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KENYATTA UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES  
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AND LINGUISTICS

SEXUAL DYSPEMISMS AND EUPHEMISMS IN SOUTH NYANZA DHOLUO:  
A COGNITIVE LINGUISTIC APPROACH

BY

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## DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to all the dreamers in the world. For those whose dreams have been broken, don't lose hope and don't stop dreaming. The best thing to do is to reposition yourself for Les Brown Says, "*When life knocks you down, you should always try to land on your back because if you look up, you can get up.*"

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## DEFINITION OF TERMS

**Act:** what is intended to be done by a verbal or non-verbal communication.

**Dysphemism:** the prohibition of certain kinds of behavior or objects believed to be harmful either for moral, religious, cultural or social reasons.

**Euphemism:** an expression that seeks to avoid being offensive and which is normally used to avoid possible loss of face.

**Face threatening act:** when an act of verbal or non-verbal communication runs contrary to the face wants of the addressee and/or speaker.

**Face:** the public self-image that every person wants to claim for himself or herself.

**Gender:** a socially constructed term that refers to those differences between men and women.

**Linguistic dysphemism:** the word or phrase to be avoided in public discourse because of the restrictions imposed by dysphemism.

**Metaphor:** a relation between two conceptual structures.

**Negative Face:** the want of every person that his or her actions be unimpeded by others.

**Positive Face:** the want of every individual that his or her wants be desirable to at least some other people.

**Saving Face:** the act of avoiding embarrassing or humiliating the speaker, hearer and/or a third party.

**Sex:** the biological aspect of being male or female.

## ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

BNC	-	British National Corpus
CIT	-	Conceptual Integration Theory
CL	-	Cognitive Linguistics
F	-	Female
FTA	-	Face Threatening Acts
I	-	Input
LF	-	Lexical Frequency
M	-	Male
MET	-	Metaphor
PT	-	Politeness Theory
RI	-	Research Instrument

## ABSTRACT

The study examined sexual dysphemisms and euphemisms in the Kenyan Dholuo using Cognitive Linguistics which is based on the experiences of the world and the way people perceive and conceptualize them. This study had three objectives: to identify and explain the sex-related dysphemistic words and phrases in Dholuo; to account for the cognitive processes in the creation of sex-related euphemisms and to discuss the relationship between age and gender in the usage of euphemisms. To achieve the objectives of the study, this research used a descriptive design in which the researcher identified the sex-related dysphemisms by asking the respondents to name the male and female sexual organs, sex-related physiological processes associated with both males and females as well as to describe the instances in which ritual sexual intercourse were performed in the Luo set-up. In addition, the respondents were asked to give the alternative terms that were used to refer to the sex-related dysphemistic terms mentioned. The researcher used both purposive and simple random techniques to obtain a sample of eighteen native Dholuo speakers for the study (nine were males and the other nine females). The researcher used an interview schedule and a tape recorder to collect data which was transcribed, categorized, quantified and then processed after which suitable methods of statistical representations were used to display the emergent patterns. The euphemisms collected were analyzed using Conceptual Integration Theory of Fauconnier and Turner (2002) and Politeness Theory of Brown and Levinson (1978). Those that were analyzed using the Conceptual Integration Theory were mapped into the different kinds of conceptual mappings also known as the mental spaces. The others were analyzed using the positive politeness strategy, initiated by the proponents of the Politeness Theory. The conceptual mappings were used to discuss the relationship between gender and age in the usage of euphemisms in Dholuo. The study found out that the Conceptual Integration Theory though more advanced than the Conceptual Metaphor Theory of Lakoff and Johnson (1980), was not able to analyze all the sex-related euphemisms collected in the study. Those that it could not cater for were euphemisms unique to the customs and beliefs of the Luo especially those that dealt with ritual sex in this community. From the findings of this study, the researcher recommends that an extensive study be carried out on Dholuo euphemisms in order to come up with a comprehensive data base from which a dictionary of Dholuo euphemisms which will act as a reference material can be drafted.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background to the Study

Dysphemism is a system of placing prohibitions and restrictions on certain acts and utterances in a society. These prohibitions signify that the acts or utterances in question are not acceptable within the norms and culture of the society and therefore, must not be practiced or talked about by its members. The degree of avoidance varies from one social context to another and is also based on the item dysphemized. Dysphemism (both behavioral and verbal) is a universal concept practiced by every human society around the world. However, it is language and culture specific, such that what is prohibited in one society may be the norm in another (Agyekum, 2002).

Allan and Burridge (2006) state that there is an assumption in most communities that both accidental breach and irrational defiance of dysphemism will be followed by some kind of trouble to the offender such as sickness or death of the offender or one of his or her relatives. However, there are milder kinds of dysphemism, whose violation results in lesser penalties of corporal punishment, incarceration, social ostracism or mere disapproval. Those who violate a dysphemism can often purify themselves or be purified by confessing their sins and submitting to a ritual. Mboya (2001:11) describes a Luo ritual for cleansing an incestuous relationship:

When a man had sex with his father's wife, the two had to drink medicine to be cleansed from the offence committed. After this, the son moved out of the home and at times, the woman was sent away. This was a very serious offence and the cleanser, a *Jaoso*, slaughtered a sheep to cleanse the offence. Should the father of the man at one time become ill, both the woman and the man could not go to see him. If the old man died, the

offenders (the man and his father's wife) were not supposed to cry or mourn. An old woman and some elders washed the dead man's hands and genitals and then used the water to mix cleansing medicine, *manyasi*, which was given to the man and woman to drink. This was done secretly and after this the offenders were free to mourn the dead man.

Allan and Burridge (2006) note that to an outsider, the prohibitions imposed on dysphemisms are perplexing and seem silly but they are among the common values that link the people of a community together. What one group values, another scorns. Shared dysphemisms are therefore a sign of social cohesion. Moreover, as part of a wider belief system, they provide the basis people need to function in an otherwise confused and hostile environment.

Trudgill (1974) notes that linguistic dysphemisms, which are associated with particular words or sets of words, exist in most cultures. Such words are not only considered inappropriate for a certain context, but are forbidden in most communicative contexts. According to Trudgill (1983), dysphemistic language is normally associated with lack of decency and very often, it is just a matter of convention where the normal use of an item in a language is prohibited due to particular social values and beliefs. He further posits that the strongest dysphemistic words in the English speaking world are still associated with sex. This is the same view held in traditional African societies, Luo specifically.

In view of this study, it is worthy to mention some of the sex-related cultural practices in the Luo community where dysphemism is rife and by extension dysphemistic words and phrases. The Luo are Nilotes whose cradle land historians and linguists have located around Wau, along the rivers of Sue and Jur in the grassland plains of Bahr-el-Ghazal

province of Sudan (Ochieng', 1985). This study is specifically based on Kenyan Dholuo which belongs to the Western Nilotic sub - branch of the Nilotic branch of the Eastern Sudanic family. According to Stanford (1967), Kenyan Dholuo has two major varieties, the Trans - Yala variety which is spoken in Ugenya, Alego, Yimbo and parts of Gem and the South - Nyanza variety spoken in various locations of Southern Nyanza, Kisumu and those parts of Siaya not included in the Trans-Yala group.

Okombo (1997) notes that although these dialects of Dholuo have a high degree of mutual intelligibility, they are distinct enough in their lexical and phonological features to enable one identify a dialectal zone a speaker comes from merely by the way he or she speaks. The South - Nyanza variety is the one regarded as standard, as it is the one that is found in the bulk of the literature in Dholuo, including the Bible and the school readers. It is also the dialect on which this study is based as such; any reference to Dholuo herein will be referring to the South - Nyanza variety.

Sex is so deeply entrenched in the cultural framework of the Luo community that it cannot be understood in isolation from the cultural meanings that it carries (Ogutu, 2007). Traditionally, Luo culture demands that widows display an identifying symbol and be sexually cleansed. The process of sexual cleansing entails intricate details that must be observed during the mourning period till the widow is cleansed (Mboya, 2001).

Luo widows are required to have sexual intercourse with one of the male-in-laws as part of the cleansing rite. This is done to get rid of the husband's spirit or ghost. The "sin of

death” that is symbolically represented by a banana rope (*okola*) tied around the widow’s waistline is removed sexually by the cleanser. The rope must fray and break during intercourse. This is called *chodo okola* (Okeyo and Allen, 1994).

Mboya (2001) observes that after cleansing, the cleanser proceeds to change house for the widow. A ceremony called *turo-osuri* is then organized by the inheritor to celebrate the completion of the house. It involves feasting and sex between the widow and inheritor. He further notes that burial rites are also performed by the relatives of the deceased family member on the night before and after burial. The rite is also performed by unmarried women who lose their children through death. The ritual is believed to have protective powers against the spirit of death.

The planting system among the Luo is hierarchical meaning that parents plant first then children follow. A widow has to find a sexual partner during the planting season otherwise, by tradition; the children cannot plant seeds in their farms. A woman’s refusal to have sex is an impediment to the farming process. It is strongly believed that the fertility of the land and bumper harvests depend on whether a man or woman has sex before cultivating his or her field or going out to harvest the crop. This ritual has to take place at every stage of the farming process (Ayikukwei et al, 2007).

Mboya (2001) states that sexual cleansing, a sacred ritual, is also associated with and precedes many societal activities and achievements like buying a new home or moving to a newly constructed house. This ritual is practiced by married couples when they move

into a new house or home and those who are unmarried have to get a sexual partner for the occasion. It is dysphemistic to disregard this ritual. It is believed that the rite brings forth protection from evil curses and many blessings. He further notes that on the day the new born baby is taken outside the house for the first time (*chieng' yiego nyathi*) the parents have (ritual) sex (*ng'ado imbo*). It is believed that after this, the child cannot be affected by sex related dysphemisms if the mother commits adultery.

Euphemisms on the other hand, constitute a pragmatic choice by the language user at a given point in interaction. The language user's option for a euphemism often emanates from contextual factors such as social relationship between the speaker and addressee or the level of formality induced by the setting (Farghal, 1995). William (1975) concludes that dysphemisms and euphemisms are two closely related cultural and linguistic phenomena of human society. We cannot talk of one without referring to the other.

## 1.2 Statement of the Problem

In all cultures of the world, the subject of sex is a major concern in life and it is one that is likely to elicit embarrassment. This is why sexual language is subject to censoring therefore, it is a potent source of euphemisms for people from all walks of life and hence it is a worthy subject of observation and research. It is important to note that without dysphemisms, euphemisms become very ordinary words.

