

A pragmatic Analysis of symbolism in Some Selected Iraqi Proverbs

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Abstract

This paper provides a perceptive analysis of the symbolic significance embedded in Iraqi proverbs. It aims to unveil Iraqi proverbs' cultural, social, and historical context by employing a pragmatic approach. The researcher sheds light on the linguistic tool that mirrors societal ethics and beliefs to supply a comprehensive understanding of Iraqi society. The study hypothesizes that: (1) Iraqi proverbs reflect Iraq's unique cultural and social values. (2) the pragmatic analysis reveals the deep-seated wisdom and philosophies of the Iraqi people. (3) the use and interpretation of proverbs may differ across different regions or demographics in Iraq. To verify these hypotheses, the data collected are analyzed pragmatically to clarify their meanings. The study reveals that the pragmatic analysis of symbolism in Iraqi proverbs plays an important role in comprehending Iraqi culture. In addition, the study concludes that the Iraqi proverbs serve as a reflection of society's values and beliefs and hence the validity of the hypotheses. It also reveals that the collected data have indicated that the Iraqi proverbs include speech acts of advice, irony, and warning.

Keywords: pragmatics, proverbs, symbolism, types of symbolism.

تحليل تداولي للرمزية في بعض الأمثال العراقية المختارة

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الخلاصة

تقدم هذه الدراسة تحليلاً منظوراً للدلالة الرمزية المتضمنة في الأمثال العراقية. وتهدف إلى الكشف عن السياق الثقافي والاجتماعي والتاريخي للأمثال العراقية من خلال استخدام نهج عملي. يسلط الباحث الضوء على الأداة اللغوية التي تعكس الأخلاق والمعتقدات المجتمعية لأثراء المجتمع العراقي بالفهم الوافي. وتفترض الدراسة أن: (١) الأمثال العراقية تعكس القيم الثقافية والاجتماعية الفريدة للعراق. (٢) يكشف التحليل العملي الحكمة والفلسفات العميقة للشعب

العراقي. (٣) قد تختلف استخدام الأمثال وتفسيرها باختلاف المناطق أو التركيبة السكانية في العراق، ولضمان صحة هذه الفرضيات، يتم تحليل البيانات المجمعّة تداولياً لتوضيح معانيها. وتكشف الدراسة أن التحليل التداولي للرمزية في الأمثال العراقية يلعب دوراً مهماً في فهم الثقافة العراقية. كما خلصت الدراسة إلى أن الأمثال العراقية تعد بمثابة انعكاس لقيم المجتمع ومعتقداته وبالتالي صحة الفرضيات. كما بينت أن البيانات المجمعّة أشارت إلى أن الأمثال العراقية تحتوي على أفعال كلامية كالنصيحة والسخرية والتحذير وغيرها. الكلمات المفتاحية: التداولية، الأمثال، الرمزية، أنواع الرمزية.

1. Introductory Remarks

Pragmatics is the study of language use in context. It explores how people use language to convey meaning beyond literal words. In other words, pragmatics deals with the social and cultural factors that influence the use of language.

When we communicate, we rely on context to understand the intended meaning of the message. This context includes the physical environment, the speaker's tone of voice, and the cultural background of the speaker and listener. Pragmatics helps us to understand how these contextual factors influence the interpretation of language. The symbolism of Iraqi proverbs reflects the country's rich history and cultural identity and plays an important role in social communication understanding the pragmatic relational pattern of symbols is a situation when symbols are blended into communication to define a purpose in the context of a specific setting. Pragmatics tries to figure out how native speakers understand the way that their culture significantly connects with the wording and meaning formation. Thus, analyzing the pragmatic function of symbolism needs investigation of not only the implicit meanings of the symbols but also a scratch into how they create communicative outcomes and shape social interactions. Examining how pragmatic symbolism helps the researchers know more about the complexities of communication and the relations between symbols and the lens with a form of an experience as well as culture.

Pragmatic Functions of Symbolism

Function

Example

- Reinforcing Social Norms **"The neighbor's hen looks like a goose."**
- Exploring Social Boundaries **"He who is not courteous in the city will not be courteous in the desert."**
- Critiquing Authority **"The king's dog got a bone stuck in its throat."**
- Expressing Life Lessons **"A wise man keeps his own counsel."**

Proverbs are integral parts of the fabric of human communication and reflect the wisdom, values, and traditions of a society. Moreover, a proverb is a concise and traditional statement of an obvious truth that is widespread among people. More specifically, a proverb is a short, commonly known as a folk phrase, that contains wisdom, truth, morality, and traditional views in a figurative, fixed, and memorable form, and is passed down from generation to generation (Mieder, 1996:4).

The symbolism of Iraqi proverbs adds a layer of depth and meaning to its message and each symbol represents a concept, emotion, or cultural aspect, allowing for powerful and concise communication. This allows us to convey complex ideas and experiences in a concise and relatable way to reflect Iraqi culture. Additionally, Iraqi proverbs, like most proverbs around the world, are full of symbolism, convey deep meaning, and often reflect a culture's values, wisdom, and experiences. For example: **'When the jug is turned upside down, the girl looks like her mother'**. This proverb, translated from the Iraqi public language suggests that no matter what a daughter does, she is likely to have similar characteristics to her mother, suggesting the influence of heredity and education.

