JOURNAL OF PRAGMATICS RESEARCH

Metaphorical Euphemisms in Dholuo Marriage Conflict Resolution Program *'Dak Man Gi Ndhadhu'* on Radio *Nam Lolwe*

[1]Felix Owino, [2]Benard Mudogo, & [3]Gervasio Miriti
[1&2]Department of Language and Literature Education Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology, Kenya, [3]Department of Languages and Teacher Education, Turkana University College, Kenya.

Corresponding E-mail: dmudogo@mmust.ac.ke

Abstract
This paper investigates the Marriage Conflict Resolution (MCR) discourse among Dholuo speakers, which is full of taboo words, particularly those with sexual connotations and other obscenities. The purpose is to examine the use of metaphorical euphemisms by interlocutors to enhance the comprehension of ideas and to politely avoid taboos for culturally acceptable communicative purposes. The study employs a cognitive linguistics approach to analyze these metaphorical euphemisms. Using a descriptive research design, data are collected through Key Informant Interviews and a digital corpus from the Dholuo marriage conflict resolution program *Dak Man Gi Ndhadhu* on Radio Nam Lolwe, a vernacular station for Dholuo speakers broadcasting in Kisumu County, Kenya. The Metaphor Identification Procedure Vrije Universiteit (MIPVU) is employed to interrogate whether the expressions and lexical items identified are metaphorical. The items are then transcribed and translated into English.The study findings show that MCR metaphorical euphemisms are conceptualized through the interlocutors' experiences, such as actions, organisms, food, body parts, journeys, objects, human beings, and nature. The findings indicate that Dholuo speakers effectively apply their understanding of these concepts to enhance their comprehension of marital

issues. The study focuses solely on the cognitive-linguistic processes underlying metaphorical euphemism and not on gender-based perspectives. The study concludes that Dholuo speakers conceptualize MCR issues through metaphorical euphemisms to avoid taboo language.

Keywords: *Metaphorical euphemism; Categorization, Dholuo Marriage; Conflict Resolution, Radio Nam Lolwe.*

INTRODUCTION

The study aimed to identify metaphorical euphemisms used in the MCR program, '*Dak Man Gi Ndhadhu'* aired on radio *Nam Lolwe* - a vernacular radio station targeting Dhouluo speakers. It aimed to categorize these euphemisms and explore how they are metaphorically structured for culturally acceptable communicative purposes in MCR discourse. These euphemisms not only reflect societal norms but also encapsulate the underlying cognitive processes that shape discourse. Euphemisms are linguistic tools used to tone down the impact of harsh, offensive, or socially sensitive topics. Radio *Nam Lolwe* is a vernacular Dholuo radio station based in Kisumu city. It airs a diverse range of listener-engaging programs blending entertainment and educational content. The station works together with organizations to address social issues affecting its listeners. Such programs include '*Dak Man Gi Ndhadhu',* which can loosely be translated as 'a meaningful marriage'. It deals with issues like MCR and airs on Wednesdays from 9:20 pm in Dholuo.

According to Allan & Burridge, (2006). Euphemisms are, in broader terms, sweet-sounding or at least inoffensive alternatives for expressions that speakers or writers prefer not to use in executing a particular communicative intention on a given occasion. Metaphors involve 'carrying over' or crossing of one element of experience into another (Anudo & Kodak, 2017). Allan & Burridge (2006) assert that many words and expressions are viewed as 'taboo', such as those used to describe sex, our bodies and their functions, and those used to insult other people. Allan & Burridge (ibid) further posit that the use and avoidance of taboo language, also known as forbidden words, is an everyday life phenomenon.

JOURNAL OF PRAGMATICS RESEARCH

Speakers employ language strategically to be polite or impolite, politically correct or offensive, depending on whether they are "sweet-talking," "straight-talking," or being deliberately rude. Euphemisms, therefore, serve to obscure or disguise disagreeable realities (Jaganegara, 2020). Within this framework, the present study contributes to understanding how Dholuo speakers employ metaphorical euphemisms in radio-mediated MCR discourse to maintain politeness, uphold cultural decorum, and facilitate sensitive discussions within a socially acceptable communicative framework.