Mboya (2001) and Ogutu (2007) posit that in the Luo set - up, birth, death, social and economic activities are viewed in the prism of sex and this aspect of the Luo culture is

unique. Moreover, these domains attract dysphemistic words, phrases and euphemisms. On account of the literature reviewed, limited research has been carried out on sex related dysphemistic words, phrases and their euphemistic equivalents in Dholuo despite their widespread use in the community, a fact that may result in some of these dysphemistic words and phrases becoming extinct. It is for this reason that the researcher sought to carry out a synchronic study in order to capture these terms in their present state and document them for future reference.

### **1.3 Research Objectives**

This study seeks to achieve the following specific objectives:

1. To identify and explain the sex-related dysphemistic words and phrases in Dholuo.
2. To illustrate the cognitive processes in the creation of sex-related euphemisms.
3. To discuss the relationship between age and gender in the usage of euphemisms.

### **1.4 Research Questions**

This study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. Which words and phrases refer to sexual dysphemisms in Dholuo?
2. Which cognitive processes are involved in the creation of sex-related euphemisms?
3. How does the relationship between age and gender influence the usage of euphemisms in Dholuo?

## 1.5 Research Assumptions

In order to realize the aforementioned objectives the study made the following assumptions:

1. That there are sex-related dysphemistic words and phrases in Dholuo.
2. That there are cognitive processes involved in the creation of sex-related euphemisms
3. That there is a relationship between age and gender in the usage of euphemisms in Dholuo.

## 1.6 Rationale of the study

Several studies have been conducted in Dholuo and most of the available literature has focused on Grammar; (Omondi 1982, Onditi 1987), Phonology; (Oduor 2000), Morphology; (Huntingford 1959, Okombo 1986), Sociolinguistics; (Oduol 1990) and Acquisition of Language (Nondi 1995, Ogol 2005) among others. The researcher noted that little has been done on the functional aspects of the language. There is, therefore need to conduct some research on this field and this study seeks to fill this gap.

Also, whilst there is substantial body of research on the metaphorical conceptualization of the dysphemisms of sex (Lakoff 1987; Pfaff, Gibbs and Johnson 1997; Murphy 2001 just to mention but a few), relatively little attention has been paid to the conceptual metaphor as a purely dysphemistic or euphemistic device. This study will moreover enrich literature in Cognitive Linguistics and in particular, Cognitive Pragmatics and will become a source of preserving lexical items which are in danger of getting lost since language is dynamic. In addition, this study will be useful to any researcher who may be interested in carrying

out a diachronic study of dysphemistic words, phrases and their euphemistic equivalents in future.

Mboya (2001) posits that dysphemistic words are part and parcel of culture, they are worth studying so that the current and future generations will have access to them and may not lose them as no nation can prosper by adopting foreign cultures and ignoring its customs and practices. It is important that a society uses its good customs as the foundation upon which foreign customs and practices can be laid. In addition, the choice of Dholuo is not only based on the fact that this is an indigenous language which has not been extensively studied in the area of sex-related dysphemistic words, phrases and their euphemistic equivalents in the domains of birth, death, social and economic activities but also on the fact that there is a need for a study that the respondents can culturally associate with.

Furthermore, the information gathered will be useful to sex-educators like Guidance and Counseling teachers in primary, secondary and tertiary institutions and even HIV/ Aids counselors. Vernacular radio stations like Ramogi Fm, Lolwe Fm and Lake-Victoria Fm will also find this information resourceful as they carry out educative programmes on sex related issues. Finally, the research will play a significant role in the development of the Conceptual Integration Theory.

### **1.7 Scope and Limitations of the Study**

The study falls within Cognitive Linguistics and this research provides primary data drawn from Dholuo which has been analyzed within the framework of Conceptual

Integration Theory initiated by Fauconnier and Turner (2002), in order to give insightful information on the Luo culture. There are dysphemistic words and phrases associated with disease, marriage, excretion, body effluvia, food, body parts or even boats and their handling in the Luo community. However, the present study is limited to sex-related dysphemistic words and phrases in the domains of birth, death, social and economic activities only. Other domains such as marriage, body parts and body effluvia will not be totally ignored but will be considered to the extent that they have a bearing on the sex-related dysphemistic words and phrases since these expressions are not used in isolation.

Reference was also made in the background to dialectal variations: the Trans-Yala and the South-Nyanza dialects in Dholuo. For the purposes of standardization and uniformity, the South-Nyanza dialect, which is the dominant dialect, was used in drawing data for this study. The study was also limited to the analysis of nominals and verbals only because through nominals and verbals we are able to get the vocabulary of a language (Sebba, 1997).

The study also limits itself to Kenyan Dholuo because of the inherent advantages available to the researcher who is studying her own language such as having a native speaker's intuition (Milroy, 1987). Blount (1969) also demonstrates the difficulties of studying a language that one is not very familiar with. He reports that his study of Luo speaking children was hampered by his inability to understand some of the children's utterances and the lack of cultural knowledge to interpret utterances in certain contexts. The choice of Dholuo as the language of study was further based on the fact that this is an indigenous

language which has not been extensively studied in the areas of dysphemisms and euphemisms.

### **1.8 Conclusion**

This chapter has outlined a general introduction to the study, background information, statement of the problem, research objectives, questions, research hypotheses and the rationale that guide the study. Also outlined are the justification of the study as well as the scope and limitations. The next chapter focuses on the review of related literature and the theoretical framework that inform the study.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

#### 2.1 Introduction

This study falls under Cognitive Linguistics (henceforth CL) and in particular Cognitive Pragmatics. In this chapter, literature on language use in society is reviewed. Secondly, a general review of studies on dysphemisms and euphemisms has been done. Next, a review of related studies has been carried out and the relevance to the current study drawn. The link between language and cognition has also been elaborated. Finally, the theoretical framework that informs the study is discussed

#### 2.2 A Brief Review of Language use in Society

Agyekum (2007) argues that language is used effectively in the social world to achieve a lot of things. It is one of the conventional tools and resources employed to influence people's attitude and behavior. The effect, impressions, and influences of language on people depend on the style and pragmatics of expression. It can sustain a good interpersonal relationship between people and vice-versa.

Moto (2004) states that language can be sorted into three categories: acceptable, unacceptable and inappropriate. Acceptable language is what we read in a magazine or hear in a news broadcast. It is a formal or conventional level of speech that we hope young children will eventually learn and use. Unacceptable language is that which must be forbidden for legal reasons. It includes harassment, libel, threats, gender or racial discrimination and obscenity. Inappropriate language on the other hand, is the gray area

between acceptable and unacceptable language. It is language that depends heavily on context, because different contexts pose different standards or rest restrictions on language and behavior. What for instance constitutes appropriate speech in an informal setting may not be appropriate within a formal one. This study explored both acceptable (euphemisms) and unacceptable language (dysphemisms).

Douglas (1979) argues that in many speech communities, unacceptable language of which dysphemisms are part, are only uttered under restricted circumstances; a speaker who utters them outside the restriction is shamed or punished. William (1975) notes that acceptable language is profoundly influenced by culture. The culture of a people has an effect on people's way of avoiding unacceptable language. Almost all cultures seem to have certain notions or things that people try to avoid mentioning directly, even when there are such terms in the language.

### **2.3 A Review of General Works on Dysphemisms and Euphemisms**

The English word dysphemism came to notice towards the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> C, having been introduced to English use in 1777 by Royal Navy Captain James Cook, during a voyage to Tahiti (Marsen, 2006). The word simply means "to forbid" or "forbidden" and can be applied to any sort of prohibition. Dysphemistic language is regarded as a breach of etiquette. It exists in great predominance in the language of insult. Dysphemisms are uttered, heard and accepted in such contexts and this explains why they are shunned in normal conversation.

Mbaya (2002) notes that linguistic dysphemisms or the fact of avoiding mentioning certain words and expressions in a language is a common practice in more than one society. In traditional Africa, as a result of their lack of decency, shocking character or immorality and in order not to hurt the other members of the society, many a term are never used in the lives of some individuals although they know them perfectly. It would therefore be plausible to observe that even though dysphemisms are not uttered in general audiences, they are uttered in certain contexts. Trudgill, (1983) adds that dysphemistic language is not only associated with lack of decency but it is also just a matter of convention where the normal use of an item in a language is inhibited due to particular social values and beliefs.

Ullman (1981) states that dysphemisms are divided into four categories "according to the psychological motivation behind them." The first of these categories is fear, which has motivated different dysphemisms on speaking the names of certain supernatural beings. These include God, the Devil and names of certain animals like bear, lion and tiger. The clearest dysphemism motivated by fear must be that of the Devil. The euphemistic expressions associated with the Devil are somewhat humoristic and friendly, perhaps to make the Devil seem less frightening. Examples are: *Old Nick* and *Lord of Flies* among others.

The second category is respect. It is argued that the motivation behind the dysphemism of God might have something to do with respect as Katamba (1994) suggests. He posits that God could not be referred to by name, which has resulted in expressions such as the *Lord*,

*King of Kings* and *the All-Mighty*. The third category is delicacy. In this category people try to avoid direct reference to topics they find unpleasant such as death, disease, physical and mental defects and criminal actions. There are many euphemisms used to refer to the dysphemistic term death for example, 'to pass away' which seems to be appropriate and politically correct in a large number of situations. Others are 'passing on, going to one's maker, joining the majority, to resign one's being, moving into upper management and no longer eligible for the census.'

The fourth category has to do with propriety. The three most common areas in this category are sex, certain body parts and functions and swearing. This study is interested in this category specifically that of sex. Santaemilia (2005) argues that sex is not a univocal phenomenon, but a mixture of voices and desires, of private and public meanings. It is overwhelmingly present in our daily lives, for instance, in a number of words which serve to describe our body or its ailments, to prescribe medical care and to arouse readers erotically; it is also present in a series of genres, discursive situations, speech events and communicative contexts. Sexual language is also a remarkable cultural feature because of the profound effects it has on individuals and on social relations.

There are a number of different ways used to refer to having sex, they include: *sleeping with, going to bed with, and making love*, as mentioned by Hughes (2000). People also find it difficult to talk about going to the toilet, and have therefore, invented numerous ways of avoiding direct reference to the topic. Bousfield (2007) argues that among good friends and acquaintances, it may be acceptable to directly ask the location of the toilet or

mention the bodily function(s) for which one needs to use it, but in other situations people may use terms like “washroom or restroom” to refer to the toilet. When talking about swearing, people often use “minced oaths.” These are expressions based on profanities but these profanities have been changed to remove the inappropriate characteristics of the original utterance. Among the most common expressions are *freaking* for *fucking*, *gosh* for *God*, *heck* for *hell* and *darn* for *damn*.

