

A Cogni-pragmatic Study of Animal Proverbs in English

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Abstract:

The present study is a cogni-pragmatic analysis of animal proverbs in English. The analysis shows how these proverbs are categorized according to the typology of Henock's Cognitive Ideals Hypothesis (CIH), how they share common underlying schema of cognition and how their cognitive mapping differs as a result of different contexts and uses. The study aims at investigating the cognitive mechanisms that are followed in the comprehension and the use of animal proverbs in English based on their socio-cultural and pragmatic environments. The study concludes that animal proverbs are of a conceptual communicative value and their use and interpretation involve some basic cognitive processes that are related to the relation between fauna as a natural phenomenon and languages users' emotional and intellectual perception of the world. .

1. Introduction

Animals take part in the constitution of the social, moral and religious context of man's life. Because of the importance of animals to human beings, animal words and expressions gain rich connotations in human communication. In every speech community, people usually use a large number of animal words or expressions to express feelings or describe some situation in various contexts. The communicative power of such words and expressions can be fully exploited when used in their meaningful texts or talks such as sayings, proverbs, literary texts, etc.

These words and expressions do not only refer to the animal itself but sometimes to part of its body, or products, or one of its traits. This depends on the way people interpret animal behaviour or any other attribute again in accordance with cultural aspects and social experience. Such contextualized

uses mostly bear cultural information and depend heavily on the obtained connotative meaning. They gain such additional domains of meaning as a result of the effect of various intervening cultural aspects on language like religion, economy, politics, arts and the like.. They are used in nonliteral expressions to express figurative meaning which is highly dependent on the connotative meaning of words which make their use mostly metaphorical or culturally bound. Sometimes they are used universally and in other cases, culture specific.

As animals used to describe human beings figuratively, the focus is mostly on attitudinal reactions to behavioral traits and personality qualities that are considered animal like. The figurative use of animal words and expressions often shows a culturally wide-spread attitudes to these animals, or even to myths of a fable-like, symbolic or iconic characters concerning their physical, psychological or behavioral attributes which are connected to some human counterparts. The perception of these attitudinal figurative characterizations depend on the perceived similarities and differences between such animals and human beings which are used either negatively or positively. These similarities and differences are sometimes more factual or mostly more subjective or emotional. This is done through different conceptual processes which are based on the concept of comparison, whether overt or covert. These resulted in various figurative devices such as simile, metaphor, metonymy, symbol, and the like. Such uses appear mostly in proverbs, dictums, admonitions or sayings.

The present study adopts the cogni-pragmatic approach depending mainly on Cognitive Ideals Hypothesis (CIH) in line with the views of Honeck and Temple (1994) and Honeck, (1997). This hypothesis ascertains that the processing of proverbs involves mantel building up of an ideal, standard, or norm starting with their literal meaning to generate the specific ideal of the proverb to be used then as a generic one in similar situations. This ideal is implicit or intuitive in the memory language users on the basis of shared

natural human strive for perfection. This ideal serves as basis for both of the construction and instantiation of proverbs (Henock and Welge 1997: 609).

2. Theoretical Background

Language users encounter proverbs in conversation, and proverbs have appeared in the literatures of the ancient Sumerians and Egyptians, the Talmud and Bible, the classical writings, and those of recent decades. This affinity leads language speakers to believe that they know what proverbs are. In fact, because of their enigmatic nature, proverbs proved to be undefinable and have been looked upon from different perspectives by scholars of various interests along history. Paremiologists and other scholars always emphasize that finding a generally agreed upon definition for a proverb is a hard task. Mieder (1993: 24) constructed a composite definition out of 55 definitions of the proverb he got from various people: "A phrase, saying, sentence, statement, or expression of the folk which contains above all wisdom, truth, morals, experience, lessons, and advice concerning life and which has been handed down from generation to generation". Then he reduces this definition to "a proverb is wisdom expressed in a sentence" (Mieder, 1993: 25). Such a short definition mirrors Lord John Russell's nineteenth century definition "a proverb is the wit of one and the wisdom of many" (quoted in Honeck and Welge 1997: 606-607). Proverbs, as loaded with cultural connotation, generally bear traditional notions and, as linguistic vehicles, they reflect the speaker's views, culture, beliefs and social behaviour and roles.

