Proverbs in Modern Tamil and Telugu Societies

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Introduction

Proverbs are usually short forms and contain social and individual wisdom of the society in which these are used and often followed. Proverbs have the unique distinction of being used both in written and spoken language. They may contain allusions, stories, advice, sarcasm, cynicism, history, and many other virtues, which authors have to struggle hard or sweat it out to achieve in their deliberate creations. The change of time may change some words and give some extended meaning to proverbs. But the proverbs are time-honored. Proverbs can be part of the didactic literature of any society or faith community.

Aim of the Paper

The main aim of this paper is to show the place of proverb in this modern society. That means in this modern world how much importance the proverb has? How it is used? Is there any change in the form and content? Are there any new arrivals? There are many proverbs created on the basis of old ones. How are they used? This paper is going to check some of the above mentioned questions.

Data

The data for this paper is collected from the weekly, monthly, daily Tamil and Telugu newspapers and magazines, novels, etc. The proverbs are extracted from the above mentioned sources with contexts.

Method of Analysis

In sociolinguistics, to study the use of language in the society, society is divided into various domains like home, neighbors, friends, market, place of staying, etc. The variables are age, sex, caste, religion, occupation, social status, economic status, etc. Likewise to check the use of modern proverbs in the society, the society is divided as the mass media, the field of Computer, and politics as domains. The variables consider for this study is occupation. I collected the proverbs from the News Reporters who worked in the Newspapers, Cinema, also from story-writers and News Readers from Radio and T.V. and also from Computer Scientists. Then I analyzed the collected proverbs as how they are used by these people? Whether they used these as they are, or changed their form and meaning? Or changed only the form? Or changed only the meaning?
Results

The old proverb in Tamil "நாளராரு ம஫னி லண்ண஫ாக குறந்த வருந்து து" which means “The child is growing healthy day by day” indicates various meanings in the modern society. The above mentioned people used the proverb with the extended meaning. The story-writers in Tamil use the proverb to indicate the story development in writing as ‘naaLoru kadhaiyum pozhutoru kavitaivyumaaka ciRRidzhuuku ezhudi vandeen’ (நாளராரு காதையும் பாடுளாரு குறந்த வருந்து கோபுருவிடு சிரியுட்கு எழுத்து) means “the writer writes per day a story and a poetry.”

The Cinema Reporter is using the same proverb to indicate the development of the cinema actress Malavika’s cinema life as maLavika cinema vazhkai naaLoru vaayppum pozhutoru tirilumaakap pooyik koNTirukkiranu (மாலாவிகா சினிமா வாய்ப்பும் பாதுகாப்பு பொய்யிக்கு கோண்டிருக்கின்று) means ‘the cinema life of Malvika is going with chance and thrill day by day’. One poet wants to indicate the development of love by using the same proverb as ‘naaLoru meeni pozhutoru vaNNam I love you. (நாளராரு மெனியும் பாதுகாப்பு வானூம் இலவூம்) ‘I love you day by day so much’. “NaaLooru meeni pozhutoru vaNNam oruvar manatile oruvarati” (நாளராரு மெனியும் பாதுகாப்பு வானூம் ஒருவர் மனமோல் ஒருவராதி) “Our thinking about each other is growing in our heart day by day’

In the same way the old proverb (Here after OP) in Telugu “nii batuku muuDu puvvulu aaru kaayaluga vardhillaali” (తూబతుకు మూడు పువ్రకు ఆరు కాయలుగా వ్రథిలలా లి). The meaning for the proverb is that the newly married couple should lead their life happily with wealth and children. The Modern proverb (Here after MP) created on the basis of this shows various meanings like inauspicious, injustice, crucial situations. For example, a story writer in his story used this proverb as ‘nii jiivitam muuDu romansulu aaru sviIT nightulugaa vardhillaali’ (తూ జీవితం మూడు రోమాషులు ఆరు స్వుట్ నింటులుగా వ్రథిలలా లి). That means “you enjoy your life as you like”. Actually it is not a blessing in a good sense. The story writer is teasing sarcastically the younger generation’s free ways of life.