Jay (2000) posits that people use dysphemistic language for various reasons such as to hurt others, for expressing themselves and most importantly for power. Dysphemistic language is emotionally powerful. As emotional, sexual and aggressive animals, human beings have the need to express and relieve themselves of depression, as well as establish an identity through their speech. Using dysphemistic language is definitely an effective way to accomplish this aim. He further adds that usage of such language depends on the consequences following the speech act. If the employment of dysphemistic language will lead to a costly end (for example, embarrassment, punishment or banishment) it will be eliminated, while if it will lead to beneficial consequences (for instance, relaxation, solidarity or humor), it will be enhanced. In this sense, the usage of dysphemistic language will be positive when it occurs in circumstances like joking and sexual enticement but it will be negative when used to harm someone like name calling or sexual insults.

Euphemisms on the other hand, are powerful linguistic tools that are “embedded so deeply in our language that few of us, even those who pride themselves on being plain spoken, ever get through a day without using them,” (Rawson, 1981:1). Euphemism is a pragmatic

phenomenon and as such, largely dependent on extra-linguistic issues. In fact, every historical period cultivates and develops its own euphemisms, which become revealing indicators of the habits and censorships of its society (Fernández, 2007). One of the major defining features of euphemism as a linguistic phenomenon is ambiguity. Dominguez and Benedito (2000) argue that a term acts as a euphemism because, in a given context, it is capable of generating an ambiguity which suggests that there may be a distasteful concept beneath and thus it permits the mitigation of dysphemism. A euphemistic item is ambiguous insofar as it can be understood both in terms of its literal meaning and in terms of its dysphemistic meaning. Ham (2005) adds that the need for euphemism is both social and emotional, as it allows discussion of 'touchy' or dysphemistic subjects (such as sex, personal appearances or religion) without enraging, outraging, or upsetting other people, and acts as a pressure valve whilst maintaining the appearance of civility.

Warren (1992) argues that the function of euphemism is to protect the interactants from possible effrontery and offence. This offence may occur in the breaching of dysphemistic topics, for example sex, religion, death or by mentioning a subject matter to which one party involved may be sensitive, such as politics or social issues. In order for communication to progress smoothly and without conflict, accommodations are continually, and often subconsciously, made. Fernández (2006) points that euphemisms have provided a way to speak about the unspeakable.

They also function as face-saving mechanisms which support cooperation in discourse and reflect the semantic collaboration between the parties involved hence maintaining good

relationships. Similarly, they are word games used to take the sting out of a practice or behavior one would otherwise find offensive or reprehensible (Mitchell, 2001). In addition, euphemisms are a reflection of certain values such as respect and courtesy. Moreover, their use adds the lubricant to the exchange of information (O'Sullivan, 1994). Lastly, they also serve to recirculate words that have passed out of use because of the negative connotation for example, the word 'lame' was revitalized as a slang word generally meaning "not living up to expectations."

Euphemisms can be divided into two general types: positive and negative. Rawson (1981) states that positive euphemisms magnify and inflate, making the euphemized items grander and more important than they really are or making certain topics more inviting. They are often used to amplify the job titles of certain occupations that have a rather humble status in our society in order to boost the egos of workers by elevating their job status. Examples include: *sanitation engineers* for *garbage collectors*, *custodians* for *janitors*, *director of first impressions* for *receptionist*. An example of a positive euphemism in this study is *okweya (cooler)* for *vagina*.

Negative euphemisms on the other hand, are slightly defensive in nature, thus, helping discourage the negative terms that people prefer to avoid and not deal with directly. These euphemisms are also used in our language, sometimes to help conceal negative impacts in our society. They help make negative situations seem not so bad. An example of a negative euphemism in Dholuo is *ohand mudho* (business of darkness) for the dysphemism prostitution.

## 2.4 Review of Related Studies

Stanley (1977) studied the names given by men to sexually available women and makes the following observation:

The names that men have given to women who make themselves sexually available to them reveal underlying metaphors by which men conceive of their relationships with women, and through which women learn to perceive themselves (Stanley, 1977: 305).

She analyzed 220 terms men use for prostitutes. This astonishing variety represents, in Stanley's words, the great variety of role and metaphors assigned to women as sexual objects. She adds that women are considered as: receptacles for the excretions of men (*bedpan, slop jar*) animals (*bitch, sweat hog, quail*), inanimate objects (*mattress, baggage, pisspallet*), holes for men (*nut cracker, bulls eye, organ grinder* among others). All of them show that, "The only way a woman can define her sexuality with the names provided by our culture is demeaning, shameful, and/or oppressively non-existent should she choose to reject the terms that men associate with her sexuality."

Risch (1987) however, offers a significantly different interpretation. In her study of derogatory terms ('dirty' words) that women use to refer to men, she addresses the stereotype which considers sex-related terms, associated with masculinity. The wealth of examples that she gets from women (*bastard, asshole*, among others) leads her to wonder: "Is non-standard speech really associated with masculinity, or is it more a signification of public versus private discourse?" She further notes that studies in the psychology of language define dysphemisms or dirty words by their affectation, the reason aroused by the word instead of the word's denotative meaning.

Hudson (1994) observed that dysphemistic words are mostly used in graffiti. The strength surrounding such words is that people know what they mean, and yet may never utter some words throughout their lives. They would prefer to use a technical synonym instead of the real dysphemistic word. Such synonyms in most cases are euphemistic and this study is interested in such expressions.

Cameron (1995) carried out a study among college students, both male and female, to list the terms for penis. This study revealed deep rooted cultural and ideological assumptions about gender and sexuality. She found that there were some differences between the lists offered by the male and female students. Men metaphorized the penis as a person (*His Excellency, Your Majesty, Genghis Khan, Kojak, Dick, Peter, Mr. Happy*), an animal (*King Kong, hog, one-eyed trouser snake, python*), a tool (*garden hose, screw driver, drill, fuzz buster*), a weapon (*passion rifle, destroyer*) or food (*love popsicle, Vienna sausage, piece of pork*); women's terms for penis, on the other hand, included nonsense terms (*dickhead, schmuck, tallywacker*), useless things (*pencil, blood-engorged pole, third leg*), names (*Fred, Peterdinkie*), animals (*visions of horses*), weapons (*rocket, atlas*) or food (*biscuit*).

Cameron's findings reveal opposing and clearly gendered ideological assumptions about gender and sexuality. She further posits that by ridiculing terms for the penis, men paradoxically recirculate them (masculinity as dominance and sex as war and conquest). Women, as was predictable, reject the overall male metaphorical schema: they avoid

mythic or heroic overtones and identify the penis with violence and aggression. She concludes that metaphors turn out to be cultural constructions, though of a highly predictable nature.

Jay (2000) argued that dysphemism is never a belonging for women in conversation because they are expected to exhibit control over their thoughts, while men are freer to exhibit hostile and aggressive speech habits. Men, he noted, use a larger vocabulary of offensive curse words than do women. Also, apart from the frequency of usage, men and women employ and use dysphemistic words differently. Gender differences are found in the use of sexual terms, joke telling, verbal dueling, harassing speech and fighting words. Men use more aggressive sexual terms than women.

Coates (2004) argued that in mixed-sex conversations women will speak more dysphemistic words so as to pursue a man's norm of dysphemistic language. The reason why women would use more dysphemistic language in some contexts could be explained by the notion of covert prestige. Since dysphemistic language is stigmatized, people choose it because they will get covert prestige which would enhance social network and solidarity in certain communities. She further argues that men have more covert prestige than women because women always try their best to make their language standard thus; they need covert prestige to reinforce their place in the community. The studies above indicate that there are gender differences in the use of dysphemistic language. The present study also seeks to confirm whether gender as a variable influences the use of dysphemistic language in the Luo community where the study was carried out.

Santaemilia (2005) states that without doubt, sex is one of the most profound human experiences and a complex index of identity. He further notes that sex-related euphemisms like 'to make love' or 'to go to bed with someone' have undergone a complete process of lexicalization (thus having a primary sexual meaning) whereas others like 'to ride', 'to mount', 'to nibble' or 'to pull a train' are semi-lexicalized as they retain a certain level of ambiguity in meaning. Besides, they make up a series of perfectly articulated and consistent conceptual or metaphorical networks. The present study also seeks to find out if the same is true regarding sex-related euphemisms in Dholuo and also whether the Conceptual Integration Theory that is used to analyze the data elicited can account for such euphemisms.

Fernández (2008) posited that euphemistic conceptual categorization of sexual dysphemism is greatly influenced by the degree of lexicalization of the linguistic substitute. He also looked at the effects of the process of lexicalization in sexual conceptualization, particularly concerning the bidirectionality of metaphorical projections. He further mentioned the three types of euphemisms and dysphemisms according to their degree of lexicalization namely: lexicalized (those in which the figurative meaning is regarded as the normal or literal meaning), semi-lexicalized (those in which the substitute is associated with the dysphemism because of its inclusion in a conceptual domain traditionally tied to the forbidden concept) and creative (those in which the euphemistic item is the result of a novel association with the dysphemism, only accessible in its phraseological context).

Even though the study above deals with the sex-related euphemisms and dysphemisms, it is based on coherent and contextualized discourses extracted from literary texts and from the British National Corpus (BNC). It also uses the Conceptual Metaphor Theory to analyze the euphemisms. The present study also deals with the same topic but is based on isolated words and phrases elicited not from literary texts but directly from respondents who are native speakers of Dholuo and this is vital because the researcher gets first hand information. The study uses the Conceptual Integration Theory as well as the Politeness Theory to analyze the euphemisms.

Agyekum (2002) posits that since menstruation is a routine human state and cannot be ignored completely, strategies must be found for talking about it, hence the variety of euphemisms used. These euphemisms illustrate the prevalent Akan cultural attitudes and perception about menstruation. Agyekum devices two models of menstruation dysphemisms namely: the negative and the positive model. The former views menstruation as filthy and debilitating and the less said about it the better. It also emphasizes men's purity and male superiority in male dominated societies like Akan. The latter, considers the importance that Akan society attaches to menstruation. It highlights the powerful and purifying aspects of menstruation.

Similarly, the current study also establishes the various euphemisms used for menstruation in the Luo community. Just like in the Akan culture, menstruation euphemisms in the Luo culture are normally used by females since menstruation is a female phenomenon.

However, it is possible for a woman to use any of the euphemistic expressions before a physician or a native doctor of either sex.

Mbaya (2002) notes that dysphemistic words are frequently used as swear words to express hatred, antagonism, frustration, pain or surprise because of their power. In this study he observes that husband, wife and relatives from both sides avoid mentioning the names of the different persons involved in the marriage relationship. Such names are avoided by devising substitution mechanisms like use of honorific pronouns, improvisations and use of physical traits among others.