Animal proverbs constitute a significant part of the corpus of proverbs in almost any language. English is not an exception in this regard. However, animals, both as entities and words or expressions related to them, are associated with lots of contextualized figurative and / or connotative meanings which can be exploited creatively. Creativity also "involves exploitation of conventional familiar language, and in doing so generates multiple layers of meaning..." (Philip, 2011: 4). The treatment of the pragmatic, figurative and symbolic functions of animal words and expressions requires attention to their contextual meaning and cultural evaluation. These words and expressions must be evaluated differently from those of other realms, such as flora and

climate. The zoological characteristics and the specific human traits with which these animals are associated within a particular fauna should be identified to acquire the meaning intended by the use of these animal words and expressions. Discussing their figurative and symbolic use as both a stylistic device and a rhetorical vehicle involves a linguistic and stylistic investigation of this relation (Forti, 2008: 4). However, in some animal proverbs, animals are personified and used metaphorically by ascribing to them human characteristics and activities. They think, speak, love, blame or fear, laugh, and likely to be used for allegory, criticism and sarcasm as proverbs are generally "designed to correct someone's thoughts or behaviours, a process that requires pointing out that some ideal was not attained" (Henock, 1997: 83) .

Proverbs are approached by scholars from different points of view: religious, formal, traditional, cultural, psychological, cognitive, and on so. Nevertheless, paremiographers, paremiologists, psychologists and linguists provided libraries with books, dissertations, scholarly articles and historical and comparative dictionaries of proverbs. Generally, there are two basic approaches of the study of proverbs. The first focuses on the formal properties and semantic content of proverbs. The other concentrates on the communicative and social role of proverbs.

However, proverbs become a fruitful challenge for cognitive studies as their creation, comprehension, interpretation and use involve various "mental processes such as categorization, inference, and analogy" (Henock and Welge 1997: 605). The key premise in the cognitive approach to proverbs is that they are best looked upon "as abstract theoretical mental entities, rather than as familiar, culturally embedded forms" (Henock and Welge 1997: 606). This is due to the belief that the cognition of proverb entails a complex set of cognitive processes that are shared by all humans. From the cognitive view, the basic functions of proverbs are psychological, i.e. to categorize events and motivate thoughts and behaviours outside their conventional domain. Besides, they have pragmatic functions such as urging, warning, shaming, etc.

Moreover, for most cognitivists, proverbs are flexible and function on the principle of generalization. They are flexible in the sense that their figurative meaning is used in a wide range of contexts. Their laconic form bears a lot of truth, wisdom, and knowledge in an artistic expressions. They are used in public speeches, political rhetoric, press, books, advertisement and so on. The instantiation of proverbs moves from what is general and abstract to the concrete and specific. Addressees are called to make generalization based on that instantiation to move from the concrete to the general through contextualization. Barajas (2010: 122) maintains that when the addressee comes across "an utterance that seems incompatible with the context", s/he starts to conciliate the two via a basic cognitive process of the recognition of patterns to build generalization from specific observation. What is noticeable here is the concreteness of proverbs which pushes the addressee towards abstraction which is one of its paradoxical features.

The cognitive approach allows the researcher to access the cognitive principles and motivations that underlie the communicative function of the use of proverbs and their interpretations. It also sheds light on the cultural beliefs reflected in proverbs.