Dholuo Language

Dholuo is a Nilotic language spoken by the Luo people of Kenya and Tanzania (Ogelo, 2024). The Luos migrated into Kenya from South Sudan (Greenberg, 1963). The Kenyan Luo originally occupied the areas around Lake Vitoria in the Western part of Kenya but are currently in various urban centers and other parts of the country due to employment and intermarriages (Ochieng, 2016; Okello, 2021). According to Oduol (1990), there are two dialects of Dholuo: Boro-Ukwala (BU) and Kisumu South Nyanza (KSN) dialects. The latter covers Migori, Homa Bay, Kisumu, and Siaya counties, while the former is spoken in Yimbo, Ugenya, Alego, and parts of Gem (Yamo, 2014). Oduol (ibid), further states that the Kisumu South Nyanza (KSN) dialect is massively used since it is marked as the standard form. It is the dialect formally used in media, radio stations, and schools.

This study, therefore, adopted the KSN dialect since it is the standard dialect. Although these dialects have a high degree of mutual intelligibility, they are distinct enough in their lexical and phonological features to enable one to tell which dialectal zone a speaker comes from merely by the way one speaks (Muriithi, 2016). The latest census report estimates the population of Luos in Kenya at 5,066,966 (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2019).

JOURNAL OF
PRAGMATICS
RESEARCH

Euphemisms And Human Cognition

What humans categorize in the sense of psychology are objects that are believed to belong together (Smith, 1990; Minda, 2011). Human beings, however, do not stop there. They form concepts. A concept may mean several things ranging from a mental representation corresponding to the category, a group of objects; or a kind of mental glue to a representation of a chunk of knowledge that can be used to categorize and understand a domain of objects, events, or processes (Cohen & Murphy, 1984). Categorization thus regulates the representation of knowledge and linguistic meaning. It either takes prototypical models or classical models (Lakoff, 1987; Evans & Green, 2006).

Rosch (2024; 2009); Aberra (2006) observe that prototype aggregation facilitates individuals' comprehension of their experiences and knowledge acquisition about the world through embodiment. The current study benefited from this to aid prototype categorization of Dholuo metaphorical euphemisms employed in MCR. According to Ungerer & Schmid (2013), the language generation and comprehension process always involves cognition. Therefore, categories emanating from categorization can be conceptualized as mental constructs that are retained within the human mind. This, therefore, means that categories reflect the cognitive abilities of the human mind. Metaphorical euphemisms largely rely on metaphorical mappings to provide alternative expressions that conceal the underlying meaning while preserving clarity in communication.

Several studies have been conducted on the categorization of metaphors & euphemisms. Ochieng (2016), on the conceptualization of HIV/AIDS, presents that HIV/AIDS among Dholuo speakers has been categorized in terms of different conceptualizations of metaphors, which include conceptualizations such as accident, calamity, journey, wild animals, insects/pests, risky business, food, familiar illnesses and war. For instance, in the case of war, he identifies the following

JOURNAL OF PRAGMATICS RESEARCH

examples of HIV/AIDS lexical items whereby the illness is categorized as war; the infected is 'one at war'. They are then euphemized and conceptualized as follows: *Okumba* (Shield) for ARV drugs; shield bearer for HIV/AIDS-infected person; going to war unprotected for defaulting in the use of ARVs; projectiles and attacks for Opportunistic diseases. This categorization presents the drugs as the shields the seropositive use against the constant attack from opportunistic diseases that the infection comes with. Reference made to them as a shield presents their users as those in war and the drugs as the shield from the attacks of the enemy, in this case, HIV/AIDS.

Ochieng (2016) further postulates that from the study, it is evident that HIV/AIDS has influenced lexical innovation in Dholuo. The taboo nature of the disease has made Dholuo speakers strive for its euphemization. This has been done to make the disease less harsh and to fight the discrimination that its acquisition comes with, and it has led to lexical innovations, bringing in some words and idiomatic expressions into the language to be used to euphemize the illness. The findings were useful to the current study, although the present study investigated MCR using CIT and IST, making it different from Ochieng (2016), who used CMT and the Relevance theory to investigate HIV/AIDS. Anudo & Kodak (2017) did a Conceptual Analysis of Metaphors in Selected Dholuo Popular Music. They observe that love is expressed metaphorically by the utilization of different categories of conceptually accepted metaphorical mappings: love is darkness, love is death, and love is a commodity among others.