He further notes that dysphemistic words must be observed by all members of the society. Failure to do so can lead to punishment or public shame. In the Oromo culture, violations of dysphemisms are usually rare. If violation occurs by accident, it will literally be spit out, thus symbolically atoning for the impropriety. While Mbaya looks at the linguistic dysphemisms of avoiding mentioning the names of different persons involved in a marriage relationship in the Oromo marriage context, the current study on the other hand, is interested in sex-related dysphemistic words and phrases in the Luo context.

Ng'eno (2009) argues that breaking a dysphemism constitutes a breach of morals and this explains why people try as much as possible to avoid using dysphemistic words. She further argues that dysphemistic prohibitions have no ground and are of unknown origin. In the Kipsigis community, like other communities, dysphemisms are passed down from one generation to the next. Ng'eno notes that women married into the Kipsigis community

from other tribes do not find anything unusual about the dysphemistic words since what counts as dysphemistic language is something defined by culture, and not by anything inherent in the language itself. This is the same view held in the Luo community. While Ng'eno looks at dysphemistic words and their euphemisms in Family Health Education, this study deals with sex-related dysphemistic words and their euphemisms in the areas of birth, death, social and economic activities.

Gathigia (2010) also notes that gender influences the usage of euphemisms in Gĩkũyũ. Females use euphemisms more than males hence postulating that polite terms are more indicative of women's speech. On sex-related euphemisms, he notes that there are more euphemisms on the vagina than the penis in Gĩkũyũ. This difference is ascribed to the unique physiological processes of menstruation and child birth associated with the vagina. While Gathigia's study deals with euphemisms of death, sexual intercourse, disease, body parts, excretion and body effluvia in Gĩkũyũ, the present study looks at sex-related dysphemistic words, phrases and their euphemistic equivalents in the domains of birth, death, social and economic activities in Dholuo.

## **2.5 Language and Cognition**

Many linguists around the world have studied dysphemisms and euphemisms using different theories. However, limited research has been done within the framework of Cognitive Linguistics (henceforth CL). Evans and Green (2006) posit that CL is a modern school of thought and practice, concerned with investigating the relationship between human language, the mind and socio-physical experience. It is committed to incorporating

a wide range of data from other cognitive disciplines; it not only seeks correspondences between conceptual thoughts, bodily experience and linguistic structure but, also seeks to discover the actual contents of human cognition.

Valenzuela and Soriano (2005) state that CL believes that language provides a 'window' on thought and that by studying language, we can uncover some of the mechanisms at work in high - level processing. Evans (2006) states that language serves as a lens for studying aspects of the mind; it does so precisely because it reflects organizational principles of embodied cognition. For instance, by studying organizational patterns in language the cognitive linguist is able to discern patterns in the nature and organization of conceptual structure.

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Moreover, language understanding involves the interaction between semantic structure and conceptual structure, as mediated by various linguistic and conceptual mechanisms and processes. Cognitive linguists take the view that meaning construction involves an interaction between language on one hand, and cognitive mechanisms and representations on the other. Language provides the language user with resources for viewing the same scene in multiple and hence alternative ways. In other words, the same situation can be linguistically encoded in multiple ways using metaphors and other figurative expressions (Evans, 2006). This is also applicable to the current study where the researcher is able to view the sex-related dysphemistic terms in numerous ways by use of euphemisms for example, the dysphemistic term penis attracted a total of thirty one euphemisms this

therefore implies that one entity can be viewed in various ways by using a variety of attributes based on the respondents point of view.

According to Esperas (2010), metaphors which are constructed by people based on their experiences represent the cognitive orientations of the people about the world. They reflect their cultural knowledge, which is an amalgamation of both old and new experiences. Kramsch (1998) states that words which are based on people's common experience, refer to the stock of knowledge about the world that people share.

Lakoff and Johnson (2003), argue that the cognitive processing of metaphorical concept is grounded on experiences, which are representations of culture. Such experiences are structured into a conceptual system in the form of metaphorical concepts and this system reveals the nature of a people in a particular society, the way they interact with their physical and cultural environments and most of all their world views. Cognitive Linguistics is therefore pouring forth a wealth of theories which connect language with the rest of cognition and which provide fresh, ambitious and global views of cognitive process. Accounting for the interpretation of sex-related Dholuo dysphemisms and euphemisms using the Conceptual Integration Theory (henceforth CIT) and Politeness Theory is, therefore, the primary objective of this study.

## **2.6 Theoretical Framework**

### **2.6.1 Introduction**

This study employs a Cognitive Linguistics Theory. In CL language is viewed as a cognitive function as opposed to the more formal accounts favored by Chomsky and other

generative linguists (Finch, 2000). The theories that were used to analyze the sex-related euphemisms are the Conceptual Integration Theory initiated by Fauconnier and Turner (2002) and the Politeness Theory of Brown and Levinson (1978).

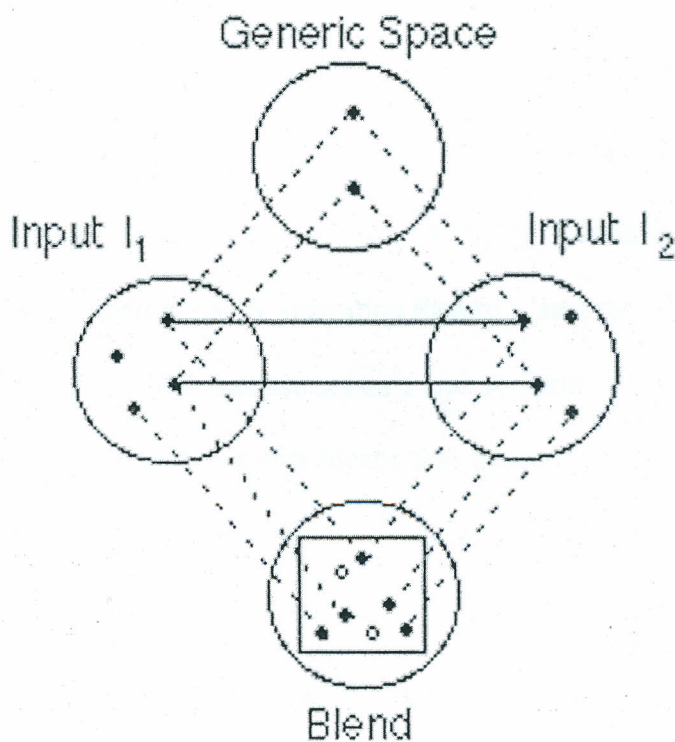
## **2.6.2 Conceptual Integration Theory (CIT).**

This is a theory that was initiated by Fauconnier and Turner in 2002. It is also referred to as the Blending theory. It is part of a major framework concerning cognition and language in the sense that it combines explanations of linguistic creativity with an explanation of other language behavior, as well as various products of human imagination. It further explains the integration of knowledge coming from distinct sources onto a single, independent and coherent unit, the blend. Conceptual integration enables one to make meaning from differing concepts that, on the surface, have no readily apparent connection or commonality.

The basic units of cognitive organization in this theory are the mental spaces. These are small conceptual packets constructed as we think or talk for purposes of local understanding and action. They are often used to divide and organize incoming pieces of information within the referential representation. The mental spaces are four namely: two input spaces, a generic and a blended space. These spaces contain different information on the same elements, but each space contains a representation that is logically organized (Coulson and Oakley, 2002). Because of these spaces, the Conceptual Integration Theory (CIT, hereafter) is referred to as the many-space approach.

The input spaces correspond to the source and target domains as exemplified in Lakoff's and Johnson's Conceptual Metaphor Theory of 1980. The input spaces give rise to selective projection. In other words, not all the structure from the inputs is projected to the blend. The input spaces are linked by means of a generic space. This space provides information that is abstract enough to be common to both the inputs. It facilitates the identification of counterparts in the input spaces by serving as a "template" for shared structure. It is these counterparts that are projected to the blended space. The blended space on the other hand, contains matched information from the input spaces as well as new pieces of information (emergent structure) that is not contained in either of the inputs. Figure 1 shows the movement of elements from the input spaces to the blended space.

**Figure 1: The Mental Spaces in the Conceptual Integration Theory**



Another component of this theory is the concept of mappings. Mapping is an abstract correspondence between elements or relations of different mental spaces. For example, the metaphor “That surgeon is a butcher,” can be mapped onto the different mental spaces. We have two input spaces for surgeon and butcher. For the surgeon we have: surgeon (role), patient, scalpel, operating table, goal (healing) and means (surgery). For the butcher we have: butcher (role), animal, cleaver, abattoir, goal (severing the flesh) and means (butchery). The generic space contains information shared by the input spaces hence we have: agent, instrument, the affected, workspace, procedure and goal. The blended space contains matched information from input spaces as well as the emergent structure (new information). It entails: role (butcher), patient, operating theatre, means (butchery), goal (healing) and emergent structure (incompetence).

The metaphor above is explainable in terms of direct projection from the source domain of butchery to the target domain of surgery, guided by a series of fixed counterpart mapping ‘butcher’ onto ‘surgeon’; ‘animal’ maps onto ‘human being’; ‘commodity’ onto ‘patient’; ‘cleaver’ onto ‘scalpel’; ‘abattoir’ onto ‘operating theatre’; ‘severing flesh’ onto ‘healing’; ‘dismembering’ onto ‘repair and reconstruction’; and so forth. Meaning emerges in the blended space hence, the metaphor above means that the surgeon is incompetent. This is because a butcher, though less prestigious than a surgeon is a highly skilled professional who is typically competent at what he does. As a matter of fact, a surgeon who is assessed as a butcher brings inappropriate skills to the task at hand and is therefore incompetent. This emergent meaning of incompetence represents the additional structure provided by the blend. Furthermore, it is precisely the mismatch between the goal (healing) and the

means (butchery), which exists only in the blend, that the inference of incompetence arises.

