

Subanen Proverbs: Its Level of Influences

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Abstract — The purpose of this study was to gather existing Subanen proverbs in Matam, Katipunan, Zamboanga Del Norte, in order to establish the extent of such proverbs. It underlines the significance of the Subanen Proverbs and determines their level of social, moral, and spiritual influence.

A survey questionnaire was used involving 50 Subanen respondents of Matam, Katipunan Zamboanga Del Norte. The researchers prepared a questionnaire to be given to the respondents. The answers of the respondents were recorded for statistical treatment. The use of percentage computation was used to determine the level of influence of Subanen proverbs in terms of social, moral, and spiritual. The use of Chi-Square Test was used to determine the level of influences of Subanen Proverbs in terms of social, moral, and spiritual among 50 Subanen respondents when grouped according to their profile. This was also used to test the relationship between the Subanen level of influences in terms of social, moral, and spiritual according to Subanen Proverbs.

The level of influences of Subanen Proverbs in terms of social, moral, and spiritual was much agreed upon by the Subanen respondents. The study concludes that there is indeed an influence of Subanen Proverbs in terms of Social, Moral, and Spiritual among the Subanen tribes in Matam, Zamboanga del Norte. They have applied desirable proverbs in their day to day living to receive instruction of wisdom, justice, judgment, and equity.

The researchers recommend preserving, enhancing, and using Proverbs as a means of instruction to every individual in order for them to be aware of what is right and wrong.

Keywords — *Subanen Proverbs, Social Influences Moral Influence, Spiritual Influence*

I. Introduction

Subanen is an indigenous language spoken by approximately 300,000 people inhabiting the small villages of Malayal, Lintangan, Lanote, and Limpapa, in Sibuco district; and in parts of the municipalities of Siocon, Baliguian, Dicolom, Labason, Surabaya, and Ipil areas on the Zamboanga Peninsula, Mindanao, Philippines. Some dialectal differences can be detected in the speech of those from the different Subanon speaking areas. The word subanon is also called “subanu”, “subano”, and “subanen”, they are the biggest group of lumad or non-Muslim Indigenous cultural communities on the island of Mindanao. As a Philippine language belonging to the Malayo-Polynesian branch of the Austronesian languages (Lewis et al. 2015, Blust 1991, 2005), Western Subanen is one of the eight members of the Subanon languages (Lobel 2013), a subgroup of the Greater Central Philippines (Blust 1991, 2005). The eight members of the Subanen languages are Western Kolibugan, Tawlet-Kolibugan, Salug-Good, Southern Subanen, Central Subanen, Northern Subanen, and Eastern Subanen and Western Subanon (Lobel 2013). Subanen uses ancient proverbs that connect individuals from their ancestors to the young minds of the new

generations. Proverbs are encountered in everyday life in oral communication and written works. Probably proverbs express a truth based on common sense or experience, and it reflects as well in the attitudes of an individual. The main purpose of proverbs is to give people's assessment of the objective reality of phenomena as an expression of the world. Proverbs and sayings express the peculiar store or mindset of the peoples' intelligence; a way of judgment; view of features; indication of the way of life and everyday life; the spirit and character of the people; their manners and customs, and beliefs and superstitions. Hence, proverbs and sayings most clearly illustrate the lifestyle, and geography, and history, and traditions of a community united by a single culture. Whiting (1994) has quoted Apstolius in defining the proverbial saying as "a statement which conceals the clear in the unclear, or which through concrete images indicates intellectual concepts, or which makes clear the truth in furtive fashion". And further, in this fashion, a proverb is "a trite phrase constantly used in popular speech or a saying that has become thoroughly habitual in our daily customs and life". In short, proverbs are popular sayings that contain advice or state a generally accepted truth. They deal with issues that border on the values, norms, institutions, and artifacts of the society across the whole gamut of people's experiences. They are used to support arguments, provide lessons and instruction, and stress shared values (Mieder, 2008). Lau et al. (2004) argue that since proverbs are said to be both linguistic items (possessing concrete elements of verbal and logical structure) and behavioral (possessing motives, strategies, and outcomes), it is then imperative to discuss not only what they are in linguistic and structural senses but also how proverbs can influence or reflect the social behavior of the society.

