



Linguistics Aesthetics and Contributory Values of Bura *Karapuyeri* (Proverbs)

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Abstract

This paper comprises a collection of Bura karapuyeri (proverbs). Proverbs are conventional fixed expressions. They can be used for fluent, aesthetic and increase understanding not only of the target language, but also the culture of the people who use them. Thus, proverbs present wisdom, truth, moral and traditional views in a metaphorical manner. Oral sources were the only means in which the data were gathered. Great and literate Reverends, pastors and other old people from Buraland facilitated the retrieval of the information through impromptu interviews. The proverbs were produced in vernacular followed by translations into English using both linguistic and non linguistic commentaries in English. The paper investigated that Bura Karapuyeri have multifaceted dimensions: linguistic, social, religious, cultural and educational preoccupations which have to be understood and interpreted within appropriate speech contexts. The contexts played crucial roles as they mitigate their elucidation. Consequently, proverbs could enrich the addressees' vocabularies. However, it was not only a matter of the number of words learnt, but the sayers, the addressee, the purpose, the manner and circumstances of use determine the authenticity of Bura karapuyeri. Furthermore, the picturesque and imaginative forms of expressions of many Bura karapuyeri were applied to actions, objects, and human descriptions through figurative expressions which conveyed abstract ideas in vivid and imaginative ways. One functional role of the karapuyeri was to manifest depth of feelings and artistry demonstrations of linguistic artfulness since every not member of the society was endowed with karapuyeri.

Keywords: Proverbs; Aesthetics; Artfulness; Contexts; Culture; Education.

1. Introduction

1.1. Background of the Study

This paper is an examination of the rich verbal resources of the Bura people of southern Borno State of Nigeria.

The Bura people are regarded as a particular group of Chadic speakers whose language has come to be known as Bura by the people themselves and by others who want to distinguish the people from this area. The Bura can be found in Borno in the following Local Government Areas: Biu, Shani Hawul Kwaya Kusar and Bayo while in Adamawa they are settlers in the Garkkida in Gombi Local Government Area. There is a few of the Bura in Bularafa in Gujba Local Government of Yobe State.

The Bura language is linguistically classified as Afro – Asiatic, and Chadic language. The language has a great affinity with Chibok, Marghi, Higgi and Bazza all of which are Borno and Adamawa Borno States Nigeria.

The primary objective of this research is to collect, analyze and document some Bura *Karapuyeri*. Furthermore, the study is made to depict the dynamics of African oral literature through *Karapuyeri*, thereby disproving the widespread misleading conceptions that African oral literature consists mainly of African stories and trivial formulations devoid of artistic complexities or profound meanings. Thus, the paper is an appreciation to Bura oral literature as it provides relevant materials for future research on the subject. Specifically the research is an in –depth to preserve some aspects of oral tradition of a minority tribe from a total extinction.

Etymologically, there is no definition given to *Karapuyeri* (proverbs) in Bura language. However, it is interesting to note that, the word *Karapu* consists of two syllables that is kara-pu. 'kara' literally means 'do it' while 'pu' means 'place it inside'. Metaphorically, it means "do it inside".

Basically, *Karapuyeri* is a depiction of verbal arts which have something hidden. Indeed, to the native speaker, it is a speech or statement which is expressed with a hidden meaning.

2. Methodology

The data for this research comprises oral source retrieved from some native clergies, old and literate members of the Bura society. The data were collected through impromptu interviews which were facilitated through a tape recorder, after which the data were listened to and transliterated into English. Although English and Bura are two distinct languages, the current researchers did not encounter much difficulty with the translation of Bura *Karapuyeri* because they are somewhat proficient in both English and Bura. After these processes, the proverbs were written in Bura, followed by the English version, while the literary interpretations were proved below.

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2.1. The Bura Language

The Bura language has just five vowel system used currently which are: a, i, e, o, and u. This vowel system both the capital and small letters used in the language: Aa, Bb, Cc, Dd, Dd', Ee, Eə, Ff, Gg, Hh, Ii, Jj, Kk, Ll, Mm, Nn, Oo, Pp, Rr, Ss, Tt, Uu, Vv, Ww, Yy, Zz.

Bura is one of the languages which do not have orthographies, hence, the English alphabets. However, much of the Bura sounds are borrowed from English vowels and consonants which are represented below: Mb as in (mburu) 'us' Mw as in (mwàri) 'go' Mb as in (mbànta) 'ta cure' Mw as in (mwà) 'walk'

Although, the consonant clusters are not usually indicated in writing, the tone of the Bura language is phonemic. Thus, the language has three levels tone systems: low (ù), mid (unmarked) and high (ú). For this reason, a word in Bura language as in other languages can best be understood in its context as well as its pronunciations. See the illustrations below.

- (Ai) LL (Bába) 'aunt'
- (ii) HH (Bàbá) 'father'
- (Bi) L (fà) 'to remove or collect'
- (ii) H (fá) 'long life'

B. R. Badejo and the Committee on Bura orthography rightly pointed out there has been no publication yet in Bura in which tones have been marked. To solve this problem, the group proposed a system of tone marking for Bura. Thus, the group proposed that the high and the low tones should be marked (ú) and (ù) respectively, whilst the mid-tone is left unmarked. For instance, (Ai) LM (bàkà) as in 'almost' (ii) LL (bákà) as in 'dry fish' (Bi) LH (gàri) as in 'talk'

- (ii) LL *gári* as in 'a big flown gown'.