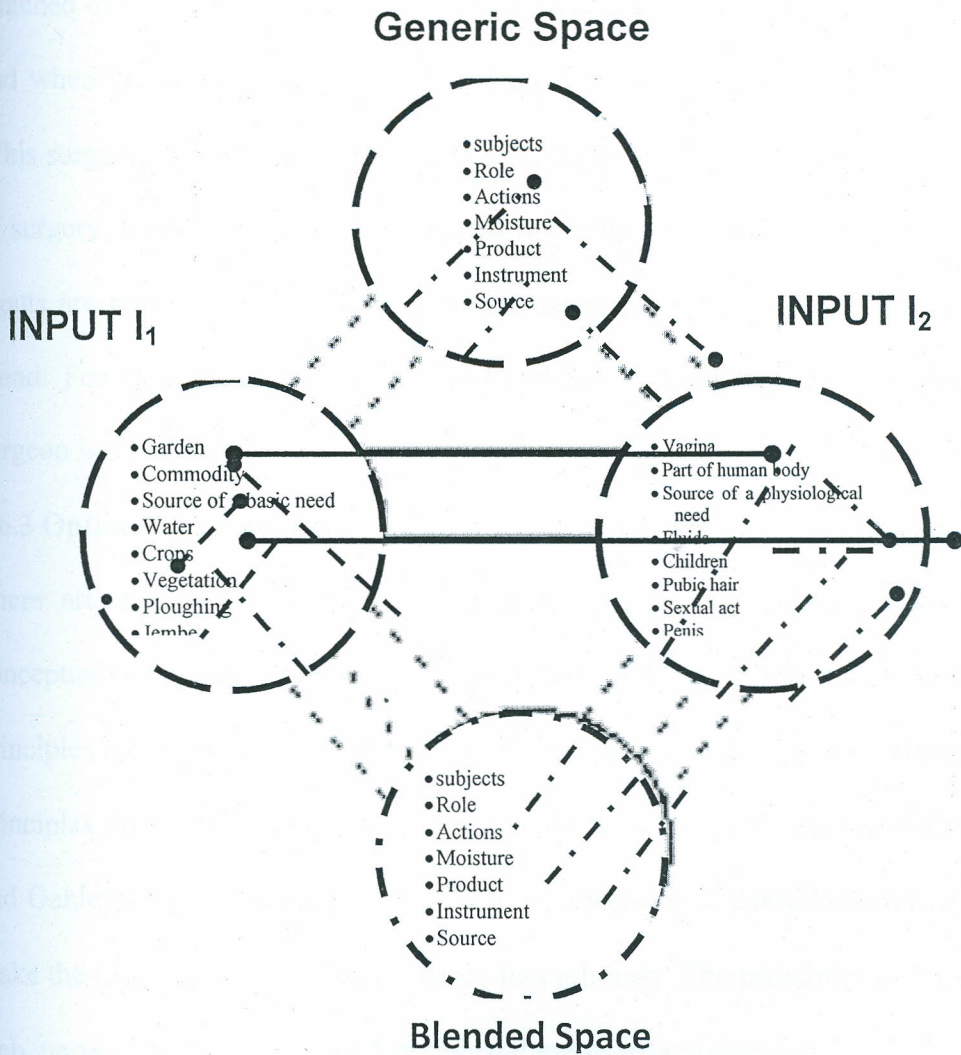
Another example that was used in this study is:

Dholuo	English
<i>Ng'ony en puodho</i>	vagina is a garden

The metaphor above is explainable in terms of direct projection from the source domain of garden to the target domain of vagina, guided by a series of fixed counterpart mappings: “garden” onto “vagina”; “commodity” onto a “human body part”; “source of a basic need” onto “source of a physiological need”; “water” onto “fluids”; “crops” onto “children”; “vegetation” onto “pubic hair”; “ploughing” onto “sexual act” and “jembe” onto “penis.” The generic space contains information that is common to both inputs and in this example it contains; patient (the affected), role (protective role), action (penetrative action), action (repetitive action), moisture, product, instrument and source. When the attributes of the garden are mapped onto the attributes of the vagina, blending takes place that is, materials from the source and target domains combine and interact.

This analysis of the cross domain relationships, however, cannot by itself explain a crucial element of the metaphor's meaning since the many-space approach deals with the emergence of meaning in the blended space. This metaphor means that vagina is a symbol of production. The physiological processes of menstruation and child birth are also associated with it. Similarly, just the way a garden is fenced from invaders for the purposes of protection, so is the vagina which is not only a private and treasured organ

that should not be openly exposed to anyone, but also one protected by societal norms and values.



**Figure 2: Mapping of the euphemism 'The vagina is a garden'**

In the CIT, there are three component processes that give rise to the emergent structure these are: composition, completion and elaboration. Composition is a blending process in which a relation from one mental space is ascribed to an element or elements from other input spaces. For example, 'This surgeon is a butcher', blend comprises the elements

projected from the surgeon input with those projected from the butcher input. Completion is a blending process that takes place when information in the long term memory is matched to the structure in the blend. Completion raises additional structure to the blend and when this structure is added the blend is integrated. For instance, in the metaphor 'This surgeon is a butcher,' completion introduces the frames of butchery as well as those of surgery. Elaboration is closely related to completion. During elaboration, links to the inputs are preserved. It usually entails mental or physical simulation of the event in the blend. For example, the issue of incompetence is brought out in the metaphor 'This surgeon is a butcher.'

### 2.6.3 Optimality principles

There are a set of optimality principles that further clarify the relations within the conceptual integration network. The proponents of this theory claim that under these principles blends function most efficiently. They also point out that satisfying one of these principles does not automatically involve satisfying another one. According to Coulson and Oakley (2002), these principles limit the spectrum of possible blending analyses and make the Conceptual Integration Theory less arbitrary. The principles include: integration, web, unpacking, topology, good reason and metonymic tightening.

- a) Integration: the blend is regarded as being an integrated unit and it can only be manipulated as such. The blend is integrated for instance, in the second example mentioned above, the attributes of the vagina are found in one input space called the target domain and the attributes of the garden are also found in another input space called the source domain. When the attributes of one mental space are mapped onto those of another mental space they combine and interact in the process. The generic

space is shared by the input spaces and it has elements common to both inputs. It contains the subjects (in this case vagina and garden), source (in this case one is a source of a physiological need and the other a source of a basic need) and protection among other common elements. The elements from the two input spaces combine and interact in the blended space.

- b) Web: the web of suitable mappings to the input spaces must be preserved in case of manipulation of the blend; this implies that all the elements in the input spaces are important though they are not all projected to the blend so, in the event of manipulation those elements from the input spaces that were not projected to the blend because they failed to match may now come in handy.
- c) Unpacking: the blend can permit the reconstruction of the entire network; in this case, the materials in the blended space can be transferred back to the target and source domains where they initially originated.
- d) Topology: relations of the elements in the blend should be connected with the relations of their counterparts in other spaces; this means that elements found in the blended space must have a relationship with elements in the other spaces.
- e) Good reason: every element in the conceptual integration network must be connected to other spaces and it must have a significant function in running the blend; this means that whatever is found in the blended space must come from either of the input spaces except the emergent structure which is the only additional information that is not found in the input spaces. All the elements in the blended space have roles to play.

f) Metonymic tightening: when elements that are metonymically related are projected to the blend, their metonymic connections decrease the distance between them. This principle is mainly applicable to metonymy and not metaphors and this study deals with the latter hence it will not be applied.

It is worth noting that all euphemisms are indeed metaphors as such, this theory helps present the sub-mappings of these euphemisms in the different mental spaces. It also shows how cross-domain mappings are structured. Fauconnier and Turner (2002) who are the proponents of this theory argue that cognitive metaphors are of prime importance for understanding natural language. Therefore, CIT is used to study Dholuo which is a natural language. This theory is chosen since it is more advanced than the Conceptual Metaphor Theory initiated by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), which is also used to analyze euphemisms. It caters for both conventional and novel euphemisms since it has many mental spaces.

Another theory that the researcher employed in the study is the Politeness Theory that was initiated by Brown and Levinson (1978). This is because the researcher found out that the Conceptual Integration Theory was not adequate in analyzing all the euphemisms that were collected since it only accounts for those that are common, in the sense that they can also be found in other languages for example, the euphemism, 'The penis is a hoe/jembe' and not those that are unique to the customs and beliefs of the Luo for instance, the ones used for sex-rituals in different scenarios in the Luo community. Therefore, the politeness

theory came in handy in the process of analyzing these unique ones. The next section looks at this second theory in detail.

#### **2.6.4 Politeness Theory (PT)**

This is a theory that was developed by Penelope Brown and Stephen Levinson in 1978. Politeness is the expression of the speaker's intention to mitigate face threats carried out by certain face threatening acts (Mills, 2003). Being polite consists of attempting to save face for another. Face refers to the public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself or herself (Brown and Levinson, 1978). Two major politeness strategies used to formulate messages in order to save the hearer's face when face threatening acts (hereafter FTA) are inevitable or desired, are discussed. FTA refers to the process when an act of verbal or non-verbal communication runs contrary to the face wants of the addressee and/or speaker (Brown and Levinson, 1978).

There are positive and negative politeness strategies. Positive politeness is a redress directed to the addressee's positive face (the want of every member that his or her wants be desirable, appreciated and approved of). Positive politeness strategies seek to minimize the threat to the hearer's positive face. They are used to make the hearer feel good about himself/herself, his/her possessions, and interests and are used in situations where the audience knows each other fairly well. Such strategies include: hedging, attempts to avoid conflict and using statements of friendship, solidarity and compliments.

Negative politeness is a redressive action addressed to the addressee's negative face (his/her want to have his/her freedom of action unhindered and his/her attention unimpeded). It is the heart of respect behavior just as positive politeness is the Kernel of 'familiar' and 'joking' behavior. Negative politeness is oriented towards the hearer's negative face and emphasizes avoidance of imposition on the hearer. Some of these strategies include: being direct, using hedges or questions, being pessimistic, throwing apologies, favor seeking or using plural pronouns (Brown and Levinson, 1978).

The speaker's negative or positive face may also be threatened. This could happen in the case of an offer, which would threaten the speaker's negative face because if he/she carried out the offer, her/she would be meeting the hearer's wants and not necessarily his/her own wants. The speaker's positive face would be threatened in the case of confessions, admissions of guilt and apologies, where the speaker is admitting that he/she has done something that is or not expected of him/her (Fasold, 1990).

Brown and Levinson base their theory on the acceptance of the two assumptions stated above, that is, everyone has both negative and positive face, and both of these aspects of face are, at times, threatened by each other. Another assumption that the proponents of this theory make is that the speaker is endowed with a precisely definable mode of reasoning from ends to the means that will achieve those ends (Brown and Levinson 1978; Fasold, 1990).

This theory helps justify the reasons why speakers of a language resort to euphemisms. It is believed that euphemisms safeguard social values. Within this theory, sexual language

(which this research is based on) constitutes a stereotypical example of a face threatening act, because through it we reveal areas of human geography and intimate desires which most individuals are reluctant to reveal. Therefore, euphemisms come in handy because the language of sex is likely to embarrass, degrade or humiliate the listener or reader.

## **2.7 Conclusion**

This chapter has shed light on related literature. First, a brief review of language use in society has been given. Second, a review of general works on dysphemisms and euphemisms has been presented. The chapter has also focused on language and cognition as well as highlighting the theoretical framework on which this study is based. The methodology used in the study is discussed in the next chapter.