CIH looks at proverbs from a problem-solving perspective where their understanding starts from what is specific to move to the generic. It starts with the ideal generated by the specific context of the proverb (sometimes even a story related to the proverb) and then generalized to include so many other different but related situations. The problem exists as a result of "a discrepancy between a current state and a goal state" (Honeck, 1997: 128). The comprehension of proverbs is a process that starts with the initial exposure to the literal meaning of the proverb to acquire a connotative meaning and ends with applying that meaning to get the message. So it starts with the literal meaning of the proverb as an utterance to generate a specific ideal, and then this specific ideal generates a generic one that could be used later on in similar or related situations. All these stages verify the processing of proverbs involves problem-solving process. These processes, undoubtedly, require inferences, associations, and may be even imagery. This model

permits access to universality and specificity in the cognition of proverbs as well as it allows looking at the cultural background of their uses.

Cognitively speaking, the use of animal words and expressions in proverbs is suggestive and economical since the addressee acquires the hidden meaning(s) behind their iconic and cryptic forms. Besides, they activate a full scene about a certain event in the mind of the addressee by referring back to their socio-cultural contexts. For instance, 'bees' universally stand for 'industrial people'; or a proverb like 'a cat in gloves catches no mice' where its cognition depends on the process of creating a scene of a cat with gloves (which is an animate attribute given to an animal, namely wearing gloves) that prevent it from catching a mouse. The implied meaning in this proverb could be 'if someone is too polite may not get what s/he wants'. Going further, this can be applied to anyone who is too careful which may prevent him or her from achieving his aims. This is the way how the addressee moves from the specific meaning generated by the literal sense to the generic by the connotative one which creates the idealised meaning. This is because the addressee assumes that proverbs in general are mostly about human concerns, activities, and faculties. S/he has to manipulate the literal meaning in connection with the available contextual information to gain a satisfactory solution for decoding the message of the proverb. This problem-solving process "pushes the addressee to go beyond the literal meaning" (Honeck and Temple, 1994: 94).

Both of the denotative and connotative meanings of animal words and expressions are recalled by the addressee to develop a "cognitive framework of codes" for decoding the message of the proverb (Fomukong, 2016: 154). Proverbs reflect the world view which is based on the language users' observations of the world. The addressee utilizes the available cognitive mechanism such as comparison, reflection, abstraction, creative mapping to apply these codes to interpreting proverbs in accordance with his or her experiences of the world around them which is called "cognitive environment" by Sperber, and Wilson (1986: 38). This environment is constituted by a shared information among language users built on culture,

linguistic knowledge, interpersonal knowledge and knowledge about the current topic. This process of interpretation that is based on cognitive mechanisms invites the addressee as a decoder to take part in creating the intended generic or specific intended meaning of the proverb.

2.1 The Extended Conceptual Base Theory

Honeck (1997: 128) explains the Extended Conceptual Base Theory (ECBT), which is an update of the Conceptual Base Theory, within a problem-solving general frame. When the proverb is uttered, its literal meaning does not fit the conversation, and, therefore, the addressee needs to solve the problem of its meaning. Both of the addresser and the addressee share a certain cognitive environment, which decide their access to the use and message of the proverb. According to Honeck (1997: 129–130), the comprehension of the proverb occurs in three phases:

1. "The literal transformation phase",
2. "The figurative meaning phase" and
3. "The instantiation phase", also called the "revised meaning phase".

As Honeck explains, when the addressee first comes across a proverb, s/he builds a literal understanding of it. Then, s/he understands that there is no immediate referent in the “cognitive environment” and that the utterance is stated in cryptic linguistic form. Thus, s/he recognizes that the utterance is a proverb, so s/he looks for a meaning in another level. Then, the addressee uses the 'Ostension Maximization Principle', by which s/he will searches for a broader, more general, meaning that can subsume more than the literal instantiation. S/he moves from the literal to the general by virtue of using inferences, associations, and elaboration in relation to the referents mentioned in the proverb. S/he uses the literal mental model in relation with contextual information to reach the satisfactory meaning (solution). When the addressee reaches this point of generalization s/he becomes able to provide a figurative meaning for the proverb and to connect that meaning to the context. The

processing of proverbs according to this theory is followed in both irrelevant-context and relevant context situations.