While both Ochieng (2016) and Anudo & Kodak (2017) provide valuable insights into euphemism and metaphorical expressions in Dholuo, their focus remains confined to health discourse and popular music, respectively. Little attention has been paid to how Dholuo speakers employ metaphorical euphemisms in socially sensitive communicative contexts such as Marriage Conflict Resolution

(MCR), where issues of sex, infidelity, and domestic tensions are often heavily tabooed. Moreover, previous studies have not sufficiently explored how such euphemisms function cognitively and interactively to maintain politeness, negotiate meaning, and ensure cultural appropriateness during conflict resolution. This gap underscores the need for the present study, which applies the Conceptual Integration Theory (CIT) and Interactional Sociolinguistics Theory (IST) to analyze metaphorical euphemisms in MCR discourse as mediated through radio communication, thereby extending the understanding of euphemistic language use beyond health and artistic domains into a pragmatic, socially grounded context.

Theoretical Framework

The study made use of CIT (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002) in describing MCR metaphorical euphemisms as a conceptual phenomenon that is linked with people's thinking and mannerisms. The study thus addressed the gap since CIT and Dholuo MCR metaphorical euphemisms are an area that needed research. CIT helped the researchers to show each metaphor as a thought process. The relationships of different conceptual realms whereby a metaphor is used to elucidate one conceptual realm by using another conceptual realm.

We adopted Conceptual Integration Theory (CIT) because it offers a strong analytical lens for tracing how distinct conceptual domains merge to generate culturally meaningful and socially acceptable lexical choices that embody both cognitive patterns and underlying cultural schemas. As noted by Fauconnier and Turner (2002), CIT can account for the emergence of novel structures that are absent from any single input space. The Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Lakoff, 1987) would not give adequate explanations to new meanings that are not present in either source or target. This makes CIT especially relevant to our analysis of how Dholuo euphemisms develop unique cultural significance that extends beyond their literal source and target concepts within MCR.

The researcher strove to prove the mental function of MCR metaphors and that, as observed by (Kovecses (2010), mental metaphors enhance comprehension of ideas. Mudogo (2019), observes that the conceptualization of women by bilingual Lukabras-English speakers was made easier through the utilization of appropriate metaphors. The researcher investigated how the understanding of target A by way of the structure of source B, is achieved through the transference between the two mental fields (the target unit and the source unit). Through the metaphors, the researcher described how our knowledge of intangible and inaccessible concepts and experiences within MCR is related to our actual experiences and physical objects and substances in the environment. The mapping from the source domain onto the target domain and how it aids the transfer of meaning and understanding.

RESEARCH METHODS

The study area was a call-in radio program, *'Dak Man Gi Ndhadhu,'* on radio Nam Lolwe. This is equivalent to the four counties inhabited by Dholuo speakers: Homa Bay, Migori, Siaya, and Kisumu. Data was derived from 300 euphemisms collected from six excerpts of *'Dak Man Gi Ndhadhu'* program on radio Nam Lolwe and Key Informant Interviews, composed of two moderators from the program. Metaphorical euphemisms were identified using the Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP) (Gibbs, 2017). The data was recorded, transcribed, and translated into English, the study language. They were then analyzed within the tenets of CIT (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002).

We on euphemisms as they were employed within the live MCR in the radio program, but ensured that the extracted metaphors shared communicative norms of all Dholuo speakers. In addition, the use of CIT helped us to interrogate how meaning emerges through culturally embedded mental spaces operating across dialectal and social variables in shared cultural schemas rather than idiosyncratic linguistic knowledge. Further, the moderators, who were native Dholuo speakers

with a long-standing experience of engaging diverse callers, explained the contextual meanings of the euphemisms, further reducing potential interpretive gaps.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

The study classified the data into two categories: direct MRWs and possible personification. There were no indirect metaphor expressions from the data of metaphorical euphemisms gathered. Nyarumba (2024) studied metaphorical euphemisms in AkeGusii circumcision songs, revealing categories of possible personification as well as direct MRWs. Gathigia (2014), on the other hand, came up with indirect MRWs as well, resulting in three distinct categories of MRWs found in the MIPVU: possible personification, direct MRWs, and indirect MRWs. The present study's results, however, did not reveal any instances of indirect MRW. As argued by Ochieng (2016), MRWs are words that overtly relate to metaphor by invoking a form of comparison or contrast.