As for the words which do not appear in this proposed alphabet list, the Committee has adopted the spellings of the vowel sounds used in *kakadu Ar ha ka sur Vunkir sili Aka Hyel* (Songs and Psalms of Praise, 1931) which was revised in 1958.

Due to the phenomenon of language contact with languages such as: Kilba, Marghi, Hausa, Kanuri and English, etc. the Bura language has a number of loan words which include: 'pal' (one) and 'usa' (hello/thanks) and maintains the meanings with some of the aforementioned languages. In fact, this applies to all the languages except English and Hausa.

2.2. Bura Oral Literature

Despite the incursion from the foreign culture, education and religion precipitated by the establishment of western education in the land, the Bura people remained resilient to the change brought by the new culture. Instead, the people used the western literacy to awaken their more consciousness towards their tradition. For instance, the coming of the Church of the Brethren Mission activated the oral literature of the Bura people in 1923 through its pioneer missionaries, Dr. Stover Kulp and Rev. Albeth Helser. These missionaries realized that the only possible and a fast means in which the gospel could reach the Bura people were through the incorporation of the indigenous language into the translation of some the portions of the Bible. This singular attempt brought on board the early work on the Bura people.

2.3. Categories of Bura Literature

The under listed are some of the categories of Bura oral literature:

1. Tale (Makumdla)
1. Songs (háyeri)
2. Play (gyeli)
3. Riddles (makumdla dza dza)
4. Praise songs (ha huwa)
5. Proverbs (Karapuyeri)

3. Literature Review

Elmslie (1917), traced the Greek etymology of proverbs through the word *paroimia* (proverbs). It comes from *para* and *oimos* – 'way', 'road'. So, *paroimia* is the sort of saying often heard along the way – a common expression (279).

In order for us to have a grasp of what are proverbs, it is paramount to unfold some of their structural components. Proverbs can take a variety of forms in diverse sentences.

Syntactically, proverbs can be grouped according to structures which may include: the simple sentence – contains one main clause (subject and predicate) with sub clause. This type of sentence is basically declarative and can appear both in the affirmative as well as the negative form. Complex sentence comprises one clause and one or more sub-clauses; and the sub-clauses may take the form of adjectival, nominal or adverbial. Compound sentence possesses multiple independent clauses which are separated and has the following connecting markers: (for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so). Grammatically, the clauses in this type of sentence have equal semantic strengths or contrast. Research has indicated that these structural formulae are common to a wide range of languages. A few of most salient traditional formulae are: if/when..., every..., then..., than... These formulae can be seen in the following illustrations: X is Y, X is better than Y; when X (you); no X no Y; X is (are) Y there is no X, only Y; one man's X is another man's Y.

3.1. Meanings of Proverb

Research has shown that proverbs are like some of the academic disciplines which are very difficult to define as none of the definitions meets the universal acceptance. This is because almost every writer perceives proverbs from a different viewpoint. For instance, Akporobaro defined the term to mean a short popular saying usually in the form of a moral advice or truth expressed in a concise form. Similarly, Finnegan admitted that it is very difficult to distinguish between oral culture from other forms of oral art or ordinary clichés and idioms, but made attempts to define proverbs as, 'a saying in more or less fixed form marked by shortness, sense, self and distinguished by the popular acceptance of the truth expressed in it' (878). On the other hand, proverbs are understood to mean traditional sayings Nwoga. One Rev. Ishaku P. K. Mbaya, a native of Buraland (oral source) lamented that *karapuyeri* are wise sayings usually spoken by elders of a community which are told in a situation where the hidden meanings have to be guessed. Momoh put it that, 'a proverb is a remnant from old philosophy, preserved amid countless destructions by the reason of its brevity and fitness for use' (56). Corroborating the aforementioned assertion, Akporobaro argued that, 'a collection of the proverbs of a community is in a real sense, an ethnography of the people which if systematized can give penetrating picture of the people's ways; their philosophy; their moral truth and social values' (10). In a related dimension, Mieder, perceived proverbs as, 'short, generally known sentences of the folk which contains wisdom, truth, morals, fixed and memorable form which is handed over down from generation to generation.'(5). The researchers further asserted that, 'a significant rhetorical force in various modes of communication used by native speakers not only in friendly chats and powerful political speeches but also in best seller novels and the influential mass media'(5). Importantly, Norrick (2007) put forward that proverbs are traditional and cultural legacies shared knowledge, values, history and thoughts of a nation.

While the above might look real of proverbs, one fundamental function of proverbs is conveyance of indirectness and deference.

Proverbs represent many aspects of human life. For instance, Kuusi & Lauhakangas identified three main themes of proverbs which are used to qualify them as international systems. The themes include: practical knowledge of nature, faith and basic attitudes, basic observations and socio – logic, the world and human life, sense of proportion, concepts of morality, social life, social interactions, communication, social position, agreements and norms, coping and learning, and sense of time.