2.2 The Cognitive Ideals Hypothesis (CIH)

CIH has a number of implications in the study of proverbs. It is applied to handling "proverb creation, the occurrence of oppositional concepts in the proverb, a typology of proverbs, the literal content of the proverb, comprehension, the conceptual motivating power of the proverb, production, and pragmatics" (Honeck, 1997: 137).

One of the functions of proverbs is to enable language speakers to hold ideals, a norms, or a standards. Communities and individuals believe that there are always ideal ways by which things should be done or occurred. Honeck (1997: 137) calls these "generic ideals", which are clarified and brought to short-term memory by proverbs through concepts of confirmation and deviation to show perfection. This perfection works on the level of the various realms of human environment including the physical, biological, psychological, and sociocultural. Hence, such a perfection is derived from these various constraints that work on every level of existence. As a result, each generic ideal is manifested in different ways in different realms. This is the hidden concept which underlie and motivate the proverb which is particularized and represented by what Honeck (1997: 137) calls "specific ideal".

The generic ideal is general and universal resulted from what is common among humans on biological, psychological, and cultural levels. While the specific ideal is particularized and manifested in a more cultural or personal realization. This is reflected in the text of the proverb as it is rendered in specific linguistic form. Therefore, language users encode perfection in generic ideals and in specific ideals to be decoded through the interpretation of proverbs. However, as Barajas (2010: 119) puts it, CIH assumes the concept of perfection is a part of the "mental repertoire" of humans. So they judge the world and experiences within it on the basis of confirming or deviating an ideal standard. Thus, proverbs are representations of ideals and

"regretted deviations from such ideals" (Schipper, 2010: 271). This process of decoding is done by two cognitive mechanisms: confirmation or deviation i.e. either by manifesting the ideal or by showing the opposite. These ideals are the underlying beliefs behind the use of the proverb. Hence, the same generic ideal sometimes underlie more than one proverb.

CIH clarifies mechanisms used in the creation and comprehension of proverbs which are binary contrast, opposition, and comparison. The concept of perfection tolerate nothing in between, i.e. ideals either reached or not. In addition, according to Henock "the easiest way to point to an ideal is by expressing a contrast between what the ideal is and a state of affairs that deviates from it". Proverbs work on the basis of perfection and its alternative opposite which is imperfection, or as called by Henock himself: "nonperfection"(1997: 138-139). Hence, when one looks at proverbs comes across many dualities; such as good-evil, good-bad, little-many, bright and dark, and so on.

One of the major premises of Henock's model is that the comprehension of proverbs requires some mental and interactive memory processing (1997: 141). These proverbs present some meaning that provoke generic ideals. The generic ideals are part of the tacit knowledge which is the outcome of mental processes and memory. This is manifested in the sum of facts and beliefs that language users have of their cognitive environment. This can be seen in people cognition that there are some things more valuable than others; physical events have their own verified cognitive state; some work is harder than others; direct events tend to call forth more attention and so on. These ideals offer the basis for the creation and comprehension of proverbs.

Proverbs bring to people's attention and short-term memory some meaning they are expected to know already that is presented in a laconic artistic manner and sometimes invite them to generate the meaning by themselves. When they come across a proverb, they feel a certain familiarity with it by recognizing the beliefs involved in it. This is because intuitive or tacit memory maintains beliefs, facts, and generic ideals as opposed to

semantic memory, which is declarative or proposition-based (Honeck 1997). Thus, most adult language users who have sufficient experience that helps them to build up a tacit knowledge can understand these proverbs. As Aristotle points out: "Because they are common, they seem true, as though everyone agreed" (1395a, 11; 1991: 185). This is very much clear when the specific ideal encoded in the proverb is culturally specific and missing its reference may obstruct understanding the connotative meaning of the proverb. The proverb induce a generic ideal which is less culturally centralized as the addressee moves from what is specific to the generic as the ideal can be applied in various similar or related situations.