Categorization of a word as direct MRW is anchored on whether its use can potentially yield a correspondence in the source domain (Gathigia, 2014; Wakoko and Mudogo, 2024). For instance, *ok ochung'* (the penis doesn't stand), in reference to erectile dysfunction, the domains a human being and *duong' dichuo* (penis) have been mapped to vividly explain the phenomenon. To comprehend the various conceptualizations in MCR, the researcher prototypically. To comprehend the various conceptualizations in MCR, the researcher prototypically categorized the various metaphorical euphemisms arrived at. The researcher was able to discern and come up with eight generic levels of categories of MCR metaphorical euphemisms: conceptualization of MCR issues as actions, objects, food, body parts, human beings, journeys, and nature. The following table gives the data on a presentation of the eight generic levels:

JOURNAL OF PRAGMATICS RESEARCH

Table 1: Dholuo Metaphorical Euphemisms Categorization

Category	Word in Dholuo	Gloss
Actions	*Terruok, bet, dak,*	accompanying each other, sitting, staying
	Chokruok, bilruok	exchange of water, tasting
each		other
Organisms	*Cham, yien, winyo*	Plant, tree, bird, animal, scary
	Lee, koko	animal
Objects	*Opira, ndiga, chuma,*	Ball, bicycle, metal, staff, digging tool,
	Luth, rakuny, kede, yao	stick, well
Food	*Niang', sukari, nyuka, rech, alot*	Sugar cane, sugar, porridge, fish, vegetables
Body parts	*Wang', it, dhok, nyokoth, lwedo, wich*	Eye, ear, mouth, bottom, head
Human beings	*Nyathi, waya, owadwa,*	A child/baby, aunt, brother
Journey	*Wuoth, yoo, chien, chon, Tieko wuoth, chopo*	Journey, route, back, the past, arrive at the destination
Nature	*Koth, apaka, chieng'*	Rainfall, waves, the sun

(Source: Fieldwork,2024)

Through the enablement of indirect but effective communication in socially sensitive topics and contexts, metaphorical euphemisms play a critical role in the complex tapestry of human communication. Many African cultures discourage confrontation in favor of communicative strategies aimed at masking dysphemism and upholding social decorum (Ochieng & Anudo, 2016). Dholuo speakers' culture and societal norms are dictated by some unwritten act, known as *chike, Luo Kitgi Gi Timbegi*. Euphemisms grounded in metaphor enable interlocutors to address delicate issues—such as body parts, infidelity, infertility, violence, domestic

disproportions, among others—without causing embarrassment or demeaning the discussants or their audiences. The metaphorical euphemisms emanate from conceptual blending. Culturally familiar source domains such as animals, body parts, plants, objects, among others, are mapped onto abstract or taboo target domains, resulting in veiled and intelligible meaning (Fauconnier & Turner, 2008). The symbolic and indirect nature of metaphor fosters respectful dialogue and maintains interpersonal cohesion (Nyarumba, 2024). It is, therefore, a powerful pragmatic tool in MCR.

Table 2: Metaphorical Euphemisms of Marriage is an Action

No.	Dholuo	Gloss
1.	*Terruok en chokruok*	Sex is gathering
2.	*Terruok en chiemo*	Sex is eating
3.	*Terruok en donjo e server*	Sex is entering the server
4.	*Terruok en dhi Canaan*	Sex is travelling to Canaan
5.	*Terruok en wilo pii*	Sex is exchange of water
6.	*Terruok en luoko luth*	Sex is cleaning the staff
7.	*Terruok en somo katiba*	Sex is reading the constitution
8.	*Terruok en bet e achiel*	Sex is being one
9.	*Terruok en bilruok*	Sex is tasting each other
10.	*Terruok gi nyathi en rocho ratiche*	Sex with a minor is infringing their right

(Source: Fieldwork,2024)

As displayed on the table above, the conceptualization of Dholuo MCR metaphorical euphemisms (with regard to sexual intercourse) was understood through known actions such as gathering, eating, entering, traveling, water exchange, cleaning, reading, being one, tasting, and infringing. Cellyne (2014) posits that although Dholuo speakers can occasionally invoke sexual dysphemism in certain contexts, they largely uphold good manners and embrace sexual euphemism in the marital setup. This was confirmed by the current study, which established that *terruok* (sex) was euphemized through familiar actions such as *chokruok*

(gathering), *donjo e sava* (entering the server), and *somo Katiba* (reading the constitution), among others.

For instance, in *Terruok en chokruok* (Sex is gathering); *Terruok en chiemo* (Sex is eating), we get the generic metaphors MARRIAGE IS GATHERING and MARRIAGE IS EATING, respectively. Sex, an aspect of the target domain of marriage, is comprehended through source domain actions of *chokuok* (gathering) and *chiemo* (eating). Through the use of such actions, the researchers established that Dholuo speakers could comfortably navigate the tabooed theme of sex since the topic was successfully euphemized through the familiar, less blatant actions.