While scholars may have disagreed on the exact meanings and definitions of proverbs, what constitutes proverbs does not lie in the manner only but why it is uttered. The following are some of the characteristics of proverbs:

3.2. Source

It is difficult to determine the source of proverbs as many come from many sources and majority of them may never be known. So, it is very difficult to trace their originality. However, there are proverbs which are based on stories, fables, or myths. Furthermore, some proverbs may be linked to historical incidents mostly during the early time of a nation's history.

3.3. Authorship

It is truism that some proverbs are the results of individuals who consciously wish to impose their wisdom upon others. For instance, Shakespeare was the author of 'to be or not to be' while 'knowledge is power' could be traced to Francis Bacon. To buttress the claim that some proverbs may have personal authorship, Firth stressed that authors of certain proverbs may never be known on account of their antiquity, especially famous personalities of some proverbs are very well known. He stressed that at some notable movement of his life, perhaps at a time of stress or imminent danger to himself or the tribe or maybe even when confronted by death itself, a man of rank, preserving his composure makes some remarks which display such aptness, and facility of phrase that strike the ear ...this is repeated later in the communal meeting house where the details of the whole event are narrated to an eager crowd of listeners ... (206).

3.4. Antiquity

Some proverbs date back to the remotest antiquity, to times immemorial. To many people, they are as old as the hill and traced to the time when wisdom and precepts were transmitted by stories and songs Kelso & Wilson (413). In a related vein, Smith stated that the proof of antiquity of proverbs could be sought and seen in the proverbs themselves. They could be seen not only in certain words that are heard in ordinary conversations but also in several archaism as well as grammatical forms with which the proverbs are interrelated (312).

3.5. Universality

To speak in proverbial language is a universal phenomenon. It is very difficult to find a society in which proverbs do not exist, Finnegan (389). However, argued that there are apparently few proverbs in the Bushmen of southern Africa just as there are absent or rare proverbs in the Nilotic people Fisher (94). Nonetheless, scholars have argued that there are proverbs in all human languages. What makes the difference may be the speakers of certain languages may not pay a close attention to some proverbial statements made during conversations.

3.6. Internationality

Quite a number of scholars have reported the internationality of proverbs along with other genres of folklore, dirges, riddles, etc. as proverbs are expressed in various forms across the globe. In the whole, the truth is expressed

in various forms using the varied forms as the flora and fauna of each country may differ significantly. Consequently, people may apply a variety of communicating their minds. However, people across the globe may seem to share similar kernel of wisdom. Champion expressed the reason for the semblances in the form of communicating proverbs. Proverbial wisdom is exactly the same all the world, differing only in the rendering 'men are all made of the same paste'. Fundamentally, and psychologically they are the same, oriental or occidental, pigmented or white, love, hunger and fear are the basic factors that rule mankind, primitive or cultured; factors uninfluenced by environment or civilization. All the civilizations of the ages will not eradicate the primary instincts of mankind. A study of proverbial racial folklore provides overwhelming evidence of this similarity. The same proverb conveying the same piece of advice occurs again in the indigenous aphorisms of all tribes and races.

3.7. Values

The values of proverbs have never been questioned as great orators of all time have used proverbs of various types to pass across their messages. Indeed, proverbs have been of great significance especially to public speakers, such as parliamentarians, teachers, preachers, lawyers, philosophers, etc. Thus, to the Arab, 'a proverb is to speech what salt is to food', or 'lamps to the word'. To the Jew, 'proverbs are what flowers are to the garden', 'spices to food', 'gems to garment'. To the Igbo, 'it is the palm oil that is used to eat word', 'horses in a conversation'.

2.8. Function

Proverbs cannot be dismissed either as a childish amusement or as flagrant falsehood. Its social functions are imminent to social research as well as in traditional system of education. It also enforces conformity to norms and values of the society.

Indeed, proverbs have great values in the African setting. For instance, Nketia enumerated some of the benefits of proverbs,

The value of the proverb to us in modern Ghana does not lie only in what it reveals of the thought of the past for the poet today or indeed for the speaker who is some sort of an artist in the use of words, the proverb is a model of compressed or forceful language. In addition to drawing on it for its words of wisdom, therefore, he takes in its verbal techniques – its selection of words, its use of comparison as a method of statement, and so on. Familiarity with its techniques enables him to create as it were his own proverbs. This enables him to avoid hackneyed and give a certain amount of freshness to his speech. This approach to proverbs which is evident in the speech of people who are regarded as accomplished speakers or poets of a sort makes the proverbs not only a body of short statement built up over the years, but also a technique which reflect the thought and insight of Ghanaians into problems of life, but also a technique of verbal expression. This is greatly appreciated by the Ghanaian. It is no wonder therefore that the use of proverbs has continued to be a living tradition in Ghana (21).