Furthermore, symbolism is an important aspect of literature, art, and communication, serving as a powerful tool for conveying deeper meanings, emotions, and concepts that are difficult to express in other ways and it can be also used to develop characters and themes, evoke emotion, and create mood and tone. Symbols use objects, signs, or events that represent more than their literal meaning. By embedding layers of meaning into symbols, authors and artists can add depth and complexity to their work and encourage interpretation by readers and viewers. A classic example is the green light from **F. Scott Fitzgerald's The Great Gatsby**, which symbolizes Gatsby's hopes and dreams for the future (<https://www.sparknotes.com/lit/gatsby/symbols/>).

What's more, symbolism is not limited to literature or art. It also permeates our daily life. For example, **a red light** symbolizes a "stop" in traffic, "**a dove**" often means peace, and "**a heart**" is commonly considered a symbol of love (<https://www.yourdictionary.com/articles/symbolism-examples/>).

Another key to remember is that different cultures assign different meanings to the same symbol, which can lead to interesting cross-cultural interpretations. For example, in Western cultures, **the color black** is often associated with death and mourning, while in some Asian cultures, **the color white** evokes this association. Since pragmatic analysis focuses on how context influences the interpretation of the symbolic language of proverbs, the target group's social context, cultural norms, and background must be considered (Ibid).

1-Social Context: The social context in which a proverb is used can significantly change its meaning. A proverb used in a rural community may have a different meaning in an urban environment. For example, proverbs about **agriculture** may carry more weight and symbolic meaning in the countryside than in the city.

2- Cultural norms: Proverbs are imbued with cultural norms and often reflect societal values and beliefs. For example, proverbs that use the "**lion**" symbol may evoke cultural connotations of strength, courage, and leadership associated with lions in Iraqi culture.

3-Audience background: The audience's background, including cultural understanding and personal experience, can greatly influence the interpretation of a proverb. Two persons may interpret the same proverb differently based on their personal experiences and cultural understandings.

This study explores the interesting area of symbolism in Iraqi proverbs and provides insight into the cultural, social, and historical significance of these linguistic treasures. Proverbs can convey a lot about the culture in which they are used because they convey common experiences and lessons (Smith 1920: 311). Ethnologists and linguistic anthropologists, in particular, collect insightful data about speech patterns in different places and periods. Although proverbs are considered primarily the focus of folklorists and literary experts, they need not remain outside the consideration of anthropologists (<https://hraf.yale.edu/knowledge-is-power-anthropology-of-proverbs/>).

A pragmatic analysis of Iraqi proverbs provides valuable insight into the cultural, social, and linguistic aspects of Iraqi society. Possible hypotheses, goals, problems, approaches, limitations, and values for such research include:

1.1 The Statement of the Problem

1-Multiple Interpretations of proverbial symbols challenge identifying a single meaning.

2-Evolving symbolic language: The dynamic nature of symbolic language requires a continuous search for new meanings and changing cultural contexts.

3- Cultural Specificity: The conventional understanding of proverbs from Iraqis is that they usually represent the huge diversity of the society, culture, and history of Iraqis. Iraqi culture, traditions, values, and customs, represent a central part of understanding the background of the proverbs and give insights into the symbolism embedded.

1.2 The Aims of the Study

The study aims at:

1- Understanding the cultural meaning of the underlying cultural values, beliefs, and traditions behind Iraqi proverbs.

2-Assessing language functions by analyzing the role of symbolism in proverbs to determine the influence of language on communication and interpretation.

3-Providing insight into the complex interplay of language, culture, and sociocultural dynamics.

1.3 The Hypotheses of the Study

It is hypothesized that:

- 1-Iraqi proverbs reflect Iraq's unique cultural and social values.
- 2-Pragmatic analysis reveals the deep-rooted wisdom and philosophy of the Iraqi people.
- 3-The use and interpretation of proverbs may vary by region and population group in Iraq.

1.4 The Procedures of the Study**The study follows the subsequent procedures:**

- 1-Collecting a comprehensive corpus of Iraqi proverbs.
- 2-Analyzing the language structure and identifying possible symbols in each proverb.
- 3-Contextualizing proverbs in cultural and historical contexts.
- 4-Extracting meaning and exploring practical implications in different contexts.
- 5-Connecting proverbs with cultural practices, values, and norms.

1.5 The Limits of the Study

1. This study may not cover all regional and demographic differences in proverb use.
- 2-Interpretation of proverbs is subjective and may vary from person to person.

Although our analysis aims for completeness, the breadth and diversity of Iraqi proverbs may impose certain limitations. We recognize that cultural background and personal interpretation play an important role in understanding symbols.

1.6 The Values of the Study

1-Culture Preservation of the rich tapestry of Iraqi culture by unraveling the symbolic threads woven into proverbs.

2-Enhance communication by improving intercultural understanding by deciphering the symbolic language embedded in Iraqi proverbs.

3-Knowledge Enrichment by deepening your understanding of linguistics, semiotics, and the power of symbolic communication.

2. Symbolism Definitions

Symbols can be considered a subcategory of imagery. Hawkins (1991:1464) defines symbols as something commonly regarded as typifying, expressing, or remembering something, especially ideas or qualities. Symbols can be anything from concrete objects to abstract concepts. For example, "**the color red**" can symbolize **love, passion, anger, or killing**. "**The concept of time**" can symbolize **change or mortality**.

A symbol is a signifier that represents the signified not by similarity but by convention [common custom or practice]. Similarly, the symbols found in the selected media texts are understood as signifiers representing the ideas, beliefs, concepts, and practices of contemporary society. This is an image that evokes an objective, concrete reality, and that reality suggests different levels of meaning within society (Vitrie, 2004 & Müller, 2001 cited in Jaro, 2023:14).