Table 3: Metaphorical Euphemisms Category on Objects

No.	Dholuo	Gloss
1.	Dak en law ywach	Marriage is an everyday cloth
2.	Dhako ndiga	A woman is a bicycle
3.	Dhako en opira	A woman is a ball
4.	Dhako en orundo rundo	A woman is a pendulum
5.	Dichuo en Kenya Power	A man is Kenya Power & Lighting Company

(Source: Fieldwork,2024)

The findings of the study revealed that several metaphorical euphemisms in Dholuo MCR issues were conceptualized and comprehended in terms of known objects. Anudo (2018) also observed that Dholuo speakers comprehend unfamiliar domains through known objects. The most common objects to which they were attributed (as shown on table 3 above) include: cloth, bicycle, ball, pendulum, metal, staff, digging tool, stick, whip, and well. It was inferred, for instance, that a woman was likened to objects such as a bicycle and a ball (*Dhako ndiga* a woman is a bicycle; *Dhako en opira -* A woman is a ball).

In these two instances, the generic metaphor MARRIAGE IS AN OBJECT was inferred. A woman, a participant in marriage, was understood from the source

domain: object. *Dhako ndiga (*a woman is a bicycle) is euphemistically and metaphorically used to refer to a woman as an object of sex. The woman was presented and understood as an object that can easily change ownership. The other example, *Dhako en opira (*A woman is a ball), too, displays the same parameters: MARRIAGE/WOMAN is an OBJECT. This second example further euphemistically evokes the tabooed concept of infidelity by women. Infidelity by women is understood through a ball at play in the field. The ball has numerous players chasing after it. It is kicked by many different players depending on their strength and determination.

Table 4: Metaphorical Euphemisms Category on Food

No.	Dholuo	Gloss
1.	*Okwe ka nyuka Nyathi*	He/she is cool like a baby's porridge
2.	*Macha nyamami*	That one (the woman) is a tilapia fish
3.	*Dhako/nyako en a lod odielo*	An ugly woman/lady is a cheap vegetable
4.	*Dhako/nyako en kado*	A woman is soup.

(Source: Fieldwork,2024)

A community's common food items are useful in the formulation of metaphors to understand certain complex issues (Faycel, 2012). The study established that some MCR concepts among the Luos were understood in terms of food. For instance, a baby's porridge was always very cool, maintained at very low temperatures to pose no danger to the baby. For example, 1 above, the food metaphorical euphemism: *Okwe ka nyuka Nyathi* (He/she is cool like a baby's porridge), was used to euphemistically refer to one who remained very calm even when expected to rise to the occasion and save a situation. In example four: *Dhako/nyako en kado* (A woman is soup), the target domain of marriage is understood through the familiar source domain of soup. A woman is food to a man; delectable food. A man/husband

consumes a woman/wife. These metaphorical euphemisms display the generic metaphor MARRIAGE IS FOOD and successfully euphemize the embarrassing discourse surrounding marital sex.

Table 5: Dholuo Metaphorical Euphemisms Category on Organisms

No.	Dholuo	Gloss
1.	Dhako irito	A woman is a plant.
2.	Jaoda en jowi	My husband is a buffalo
3.	Opugno ka mbuta	A plump lady is a Nile perch
4.	Ger ka kwach	Aggression is a leopard
5.	Macha nyamami	A beautiful woman is a tilapia fish
6.	Wiye tek ka wi okoko	Tough-headedness is mudfish

(Source: Fieldwork,2024)

As exhibited on the table above, the conceptualization of Dholuo MCR metaphorical euphemisms was comprehended through known organisms such as plants, wild animals, and fish. The MCR metaphorical euphemisms referring to organisms included examples displayed above in Table 5, the metaphors *Dhako irito* (A woman is a plant), *Jaoda en jowi* (My husband is a buffalo), *Opugno ka mbuta* (A plump lady is a Nile perch), *Ger ka kwach* (Aggression is a leopard), *Macha nyamami* (A beautiful woman is tilapia fish), *Wiye tek ka wi okok*o (Tough-headedness is mudfish). For instance, No. 1 in table 5 above, *Dhako irito* (A woman is a plant) was used to mean a woman is like a plant; tendered or taken care of by the husband or the matrimonial family. Deluz (1968) posits that the Luo community treasured and took good care of their daughter-in-law, and the husband was expected to love her and provide for her. From the example, the generic metaphor: MARRIAGE IS AN

ORGANISM is inferred. In example 3 of the same table: *Opugno ka mbuta* (plump like a Nile perch) is used in reference to a stout woman in a marriage, bringing forth the generic metaphor MARRIAGE IS AN ORGANISM; A FAT WOMAN IS A NILE PERCH. The source domain characteristics of an animal, the Nile perch, are mapped onto the target domain of a woman in marriage.