2.3 Typology of Proverbs According to CIH

One of the implications of CIH is typology of proverbs, i.e. proverbs are divided into two basic categories. The first includes "ideal-confirming proverbs" which refers to those proverbs that assert or affirm an ideal and how to realize it explicitly. The second includes "ideal-disconfirming proverbs" which refers to proverbs that assert an ideal implicitly via presenting some deviation from it, i.e. by disconfirming it. (Honeck, 1997:138-139)

In the ideal-confirming group, the specific ideal is explicit to the extent that the addressee is told how to reach it and its opposite is implicit. The specific ideal in the ideal-disconfirming group is expressed by presenting a situation which deviates from it to the addressee to tell him or her what s/he should not think or do or expect. However, both of these groups use a variety of binary oppositions to express the ideals which could be explicit or implicit and comprehended in forms dualities. This, according to Henock (1997: 140), is manifested in different rhetorical forces; as a proverb may "call for certain action" or "ask us to note a state of affairs" or "implicitly ask us to consider the implications of possible state of affairs".

These ideals encoded in proverbs are culturally bounded to their decoding to comprehend the appropriate figurative understanding depends on addressee's knowledge of their reference. Consequently, the proverb typology

generated by CIH confirms that there are ideal-confirming and ideal-disconfirming proverbs. Ideals are either confirmed as positively valued and sought goals or proverbs presents deviations from these goals which are negatively valued and hence avoided. The ideal-confirming proverbs exhort addressees to act in consistency with the generic ideal denoted by the proverb, while ideal-disconfirming proverbs exhort them not to act in the manner shown by the proverb.

Proverbs do more than exhortation and to delve into the pragmatics of proverb all elements of communicative situation are to be taken in consideration. These elements that provide the proverb with pragmatic force, according to Henock (1997: 143) are:

1. The people involved.
2. Their relationship.
3. Their shared cognitive environment.
4. The topic of the proverb
5. And the proverb itself.

As such, the pragmatics of the proverb depend on the entire communication situation. The cognitive approach endeavour to provide a comprehensive theory that shows how all these elements shape the way meaning is encoded in the proverb for effective communication. It also examines the process of decoding and interpretation as related to the motivational potential behind the proverb. CIH looks at proverbs as having "strong potential for activating the motivation for effective rhetoric and message making" (Honeck, 1997: 144).

Henock (1997: 144-145) sums up the claims of CIH in following points:

- (a) Generic ideals describe a mentally created state of perfection.
- (b) Generic ideals are universal and common to most cultures.

- (c) Generic ideals can be instantiated in different ways at the generic level.
- (d) Generic ideals motivate and constrain specific ideals without overdetermining their content.
- (e) Specific ideals are more culture and individual specific.
- (f) A generic ideal can result in two kinds of proverbs, those that affirm the ideal and those that express a deviation from it.
- (g) Because ideals are either attained or not, in discrete fashion, proverbs often use contrasts to allude to them.
- (h) A proverb's exhortative and pragmatic effects in general are partially determined by the generic ideal that underlies it.
- (i) Generic ideals provide the rational motivation for a proverb's pragmatic force.
- (j) Proverbs are created and produced to satisfy a generic ideal.

According to Honeck (1997: 141), the application of the CIH affects the comprehension of proverbs: proverbs give "information that arouses thoughts about generic ideals, and these ideals provide a basis for assembling an understanding of the proverb". These ideals play a large role in the process of the convergence of figurative meaning which is the conceptual base for encoding and decoding of proverbs.