It is also defined as the use of symbols to express ideas or qualities in literature, art, music, religion, etc. or it is a special idea or quality expressed by a symbol. (<https://www.britannica.com/dictionary/symbolism>)

In addition, it can be used to create a sense of mystery or intrigue, convey a deeper meaning, or evoke a particular emotion in the audience. There is a close interrelationship between symbolism and creating a sense of unity and community. For example, a country's flag is a symbol of patriotism and national unity. A national flag represents a country's history, values, and culture.

The concept of Image is defined as a representation or likeness of a person or something (Stevenson & Maurice, 2011:1221). The visual

representation of an object or a concept is referred to as an image. So, it is a symbol in movies comparable to a word in written literature. Thus, it is a signifier that expresses what is signified, just like a word (Vitrie, 2004). In this study, image is a highly significant concept (Jaro, 2023:15).

Symbolism is the use of symbols to represent ideas, concepts, or other things. It can also include anything from words and images to objects and actions. They can be literal or figurative, and their meaning depends on the context in which they are used.

Overall, symbolism is a powerful tool that can be used to convey complex ideas and emotions concisely and effectively. It is an integral part of various forms of art and literature and plays an important role in our daily lives.

Here are some different types of symbolism:

(i)Conventional Symbolism: This type of symbolism is generally recognized and understood. For example, **the color red** is often used to symbolize love and passion, while **the color black** is often used to symbolize death and sadness (Singer, 2010:5).

(ii)Cultural symbolism: This type of symbolism is specific to a particular culture. For example, in **Buddhism**, the lotus flower is a symbol of purity and enlightenment. In the United States, **the eagle** is a symbol of strength and freedom (Oberle, 2011:72).

(iii)Personal symbolism: This type of symbolism is specific to an individual or a group of people. For example, **wedding rings** are a symbol of marital love, ritual, and commitment (Danesi, 2019 https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-18111-6_6/).

Symbolism can be used in many different ways. Here are a few examples:

-To create a sense of mystery or intrigue: For example, in Nathaniel Hawthorne's novel, the scarlet letter "A" that Hester Prynne is forced to wear is a symbol of her guilt and shame. But it is also a symbol of their strength and resilience (Wang,2010:894).

-To convey complex emotions: For example, in John Keats's poem "Hymn to a Nightingale," **the nightingale** is a symbol of natural beauty,

happiness, and mystery. It also symbolizes the speaker's longing for something beyond the material world (Ibrahim, 2020:61).

-Exploring universal themes: For example, in William Shakespeare's play Hamlet, the skull that Hamlet holds in his hand is a symbol of death and the fragility of life. It is also a symbol of Hamlet's mortality and the impending doom he faces (Ghose. 2010: <https://tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/0950236X.2010.521668>).

Symbolism is a symbol of meaning and depth. By understanding the different types of symbolism and their uses (a powerful tool used to create symbols), you will gain a deeper understanding of the richness and complexity of human culture.

Here are some examples of symbolism in our daily life:

Objects	Symbolism
The red color	Red symbolizes love, passion, and anger.
The white color	can symbolize purity, innocence, or death
The black color	can symbolize darkness, evil, and mystery
The dove	a symbol of peace
The eagle	a symbol of strength and power
Roses	a symbol of love and beauty
The cross	a symbol of Christianity
The Star of David	a symbol of Judaism

The crescent moon and star	symbols of Islam
number 13	can symbolize bad luck or death
Snakes	can symbolize evil and temptation
The rising sun	can symbolize hope and new beginnings.

(<https://www.Yourdictionary.com/articles/symbolism-examples>)

Symbolism can be used in many different ways. For example, an author may use symbolism to create an atmosphere or convey deeper meaning in a work. Painters may use symbolism to create visually appealing works of art with deeper meaning. Musicians often use symbolism in their lyrics and songwriting methods. Additionally, symbolism is a complex and fascinating subject, we can see it in every aspect of our lives. Understanding symbolism allows us to better understand the art, literature, and music we consume. It also allows us to better understand the world around us and the people in it.

3. Symbolism Theories

1-**The theory Ferdinand de Saussure**: A linguist who revolutionized the study of symbols through structuralism, revealing the complex structure and meaning behind symbolism. Ferdinand de Saussure is a linguist who developed the basis or background of recognized linguistic theory. He is considered an architect and avant-garde linguist. The realization of a theoretical approach in the field of linguistics began when it was discovered that the linguistic-semiotic approach should be placed within a more accepted fundamental theory. Inspired by this idea, he proposed the term "**semiotics**" in several studies. He wrote his lectures from 1907 to 1911, and eventually "**General Linguistics**" then was published as a book titled "**Course in Accepted Linguistics**". Ultimately, these works or masterpieces became influential forerunners of the linguistic approach that came to be accepted as structuralism (Grenz, 2001). The following is an