As part of most African tradition, proverbs appear in songs, poems as well as in riddles. They also characterize praise names and used in general conversations in order to embellish, conceal or hint. In fact, to Africans, proverbs are closely related to linguistics, artfulness, and literature. This is because most proverbs are structured in a particular style and form. Indeed, one fundamental index of proverbs is the poetic form in which they are used to express thoughts. Finnegan said:

Their figurative mode of expression serves to some degree to set them apart from everyday speech. Another general characteristic of proverbs is their generalization about everyday life which is used to suggest some related things about people in general. The commonest way to accomplish this is through the use of metaphor in which general or abstract ideas are conveyed not only through any direct generalization at all but through concrete (879).

In addition to metaphor, hyperbole is also a frequent motif. Thus, the allusions of proverbs as well as situations in which they are cited may be essential aspect of individual comprehension as some proverbs may be used according to context to suggest a variety of thoughts. Importantly, some proverbs are obscure even to the native speaker of the language. This is due to the picturesque and figurative qualities of the language used.

3.9. Analysis

The analysis is done under several broad headings which are alphabetically arranged.

(1). Acceptance

There are numerous Bara *Karapuyeri* that stress the act of accepting; a receiving and offering, with approbation, satisfaction, or acquiescence in the society. These are illustrated as follows:

1. **Muta ana nggəlar su wa.**(oral source.).

Literal translation: An orphan does not reject an alm.

Translation: An orphan accepts any gift.

Context: The *Karapu* implies that an orphan is a needy and has no choice.

2. **Mtə a kəl mi wa.** (oral source)

Literal translation: Death does not take hunger.

Translation: Only an animate object can die.

Context: Do not worry yourself, death is inevitable.

3. **Mda ngkir-ngkir tuwar muma aka bzir wa.**(Oral source.)

Literal translation: a child needs not to be told when to mourn his mother's death.

Translation: Opportunity comes but once.

Context: One has to make use of every opportunity that comes to him/her.

4. **La kilang ka vidza aka kurari.** (oral source.)

Literal translation: Dig out a rat from its hole and place its tail close.

Translation: Know the source of information before you accept it.

Context: It implies that you should know the source of a matter before acting on.

(2) Advice

Opinions recommended or offered which are worthwhile are expressed in many *Karapuyeri*.

5. Ma lunggur piwa, kuji dliya, wala kuji mwa dim.(oral source.)

Literal translation: if you do not intend to pass the night there, you should rather embark on the journey early enough.

Translation: The early the better.

Context: The *Karapu* implies that whatever is mandatory it is worth doing in good time.

6. Ma hidi nji pelə- kurari an darboni.(O.S.)

Literary translations: If scorpion stings a stone, it will have a sore tail.

Translation: Do not fight your elder or senior colleague.

Context: The *Karapu* is used to advise someone not engage in a fight with a stronger partner.

7. Ma nggilim ku nggilar kufarni, kisirni ata katsakar. (O.S.)

Literal translation: a crocodile that stays away from the river would lose its life.

Translation: anyone who shuns his/her parent's advice is likely to die young.

Context: The *Karapu* is aimed at counseling the young folks to be obedient.

8. Ma giri msira ka mda, giri adiya lunggu kapiwə.(O.S.)

Literal translation: Too intimate friends should not pass the night together if they are sojourners.

Translation: never trust human beings completely.

Context: one is advised that human beings are dynamic in nature.

9. Kir kalkal amma nggwədaka zumzum.(O.S.)

Literal translation: Heads are the same but lungs are different.

Translation: all fingers are not equal.

Context: know that our status is not the same.

10. Zhimbutu pila, ma mda ata kirari mnyari a hara sabil wa.(O.S.)

Literal translation: one black long mouth bird says that if someone had advised him earlier, his mouth would not have been too long.

Translation: correct advice serves as a corrective measure.

Context: If you are not informed, you would not be able to perform well.

11. Mda pila, masu nggilar kuta ga, thlata adzi ngə.(O.S.)

Literal translation: Someone says, 'if you have to blame yourself for everything that happens to you'...

Translation: Your bad deed makes your heart restless.

Context: the *Karapu* implies that it is always very difficult to change from bad habit.

12. Su tu diffu mwabta duna atsokta wa. (O.S.)

Literal translation: Whatever the mine cherishes, strength along cannot achieve it.

Translation: it is not everything you desire that you can get it.

Context: Cut your coat according to your size.

13. Kica mbilka ata kira lu.(O.S.)

Literal translation: Dress the worn on the pus.

Translation: What has gone wrong cannot be amended.

Context: The *Karapu* advices one to be cautious for any mistake committed cannot be corrected.

14. Mdir yu laku a sha ta laku wa.

Literal translation: One who asks for a direction would not miss the road.

Translation: Give room for corrections.

Context: If you are not corrected; you might miss the way.

15. Kila wuva ana kyi gwa-gwa.

Literal translation: A hasty hunting animal misses its prey.

Translation: Do not run faster than your shadow.

Context: The *Karapu* implies that always think before acting on something.

(3) Appropriateness

The quality or condition of being appropriate is emphasized in many *Karapuyeri* as illustrated below:

16. Ma ciri a mpa, muma akwa.

Literal translation: If the honey bee is tough, there is honey in the hive.