3. Method and Data

Collecting data of proverbs in a relevant contexts in real life situations is not an easy task. CIH tackles proverbs in both relevant and irrelevant context of situation. So the present study is carried on the irrelevant context of situation level. The animal proverbs that constitute the corpus are studied with reference to contextualized explanations given to each proverbs in specialized dictionaries. This is based on the fact that proverbs do not refer to

themselves as most of the other communicative utterances do. Animal proverbs refer to humans in terms of animals or things related to animals.

The corpus of the study is (177) animal proverbs that appear in Speake's *The Oxford Dictionary of Proverbs*. 5th Edition out of (1,114) proverbs. Interpretations of proverbs are taken from Speake (2007) and Manser (2007) *The Facts on File Dictionary of Proverbs*. However, any proverb that has a word or an expression that refers to the animal or its kids, or males or females or part of its body or production is regarded as an animal proverb in the present study. The researcher examines these animal proverbs and categorizes them into ideal-confirming type and ideal-disconfirming proverbs. This categorization is based on the interpretations and explanations given in the above dictionaries. The study also traces the conceptual processes followed in generating ideals in the comprehension of these proverbs and shows what is specific or universal among them. Then, within each category different pragmatic functions are determined and discussed with some sample animal proverbs.

4. Analysis

The Analysis of English animal proverbs in the present study attempts to delve into the cognitive and pragmatic bases of their use, interpretation of the meaning, and mapping. The analysis is basically done by categorizing the corpus according to CIH. They are divided into ideal-confirming and ideal-disconfirming animal proverbs.

Consider the following sample of two ideal-confirming animal proverbs which tell what the ideal is and how to reach it. Some of them tell the addressee what to do in certain situation:

First catch your **HARE**. [1]

Let sleeping **DOGS** lie. [2]

The first proverb and its variant 'First catch your **RABBIT** and then make your stew' asks the addressee not to act in anticipation of something that is yet to be achieved. So the generic ideal confirmed in this proverb is to avoid making plans about what people will do when they have something until they actually have it. The confirmed ideal in the second proverb is that one should not instigate trouble and to leave to leave things as they are if they might cause trouble. Through the allusion of waking up a fierce watchdog, the proverb one should leave inactive problems to remain so this injunction to avoid stirring up troubles. The addressee should not cause trouble by disturbing a stable, but potentially problematic, situation. In both cases, the imperative mode is very clear which is manifested in giving instructions.

Some other ideal-confirming proverbs come in the statement mode as the specific ideal is expressed explicitly by means of binary contrast:

A **BIRD** in the hand is worth two in the bush. [3]

A live **DOG** is better than a dead **LION**. [4]

HONEY catches more **FLIES** than vinegar. [5]

In proverb [3], or its variant "A **BIRD** in the hand is worth a hundred flying", the ideal is that it is better to accept or be content with what one has in possession than to try to get more and risk losing everything. That is to say, it is better to preserve maximum value even if one possesses less than what exists. This proverb depends on binary contrasts as a means to make the ideal explicit; i.e. between 'one bird and two' and between 'in hand and in the push or flying'. The generic ideal here is that a benefit available now is more valuable than some possibly larger future benefit. The same can be seen in proverbs [4] and [5] where in the former the contrast is between 'live' and 'dead' and in the later between 'honey' and 'vinegar'. Some of them state the ideal directly:

A bellowing **COW** soon forgets her **CALF**. [6]

A **BARKING DOG** never **BITES**. [7]

BIRDS of a **FEATHER FLOCK** together. [8]

Proverb [6] means that excessive show of grief and mourning quickly pass and laments or complaints are often the first to subside. The confirmed ideal here is that one should put in mind that excessive grief and loud complaints are always cured quickly by forgetfulness. In proverb [7] the generic ideal is that someone who makes threats all the time seldom carries out the threats or People who make the most or the loudest threats are the least likely to take action. Proverb [8] expresses the generic ideal that similar people or those who have similar characters or interests tend to associate with each other and often choose to spend time together.