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## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Introduction

This section discusses the methodological procedures undertaken to carry out the study. It is divided into seven parts namely; research design, study area and population, sampling technique and sample size, research instruments, data collection, ethical considerations and data presentation and treatment.

#### 3.2 Research Design

This study has adopted a descriptive design. The major purpose of such a design is description of the state of affairs as it exists at a particular point in time. The researcher identified and described the sex related dysphemisms and euphemisms as they currently were and then reported the findings. This data was presented from the perspective of the subjects so that the researcher's intellectual biases do not distort the collection, interpretation or presentation of the data.

This study utilized data in the form of words and phrases in order to obtain detailed information about the sex-related dysphemisms and euphemisms in Dholuo and then proceeded to establish patterns, trends and relationships from the gathered information. Kerlinger (1969) points out that descriptive studies are not only restricted to fact findings, but often result in the formulation of important principles of knowledge and solution to significant problems. They are more than just a collection of data. They involve measurement, classification, analysis, comparison and interpretation of data. For example,

in this study lexical frequencies were obtained to indicate how often various sex-related euphemisms were used by both male and female respondents. The information from the frequency tables were also statistically presented to show the distribution of the usage of the euphemisms mentioned above.

### **3.3 Study Area and Population**

This study was conducted in South-East Kanyamkago Location, Nduru Village. Administratively, the area is located in Uriri District in Nyanza Province. This location is about 20 Kilometers from Migori town and approximately 380 Kilometers from Nairobi. The research was carried out in this region since the researcher is quite familiar with the area; and has well established networks that would effectively facilitate data collection during the research. Similarly, the area is ideal because it is rural with most subjects mainly using Dholuo as the language of everyday communication and is hence likely to provide a corpus of fully integrated words in the language. Moreover, the area is centrally located and there is limited contact with people from other tribes who may influence the vocabulary of the respondents. Lastly, this area of study is deemed appropriate since it has a homogenous population.

The target population for the study was all Dholuo speakers. However the researcher was interested in Dholuo speakers aged between twenty and above sixty years who could read and write in English and Dholuo. This target group was chosen in order to get data that was representative. The study specifically targeted adult respondents who were married or had once been married. This was because the euphemisms to be studied touched on

marriage, death, social and economic activities among the Luo. The targeted respondents were eighteen (nine males and nine females) and they were identified with the help of the two research assistants

### **3.4 Sampling Technique and Sample Size**

For the purpose of this study, some respondents were purposively sampled. These were respondents who had certain characteristics desirable for the study for example, widows and a widower, two members of the Luo Council of Elders and a traditional birth attendant. The widows and widower were desirable for the study in the sense that they helped shed light on the sex rituals undertaken by the bereaved spouse in the event of the death of a partner. Secondly, the members of the Luo Council of Elders focused on the beliefs and customs in regard to marriage, death and home building of the Luo as well as the consequences that befell a person who did not perform the rituals as dictated by the culture. Lastly, the traditional birth attendant gave useful insights on the process of giving birth in the traditional Luo setting, the actions to be taken when this process came with complications as well as the sex rituals that had to be performed by the parents of the new born baby upon its arrival.

The remaining twelve respondents were randomly sampled taking into account the variables of age and sex. The age variable was split into three 20-40 years, 41-60 years and above 60 years. These age brackets enabled the researcher to elicit data that was representative. Simple random sampling was used and this involved giving a number to every subject, placing the numbers in a container and then picking any number at random

(Mugenda and Mugenda 1999). For instance, in this study the researcher assigned a number to each of the fifty households in the village where the research was carried out then from this a total of ten households were randomly sampled in which case, the names corresponding to the numbers picked were included in the sample.

The researcher limited the study to eighteen respondents (nine males and nine females respectively). This was considered a good sample because Milroy (1987) observes that large samples may not be necessary for linguistic surveys since they tend to be redundant, bringing increasing data handling problems with diminishing analytical returns. Moreover, this number was also considered adequate because of the sensitivity of the topic under study.

### **3.5 Research Instruments**

The data collection instruments that were used were an interview schedule (see Appendix A) and a tape recorder. The interview schedule was chosen since it allows for in-depth, detailed, 'insider' information. It is also used to extract information even on sensitive topics like dysphemisms. The interview schedule was semi-structured. The questions contained therein in turn gave an insight into the feelings, background, hidden motivations, intuitions, interests and decisions of the respondents (Mugenda and Mugenda, 1999). The interview schedule (RI<sub>1</sub>) helped meet the three objectives of the study while the pictures of both female and male body parts (RI<sub>2</sub> and RI<sub>3</sub>) helped the researcher get euphemisms related to male and female sexual body parts.

The interview schedule was augmented by tape-recording. The tape-recorder captured data (the researcher's questions and the respondents' answers) during the interview session. This instrument was chosen because it reduces the tendency for the researcher to make unconscious selection of data in the course of recording and also because the taped interview can be played back and studied more thoroughly than would be the case if only the notes that were taken during the interview were available. It further speeds up the interview as it does not interfere with communication (Mugenda and Mugenda, 1999). The researcher let the respondents familiarize themselves with the tape recording instrument.

### **3.6 Data Collection**

The interview schedule was used to collect data for the three objectives of the study. For objective one this instrument helped in identifying and explaining the sex-related dysphemistic words and phrases. To achieve this, the researcher asked the respondents to name the sex-related male and female body parts and to show the functions of these named parts as well as that of sexual intercourse. In addition, the researcher asked them to name the physiological processes associated with both males and females and to further explain the literal and implied meanings that some of these processes elicited.

As mentioned earlier, the interview schedule was also used to collect data for objective two which was illustrating the cognitive processes in the creation of sex-related euphemisms. To achieve this second objective, the respondents were asked to give the alternative terms that were used to refer to the sex related male and female body parts,

physiological processes, sexual intercourse, and ritual sex that was performed in different scenarios (for instance, during farming, fishing, birth, death and marriage) and their significance. They were further asked to name the contexts in which these alternative terms were used and the reasons for their usage.

For objective three, the interview schedule was used to collect data on the relationship between age and gender in the usage of euphemisms. The researcher split the age variable into three: 20-40 years, 41-60 years and above 60 years. Respondents from each age bracket were asked to give the alternative terms that were used to refer to the sex-related female and male body parts, physiological processes associated with both males and females, sexual intercourse as well as the sex rituals that are linked to human activities such as building a home, fishing, farming and certain natural phenomena such as marriage, birth and death. To crown it all, the respondents were asked why they used such alternative terms.

The tape recorder captured data in the form of utterances that entailed sex-related dysphemistic words, phrases and their euphemistic equivalents. Field notes were also made during the interview sessions in order to supplement the recorded data especially in cases where the reference to a particular utterance was unclear. The field notes also provided non-linguistic and contextual cues about the utterances. This ensured that the number of utterances coded as unclear were as minimal as possible.

The interviews were conducted in Dholuo and all sessions were done in the respondent's respective homes. The respondents included two elderly men in the age bracket of above 60 years. These two were very instrumental when it came to giving insights into the customs and beliefs of the Luo. Another elderly man in the same age bracket was also interviewed. Two elderly widows who were above 60 years of age were interviewed. These two were also very important to the study because they gave the researcher an insight into the rituals that were associated with wife inheritance in the traditional Luo setting. Another woman in the same age-bracket was also interviewed.

A widower and a widow in the age bracket of 20-40 years who had not only lost their spouses but also some of their children were also interviewed. These two people were important since they informed the researcher about the rituals that are performed after the death of a spouse and a child in the modern Luo setting. This information was important since it enabled the researcher compare the rituals that were performed in the traditional Luo setting with those that are performed in the modern Luo setting with the aim of trying to find out which aspects of the rituals have been maintained and which have been discarded and why they have been done away with. Other two married men and women in this age bracket (20-40) were also interviewed. Specific attention was paid to married couples since most of the sex-related rituals carried out during birth, death, farming and construction of homesteads affect them in one way or the other.

A traditional midwife in the age bracket of 41-60 years old was also interviewed. This respondent was crucial to the study since she shed light on issues related to giving birth in

the traditional Luo setting. A female herbalist who also doubled up as a village elder was also interviewed during the research. The other respondents in this age bracket were randomly selected and they were all married.

Data was collected with the help of two research assistants who were male and female. Each assistant interviewed the respondents of the same sex as theirs to minimize embarrassment that sometimes occurs when participants are interviewed by the opposite sex. The research assistants used were mature in age to enable the respondents to interact with them freely. These assistants were selected on the basis of their ability to read and write. They performed roles such as taking notes and audio taping the sessions.

Issues to be investigated during the research were clarified to them. They were also trained on how to carry out in depth interviews and how to use the recording instrument. Two types of data were generated by the study: the qualitative data which was presented in descriptive prose and analyzed using mathematical percentages and the quantitative data presented in a tabular manner in the form of contingency tables where numerical codes representing attributes were analyzed. For the male sexual organ, thirty one euphemisms were identified and for the female sexual organ twenty four euphemisms were identified by the researcher.

### **3.7 Ethical Considerations**

Before collecting primary data, the researcher obtained a research authorization letter from the Graduate school, Kenyatta University. This enabled her to get an introductory letter

from the Assistant Chief, Lwala sub location (see appendix F). Informed consent of the respondents was sought before commencement of the study and they were assured of confidentiality. The respondents were told that they were free to decline to participate, not to answer certain questions or to quit altogether if they so wished. Their consent to be audio taped was also sought in order to avoid those recordings that breach the privacy of individuals and erode the trust between the researcher and the respondent.

### **3.8 Data Presentation and Treatment**

The data obtained through interview was presented in Dholuo orthography and a gloss provided (see appendix D). The language samples collected were transcribed and coded as soon as possible after the sessions. Field notes written during the sessions were used to supplement the recorded data especially in cases where references to particular items were unclear. The field notes also provided non linguistic and non contextual cues about the utterances. All the transcriptions were checked manually for the purpose of verification. The transcribed data was edited in order to come up with a clean and organized copy to facilitate recall of information. This was thereafter followed by translation of the copies from Dholuo to English.

After the transcription, the data was coded and this encompassed three stages; categorization, quantification and processing. The sex-related dysphemistic words and phrases that were collected were sorted out and classified into different categories such as birth, sex-related female and male body parts, physiological processes, sexual intercourse and ritual sex. A list of these categories was then compiled and a finite group of patterns

and sub-patterns emerged. Similarly, the images that the sex-related dysphemistic words and phrases depicted were explained and the researcher proceeded to show how these words and phrases were viewed in the Luo society. The data on the cognitive processes in the creation of sex-related euphemisms that were used to replace the dysphemistic male and female body parts were analyzed using the Conceptual Integration Theory (cf. pg 27).