Table: 6: Metaphorical Euphemisms Category on Body Parts

No.	Dholuo	Gloss
1.	*Duong' dichuo en chuma*	Mr. P is a metal
2.	*Duong' miyo en nam lolwe*	Mrs. V is Lake Victoria
3.	*Duong' dichuo en rakuny*	Mr. P is a digging/penetrative tool
4.	*Nyokoth/Adhiambo*	Buttocks
5.	*Puga mar chak*	Breasts

(Source: Fieldwork,2024)

The study revealed that among Dholuo speakers, certain body parts cannot be called out since it is taboo or just utterly embarrassing. The male and female reproductive organs were particularly euphemized. For example, in an example, a woman's buttocks were referred to as *Nyokoth* (daughter of Okoth). A woman would be told *chuo Nyokoth piny,* meaning to sit or take a seat. The metaphor MARRIAGE IS A BODY PART is inferred. Anudo (2018) also corroborates the assertion that Dholuo speakers euphemize sensitive body parts like the male and female reproductive organs. In example 5, *Puga mar chak* (breasts); rather than blatantly say breasts, the interlocutors preferred to euphemistically refer to them as milk containers.

Table 7: Dholuo Metaphorical Euphemisms Category on Dreaded Malady

No.	Dholuo	Gloss
1.	*Tuo nyalo chayi*	A disease can despise its victim

2.	*Kundi ochuoye*	He/she is infested by a pest
3.	*Dhiang' tho gi lum e dhoge*	A cow perishes with grass in the mouth
4.	*Kwach omake*	He/she has been caught by a leopard
5.	*Ondilo*	He/she is on ARVs

(Source: Fieldwork,2024)

Since Dholuo speakers practiced farming and kept livestock as one of their economic activities, they have had an encounter with insects and pests destructive to crops and livestock. HIV/AIDS was a dreaded malady, and a mere mention of the disease would rekindle horrific memories (Ochieng 2016). The current study established that HIV/AIDS was euphemized using insects, pests, and wild animals. This has led to the conceptualization of HIV/AIDS as a lethal pest using metaphorical euphemisms such as *Kundi ochwoye* (He/she is infested by a pest). The target domain of HIV/AIDS destruction to the victim's body was euphemized and comprehended through the familiar source domain of a pest. The dreaded HIV/AIDS malady, majorly viewed because of marital infidelity, brought forth the generic metaphor MARRIAGE/INFIDELITY IS A DISEASE. HIV/AIDS victims' bodies withered and wasted away. This was presented and comprehended through pest infestation. In the same breath, for example, *Kwach omake* (He/she has been caught by a leopard). HIV/AIDS is euphemized and understood using the much-familiar source domain of a leopard grabbing its prey. A leopard is known to be one of the most brutal animals in destroying its victims. These characteristics are mapped on to HIV/AIDS in terms of the destruction of the infected/victim's body.

Table 8: Dholuo Metaphorical Euphemisms Category on Journeys

No.	Dholuo	Gloss
1.	*Wachako*	*w*e have begun our love journey
2.	*Hera nigi konde mang'eny*	Love has numerous corners
3.	*Hera kalo tembe*	Love surmounts obstacles
4.	*Aol*	I am exhausted

(Source: Fieldwork,2024)

This category euphemizes the obstacles and challenges of love as the usual characteristics of long journeys. The difficulties people go through in the name of love, which could include infidelity, rejection, separation, and even divorce, are horrifying and heartbreaking. Anudo & Kodak (2017) postulated that Dholuo speakers cherished the concept of love and popular Dholuo musicians employed love metaphors to help convey their messages. The study established that such grave issues were euphemized to avoid hurting the hapless victims. For example, *Hera nigi konde mang'eny* (Love has numerous corners), the struggles in the marriage institution are understood and euphemized as mere corners in a long journey. Similarly, *Hera kalo tembe* (Love surmounts obstacles), the idea of a journey and comprehension of MCR issues as hiccups of a long journey is made out. Thus, the generic metaphor MARRIAGE IS A JOURNEY.