All **CATS** are grey in the dark. [9]

All is **FISH** that comes to the net. [10]

In [9] and [10], generalization is very clear by the use of the pronoun 'all' at the beginning of both. The specific ideal of the former which turns on the concept that the night obscures all distinguishing features, is used in a variety of contexts. It confirms the generic ideal that People in fact have no distinguishing features, and their appearance becomes unimportant, in certain situations. Variants of this proverb are: 'all cats are black at night' and 'at night all cats are grey'. The generic ideal confirmed in the later is that anything that comes along is accepted and turned or can be used to advantage.

Some others expresses the specific ideal by referring directly to a particular behaviour or characteristic. This can be noticed in proverbs [11] and [12] below where the focus on 'curiosity' and 'hunger' respectively:

Curiosity killed the **CAT**. [11]

Hunger drives the **WOLF** out of the wood. [12]

Some other animal proverbs emphasize how to reach the specific ideal; for instance:

If two ride on a **HORSE**, one must ride behind [13]

Little **BIRDS** that can sing and won't sing must be made to sing. [14]

With a sweet tongue and kindness, you can drag an **ELEPHANT** by a hair. [15]

The generic ideal in proverb [13] directs those who are engaged in a joint activity or enterprise to let one of them take the leadership and the others have to be content with a more subordinate role in order to keep on till they achieve aim(s). Proverb [14] states how to behave with those who refuse to tell what they know by forcing them to do so. The elephant proverb [15] shows the addressee how through kind words one can convince even stubborn or dull people.

In the following ideal-confirming animal proverbs, the propositional structures show a relation of cause and effect on both of the specific and generic ideal levels:

Fine **FEATHERS** make fine **BIRDS**. [16]

If wishes were **HORSES**, beggars would ride. [17]

If you lie down with **DOGS**, you will get up with **FLEAS**. [18]

If you pay peanuts, you get **MONKEYS**. [19]

If you run after two **HARES** you will catch neither. [20]

Money makes the **MARE** to go. [21]

When the **CAT**'s away, the mice will play. [22]

Where **BEES** are, there is **HONEY**. [23]

Where the carcass is, there shall the **EAGLES** be gathered together.

[24]

Moreover, these animal proverbs show how the rhetorical (pragmatic) forces are different and the recognition of ideal of a proverb provides the motivation of its message. Some of them asks the addressee to consider the implications of a state of affairs and others calls for a certain action while the some others ask him or her to note a state of affairs.

In some animal proverbs the cognitive processing of their messages is based on the strategy of violating the behavioural consistency which is instantiated as ethical one. These are the ideal-disconfirming animal proverbs. Their interpretation depends on reminding people of the general fact that activities in the physical world are carried out better in the perfect or appropriate time and place through showing a violated image of the norms and standards.

A **BIRD** never flew on one wing. [25]

Why keep a **DOG** and **BARK** yourself? [26]

Don't shut the **BARN** door after the **HORSE** is stolen. [27]

Don't change **HORSE** in midstream. [28]

Don't put all your **EGGS** in one basket. [29]

In proverb [25], the specific ideal is that a bird should have two wings in order to fly. The generic ideal is that to do some act or task one should have all the requirements or something extra or additional is required. However, it often used to hint that another drink or some more money would be better.

The specific ideal in proverb [26] which comes in the form of a rhetorical question, is that barking is the job of dogs not men. The generic ideal expressed in this proverb is that if one employs somebody to do something for him or her, there is no point in doing it himself or herself.

In proverb [27], the generic ideal is that it would be too late to take action to prevent an undesirable event after it has already happened. Thus it indirectly confirms that the timing of the action is as important, if not more important, as the action itself. Similarly, the generic ideal of timing activities for better results in proverb [28] is confirmed in the sense that when embark on a course of action or activity, it is better not to change tactics or methods along the way.