excerpt from Saussure that can be considered a guide for the development of the semiotic field: a science that studies symbols through acoustic associations. It is part of social psychology and therefore general psychology. It can be called semiotics (from the Greek semeion "sign"). Semiotics consists of symbols, and what are the laws that govern them? No one can say what it will be like because science does not exist yet. But it has the right to exist, a predetermined place of residence. Linguistics is only one part of accepted semiotics. The laws recognized by semiotics can also be applied to linguistics, and the result will be the delimitation of categories within the collection of humans (Leeds-Hurwitz, 1993:4). The basis and main focus of Saussure's approach is the assumption that language's emphasis is on combinations of symbols and that there are numerous security systems embedded in humanity besides language. However, in his opinion, the arrangement of linguistic symbols or accents plays an important role in mixed reality and is therefore the best language system compared to other language systems that are fixed throughout the world. In short, Saussure's approach to security is a focused dissection oriented to the expectant activity of the brain or the activity of the animal mind, depending on the environment or the concrete (material) or abstract (abstract) signs of the environment and surroundings. Adds extra attention to the essentials of any human language (langue) and to the way of using a language for specific purposes in communication (parole) (Zwart, 2016: ncbi.nlm.nih.gov). Saussure's approach is that **"language does not reflect reality, but rather constructs it because we do not only emphasize or accept everything that exists in reality, but also it is seen as supporting the assumption that not all that exists remains"** (Chandler, 2002, p. 28). Saussure's theory, also called **structuralism**, laid the foundation for the recognition of scientific knowledge in other fields.

2-**Charles Sanders**: Peirce's approach of assurance Charles Sanders Peirce is considered a modern writer who laid the foundations for the common meaning of symbols through his books which were published 25 years after his death and the overall proportion of the work is favorable (Zoest, 1991). In contrast to Saussure, who rejected the term 'semiotics', Peirce proposed the term 'semiotics', which, in his opinion, meant that the animal mind is similar to the abstraction of reasoning that focuses on the capacity of action. Autograph: Logic in the traditional sense is, as I have shown, just another term for semiotics, the quasi-essential or academic element of signs. By calling things "**quasi-necessary**" or **formal**, we perceive such signs as we know them, and from such

observations, through action, we do not wish to call abstraction, noting that it leads to statements. It is fallible and therefore there is no need at all about which of all signs should be used by the "scientific" intellect, that is, the intellect that can learn from acquaintances. The main objects of Peirce's approach relate to the limits of human perception and trust, three-dimensional structure (ternary structure/trichotomy), and his three typologies or taxonomies of signs (symbol, base, icon) its relativity (Leeds-Hurwitz, 1993: 4).

4. Symbolism in Religious and Cultural Contexts

Symbols play an important role in religious and cultural contexts, representing beliefs, rituals, and values.

A – Religious symbolism is common in various faiths, with symbols representing and evoking a connection to the spiritual realm. For example, **the cross** is an important symbol in Christianity, representing the sacrifice and resurrection of **Jesus Christ**, in **Hinduism**, **the lotus flower** represents purity and enlightenment, and **the swastika** serves as a symbol of happiness and good fortune (Benson, 2013:105) & (Chatterjee & Chatterjee, 2001:13).

B- Cultural symbolism is also an integral aspect of cultural identity, representing beliefs, values, and traditions. For example, in American culture, **the eagle** is a symbol of freedom and strength, and **the dragon** represents power and prosperity. Additionally, cultural symbolism can be found in art, literature, and architecture. For example, **Egypt's pyramids** represent the country's ancient civilization, and **India's Taj Mahal** serves as a symbol of love and devotion (Dunleavy,2015 https://ddunleavy.typepad.com/strictly_symbolic/page/3/).

Religious Symbolism

Symbol	Religion	Meaning
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(The Star of David)	Judaism	(Symbolizing the relationship between God and the Jewish people)
(The Crescent Moon and Star)	Islam	(Symbolizing the faith and unity of Muslim people)
(The Om)	Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism	(Representing the sound of the universe and the essence of all existence)

(Chwalkowski,2016:4-5)

Cultural Symbolism

Proverb	Translation	Cultural Insight
"امشي شهر ولا تعبر نهر"	"Walk a month and do not cross a river."	Rivers are frequently viewed as substantial obstacles or difficulties. The proverb emphasizes the idea that one should not try to achieve a thing too hard or impossible in this context.
"اجاك الموت يا تارك الصلاة"	"Death has come to you, O abandoner of prayer."	Religious duties and faith are highly appreciated. The proverb emphasizes the significance of carrying out one's religious duties, such as praying.

Symbolism in religious and cultural contexts adds richness and depth to the representation of beliefs, values, and traditions.

5. Types of Symbolism in Literature

Symbolism is a literary device that uses an object, place, person, or idea to express something beyond its literal meaning. In literature, there are different types of symbolism that authors use to convey deeper meanings or themes. The most common types of symbolism in literature are:

1-**Metaphor**: A metaphor is a type of symbolism that directly compares two different things to suggest one thing which is to refer to something else. For example, "**All the world's a stage**" from Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, is a metaphor that symbolizes the idea that life is like a play. Metaphor, lo que debes saber (scientiaen.com).

2-**Allegory**: Allegory is a form of extended metaphor in which objects, characters, and actions in a narrative are equated with meanings outside of the narrative itself. For example, **George Orwell's Animal Farm** is a fable that symbolizes the Russian Revolution and the rise of Stalinism. <https://www.matrix.edu.au/literary-techniques-allegory/>.

3-**Personification** is a type of symbolism that attributes human characteristics to something non-human. For example, in William Wordsworth's poem, "**I Wandered Lonely Like a Cloud**," daffodils are personified as daffodils that "**dance**" and daffodils that "**throw their heads**." (Shira, 2008:93).

4-**Religious Symbolism**: This type of symbolism is based on religious beliefs and traditions to convey deeper meaning. For example, the use of **the cross** as a symbol of sacrifice and salvation in Christian literature (Cooke & Gary, 2005:69).