Translation: Stingy person always fight.

Context: The stingy person fights because he does not want someone to ask him for money or help.

17. Vir kidla anti mda ana nziha diva aka kila wa.

Translation: Do not wait until the hunting day approaches before you feed a dog.

Translation: Do not satisfy one only when you want his/her services.

Context: Do not wait for trouble to occur before you seek for the solution.

18. Mda a harta mbwa ta sha wa.

Literal translation: You cannot shut the door over yourself and be hidden.

Translation: You cannot prevent yourself from problem by shooting the door.

Context: Do your best and leave the rest to God.

19. Mi asikta dlima wa.

Literal translation: Hunger does not wait for Friday.

Translation: You should not wait until the need arises before you make an attempt to proffer a solution.

Context: Do the right thing at the right time.

20. Pci a tiri ka borborkurirni wa.

Literal translation: The Sun does not set with its heat.

Translation: There is time for everything.

Context: It implies that you should make use of every opportunity.

21. Civi a ula ka shiwuri wa.

Literal translation: A dry faeces does not smell.

Translation: Let us work when there is an opportunity.

Context: seek for the right thing at the appropriate time.

22. Mda duwar boni akumar bi wa.

Literal translation: One cannot hide his problem adjacent to a ban. .

Translation: One cannot hide his problems to others.

Context: Your face speaks what is in the heart. The problem you bear is not indicated on your face.

(4) Caution

Warnings against evil or danger of any kind; exhortation to wariness; advice; injunction are found in Karapu.

Below are the contexts in which they are used.

23. Mda halinta kir ka zhar kusar wa.

Literal translation: one cannot spoil the head without the waist being affected.

Translation: Both are important.

Context: The head is important as while as the waist. You cannot use one and leave the other.

24. Mda tsa kila ka ngkata tuwa alari wa.

Literal translation: You cannot beat a dog and stop him from crying.

Translation: You cannot stop one from expressing his problem.

Context: a shared problem is a solved problem.

25. So kumazi.

Literal translation: Danger ahead.

Translation: a terrible thing is foreseen ahead.

Context: This piece of a proverb is uttered in order to caution the listener on the need to prepare for the raining day.

26. Tsili ka kuthi kambila ga wuta sha.

Literal translation: Familiarity with the king cannot prevent misunderstanding.

Translation: Desist from what would lead to misunderstanding.

Context: The Karapu cautions one to be careful with close associates least one is betrayed.

27. Bwaliyang ar mtika kalkal ka kirari.

Literal translation: The injury seizes his head.

Translation: He is capable of doing the work.

Context: people would know you through your handwork.

28. Mda kil ka zhar duna aghili wa.

Literal translation: One cannot grow and leave his energy behind.

Translation: You cannot deny your responsibility.

Context: Perform better while you are still strong for you will get old.

(5) The child

The attitude of Bura in child upbringing and discipline are expressed in many Karapuyeri. The following are the illustration:

29. Ganggar nkyar a tua akwa kutari.

Literal translation: The young child's drum sounds in his stomach.

Translation: A child finds it difficult to express himself/herself in the midst of elders.

Context: It is the condition that makes a child to look inferior in the midst of elders.

30. Ku mbal-mbala sai udzum mbal-mbala(O.S.)

Literal translation: when a hole is meandered, only a bent stick can enter it.

Translation: Only a tough man can correct an indisciplined child.

Context: Since the child is not properly trained, s/ he can only fit in a perverse society.

31. Dunji a ndur kir wa.

Literal translation: A son cannot surpass his father.

Translation: A child cannot foresee the future.

Context: A child is expected to listen to his father's advice because s/he has little knowledge.

(6) Contentment

The state or degree of contentment is highly expressed in Bura *Karapuyeri*. The following are the illustrations:

32. Wa kuri mwaba.

Literal translation: Some one cannot achieve all his desire.

Translation: You cannot meet all your needs.

Context: Be content with what you have because human beings are not equal.

33. Su tu diffu hira ana tiksa mthlakur ni.

Literal translation: What the mind wants comforts oneself.

Translation: What one has, makes him comfortable.

Context: What you have at hand is better than what you are expecting.

34. Waski ka arni, mwala kita agaram kila ata whashim akwa bara.

Literal translation: Everybody has his/her own even dogs.

Translation: Be content with what you have.

Context: Be content with what you currently have for no condition is permanent.

35. Haghilkuma kuzukur fori su.

Literal translation: Turning back prevents forgetfulness.

Translation: No place like home.

Context: Always remember where you come from because no place like home.

36. Mda kica tsi ka divir mar wa.

Literal translation: co – wives do not wash their hand with each other's food.

Translation: Struggle makes one responsible.

Context: The *karapu* implies that you should not depend on some one's strength.

37. Mda pi akwa busuka tuwa da'a wa.(O.S.)

Literal translation: Man who has enough does not require more.

Translation: A rich man always is proud of his worth.

Context: The *Karapu* implies that rich man uses his money to get whatever he wants.

(7)Co-operation

Cooperation leads to progress.

38. Mnya duku ana ngki gar.

Literal translation: One voice can pull down a mountain.