Thereby the aim of this paper is to collect the existing proverbs of Subanen; determine the extent of such proverbs; emphasize the importance of Subanen Proverbs and find out the level of influence of Subanen Proverbs in terms of social, moral, and spiritual.

Literature Review

Liontas (2018) discusses the value of proverbs and idioms in increasing cultural awareness across the curriculum. It contends that mastery of the functions that idioms and proverbs serve in daily discourse, as well as the means for performing those functions in meaningful communicative ways without violating social appropriation conventions, is far more important than simply learning a large number of a contextualized idioms and proverbs. It implies that the metaphoric and literal interpretability inherent in idioms and proverbs, as well as lexical similarity, familiarity, compositionality, predictability, literality, translatability, and transparency, are all important dimensions in the processing of both target-language and native-language idioms and proverbs, and that the degree of decomposability or analyzability in context-sensitive situations has a significant influence on idiom/proverb processing.

Moreover, proverbs are sentences that have been passed down through generations to convey wisdom, truth, or morals. Because of their importance in preserving religious, cultural, and historical aspects, machine translation has been used to translate them from one language to

another. As the demand for online translation grows, the accuracy of machine translation systems has become one of the most pressing issues.

In the current study of Al-khresheh & Almaaytah (2018), they sought to investigate the linguistic challenges that machine translation may encounter when translating English proverbs into Arabic. It also attempted to validate the importance of human intervention in resolving the accuracy problem. The findings revealed that 'Google translate' faced some linguistic obstacles in carrying out the same meaning of English proverbs into Arabic. Lexically, words that have multiple meanings present countless challenges and difficulties to online translation. On the other hand, the different linguistic structures between English and Arabic make the process of translation sometimes a bit challenging as both languages belong to unrelated families. Simply put, machine translation is expected to encounter various problems in providing meaningful logical translation. A detailed discussion is provided and recommendations for further research are given based on the analysis.

According to Ebrahimi (2020), language is formed in the context of culture; on the other hand, the culture of a society is reflected in the language's mirror. Language has a cultural backbone as a communication tool. This cultural backing is in fact the basis for the emergence of vocabulary and its conceptual boundaries, as well as the decisive factor in the image and image reflected in the words and proverbs. Because different ethnic groups have different cultures, there are problems on the path to the relationship between nations and the mutual understanding of languages.

Meanwhile, proverbs play an important role in marriage counseling. Patience, cooperation, respect, sex, self-denial, hard work, faithfulness, loyalty, humility, child bearing and caring, and love were among the topics addressed by the counsellors. The implication is that professional marriage counselors and priests should use proverbs in their counseling sessions because proverbs depict what the Akan value as their worldview and an embodiment of their soul. This will ensure that you have a thorough understanding of the complexities of marriage (Owu-Ewie, 2019).

II. Methodology

This study used a quantitative method in which a survey questionnaire contained the influence of Subanen proverbs in terms of social, moral, and spiritual. The questionnaires were given to the selected 50 respondents who participated in the study. The scores of the respondents in the survey were recorded and tallied for statistical analysis. The percentage and weighted mean were utilized to determine the profile of the respondents and the level of influence of Subanen proverbs in terms of social, moral, and spiritual.

III. Results and Discussion

The respondents' profile in terms of age. Results revealed that there were eight or 16%, having ages between 18-28 years old; five or 10% aged between 29-38 years old; ages 39- 48 and 49- 58 with the same number or equivalent of percentage 9 or 18%; 19 or 38% having ages between 59 years old and above. This implies that the majority of the respondents involved in the study were already in the adult ages 59 years old and above. The following will be seen in table 1.

Table 1 Profile of the Respondents in Terms of Age

Age	F	%
18 – 28 years old	8	16%
29 – 38 years old	5	10%
39 – 48 years old	9	18%
49 – 58 years old	9	18%
59 years old and above	19	38%
Total	50	100%

Table 2 presents the profile of respondents in terms of sex. There were 14 Subanen or 28% of the respondents were males and 36 or 72% of the respondents were females.