5-**Emotional symbolism**: Emotional symbolism involves the use of objects or elements that represent emotions or psychological states. For example, use an object to symbolize how a text's emotions change throughout time. Using flowers as an example, the flowers may appear to suddenly droop as the energy in the room turns negative when siblings are fighting. This may happen in a florist shop

(<https://www.studysmarter.co.uk/explanations/english-literature/literary-devices/symbolism/>).

6-Animal Symbolism: Animals are often used as symbols to represent different qualities and characteristics. For example, **lions** may symbolize courage, strength, and leadership (Orhero & Friday, 2021 <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/23311983.2021>).

7-Weather Symbolism: Weather can be used symbolically to reflect a character's mood by creating symbolic meanings. For example, **a storm** can symbolize conflict or turmoil (Mncube, 2006:29).

8-Color Symbolism: Colors are often used symbolically to represent emotions, ideas, and themes. For example, in many Eastern societies, **green** symbolizes growth, nature, or envy, while **red** symbolizes fear and happiness from personal experience. Designers use color symbolism, such as in **logos**, to gain user trust and attention (<https://www.interaction-design.org/literature/topics/color-symbolism,2021>).

These types of symbolism are used by authors to add layers of depth and meaning to their works, allowing readers to engage within the text on a deeper level and uncover hidden messages or themes.

6. Data Analysis

Twenty-two Iraqi proverbs were selected for analysis. The selection of these proverbs was based on their frequency among Iraqi people. This segment offers a comprehensive examination of chosen proverbs, delving into the underlying symbolism and the cultural significance they hold. Twenty-two proverbs are selected to be analyzed pragmatically, each proverb is carefully analyzed to unveil its practical meaning, thus exposing the intricate layers of cultural and societal norms it encompasses. Iraqi proverbs transcend mere wisdom; they serve as portals to a profound cultural legacy. The symbolism interwoven within these proverbs enhances their messages, endowing them with timeless and universally applicable wisdom. Through the exploration and comprehension of these proverbs, we acquire invaluable insights into the mindset, traditions, and values of the Iraqi people.

1- ("اللي ما يعرف للصكر يشويه")

("Those who don't know the hawk grill it")

In Iraqi colloquial proverbs, symbols are employed to convey a diverse range of meanings. For instance, this particular proverb utilizes the hawk as a representation of strength and wisdom. The proverb serves as a cautionary message, advising individuals lacking knowledge or experience to exercise caution and refrain from making impulsive decisions. The analysis of the proverb leads us to believe that it might represent the idea that those without experience or understanding might find it difficult to comprehend or evaluate some facts of life. In this instance, **"the hawk"** might stand for something challenging to grasp or comprehend, and **"grilling it"** could stand for the challenge or effort needed to do so. This interpretation is consistent with many other proverbs that emphasize the value of knowledge and the wisdom gained from others' experiences.

The literal meaning of grilling and burning would be the main emphasis of the pragmatic analysis of this proverb, which emphasizes the significance of possessing the abilities and information required for performing a task correctly. The proverb's symbolic meaning highlights the need to approach one's undertakings with competence and knowledge. Considering that the proverb encourages people to acquire the skills and information required to complete a task correctly, the pragmatic analysis would also take into account the direct illocutionary act of advice. The proverb's persuasive effect would be to inspire people to pursue their activities with greater competence and knowledge. Understanding the cultural importance of the proverb would be crucial for the pragmatic study, as it would provide light on its instructional significance and broader context.

2- ("اللي ما يعرف يركص يكول الكاع عوجه")

("Those who can't dance say the ground is uneven")

In the realm of Iraqi colloquial proverbs, symbols are utilized to express various meanings. A prime example is this proverb, which employs dance as a symbol of proficiency and capability. It implies that unsuccessful individuals often attribute their failures to external factors, rather than taking accountability for their inadequacies. The preceding proverb's meaning is based on the notion that those who lack experience or understanding could exaggerate how tough or dangerous a situation is.

This proverb serves as a warning against ignorant people overestimating a situation's difficulty because they lack the necessary information or experience. It underlines how crucial it is to have counsel from those with relevant experience and knowledge rather than depending entirely on the judgment of people who might not completely comprehend the circumstances. The saying, which is frequently used, is a metaphor that emphasizes the value of getting advice from competent people. The proverb's symbolic meaning highlights the idea that people frequently attribute their lack of talent or ability to outside forces. Given that proverbs encourage people to accept responsibility for their inadequacies, the pragmatic analysis would also take into account the direct illocutionary act of advising. People would be encouraged to be more self-aware and accept responsibility for their actions by this proverb.

3- ("الفكر فوق البعير وعضه الجلب")

("The poor man is above the camel and the dog bites him")

The proverb can be pragmatically explored by looking at how it is used to illustrate the idea that those who are weak or vulnerable are frequently taken advantage of by others. This symbolism implies that individuals in authority may take advantage of others who are less fortunate. The camel is a symbol of wealth and success in Arabic culture. The proverb here emphasizes how vulnerable those who are less wealthy are. The use of the proverb to highlight the value of defending and helping the weak is its functional meaning. It can also serve as a warning against exploiting other people. The proverb can be used to accomplish several communicative objectives, including teaching, cautioning, and persuasion. In addition, the proverb can be examined in the framework of interpretation and comprehension, where it can be utilized to emphasize the need to guard and assist individuals who are weak in particular situations.