Translation: a combine effort is needed.

Context: It expresses the importance of unity.

39. Tsi duku a ntsu mtika wa.(O.S.)

Literal translation: One hand cannot remove a chicken's feather.

Translation: It requires a combine effort.

Context: Two heads are better than one.

40. Kir duku a kita mbwa wa.(O.S.)

Literal translation: A single head cannot lift a roof.

Translation: A tress does not make a forest.

Context: It implies the importance of unity.

(8) Gratitude

The state of being grateful is common in Bura *Karapu*.

41. Mda a psikkima shishal ka huni mwarini wa.(O.S.)

Literal translation: Put a dwarf at the front and expect him to be fast.

Translation: Do not look down on some one.

Context: Learn to appreciate others because you do not know where your help would come from.

42. Mongzar nga dimi, ga pumta wa.(O.S.)

Literal translation: You cannot dispose your *mongza* (Bura delicacy that has savour) even if it is bad.

Translation: One cannot change his/her origin.

Context: Blood is thicker than water.

43. Yawutawa

Literal translation: I would not get it.

Translation: Impossible to get.

Context: The *Karapu* gives courage to someone to depend on God alone.

(9) The supremacy of God

The attributes of God which include: omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent have been prominent in Bura *Karapu*.

44. Zhara ka Hyel.

Literal translations: Leave it for God.

Translation: God knows better.

Context: Surrender all to God, the Creator of all things.

45. Thla gudukum kur, Hyel ana kidla ciri ala ri.

Literal translation: it is God who helps to drive flies away from a tailless cow.

Translation: God along can provide your needs.

Context: God helps the orphans, widow and all those in need.

46. Hyelapa mda wa.

Literal translation: God is unlike Man.

Translation: Is not God intention for man to suffer.

Context: This *Karapu* implies that human beings generally are wicked but God only is good.

(10) Goodness

The state of being good has been spelt out clearly in Bura *Karapuyeri*.

47. Sukwar msira ana tsi mi wa.(O.S.)

Literal translation: delicious soup does not quench hunger.

Translation: Leisure hardly satisfies someone.

Context: This *Karapu* expresses good virtues in whatever one does.

48. Dibino a dila a kira nfu mani.(oral S)

Literal translation: A date-palm does not blow its flowers under its tree.

Translation: a good character corrects bad manners.

Context: Well behaved person is praised by all.

(11) Hard work

The theme of work done by the hands, as opposed to by machine is expressed in Bura *Karapuyeri*.

49. Mwala pa sal.

Literal translation: a woman who is like a man.

Translation: A strong woman.

Context: The *Karapu* refers to a woman who despite the challenging situation endures and struggles for life.

50. Ma mda ku ya dakwai ka tsa jaka kapira.

Literal translation: if someone is born handsome, he should complement it with bathe.

Translation: If you are praised by others, do your best to maintain the status quo.

Context: Praising, showing love and care to those who are good make them feel proud.

51. Nca akili kum ata kisim, wala ata thlaliwa.

Literal translation: the eye cannot remove meat on the skin or on the leaf.

Translation: Do not interfere with someone's business.

Context: mind your business along and never bother yourself about others.

(12) Ignorance

The condition of being uninformed or uneducated is condemned in Bura society. Below are some illustrations:

52. Whi ta hidi ka turkwa tiha.

Literal translation: flee from air pollution and enter into diarrhea.

Translation: flee from bad to worse.

Context: Do not run from your responsibility.

53. Kisi chivi akwa kuta ana kata miwa.

Literal translation: Refusing to defecate does prevent someone from feeling hungry.

Translation: Keeping malice does not solve problems.

Context: The *Karapu* implies that when you share your ordeal with someone, it is over.

54. Sur mda akuri diba wa.(O.S.)

Literal translation: Someone's dress cannot clothe you better.

Translation: One should not boast with some body's wealth.

Context: Do not be proud of someone's wealth.

(13) Knowledge

The theme of fact of knowing about something is vital because is an instrument of development among Bura people. These are illustrations:

55. Ka tungnwa hala ,tsuka dihirni.

Literal translation: Leopard's design does not change his old age.

Translation: Good deeds are maintained till death.

Context: This *Karapu* admonishes someone to do good always because it pays.

56. Ma ga nggata ganga ata tuwa msira kaga sika sakar thluhurni.

Literal translation: a drum that produces pleasant sounds shall surely tear.

Translation: Eloquent speaker can easily tell lies.

Context: It alerts one to be careful when listening to eloquent speakers for they can be deceitful.

57. Bzir muzimaku ata psa babi.

Literal translation: a hunter's son begs for a shoe.

Translation: No condition is permanent.

Context: Nothing on this earth is permanent.

58. Yamwabulu pila, ma ku adi wa man sinta nditir ku ri?

Literal translation: the hyena says, 'if there is no hole what brought about the issue'?

Translation: In any rumor, there is an element of truth.

Context: Rumor alerts one to the message that is about to come.

59. Sedar ndla mda awula ata macikil.

Literal translation: Man's satisfaction is reflected on the residues of the food.