For each euphemism, four mental spaces are created that is, two input spaces, a generic space and a blended space. Input one which is the source domain represents the euphemistic term while input two which is the target domain represents the dysphemistic term. The attributes of the euphemism are also illustrated in the source domain just the way those of the dysphemistic term are represented in the target domain.

For example, the euphemism 'The penis is a hoe' is mapped onto the different mental spaces such that 'hoe' which is the euphemism is mapped onto penis which is the dysphemism then the characteristics of the 'hoe' and those of the penis are illustrated in the source and target domains respectively. Those of the 'hoe' are: tool for it is used in digging as well as harvesting, it is used on the farm, it breaks virgin land, a hoe is a non-living thing which is made of wood and metal and it is involved in the production of food. The features of the penis on the other hand are: it is a tool that plays an instrumental role in sexual intercourse, it breaks the virginity of a woman, it is a living thing, the penis is inserted in the vagina, it is made of skin, veins and blood, it also plays a reproduction role in the sense that it ejaculates sperms into the vagina and if these meet the ovaries and

fertilization takes place, fetal development begins meaning that it is involved in the production of children.

The traits of these two entities (hoe and penis) that are similar and which are therefore referred to as the shared information is projected to the generic space. The last space is the blended which contains all the information in the generic space as well as the emergent structure (which is the meaning of this euphemism). This euphemism means that the penis is a symbol of production. Other euphemisms that could not be analyzed using the Conceptual Integration Theory were analyzed using the Politeness Theory whereby the literal as well as the implied meanings of euphemisms for ritual sex were expounded in detail. For example, farming has sexual connotations in the Luo culture and the euphemistic term for ritual sexual intercourse at the onset of planting is 'golo *kodhi*' (removing seedlings prior to planting).

The data obtained from the analysis above was then quantified. Processing followed and here the categorized and quantified data was transferred on separate columns with each category on its own column. Suitable methods of statistical representations as explained in the research design were used to represent the emergent patterns. Codes rather than names of respondents were used to ensure confidentiality of personal details that emerged during the interviews. Capital letters F and M which stand for female and male respectively were also used to represent the respondents.

### 3.9 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed in detail the methodology that the researcher has used in the interpretation of sex-related euphemisms in Dholuo using the Conceptual Integration Theory and Politeness Theory. The chapter has put into focus the research design, area of study and population, sampling procedure and sample size, research instruments, data collection, and ethical issues as well as how the data was treated and presented. The next chapter deals with the presentation, analysis and discussion of data.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.1 Introduction

In this chapter Dholuo dysphemistic and euphemistic words, phrases and expressions are analyzed within the framework of Conceptual Integration Theory (CIT) which is initiated by Turner and Fauconnier (2002) and Politeness Theory developed by Brown and Levinson (1978). The sex-related male and female body parts are analyzed in terms of their conceptual mappings while the sexual rituals associated with human activities, sexual intercourse as well as sex-related physiological processes that are linked to both males and females are analyzed using the second theory.

Also discussed is the relationship that age and gender have on the usage of euphemisms in Dholuo. For the male sexual organ, thirty one euphemisms were identified by the researcher. Nine of these were mapped using the Conceptual Integration Theory which is a Cognitive Linguistics theory. The number to be mapped was arrived at after grouping the euphemisms into six categories of animal, tree, leg, reptile, weapon and tool for work. For each category, a specific number of items were chosen depending on the total number in that category.

For the female sexual organ, a total of twenty four euphemisms were collected. Nine of these were mapped using the Conceptual Integration Theory. Just like the male sexual organ, the number to be mapped was arrived at after grouping the euphemisms into nine categories of food, a passage, wealth, medicine, garden, tool, place, organ and a river and

then for each category, a specific number of items were chosen depending on the total number in that category. In total twenty one euphemisms were analyzed for the male and female sexual organs.

#### **4.2 Sexual Dysphemisms**

In all societies on earth there are certain behaviors both verbal and non verbal which have been forbidden since they are considered dysphemistic by the people of a given community. Jay (2000) posits that being social animals, human beings tend to avoid some words or expressions which are generally considered dirty or shameful thereby imposing a ban on them. Words in this category include expressions of sex, certain diseases, defecation, micturition, body effluvia and even death. For instance; people tend to be ashamed when they refer to sex or any other term related to it because it is highly personal and private. In most societies therefore, direct references to sex and its related words are strongly forbidden or avoided. People have as a matter of fact learnt how, to whom and when to use them in terms of careful and speculative choice under the restriction of factors such as age, status, gender, education and relationship in a socio-linguistic environment.

Risch (1987) argues that dysphemism is based on cultural values, norms, beliefs and cognitive attitudes that the members of the society have formed towards the topics concerned. She further notes that dysphemism is usually indirect; its real object is not so much what is forbidden, but rather the cultural and social circumstances affected by the prohibitions. Jay (2000) further notes that dysphemistic words can be used to achieve a

variety of personal and interpersonal outcomes that may be positive, negative or inconsequential in terms of their impact on others.

Mbiti (2002) points out that there is a moral order at work among people. Through it, customs and institutions have arisen in all societies to safeguard the life of the individual and the community of which he is part. As a matter of fact, dysphemisms are seen to strengthen the keeping of the moral and religious order. Therefore, breaking them constitutes a breach of morals and this explains why people try as much as possible to avoid using them as was seen among Dholuo speakers who were interviewed in the study.

The respondents interviewed noted that in the Luo culture just like in most cultures of the world, dysphemistic language is usually avoided because it is regarded as obscene and its use in many instances leads to embarrassment though, in a few occasions it may be positive especially when it occurs in circumstances like sexual enticement or in jokes. The members of the Luo Council of Elders that were interviewed noted that in the Luo set-up, women are prohibited from using dysphemistic terms even though the males are allowed to talk rough thereby employing aggressive sexual terms in their speech. They further pointed out that dysphemistic words and phrases are powerful and that is why even though they are avoided, language users are compelled to preserve them. The next section discusses the male and female sexual organs.

#### **4.2.1 The Male Sexual Organ**

This organ has both internal and external components. The external component comprises the penis and the scrotum while the internal component consists of the testicles, a system of genital ducts, urethra and accessory organ (Graap, 1998). For the purposes of this study, the external components of the male sexual organ and one internal component which are the testicles were discussed since the researcher was only interested in the penis, sperms and the euphemistic expressions used for them.

The penis is a cylindrical organ which contains erectile tissue. Its tip which is referred to as the glans is usually slightly thicker than the body of the penis and it is extremely sensitive to touch, particularly around its rim. By the same token, it is also an important source of sexual pleasure for the male. The penis has procreation as well as pleasure-giving functions (Graap, 1998).

#### **4.2.2 The Female Sexual Organ**

Just like the male sexual organ, the female one is also made up two parts namely, the internal and external sex organs. The external organs consist of the mons veneris, the major and minor lips, the clitoris and the vaginal opening all collectively referred to as the vulva. The internal sex organs consist of the ovaries, the fallopian tubes, the uterus and the vagina (Graap, 1998).

The last and the most important of the internal sex organs is the vagina and it has several functions. Firstly, it provides a passageway for the menstrual flow from the uterus to the

outside. Secondly, it serves as a receptacle of the man's penis and his ejaculated sperms which may then move on through the cervix. Thirdly, it provides a passageway for a baby during birth from the uterus to the outside. During sexual excitement, the vaginal walls secrete a watery substance which serves as a lubricant during coitus (Graap, 1998). The penis and the vagina are organs of sexual desire that elicit sexual language which as was found out during research is catalogued as impolite therefore, the usage of such language calls for unending apologies and justifications on the part of the user.

After the brief discussion of the male and female sexual organs that elicit dysphemistic terms which form part of this study, the table presented below gives the dysphemistic terms of the organs discussed, sexual intercourse and sex related physiological processes as they are referred to in Dholuo with a gloss provided for each term.

**Table 4.1 sexual dysphemisms**

<b>Dysphemism</b>	<b>Gloss</b>
Chund/Chul	Penis
Ng'ony/Ther	Vagina
Boke	Menstruation
Nyuol	Giving birth
Olo mach	Ejaculation
Ng'othruok	Sexual intercourse

Dysphemistic terms such as ejaculation attract two meanings. In Dholuo this word is referred to as '*olo mach*' which is literally translated to mean 'pouring fire.' 'Fire' in this instance refers to the sperms that are released into the vagina by the penis during sexual intercourse and as was noted during research, this 'fire' is a significant component in

procreation since in the traditional Luo set-up, sexual intercourse was primarily geared towards reproduction with children being the valued end product of the sexual act. The next section discusses the sexual euphemisms of the male and female sex organs and goes ahead to analyze selected ones using the Conceptual Integration and Politeness Theories.

### **4.3 Sexual Euphemisms**

Fahgal (1995) argues that euphemisms are alternatives to dispreferred expressions that are used to avoid possible loss of face. These expressions may be dysphemistic, fearsome, distasteful or for some reason have too many connotations to felicitously execute speaker's communicative intention on a given occasion. Interactants therefore, utilize lexical resources in language to achieve the expression of politeness and demureness in human interaction.

Allan and Burridge (2006) posit that euphemisms arise from conscious and unconscious self censoring and they are normally used to avoid embarrassing and/or offending the hearer or some third party. Euphemisms therefore advocate for politeness on the part of the speaker, hearer and/or a third party. They are used to dignify certain terms and to downplay their potential offensiveness.

Jay (1996) asserts that euphemisms are quite flexible since the speaker could choose them according to the speaker-listener relationship, the setting and the topic at hand hence some speakers in certain conversational settings would produce new euphemisms. So many euphemisms have developed to describe genitals, sexual acts, body parts and body

products therefore, sexual euphemisms deserve special attention as they are an important part of the expressive mechanisms of most languages as Allan and Burrige (2006) note.

Allan and Burrige (1991) argue that sexual intercourse may be spoken of tenderly, lyrically or lasciviously, beautifully and sometimes even profanely. In Dholuo the term sexual intercourse generally evokes squeamishness and that is why it is always accompanied by euphemisms as a form of linguistic interdiction. Table 4.2 shows euphemisms of the penis and how often they are used by the male and female respondents.