Table 9: Dholuo Metaphorical Euphemisms Category on Death

No.	Dholuo	Gloss
1.	Wan duto wan e yo	We are all on the way
2.	Onindo	He/she has slept
3.	Otieko wuodhe	He/she has finished the journey
4.	Oyueyo	He/she has rested

(Source: Fieldwork,2024)

The study revealed that Dholuo speakers feared death, and making a direct mention of this natural phenomenon was taboo. It was believed that this could call the spirits of death or hurt victims. Owuor, (2006) notes that the Luos respected departed souls and feared exasperating the spirits. Dholuo speakers, therefore, euphemized death by presenting life as a journey and death as a destiny for all and sundry. From Table 9 above, the metaphorical euphemism. For instance, *wan duto wan e yo* (we are all on the way) underscores that life is a journey and we are all travelers. Death is thus understood from the familiar domain of being on a journey where people have different destinations. It helps in accepting death by euphemizing it as the fate of all. In the same breath, *onindo* (he/she has rested)

brings forth a consolation that the departed person is just asleep. This euphemizes life loss and consoles the loved ones that the deceased will one day wake up or rise from the dead.

Table: 10: Dholuo Metaphorical Euphemisms Category on Nature

No.	Dholuo	Gloss
1.	*Apaka mag udi*	Waves of households
2.	*Goyo piny*	Prostitution
3.	*Piny noneni* the world will judge you	

(Source: Fieldwork,2024)

The findings of the study established that there are Dholuo metaphorical euphemisms drawn from nature. The excesses of nature were used to euphemize marital struggles and MCR issues. For instance, marital life challenges (*apaka mag udi*) were understood as waves. Dholuo speakers, being predominantly fishermen, invoked the experience of a rough sea/lake to comprehend these challenges and euphemize them as ephemeral. The generic metaphor: MARRIAGE IS NATURE was brought forth. The study further revealed that Dholuo speakers highly regard marital faithfulness by women to their spouses. Prostitution is, therefore a disgrace. It is referred to as *goyo piny* just to bar children from the adult content/topic and to help adults comprehend its gravity.

The tables above (1 – 10) display the various sources from which metaphorical euphemisms in Dholuo MCR discourse were derived for purposes of this study. They were classified into eight generic levels of categorization. The study showed that the most common metaphorical euphemisms emanated from experiences related to actions, objects, organisms, body parts, journey, food, human beings, and nature.

CONCLUSION

Dholuo speakers utilized metaphorical euphemisms in the MCR discourse. Since MCR discourse is a phenomenon characterized by a lot of sexual connotations and many other obscenities, the speakers euphemistically conceptualize it through their basic experiences with animals as well as other organisms, objects, actions, food, human beings, journey, and nature. From these experiences, the conceptual metaphors identified were culture-specific and could have other metaphorical entailments in other cultural settings. As such, it was only the relevant parts of the source domains that were mapped to the target domain of MCR concepts. Through conceptual mappings, the study identified metaphors such as those elucidated above. The study deduced that conceptualizations were important in understanding the various complex MCR concepts veiled through metaphorical euphemisms. However, it was realized that some Dholuo speakers were not competent enough to spontaneously come up with deep MCR metaphorical euphemisms in their natural discourses but would easily make out the ones emanating from other interlocutors. Therefore, there is a need to have and listen to many such programs to adequately equip Dholuo speakers with language tools that enhance positive public MCR discourse.

REFERENCES

Aberra, D. (2006). Prototype theory in cognitive linguistics.

Allan, K., & Burridge, K. (2006). *Forbidden words: Taboo and the censoring of language*. Cambridge University Press.

Anudo, C. N. (2018). *Conceptual metaphors in Dholuo: A cognitive linguistic approach* (Doctoral dissertation, Kisii University).

Anudo, C. N., & Kodak, B. (2017). A Conceptual Analysis of Love Metaphors in Selected Dholuo Popular Music.

Cellyne, A. N. (2014). A cognitive linguistic analysis of sexual dysphemism and euphemisms in South Nyanza Dholuo.

Cohen, B., & Murphy, G. L. (1984). Models of concepts. *Cognitive science*, *8*(1), 27-58. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0364-0213(84)80024-5

Deluz, A. (1968). BA Ogot, History of the Southern Luo. Vol. I: Migration and settlement, 1500-1900. *Homme*, *8*(1), 91-92.