4- ("غراب يمول لغراب وجهك اسود")

("The raven said to the raven, 'Your face is black'")

The expression serves as a symbolic representation of the notion that people frequently point the finger at others for weaknesses that they also have. It makes a point about people's propensity to blame others for their

failures. The principle of projecting one's deficiencies onto others is highlighted by the symbolism of the raven critiquing another raven's black face in the pragmatic understanding of this proverb. The meaning of the proverb highlights the idea of hypocrisy and people's propensity to draw attention away from their shortcomings by bringing them out in others. The proverb's perlocutionary act is to promote insight and self-awareness of one's conduct and words. A pragmatic study of this proverb would also take into account its cultural relevance since it is a widely used expression that stresses the ideas of self-awareness and hypocrisy in many different cultures.

5- (" لا تمشي وياه اللي يضحكك وأمشي وياه اللي يبجيك")
(" Do not walk with those who make you laugh, and walk with those who make you cry")

This saying serves as a metaphor for the idea that, even though they may not always bring happiness, one should surround oneself with real and supportive individuals. It delivers a message about how important it is to consider who one surrounds oneself with and how it affects one's emotional health.

The pragmatic interpretation of this proverb would emphasize the significance of surrounding oneself with real and encouraging individuals by focusing on the symbolism of preventing walking with those who make you laugh and walking with those who make you cry. The proverb's symbolic meaning highlights the notion that people surround themselves with those who have an impact on their mental health. As the proverb aims to remind individuals to be careful whom they associate with, the pragmatic analysis would also take into account the direct illocutionary act of advising. The proverb's illuminating effect would be to make individuals more aware of the people they surround themselves with those people who affect their psychological well-being.

6- ("يحفر البير بأبره")
("He digs a well with a needle")

This proverb serves as a metaphor for the idea that perseverance and patience, even in the face of an obstacle or challenge, can lead to success. It sends a message about the value of determination and fortitude.

The pragmatic analysis of this proverb would concentrate on the analogy of using a needle to dig a well, emphasizing the value of perseverance and endurance in reaching accomplishment. Given that the proverb advises people to pursue their aims with patience and persistence, the pragmatic interpretation would also take this direct illocutionary act of advising into account. The proverb's perlocutionary would motivate individuals to pursue their goals with greater persistence and determination. Providing that this proverb is a widely used expression that highlights the value of tenacity and determination across various cultures, a pragmatic study of it would also take cultural relevance into account.

7- اسمه بالحصاد ومنجله مكسور (")

("His name is in the harvest, but his sickle is broken.")

This statement may represent unrealized potential or the gap between talent and reputation in a pragmatic sense. It implies that it doesn't matter whether someone has a high reputation or is linked to something admirable, they may not be able to live up to it because of an obstacle or weakness. Its precise meaning may change depending on the historical, social, or cultural setting in which this symbolism is employed. It could be seen as an evaluation of the discrepancy between perception and reality or as an indictment of the value of living up to one's reputation. These symbols might have varied meanings depending on the situation, it's crucial to take both the cultural background and the context into account while interpreting them.

8- الباب اليجيك منه ريح سده واستريح (")

("Close the door from which the wind came and rested")

This statement could represent the practical notion that one can take advantage of the weaknesses of his adversary to achieve goals. It implies that one can obtain an advantage by being aware of the advantages and disadvantages of one's adversary. Depending on the historical, social, or cultural setting in which this symbolism is employed, its precise meaning may change. It might be seen as a critique of the nature of battle, the value of knowing one's opponent,

or the possibility of mutual understanding among enemies. Moreover, symbols might have varied meanings depending on the situation, so it's crucial to take both the cultural background and the context into account while interpreting these proverbs.

9- "الكرعة تتباهه بشعر أختها)

("The bald woman shows off her sister's hair")

Proverbs are idioms from culture that represent discernment and common sense. Frequently, they are brief and witty proverbs that convey widely accepted concepts and viewpoints. The proverb implies that the person is impacted by the beliefs or deeds of his close relative, as though the person were thinking based on the hair of his/her sister. The significance of hair and the intimate bond between the two people would be the main points of emphasis in the pragmatic interpretation of this proverb. The proverb's symbolic meaning emphasizes the value of intimate bonds and the impact they can have on a person's beliefs and behavior.

10- ("ألف صديق ولا عدو واحد

("A thousand friends are too few; one enemy is too many")

The significance of genuine friendship and the potential consequences of having a sole opponent are emphasized in this proverb. It implies that the positive influence and support received from true friends surpass the detrimental effects caused by a solitary enemy. The proverb encourages us to protect and maintain deep connections while being cautious of people who might be out to get us. The phrase serves as a symbolic representation of the maxim that it is better to have lots of friends than adversaries. It transmits a message about how crucial it is to develop wholesome relationships with other people. The pragmatic analysis would also take this direct illocutionary act of advice into account. The proverb's persuasive effect would be to make people more aware of their interpersonal interactions while assigning priority to those that are positive over the negative ones.

11- ("الصبر مفتاح الفرج")

("Patience is the key to relief")

The significance of patience and the benefits it brings are highlighted in this proverb. It draws a parallel between patience and a key that has the power to unlock the gates of paradise, representing the ultimate state of happiness and contentment. This proverb serves as a reminder that by staying persistent and maintaining a composed attitude, we can conquer the obstacles that life presents us with. The proverb's meaning is based on the notion that patience is a virtue that results in positive developments. The expression "**key to relief**" refers to the ultimate prize that awaits people who exhibit the virtue of patience. Still, "**patience**" refers to the capacity to bear difficulties or obstacles without losing patience or getting impatient. This proverb serves as an excellent illustration of how valuable patience is to becoming successful or achieving desired results. This proverb is frequently connected to Islamic beliefs, which hold that patience is a virtue that leads to spiritual development and honor in the hereafter.

