 51:

kazĩ katoseka – Kalĩma.

On ground thing not picked – Hole.

It's on the ground but cannot be picked – A hole.

Transparent riddle.

Riddle 52:

Vuluku ndalika veleke ĩndĩ veleke noalike vuluku – kĩvulĩ na Mbisũ

Vuluku cannot enter *veleke* but *veleke* can enter *vuluku* – A serving spoon and a pot.

Vuluku cannot enter *veleke* but *veleke* can enter *vuluku* – A serving spoon and a pot.

Transparent riddle.

Riddle 53:

Kĩveti kyamina mũũnda na ndũkwona nyaĩ! - Kĩondo!

Woman finish garden and see not footprints! - Traditional basket!

A woman finished garden and no footprints! - Traditional basket!

A semi-opaque riddle.

Riddle 54:

Kasoni kaiũ ke maa me mũyo – Mbisũ.

Bird black with intestines sweet – A pot.

A black bird that has sweet intestines – A pot.

A semi-opaque riddle.

Riddle 55:

Ni ngũkũna ĩvĩsĩ vokĩle ĩngĩ – kĩwa.

I beat boy rises another – Sugarcane.

I beat a boy and there rises another - Sugarcane.

Its an opaque riddle. No clues.

Riddle 56:

Mũthui athuaa ũtukũ na kwakya akĩtwika ngy'a – kyũũ.

Rich man rich at night and day time become poor – the cattle kraal.

Rich man who is usually rich in the night, when it gets light he becomes poor – the cattle kraal. In the mornings, the cattle are taken out for grazing and it is only in the evenings they are driven into the Kraal again.

A transparent riddle.

Riddle 57:

Mũthui athuaa mũthenya na kwatuka akĩtwika ngy'a – kĩtindio.

Rich man rich day time and night becomes poor – a place where the cattle rest outside the village.

A rich man rich during day time and when it gets dark he becomes poor – a place where the cattle rest outside the village. *kĩtindio* is only utilized in the afternoon. In the evenings, the cattle are gathered into their kraal, which is within the village thorn fence.

A transparent riddle.

Riddle 58:

Syavulana kitindionĩ na ndũmanya yaku – mai ma mbũi.

They mix at resting place and can't know yours – droppings of goats.

They commingle on the resting place and you do not know yours – the droppings of the goats.

Traditionally, the goats and sheep were driven to a place outside the village, so as to rest in the shade of the trees during the hottest part of the day. *Kitindio* is derived from the word *kũtinda* which means to stay. If a number of owners have the animals in the same spot, they cannot tell from whose animals the droppings on the ground originate. A transparent riddle.

Riddle 59:

Kungulu kangala makũmbĩnĩ? - Mũtwaano wa mbĩa.

Kungulu kangala in the granary - A wedding of rats.

Kungulu is an onomatopoeic word for noise in the granary. An opaque riddle.

Riddle 60:

Seh! - mũkuva watonya kĩhangathĩnĩ.

Seh! - A needle stabbed the sand.

The question (*Seh!*) imitates the sound made by a needle dropping point first into the sand. Opaque riddle.

Riddle 61:

Aa! – Nĩ kamũtumĩla kakunda ĩia ya thano.

Aa! –an old man who has drunk a little milk in the dry season.

The sound (*Aa*) usually suggests the man's intense thirst and his enjoyment of the milk. Opaque riddle.

Riddle 62:

Tu na tu - ndĩĩ na mũthĩ.

Tu na tu - mortar and pestle.

Opaque riddle.

Riddle 63:

Wooka na mũeni na wamũtia nza – Ngitiĩ.

You came with a visitor and left him outside - a dog.
Semi-opaque riddle.

Riddle 64:

Nyumba ĩte mũomo – Ĩthae.

A house without a door – An egg.

Transparent riddle.

Riddle 65:

Ndũlĩsa mũkakai – ũlii wa ũta.

You cannot climb *mũkakai* tree – a bow string.

Mũkakai is a type of tree that is very thin and slippery. It is compared to a string of a bow because it is also too thin. Opaque riddle.

Riddle 66:

Kyalo kĩte nzyoko! - Kĩw'u kĩ usĩnĩ!

A journey with no return! – Running river water

Explanation: “*Kiw'u*” is water. “*Usĩ*” is river. Running river water never returns!

A transparent riddle.