Fauconnier, G., & Turner, M. (2008). *The way we think: Conceptual blending and the mind's hidden complexities*. Basic books.

Fauconnier, G., & Turner, M. (2002). Conceptual blending, form nd meaning. *Recherches en communication*, *19*, 57-86.

Faycel, D. (2012). Food metaphors in Tunisian Arabic proverbs. *Working Papers in Linguistics*, *3*.

Gathigia, M. G. (2014). Metaphors of love in Gikũyũ: Conceptual mappings, vital relations and image schemas. *Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Kenyatta University, Nairobi, Kenya*.

Gibbs Jr, R. W., & Chen, E. (2017). Taking metaphor studies back to the Stone Age: Areply to Xu, Zhang, and Wu (2016). *Intercultural Pragmatics*, *14*(1), 117-124.

Greenberg, J. H. (1963). The languages of Africa. *International journal of American linguistics*.

Goldstone, R. L., Kersten, A., & Carvalho, P. F. (2003). Concepts and categorization. *Comprehensive handbook of psychology*, *4*, 599-621.

Jaganegara, H., Arvian, E., & Noryatin, Y. (2020). Euphemism types in the Washington Times online political articles: a study of semantic change. *LADU: Journal of Languages and Education*, *1*(1), 11-19.

Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (2019). *The 2009 Kenya Population and Housing Census*. international.ipums.org.

Kovecses, Z. (2010). *Metaphor: A practical introduction*. Oxford University Press.

Lakoff, G. (1987). The death of a dead metaphor. *Metaphor and symbol*, *2*(2), 143-147.

Mudogo, B. (2019). Conceptualization of women through metaphor by bilingual Lukabras-English speakers. *Conceptualization of Women through Metaphor by Bilingual Lukabras-English Speakers International Journal of Linguistics, Literature and Translation (IJLLT)*, *2*, 26-32. 10.32996/ijllt.2019.2.5.4

Muriithi, G. N. (2016). *The Phonological and Lexical variation within Kisumu-South Nyanza dialect of Dholuo* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Nairobi).

Nyarumba, D. M., Mudogo, B., & Mandillah, L. (2024). Metaphorical Euphemisms in Ekegusii Circumcision Songs. *Journal of African Languages & Literary Studies*, *5*(1), 69.

Ochieng Orwenjo, D., & Anudo, C. A. (2016). A cognitive linguistic approach to Dholuo sexual euphemisms and dysphemisms. *Cognitive Linguistic Studies*, *3*(2), 316-346.

Ochieng, J. J. (2016). A linguistic analysis of the metaphorical Euphemisms used in Dholuo HIV. *AIDS Discourse.*

Oduol, J. H. (1990). *Dholuo dialects: Synchronic state and some historical inferences* (Doctoral dissertation).

Ogelo, A., & Bylund, E. (2024). Spatial frames of reference in Dholuo. *Language Sciences*, *104*, 101614.

Okello, B. (2021). What's in a name? Reinventing Luo naming system in Kenya's ethnopolitical landscape. *African Identities*, *19*(1), 77-90.

Owuor, V. B. (2006). *Resurrection hope in the African context: Challenging Luo beliefs and practices concerning death* (Doctoral dissertation, North-West University).

Rosch, E. (2009). Categorization. In *Cognition and Pragmatics* (pp. 41-52). John Benjamin's Publishing Company.

Rosch, E. (2024). Principles of categorization. In *Cognition and categorization* (pp. 27-48). Routledge.

Smith, E. R., & Zarate, M. A. (1990). Exemplar and prototype use in social categorization. *Social cognition*, *8*(3), 243-262.

Minda, J. P., & Smith, J. D. (2011). Prototype models of categorization: Basic Formulation, predictions, and limitations. *Formal approaches in categorization*, 40-64.

Statistics, K. N. B. O. (2019). The 2009 Kenya population and housing census. *Nairobi: Kenya National Bureau of Statistics*.

Ungerer, F., & Schmid, H. J. (2013). *An introduction to cognitive linguistics.* Routledge.

Wakoko, M., & Mudogo, B. A. (2024). Accounting for Pain using the Image Schemas: Evidence from Lubukusu Language in medical discourse. *Journal of African Languages & Literary Studies*, *5*(3), 5. https://hdl.handle.net/10520/ejc-aa_jalls_v5_n3_a1

Yamo, J. O. (2014). Loanword adaptation in the Boro-Ukwala dialect of Dholuo: A case of borrowing from Lumarachi, Lunyala, and Kiswahili.