12- ("مثل الأطرش بالزفة")**("Like the deaf at the wedding")**

The proverb can be pragmatically analyzed by looking at how it is used in different situations to suggest that someone who lacks knowledge or talent in a particular area can still engage in it, but it may be obvious that they do not. This symbolism implies that people have to be conscious of their limitations and work to advance their knowledge and abilities.

The proverb can be interpreted symbolically to mean that individuals should strive to increase their knowledge and abilities in addition to being conscious of their limitations in all aspects of life.

13- ("الكلب الي ينبج ما يعض")**("A dog that barks does not bite")**

The underlying message of this proverb emphasizes the importance of actions over empty talk, suggesting that individuals who fail to follow through with their words should not be taken seriously. The proverb serves as a metaphor for the notion that people who threaten or create the most noise are not always the most violent or dangerous. A dog that barks

signifies someone outspoken about their intentions or threats, whereas a dog that does not bite indicates no actual action or follow-through. This proverb serves as a helpful reminder to refrain from taking aggressive conduct inappropriately, as it may not always be an authentic indicator of power or capacity. It emphasizes how crucial it is to examine behaviors rather than just words or threats. The phrase might be interpreted metaphorically to mean that giving out too much criticism is useless, comparable to a dog barking in the darkness. The proverb can be used to accomplish several communicative objectives, including teaching, cautioning, and persuasion.

14- (" الي مايلوح العنب يكول حامض ")

("He who has not tasted grapes says they are sour".)

The idea that individuals frequently criticize or assume things about which they have not personally experienced is expressed symbolically in this proverb. It conveys a message about the value of personal knowledge and the possibility of misinterpretation or error when discussing something one has not experienced before. Proverbs are speech acts that are understood according to the context in which they are used and represent the particulars of ethnocommunication. It can be pragmatically examined by looking at how it is used in particular situations to communicate the idea that someone who criticizes something they are unable to have or accomplish is likely to minimize it. This symbolism implies that someone unable to achieve anything may criticize it to feel better about himself.

The proverb has its origins in Arabic tradition, where grapes are regarded as a sign of success and fortune. The proverb can be examined in light of literary and rhetorical devices that are used to portray the idea of excessive criticism, such as simile, metaphor, and hyperbole. The proverb can be used to accomplish several communicative objectives, including teaching, warning, and persuasion.

15- ("يحظر المعلف قبل الحصان")

("Prepare the fodder before the horse.")

The proverb conveys the idea that readiness is essential for success in a symbolic way. It delivers a message about how crucial planning and initiative are to achieving one's objectives.

Proverbs are culturally and context-specific verbal symbols representing people's identities and value systems. In the study of proverbs, the moral relevance of the chosen proverbs is determined by applying linguistic theory. Understanding the proverbs' instructive purpose, sociocultural background, and prevalent context is the goal of the pragmatic analysis of proverbs. However, proverbs are cultural symbols, and their contextual relevance can be used to analyze the proverb's symbolism and pragmatic connotations. The proverb's meaning emphasizes how crucial planning and preparation are to success.

16- ("اكل ما يعجبك والبس ما يعجب الناس")

("Eat what you please, but wear what pleases others")

The proverb can be pragmatically examined by looking at the various circumstances in which it is used to express the idea that people shouldn't be expected to share one's particular preferences. This symbolism implies that one should not presume that others would share one's interests and preferences because everyone has distinct preferences. The use of the proverb highlights how important it is to recognize that people are diverse in their interests and preferences. It can also be used to draw attention to the possible drawbacks of presuming that one's personal preferences will be shared by others. The proverb can be interpreted in a way that implies that people differ in their desires and tastes when it comes to a variety of things, including food, costumes, and entertainment. Furthermore, the proverb can be used to accomplish several communicative objectives, including teaching, cautioning, and persuasion.

17- ("لا تكول سمسما الا تلهم")

("Don't say Sesame unless it inspires them")

The proverb conveys the idea that one should not speak about anything unless they have knowledge or expertise regarding it, and it may be pragmatically studied by looking at how it is used in different settings. This symbolism implies that communicating without experience or expertise might result in misconceptions and incorrect presumptions. The proverb can be used to highlight how important it is to have information or experience before discussing something. It can also serve as a warning against assuming things or spreading misleading information. The proverb might be interpreted to mean that speaking without experience or knowledge is analogous to planting seeds without understanding how to look after them. The proverb can be examined in the context of cross-cultural dialogue, where it could be employed to emphasize how important it is to be knowledgeable or experienced about a subject before conversing with someone.

("الي يلدغ بالحية يخاف من الحبل") - 18**(" whom a snake has bitten him, fears a piece of string")**

The enduring influence of traumatic experiences on an individual's subsequent responses is symbolized by this proverb. Within Iraqi society, it is frequently employed to convey the idea of post-traumatic stress and the human inclination to connect unrelated objects or events with a previous traumatic incident. The pragmatic interpretation of this proverb would emphasize the significance of exercising caution and being aware of potential risks by focusing on the symbolism of the snake and the rope. The proverb's symbolic meaning highlights the notion that an individual's current conduct and attitudes can be shaped by their prior experiences. Since the proverb aims to warn individuals to exercise caution and be aware of any possible risks, the pragmatic analysis would also take into account the direct illocutionary act of warning. People would be encouraged to be more watchful and cautious in their behaviors due to the saying. This proverb is often used to stress the value of exercising caution and being aware of one's surroundings. The proverb can be used to

highlight how important it is to use caution when discussing other people and assuming things or transmitting incorrect information.