Table 2 Profile of the Respondents in Terms of Sex

Sex	F	%
Male	14	28%
Female	36	72%
Total	50	100%

Table 3 presents the respondents' profiles in terms of their educational qualifications. There were 28 or 56% of our respondents who belonged to the elementary level/ graduate; 16 or 32% belonged to high school level/graduate, and six or 12% belonged to the college level or graduate. The following is seen in table 3.

Table 3 Profile of the Respondents in Terms of Educational Qualification

Educational Qualification	F	%
Elementary Level/Graduate	28	56%
High School Level/Graduate	16	32%
College Level/Graduate	6	12%
Total	50	100%

Table 4 The Collected Subanen Proverbs

Table 4 presents the ten Subanen proverbs that had been collected by the researchers and translated into English, Bisayan and Subanen languages. The following translated Subanen proverbs will be seen below.

English	Bisayan	Subanen
1. My child, when the Lord corrects you, pay close attention and take it as a warning.	<i>1. Anak, kon pantanon ka sa Ginoo, hatagi kinig igong kabug-aton ug ayaw wad-a ang imong kadasig tungod sa iyang pagbag-o.</i>	<i>1. Bata bo bedlungon nga dig Ginoo, begayan mog gebegatin inde mo rela-in ag paglaom tending janin pagbigu.</i>
2. Listen because wisdom is calling out: Reason is making herself heard.	<i>2. Pamatia kay nagtawag ang kaalam: Nagpabati sa iyang tingog ang kahibalo.</i>	<i>2. Peminawa ag migtawag sog misunan migpisun dig metalo misunanan.</i>
3. To those with insight, it is all clear; To the well-informed, it is all plain.	<i>3. Sa tawo nga mayo ug panabot tin-aw kini; Sa tawo nga daghang nahibaloan tataw kining tanan.</i>	<i>3. Sugutao me piya manginoog mepalas kini sugu tao miloon misunanan milan gila.</i>
4. I walk the way of righteousness; I follow the paths of justice.	<i>4. Gisubay ko ang dalan sa katarong, gisunod ko ang mga dalan sa hustisya.</i>	<i>4. Linawa nga ag beyanan piya sinunuro gin sog lunan beganan kataringan.</i>
5. The more you talk, the more likely you are to sin: If you are wise, you will keep quiet.	<i>5. Kon magpataka kag sulti, lagmit kang masayop. Kon maalamon ka, magpakahilum ka lang.</i>	<i>5. Bo megpisagad ra menale-a mo sayop. Bo metawa dia na magsasak-sasak.</i>

6. Hate stirs up trouble, but love forgives all offenses.	6. <i>Makahimog kasamok ang pagdumot apan ang gugma mopasaylo sa tanang kalapasan.</i>	6. <i>Mekibal samok ag pegdumot bo ag meinlaba mepisaylo mo ilan gila sayepan.</i>
7. Let love unfaithfulness never leave you; Bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart.	7. <i>Himoa nga ang gugma ug pagkamasaligon dili mobiya kanimo; Itagkos/ihikot kini sa imo liog, isulat diha sa imo kasing-kasing.</i>	7. <i>Bal mo ag meinlaba mesiliganga endia belungan iket mo dig lig sulatin dig puso.</i>
8. Be sure of this: the wicked will not go unpunished, but those who are righteous will go free.	8. <i>mao ni ang kasiguroan: Ang dautan pagasilutan, ang matarong mahimong gawasnnon.</i>	8. <i>Kini meniguro ag diotan hikma sog mopiya don negkiluwasan.</i>
9. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline.	9. <i>Ang kahadlok sa Ginoo mao ang sinugdan sa kahibalo apan ang mga buang-buang wala maghatag ug bili sa kaalam ang disiplina.</i>	9. <i>Ag mendik-a dig mebibiya ini pigsuguran misunamen sug maiga kulang-kulangen eda mebigoyay pesigdan nalak ta metoo ag disiplinamen.</i>
10. An achievement in life is not what lies dimly on hand but what lies clearly on it.	10. <i>Ang kauswagon sa kinabuhi dili dulom tan-awon apan tin-aw makita diha sa palad.</i>	10. <i>Ag kelambuan ta kinabuhi endi mirelim imanan pero merilag mita dig emo kemit.</i>

Table 5 The Ranking of Subanen Proverbs according to Social, Moral, and Spiritual