In all the proverbs in this category, ideal-disconfirming, the ideal, norm, or standard is expressed through a situation where its deviant form presenting is presented. Such as 'putting all eggs in one basket' in proverb [29] which tells the addressee not to exploit all his or her opportunities. So it is better to spread risks or investments so that if an enterprise fails one will not lose everything. As the case in ideal-confirming proverbs, ideal disconfirming ones use various expressed or implied oppositions. These oppositions tells the addressee what not to think or do or expect. S/he is not supposed to expect 'a bird to fly with one wing; not to bark himself when s/he has already got a dog'; not 'to let the horse to be stolen then shut the door of the barn'; one must not put all his or her eggs in one basket; and so on.

In both of the ideal-confirming and disconfirming animal proverbs, the generic ideals are illustrated by specific ideals through animal traits, activities or qualities expressed literally or figuratively. Some of these animal proverbs seems literal in the sense that they are based on the animal world. They tackle qualities, traits, or activities of animals to in their specific ideals to generate generic ideals which refers to human world. Most of these are figurative:

A **CAT** in gloves catches no **MICE**. [30]

DOG does not eat **DOG**. [31]

EAGLES don't catch **FLIES**. [32]

HAWKS will not pick out **HAWKS'** eyes. [33]

It's an ill **BIRD** that fouls its own nest. [34]

The higher the **MONKEY** climbs the more he shows his **TAIL**. [35]

The **LEOPARD** does not change his spots. [36]

Some other ideal-disconfirming animal proverbs talk about the relation between human beings and animals on the level of their specific ideal. Then in the phase of instantiation their interpretation generates generic ideals that refer to human nature, activities, or actions:

Do not call a **WOLF** to help you against the **DOGS**. [37]

Do not throw **PEARLS** to **SWINE**. [38]

Don't count your **CHICKENS** before they are **HATCHED**. [39]

Don't put the cart before the **HORSE**. [40]

Don't sell the **SKIN** till you have caught the **BEAR**. [41]

Never look a gift **HORSE** in the mouth. [42]

You can take a **HORSE** to the water, but you can't make him drink.

[43]

You can't teach an old **DOG** new tricks. [44]

You cannot catch old **BIRDS** with chaff. [45]

In the above ideal-disconfirming animal proverbs, the specific ideals which are based on some qualities and traits of the animals instantiate generic ideals that are used in situations particularly related to human nature or behaviour.

However, these category of animal proverbs, where the norms and standards are expressed by deviation, express various rhetorical functions, such as warning, advising or even instructing people of the way how things are done or managed perfectly.

5. Conclusions:

English animal proverbs have effective conceptual power as they comment on anything through judgement, attitude or belief within the interests and motivation of the language users as a significant category of English proverbs. The study shows these animal proverbs share the same cognitive processing that is based on the use of specific observations from human experience with animal and their world to make points which are general to instantiate generic ideals that are used in various situations. This is shown through the application of CIH as the domain of the ideals expressed in these proverbs either through confirmation or deviation of some norms and standards for human judgement of the world and experiences. In addition, the application of CIH in the present study through the typological categorization of animal proverbs proves that language users follow some universal cognitive processes in the use and comprehension of the various messages expressed by these proverbs. The typological scheme of CIH (ideal-confirming and ideal-disconfirming) shed lights on the oppositional and analogical mapping strategies applied in using and understanding these proverbs and guides the addressee toward the implied ideals.

This approach provides an opportunity to study animal proverbs independently of a given culture, context, or individual, and at the same time reminds of the soci-cultural norms they embody. The figurative meaning of these proverbs may give pragmatic meaning as well so even proverbs that uttered in isolation imply their addressers' intentions which are ideals. The use of CIH helps to predict interpretations of animal proverbs and this can mostly justify new inferences in various contexts. This could be of significant importance in overcoming difficulties in experimental work on proverbs and studying proverbs as utterances. This can also help in building an authorized data base for proverbs dictionaries especially for second and foreign language learners.

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