Additionally, the accompanying tables provide visual representations of idiomatic expressions that bear no connection to their symbolic meanings as in the following figure:

Iraqi Expression	Symbolic Meaning
صاكة	beauty
وطنية	Iraqi National Electricity
حديقة	The unemployment
انضرب بوري	A victim of a scam

19- ("عصفور باليد خير من عشرة على الشجرة")

("A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush")

The proverb symbolizes the preference for assurance and instant benefit over ambiguity and possible future benefit. The birds in the tree represent potential but unknown gain, whereas the bird in the hand represents something concrete and certain. This pragmatic perspective emphasizes the importance of valuing and utilizing what one already has rather than risking something for something that isn't assured. Proverbs like this one are meant to teach lessons, give counsel, and uphold moral principles. The significance of recognizing the certainty of what one already owns is highlighted by the pragmatic analysis of this proverb, which focuses on the symbolism of the birds in the hand and the birds in the bush. The principle of preferring certainty over uncertainty is emphasized by the proverb's symbolic meaning. Since the proverb advises people to keep and appreciate what they already have, the pragmatic analysis would also take into

account the direct illocutionary act of advice. People would be encouraged to be content with what they have and avoid taking unnecessary dangers by this saying.

20- ("الغركان يتعلك بكشاية")

('A drowning man will catch at a straw')

It denotes the act of grasping the final chance. The proverb, "**a drowning man will clutch at a straw**" refers to the extreme lengths people would go to survive, even if their hope is weak. Clutching at a straw symbolizes the inherent and agitated need to seize every opportunity that presents itself regardless of the likelihood that it will lead to a solution. This proverb highlights how people would often look for any kind of support or redemption, no matter how slight or unlikely that may be. It represents the common human experience of encountering overwhelming challenges and adhering to hope in the face of every obstacle, and it serves as a sobering reminder of the forceful approaches people may take in the crisis period.

Proverbs are idioms from culture that represent discernment and common sense. Frequently, they are brief and witty proverbs that convey widely accepted concepts and viewpoints. Proverbs are culturally and context-specific verbal symbols representing people's identities and value systems. To determine the moral significance of the chosen proverbs, linguistic theory is applied in the study of proverbs.

21- ("السمجة معفنة من الراس للذيل")

("The fish rots from the head down")

The symbol is a visual depiction of the corruption within society or organizations. The saying "**the fish rots from the head down**" is a metaphor for implying that everyone who works for an organization or system will suffer if the person in charge of it is incompetent. According to the expression, an organization or system's prosperity and well-being are dependent on effective management and leadership. An organization or system's decline is symbolized by the rotting fish, and the leadership is represented by the fish's head. The significance of capable leadership and

the unfavorable effects of incompetent leadership are both emphasized by this proverb.

The fish and its rotting symbolism would be the main emphasis of the pragmatic analysis of this proverb, emphasizing the significance of solving issues at their root. The proverb's symbolic meaning highlights the notion that corruption and problems frequently originate at the top and have an impact on the entire system. Since the proverb encourages individuals to handle problems at their source, the pragmatic interpretation would also take into account the direct illocutionary act of warning. The proverb's illustrative effect would be to motivate individuals to take a more proactive approach to problem-solving rather than merely medicating symptoms.

Considering that this proverb is a widely used statement that stresses the value of resolving problems as they take shape, a pragmatic analysis of it would also take cultural relevance into account.

(22- "على وجه اليتيمة غاب الكمر")

("The face of the orphans was hidden by the moon")

The moon's symbolic meaning would be the main emphasis of the pragmatic analysis of this proverb, emphasizing how crucial it is to identify and meet the needs of the orphans. The proverb's symbolic meaning highlights the notion that the orphans were ignored or overlooked. The proverb is meant to inspire people to take care of and assist orphans, therefore the pragmatic analysis would also take into account the direct illocutionary act of warning. This proverb is widely accepted emphasizing the need to protect and assist the weak. Identifying the cultural importance of the proverb would be crucial for the pragmatic study, as it would provide light on its didactic significance and contextual meaning. In conclusion, the pragmatic interpretation of the proverb "على وجه اليتيمة غاب الكمر" would center on the moon's symbolism and stress the significance of identifying and meeting the needs of the orphans.

7. Conclusions

The study emphasizes the significance of proverbs in Iraqi culture and society, highlighting their symbolic richness and practical value. The

analysis demonstrates that Iraqi proverbs go beyond mere sayings; they encapsulate societal wisdom, norms, and history, acting as a mirror that reflects the social constructs of the community. Symbolism plays a crucial role in our communication and understanding of the world, enriching and deepening our experiences.

In conclusion, a pragmatic examination of symbolism in Iraqi proverbs necessitates a profound comprehension of Iraqi culture, societal norms, and the context in which the proverbs are employed. It also requires an understanding of the audience's background to fully grasp the intended meaning and impact of the proverbs.

In addition, Iraqi proverbs utilize symbolism to convey important messages, offering insights into Iraqi culture and values, and aiding in a better understanding of the Iraqi people. These sayings are replete with symbolism, often reflecting the country's rich history and culture.

Symbolism allows us to tap into our subconscious and evoke emotions beyond what words alone can convey. It adds layers of meaning, depth, and richness to our experiences of art, literature, and culture. Understanding symbolism helps us to analyze and appreciate the hidden messages and profound symbolism surrounding us.

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