Subanen Proverbs		Social		Moral		Spiritual	
		F	Rank	F	Rank	F	Rank
1. Bata bo bedlungon nga dig Ginoo, begayan mog gebegatin inde mo rela-in ag paglaom tending janin pagbigu.	1. My child, when the Lord corrects you, pay close attention and take it as a warning.	23	4.5	34	1	21	7

2. Peminawa ag migtawag sog misunan migpisun dig metalo misunanan.	2. Listen because wisdom is calling out: Reason is making herself heard.	11	10	16	10	19	9.5
3. Sugtao me piya manginoog mepalas kini sugu tao miloon misunanan milan gila.	3. To those with insight, it is all clear; To the well-informed, it is all plain.	16	8	31	2	32	1
4. Linawa nga ag beyanan piya sinunuro gin sog lunan beganan kataringan.	4. I walk the way of righteousness; I follow the paths of justice.	24	3	18	9	31	2
5. Bo megpisagad ra menale-a mo sayop. Bo metawa dia na magsasak-sasak	5. The more you talk, the more likely you are to sin: If you are wise, you will keep quiet.	30	1	27	4	30	3
6. Mekibal samok ag pegdumot bo ag meinlaba mepisaylo mo ilan gila sayepan.	6. Hate stirs up trouble, but love forgives all offenses.	23	4.5	28	3	26	4
7. Bal mo ag meinlaba mesiliganga endia belungan iket mo dig lig sulatin dig puso.	7. Let love unfaithfulness never leave you; Bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart.	27	2	19	8	21	7
8. Kini meniguro ag diotan hikma sog mopiya don negkiluwasan.	8. Be sure of this: the wicked will not go unpunished, but those who are righteous will go free.	14	9	23	6	19	9.5
9. Ag mendik-a dig mebibiya ini pigsuguran misunamen sug maiga kulang-kulangen eda mebigoyay pesigdan	9. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline.	20	7	21	7	21	7

<i>nalak ta metoo ag disiplinamen.</i>							
<i>10. Ag kelambuan ta kinabuhi endi mirelim imanan pero merilag mita dig emo kemit.</i>	10. Achievement in life is not what lies dimly on hand but what lies clearly on it.	22	6	26	5	24	5
Mean		21		24.3		24.4	

Table 5 shows the ranking of Subanen proverbs according to social, moral, and spiritual. In social, proverb number 5, “The more you talk, the more likely you are to sin: If you are wise, you will keep quiet,” got the highest number of frequency which is 30, and considered to be the rank 1. For Moral, rank 1 is proverb number 1, “My child, when the Lord corrects you, pay close attention and take it as a warning,” got 34. The rank 1 for spiritual, “To those with insight, it is all clear; To the well-informed, it is all plain,” got 32 frequency. Overall mean, spiritual proverbs comes first with 24.4 average weighted mean, followed by moral with 24.3 average weighted mean, then social with 21 average weighted mean.

This means that Subanen respondents are bound with these proverbs in their daily lives. They give value to these spiritual, moral, and social proverbs. Spiritually, it is all evident to those with insight; it is all plain to those who are well-informed.

IV. Conclusion

On the basis of careful evaluation and analysis of the findings, the study concludes that there is indeed an influence of Subanen Proverbs in terms of Social, Moral, and Spiritual among the Subanen tribes in Matam, Zamboanga del Norte. They have applied desirable proverbs in their day to day living to receive instruction of wisdom, justice, judgment, and equity

In view of the results gathered from this study; the following recommendations are hereby offered:

1. Every person should put in mind that proverbs are a big help in binding strong relationships with the members of the family.
2. The use of proverbs should guide one to be aware of what is right and wrong and apply proverbs in your day-to-day living to receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, judgment, and equity.
3. Studying proverbs should drive one to have a right relationship with God and you should always believe and practice proverbs that will help change one’s bad deeds.

4. Parents should include proverbs in their daily lives that will serve as a means of instruction on disciplining their children and children need to pay attention to the instruction of their parents.
5. National Indigenous people should enhance and preserve Subanen Proverbs so that they can pass it to the next generation in order for them to acquire or receive some good instruction of it.

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