Translation: a sign of good living is seen physically.

Context: When you are in need be careful with those think they have enough.

Ciri ku hara hang ta mnya mbilku.

Literal translation: the number of the flies outnumber the size of the wound.

Translation: it is too cumbersome to solve a problem at once.

Context: The *Karapu* signifies that your power cannot control it; just bear with it.

60. Mwarakuma a ngkata mwaraghili wa.

Literal translation: forward movement does not prevent late coming.

Translation: Late is better than never.

Context: better late than never.

61. Shabar ata di nkiwal.

Literal translation: the wind bends the dust.

Translation: a bad company corrupts the good manner.

Context: The Karapu signifies that bad group always corrupts good manners, so you should be careful with them.

(14) Laziness

In Bura society, hard work is strongly encouraged as illustrated in the following *Karapu*:

62. Fil sal sal kasi pwa mwala mwala.

Literal translation: Jumped like a man and dropped like a woman.

Translation: it is not the beginning matters but the end.

Context: Do not accept a responsibility that surpasses your strengths.

63. Mtika harwa ana thamalwa.

Literal translation: a lazy chicken cannot be cheesy.

Translation: a lazy man depends on others.

Context: It implies that a lazy man becomes a slave to a hard working person.

64. Thlenta mda ana masta mafa mba-mba kir.

Literal translation: reliance on someone for help brings disappointment.

Translation: Better to hear from the host's mouth.

Context: Laziness plunges one into a trouble.

65. Nca kili kum ata kisim wa.

Literal translation: the eye cannot remove meat from the skin.

Translation: Work hard and achieve your goal.

Context: If you do not work, you would not be prosperous.

(15) Luck

The act of being good or bad is strongly expressed in Bura *karapu*.

66. Pela tsa sil, jaktir mwa.

Literal translation: the piece of a stone that hits the foot of a walking person does not increase his pace.

Translation: What happens by chance is an opportunity.

Context: Opportunity comes but once.

67. I wuta minta tipci

Literal translation: I saw minta (tree) on the broad day light.

Translation: Sign of bad luck.

Context: The *Karapu* signifies the *minta* trees symbolizes bad omen.

68. Vina nkila ta, siwa atawa.

Literal translation: Where there is a concernment to carry, robs are lacking.

Translation: Life to the poor is a hell and a game to the rich.

Context: The *karapu* expresses how life seems to mean a different thing to different people.

69. Pela duku ku tsi ika suda.

Literal translation: Two birds are killed with a stone.

Translation: Achieving two things at a time.

Context: Only God that makes the impossible possible.

(16) Patience

The quality of being patient in Bura society is a sine qua non for anybody who wishes to get on well in every aspect of life.

70. Mda a jika shaka akuma ta mtika atsitsa wa.

Literal translation: Do not count your chicken before it hatches.

Translation: Do not run faster than your shadow

Context: This proverb has to do with being patient, self control and diligent are God's.

71. Kila huva ana nkigwegwe.

Literal translation: the impatient dog misses his prey.

Translation: Patience is a key to success.

Context: better be contented than taking the wrong step.

72. Kita yimi ata diffa ga.

Literal translation: pour some water on your heart.

Translation: be comforted!

Context: The *Karapu* is used to encourage someone who loses a dire one or something precious.

(17) Pride

The quality or state of being proud is prominent in Bura Karapuyeri. The following are some illustrations:

73. Mda ta diva ka sika mitipi kugari wa.

Literal translation: You do not prepare a meal and wait for a visitor to partake.

Translation: Do not be proud of yourself.

Context: This *Karapu* admonishes someone to be humble so as to earn respect.

74. Ndila ata nu kuzukur ya.

Literal translation: Would a pestle pursue a herb?

Translation: Poor man who pretends to be affluence.

Context: The *Karapu* expresses how one pretends to be rich while he is poor or pretends to solve some problems that are beyond his capability.

(18) Relationship

The theme of connection or association is illustrated in *Karapuyeri*.

75. Mda siza kwarda ka kil wa.

Literal translation: You should not pity a slave and marry her.

Translation: One should not pity his/her partner for the sake of love.

Context: If you are destined to someone will surely be for you. Do not pity one for marriage sake.

76. Mda ana paka yangkur ata sil.

Literal translation: someone searches for a relation through the foot.

Translation: a man who has so many friends or a friendly fellow.

Context: The *Karapu* implies that an extravert makes friends easily.

(19) Regret

The act of feeling sober for the occurrence of the unwanted is expressed in the following proverbs:

77. Thir a tsili ka bda ka zharwa.

Literal translation: a long throat person cannot easily change his habit.

Translation: Behavior is heredity.

Context: Through your behavior your origin would be traced.

(20) Secrecy

The habit of keeping secrets is expressed in *karapu*:

78. Tar ga mta.

Literal translation: Till you die.

Translation: Only death can terminate your destiny.

Context: God holds your future in his hand.

79. Taku a ya ata ncawa.

Literal translation: A horse does not deliver in the present of onlookers.

Translation: secrecy donates respect.

Context: One does not keep secrets in the presence of those whose respect is due.