The same proverb is used as it is to indicate the growth of selling a “drugs and drinks” business in the Hyderabad city. ‘guDumba viyapaaram kramamgaa nagaramanta
muuDu puvvulu aaru kaayalugaa vardhillutundi’ (నగరంచే గుడుంబ లాాతృారం మూడు పువ్ుులు ఆరు కాయలుగా విరజలు ా తుంది), “The business of gudumba increases gradually throughout the city”. ‘nalla bellam amakaalu muuDu puvvulu aaru kaayalugaa virajallutundi’ (నల ాబెల ంఅమమకంమూడు పువ్ుులు ఆరు కాయలుగా విరజలు ా తుంది), “The business of selling nalla bellam (a kind of drug) has increased in the city”.

Another newspaper reporter has used this proverb to pinpoint the critical twisting of the murder case related to a popular cinema hero by changing the words in the following way. ‘muuDu malupulu aaru twistulugaa baalayya kaalpu kadha maarindi’ (మూడు మలపులు ఆరు టవుస్టంటం బాలయా కాలుుల కథ మలరథంది), “Balayya’s murder case became very much critical”.

Another story writer to describe the development of phyakshanism in the Rayalaseema area used the proverb according to the situation. The proverb is ‘muuDu baambulu aaru katyalugaa pheyakhsanism veeLLunukundi’ (మూడు బాంబులు ఆరు హతాలుగా తౄాాక్షతుస్ంలేళ్ళునటకుంది), “The pheyakhsanism developed in Rayalaseema very much”.

One of the newsreaders used the same proverb to indicate the injustice in politics as ‘aviniidi muuDu puvvulu aaru kayalugaa velicindi’ (అవితూతిమూడు పువ్ుులు ఆరు కాయలుగా ల లిస్ ంది), “The injustice in politics increased a lot”.

The computer scientist used this proverb to indicate his degree of involvement with the computer in the following way. ‘naa jiivitam muuDu flappiilu aaru vairasululaa unTundi’ (నా జీవితంమూడు పలలమార్కని ల లిస్కుది), “My life is immersed deeply in the computer”.

The above uses of proverbs show that the variety of form and meaning of the old proverb is changed to suit varying demands. The proverb once used for blessing the couple is now used in various meanings. These meanings are used not only in a good sense but also in bad sense. This way of using the old proverb in new senses increases the value of proverb in the society and somehow helps retain the form.

In another story, one female character wants to show the mental condition of her after listening the varieties of cooking her husband needs as kaNNaik kaTTi camaikaTTil viTTatu poola (கண்டணக் கட்டி சத஫஬ல் கட்டில் லிட்டது மபாய) on the
basis of the OP kaNNaik kaTTi kaaTTil viTTatu poola (கன்னைக் கட்டி காட்டில் விட்டது பூலா) which means “left in the jungle, blindfolded”.

Another proverb kuTTi poTTa puunai poola means the cat which gave birth to the puppies won’t keep quiet. It will always change the place by carrying them with her mouth. These proverbs generally are used to indicate a person who is in restless mood. But a storywriter used this proverb to show restlessness of a dog named ‘Tarky’ with his master ‘Vengi’ as; Tarki kuTTi poOTTa puunaiyaaka naDamaDik koNDiruntatu vengiyuDan’ “Tarki roamed with her master Vengi restlessly”. (டர்க்கி குட்டிபுத்தந்தாகக் நடாடிக் பலகாண்டிருந்து வேங்கியுடன்)

The development in Science and Technology changed the society upside down. Electricity became part and parcel of the human life. Without electricity we cannot imagine the modern society. But the electricity cut or outage creates many problems like leaving the work in the middle or doing the same work again and again. This happens in the computer field more often. Now, because of the advanced invention in the computer field, there is a possibility of storing the information even when there is an outage of power. But in the beginning saving the typed matter was very difficult when power supply was stopped suddenly in the middle of the work. It gave much irritation to the computer scientists. Due to that discouragement they created many proverbs related to computer use on the basis of OPs. ‘karanT unnappuDe kamputer cakka peTTukoovaali’ (கராண்டு உனப்புடே கம்பிட்டாக்கக் பெட்டு கோவாலி) “when there is a current one should save the data” on the basis of the old proverb ‘diipam unnappuDe illu cakka peTTukoovaali’ (தியேப் உனப்புடே இலூ கக்கக் பெட்டு கோவாலி), means “when there is an opportunity it is better to learn whatever we have to learn”

Some other proverbs related to computer are the following:

Vairus disku miida paDDa disku vairus miida paDDa nasTam Diskuke (வைரைஸ் இச்சுக்கை மீதா இச்சுக்கை வைரைஸ் மீதா பாட்டா பாட்டா நாஸ்டம் டிஸ்கேக்கை) “if the disc falls on the virus or the virus falls on the disc the loss is only to disc” The OP is aaku mullu miida paDDa mullu aaku miida paDDaa nasTam aakuku’(ஏகு முலு மீதா பாட்டா முலு மீதா பாட்டா நாஸ்டம் ஆக்கூ), “if the leaf falls on the thorn or thorn falls on the leaf, the loss is only for leaf”

MP: disku Disku raasukunTe DaTa raalintaTa (டிச்சு டிச்சு ராஸ்ட்குண்டே டைடா ராலிங்டா) “If one disc is rubbed against another disc, the data will fall.”
OP: joogi joogi raaukunTee buuDita raalindaTa
దుంగ దుంగ రాస్టకుంటే బూడిత రాలిందట
“If the saint and saint rubbed each other then the ashes will fall.”

MP: taa ceDDa vairus kamputarella ceerucu
చెడ వారిస్ కముపటరెల చెరుచడు
“The spoilt virus spoiled the whole computer.”

OP: taa ceDDa kooti vanamanta cerucu
చెడ కోతి వాంమంతా చెరుచడు
“The spoilt monkey spoiled the whole garden.”

In society, T.V. occupies a special place. Especially the new arrivals of cable connections have special status in the society. People spend much time for watching TV as these offer many programs. Due to this, housewives neglect their house work. To point out the negligence many proverbs are created in a sarcastic manner. The following are some of them:

MP: atta tiTTinantuku kaadu t.v. channel maarcinantuku eedicinantaTa
(ఆత తిటినంటకు కాడట్ టీ.ఎట్టు చానలు మలరథింటకు ఏడిచంటకు)
“She cried not because her mother-in-law scolded her but for changing the T.V. channel”

OP: MoguDu koTTinanduku kaadu tooTi kooDalu navvinanduku eeDicinanta
మొగుడు కొట్టింటండకు కాడట్కోడలు నివ్వింటండకు ఏడిచండటకు
“She cried not because her husband beats her but because her sister-in-law laughs”

MP: paapa pakkinTivaaDitoo leeci pooyindandi ante paapular siiriyal cuuDanivee annaaDaTTa
పాప పాక్కినిటిడిడం లీచి పూయింండండి అంటే పాపులర్ సిరీయలు స్వరథయల్ చూడతూ అనాండట్
“The wife told “our daughter eloped with the neighbor house boy” but the husband replied that please allow me to see the popular serial.”

OP: illu kaali pootunTe cuTTa velikincukoni
ఇలు కాలి తుంటే చట్టంలు లిక్ంచండకోతు
“Let the house burn, but let me light the cigarette.”
“Because the husband is mad after T.V. the wife eloped with her neighbor.”

“If the husband is not a skilful person then his wife will be sister-in-law to the village.”

“The lady who did not cry on her husband’s death cried seeing the serial.”

The above examples of proverbs show how T.V. consumes the time of our lives and the consequences of such excessive interest in TV watching.

In the same way, cinema, the delusive world, also has much influence on the society. The following proverbs are the best examples for its influence on the society.

“If one scolds in a bad manner the person who listen to it asks, is it a cinema dialogue”

“The wife who saw Sharukhan does not like to see her husband.”

“After seeing the king, the wife feels like beating her husband”

“While the husband is thinking of meditation, the wife is thinking of cinema and how to take him to that”
The husband who does not care about his wife’s death laments for his hero’s film flop.”

Last but not the least, the powerful and profitable field of politics also does not escape from the attack of proverb. To get power and profit, many are join politics. This is considered as the place for injustice. To point out this there are many proverbs. Following are some of these proverbs on politics.

“The person who is begging daily will get only dal and rice but the politician who begs once in a five years will get wealth.”

“The person who is cooking has one curry, but the person who is begging has many curries.”

“The unprofitable power has no value.”

“There is no difference if the eyes which do not have vision are there or not.”

“The politicians are born earlier than the notion of justice was born.”
“The ladies are born earlier than the notion of jealousy was born.”

Conclusion

In this way, the proverbs, which are the part of folklore, gain glamour and act as super stars in the Tamil and Telugu society screens. That proverbs have taken re-birth in so many novel ways is, indeed, a tribute to the creative aspect of language use. Whatever modernity the society got due to various developments like modernization, industrialization and globalization, the importance of “good old” proverbs will only increase. They have their own importance yesterday, today, and tomorrow and this is naked truth.

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