80. Da`a akwa, mbur`a akwa.

Literal translation: we as well as others are inclusive.

Translation: What is in the mind cannot be revealed.

Context: no one knows what is contained in the mind.

81. A ndir-wa anna tsi mda.

Literal translation: Silence kills.

Translation: Silence is dangerous.

Context: an open minded person hides no secret.

82. Pika ka mi, dangta yankur.

Literal translation: one who is hungry leaves to remember his dire one.

Translation: When one is in trouble he/she remember his/her relatives.

Context: During the time of comfort, one remembers his relatives first before his.

(21) Suffering

The state of one's pains or distresses is expressed in *Karapuyeri*.

83. Kwagu dlu zol kamyar bzir, wala kwagu dlu zol kamnyar yani.

Literal translation: A booboo tree is eaten because of its fruits.

Translation: Children cause insults to their parents.

Context: parents are insulted because of their children bad characters.

84. Mda pira ka duwar shimbur wa.

Literal Translation: One cannot hide his naval when taking bathe.

Translation: Problem cannot be hidden.

Context: inability to disclose one's problem would render the problem unresolved.

85. Mwla duku mshikira gwara

Literal translation: a man who is married to one woman is tantamount to a bachelor.

Translation: Monogamy is next to bachelorhood.

Context: it is better to remain a bachelor than to be married to just a woman.

86. Ma mda adi bda kum shishiwar tsa a tiha civi shishiwa.

Literal translation: If you did not eat hairy meat, you cannot pass hairy stool.

Translation: You will be held responsible for your problems.

Context: Avoid an occasion that you are not invited.

(22) Work

Effort expended on a particular task is emphasized in *karapu*.

87. Sutu diffu mwabta duna atsokka wa.

Literal translation: What the heart cherishes, strength cannot adore it.

Translation: What you desire cannot be achieved by force.

Context: If you struggle for your wish the beggar may be right.

88. Hadla a wuta mpwa wa, tar ma arnga.

Literal translation: involving in grinding corn flour does not automatically guarantee ownership of substance unless the corn is his/hers.

Translation: there cannot be a meaningful achievement without a hard work.

Context: Do not fold your hands in a joint business rather, contribute your quarter.

89. Viti kudika, ka dimitsir.

Literal translation: gone to pluck the legume leaves but ended up picking the seeds. Translation: Man proposes and God disposes.

Context: Only God knows tomorrow.

90. Tawula mba ka hahi mtika.

Literal translation: a lizard gets burnt due to the presence of a roasted chicken.

Translation: Get something by chance.

Context: one gets what he/she least expect.

91. Gari ki ola ana fori mwala ata kutir ya.

Literal translation: an issue which metamorphosis into a big one prevents a woman from sieving her flour.

Translation: The plight of a woman is unforgettable.

Context: Do not forget where you come from.

92. Pilari apa hara ri wa.

Literal translation: Saying is not doing it.

Translation: unable to keep promises.

Context: People judge you by your words.

93. Faku aya nggudi wa.

Literal translation: a farm cannot yield wretchedness.

Translation: Charity begins at home.

Context: If one had a bad character s/he might inherit it from his/her parents.

(23) Wickedness

The state of being wicked, evil disposition, immoral are expressed in many forms of *Karapu*⁹⁵.

94. Ndziha pela ka ndziha ncirkir.

Literal translation: Throw a stone; throw the forehead.

Translation: Plan evil and it will back fires on you.

Context: The *Karapu* expresses that a wicked man must reap his evil deeds.

95. Sal a pa chimba.

Literal translation: a man who is like chilly.

Translation: a wicked man.

Context: It refers to men who intolerant and dispassionate.

96. Ma ga ata la kur kumanggarkur, kara lah kwadang.

Literal translation: if you intend to plot evil, do it softly.

Translation: Evil doers reap what they plan.

Context: The *karapu* states that it does not pay to be wicked.

97. Wan a hira ki nama?

Literal translation: No one wants me to mend my ways.

Translation: everyone wants me to derail.

Context: People would rather criticize than cheer up.

98. Takur whi ana sim mpilari.

Literal translation: a fastest horse eats up his hooves.

Translation: The impatience man gets to a wrong target.

Context: Have a clean mind in all situations.

99. Zol aka mitipi, zol aka mdir di.

Literal translation: both the host and the stranger are struck in the head.

Translation: Wicked business man.

Context: The *Karapu* depicts the act of trading in which the trader does not discriminate his close relations from non family members since all that concerns him is the profit.

4. Conclusion

The significance of Bura proverbs is bound up with traditionally based on a hierarchy of rank dependent on birth as only the older person is allowed to use a proverb to caution the younger folk. Thus, in Bura traditional setting, proverbs serve to consolidate moral values. Often, they contain criticisms as well as eulogy - an urge to conform to the societal expectations.

Furthermore, proverbs among the Bura people accomplish a great deal of social significance as well as artistic importance. As clear detailed consideration of their conventional form and styles, Bura oral tradition – proverbs in particular represent a complex form of art which gives rise to imagination and power of the word and considered the healing substance to the mind.

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