**Table 4.2: Euphemisms of the penis and their lexical frequencies**

Euphemism	Gloss	Male		Female		Total	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
Yien	Tree	4	44.4	7	77.8	11	61.1
Siala	Markahamia tree	2	22.2	6	66.7	8	44.4
Rachier	Black mamba	4	44.4	8	88.9	12	66.7
Omuga	Black rhinoceros	5	55.6	9	100.0	14	77.8
Rwath	Bull	3	33.3	7	77.8	10	55.6
Kalam	Pen	5	55.6	3	33.3	8	44.4
Rapur	Hoe/jembe	6	66.7	4	44.4	10	55.6
Pondo	A type of traditional tree	1	11.1	4	44.4	5	27.8
Kede	Stick	6	66.7	8	88.9	14	77.8
Luth	A walking stick	9	100.0	7	77.8	16	88.9
Masira	Danger/ calamity	6	66.7	7	77.8	13	72.2
Ratuchi	Something used to make a hole/ opening	5	55.6	7	77.8	12	66.7
Kwer	Plough	5	55.6	3	33.3	8	44.4
Ragwar	A fork	6	66.7	5	55.6	11	61.1
Chuma	Metal	7	77.8	8	88.9	15	83.3
Le	Axe	6	66.7	4	44.4	10	55.6
Rungu	Club	5	55.6	9	100.0	14	77.8
Tielo machiek	Short leg	6	66.7	8	88.9	14	77.8
Seke	A straw	9	100.0	3	33.3	12	66.7
Nyim	That which is in front	6	66.7	9	100.0	15	83.3
Gir tich	A tool for work	9	100.0	7	77.8	16	88.9
Rakula	A bent individual	7	77.8	-	0.0	7	38.9
Pala	Sword	9	100.0	5	55.6	14	77.8
Tielo mar adek	A third leg	2	22.2	7	77.8	9	50.0
Chuma maliet	A hot metal	1	11.1	4	44.4	5	27.8
Rakuny	Something used to make a hole/ opening	4	44.4	1	11.1	5	27.8
Duong'	Private part	9	100.0	9	100.0	18	100.0
Magina	Gun	4	44.4	6	66.7	10	55.6
Mach	Fire	9	100.0	7	77.8	16	88.9
Loboko	A type of Congolese music	2	22.2	-	0.0	2	11.1
Ojwan'g muofu	Blind Ojwan'g	6	66.7	3	33.3	9	50.0

Six conceptual mappings for the penis as shown in table 4.3 were identified. In that table lexical frequencies and percentages of conceptual mappings in terms of gender are elaborately displayed. These conceptual mappings were arrived at by grouping the euphemisms thematically. For example, those that are names of animals were grouped together, those that are classified as reptiles were also grouped together and the same was done for the other categories till all of them were grouped. Table 4.3 shows the conceptual mappings.

**Table 4.3: Conceptual mappings in the interpretation of the penis on the basis of age**

Conceptual mappings for the penis	20-40 years		41-60 years		Above 60years	
	n	%	n	%	N	%
Weapon	49	30.82	42	23.33	26	17.45
Tree	9	5.66	14	7.78	19	12.75
Animal	5	3.14	9	5.00	10	6.71
Reptile	9	5.66	10	5.56	9	6.04
A leg /protrusion of body	48	30.19	51	28.33	37	24.84
A tool for work	39	24.53	54	30.00	48	32.21
<b>Total</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The subsequent sections give detailed discussions of some of the euphemisms as they are perceived by the respondents. This is then followed by their analysis using the conceptual mappings that are proposed by Fauconier and Turner (2002). The first to be discussed is the euphemism ‘The penis is a tree.’

### 4.3.1 Euphemisms of the penis

#### (a) 'The penis is a tree'

The penis is euphemistically referred to as 'a tree' because of its significance in the Luo community. It was noted that markhamia forked pole for instance, was significant during the construction of a home. Trees as was noted are used to make several domestic items such as wooden stirring sticks, pestle, mortar, wooden spoons, axe handles, hoe handles and even walking sticks. Being a fishing community, the Luo use trees in the construction of boats.

Trees were also used for ritual purposes for example, traditional priests and medicine men went to offer sacrifices at the foot of these trees to appease the ancestral spirits. The barks of certain trees such as 'ng'ou' are used as medicine to cure various ailments such as stomach ache, toothache and diarrhea. Leaves of trees such as neem (*dwele*) are also medicinal. Dyes of various shades extracted from leaves, barks or roots of some indigenous trees are used by the Luo primarily to color fabric and to decorate the walls of huts and paint walking sticks among other things. On the other hand, fiber is used to make baskets, mats, ropes and twines.

In addition, there are edible fruits that are collected from trees such as mango, orange and pawpaw. These add diversity and variety to one's diet while supplying essential minerals and vitamins. There are a variety of trees that are used by the Luo to make musical instruments such as 'Bu' (bassoon) and 'Nyatiti,' an eight stringed instrument with four or six bridges. It was observed that during leisure, the Luo male (especially adults) liked

playing 'ajua' and hockey very much. The equipment used in these games was made from species of trees such as markamia which are durable.

The tree and the penis are similar in a number of ways and this is the reason why the latter is euphemistically referred to as the 'tree.' Firstly, the trunk of a tree can be likened to the penis because it is usually long and straight just the way the penis becomes long when erect. Secondly, both of them can bear fruits in the sense that there are certain trees which bear fruits that are edible and which provide essential minerals and vitamins to the body. This implies that food is one of the products got from trees in addition to timber. Penis on the other hand, produces sperms that may fertilize the egg leading to fetal development therefore, children are its products.

The euphemism 'The penis is a tree' is then mapped onto the different mental spaces (cf. pg 28). There are two input spaces for tree and penis which correspond to the source and target domains as exemplified in Lakoff's and Johnson's Conceptual Metaphor Theory (1980) (cf. pg 28). The euphemistic term occupies the source domain while the dysphemistic term occupies the target domain. This is then followed by fixed counterpart mappings (The attributes of the tree and those of the penis) as projected by the Conceptual Integration Theory. In this euphemism, 'a tree' which is the euphemistic expression is mapped onto penis which is the dysphemistic expression. A tree is a plant while the penis is part of the human body. From trees we get food which is a basic need while the penis is a key component in sexual intercourse and sex is a physiological need.

It was mentioned that for a tree to grow effectively, it needs water which transports minerals to different parts. The penis on the other hand, contains fluids such as semen that help in lubrication during sexual intercourse. In addition, trees have a variety of uses as mentioned earlier and from them different products are gotten just the way products are also obtained from sexual intercourse where the penis plays an instrumental role.

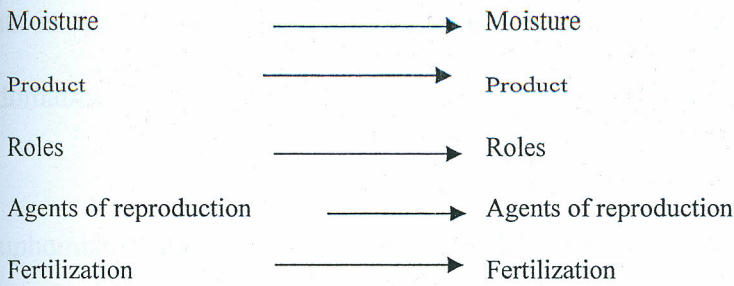
A tree has both protective and curative roles. Protective in the sense that they act as windbreakers thus protecting crops and curative in the sense that the barks of certain trees act as herbs which are used to cure various ailments such as stomach ache in the Luo community. It was observed that fruits of certain trees such as mango, pawpaw and orange contain seeds which can be likened to the sperms that the penis ejaculates. The Luo refer to the sperms as 'seeds' that are vital in reproduction. While pollination is a process that leads to fertilization in plants of which trees are part, copulation leads to fertilization in human beings.

From the two input spaces we move to the third which is the generic space. This space contains information that is shared by the input spaces for example, the subjects of this euphemism are 'a tree' and a penis. It was noted that a tree can be classified as a plant while a penis as part of a human body. It was further pointed out that both of them are sources of needs, a tree being a source of a basic need while a penis being a source of a physiological need. In addition water and fluids can collectively be referred to as moisture and what we get from both the tree and penis are collectively referred to as products. Both

of them play different roles or functions, with seeds and sperms being crucial agents in reproduction.

The fourth is called the blended space and it contains all the matched information projected from the generic space as well as a new piece of information referred to as the emergent structure which is the meaning of the euphemism. This euphemism means that the penis is an important organ just like the tree is. This is because seeds of a tree give life to other trees and even to human beings. Similarly, the penis also gives life to other human beings. This is so in the sense that the penis produces sperms (seeds) which may meet the ovum and if fertilization takes place, a new life in the form of a fetus begins to develop. The next section gives a summary of the fixed counterpart mappings presented in a table form.

<u>Input 1 (source domain)</u>	→	<u>Input 2 (Target domain)</u>
Tree	→	Penis
Plant	→	Part of human body
Source of a basic need	→	Source of a physiological need
Water	→	Fluids
Food, furniture, boats. and other domestic items	→	Children
Has protective and curative roles	→	Has procreation and pleasure giving roles
Seeds	→	Sperms
Pollination	→	Copulation
<u>Generic Space</u>	→	<u>Blended space</u>
Subjects	→	Subjects
Classification	→	Classification



Emergent structure → The penis is an important organ in life.

This euphemism takes into account the three component processes (cf. pg 31) that give rise to its meaning. In composition the attributes of the tree and those of the penis are projected. Completion introduces the frames of plants (a tree is classified as a plant) as well as those of human anatomy (the penis is classified as part of the body). The meaning of this euphemism comes in the component process of elaboration in which case the issue of life is brought out in the sense that food that is got from trees is a source of nourishment. This food helps in building as well as protecting the body hence prolonging life on the other hand, the sperms from the penis play an instrumental role in procreation.

This euphemism satisfies the principles of integration, topology, unpacking and good reason (cf.pg 32-33). The elements from the source domain of tree are mapped onto those of the target domain of penis and in the process, they combine and interact. In unpacking, the materials in the blended space can be transferred back to the source and target domains where they initially originated for example, a common feature that is found in the blended space is 'moisture.' This represents the elements which in their respective input spaces appear as 'water and fluids.' The principle of topology is also satisfied in the sense that the

elements in the blended space have a relationship with the elements in the source and target domains.

This euphemism finally satisfies the principle of good reason since all elements in the blended space have roles to play in the running of the blend. For example, the source and target domains are important since they are the ones that give rise to the other features of the euphemistic as well as dysphemistic expressions. This metaphor has failed to satisfy the web principle because in this euphemism, all elements have been projected to the blend thereby going against the basics of this principle. This failure is of no consequence since the theory points out that the main function of these principles is to make the blend function most efficiently. Moreover, satisfying one of these principles does not automatically involve satisfying another one. Figure 3 shows the mapping of the euphemism 'The penis is a tree.'

## Generic Space

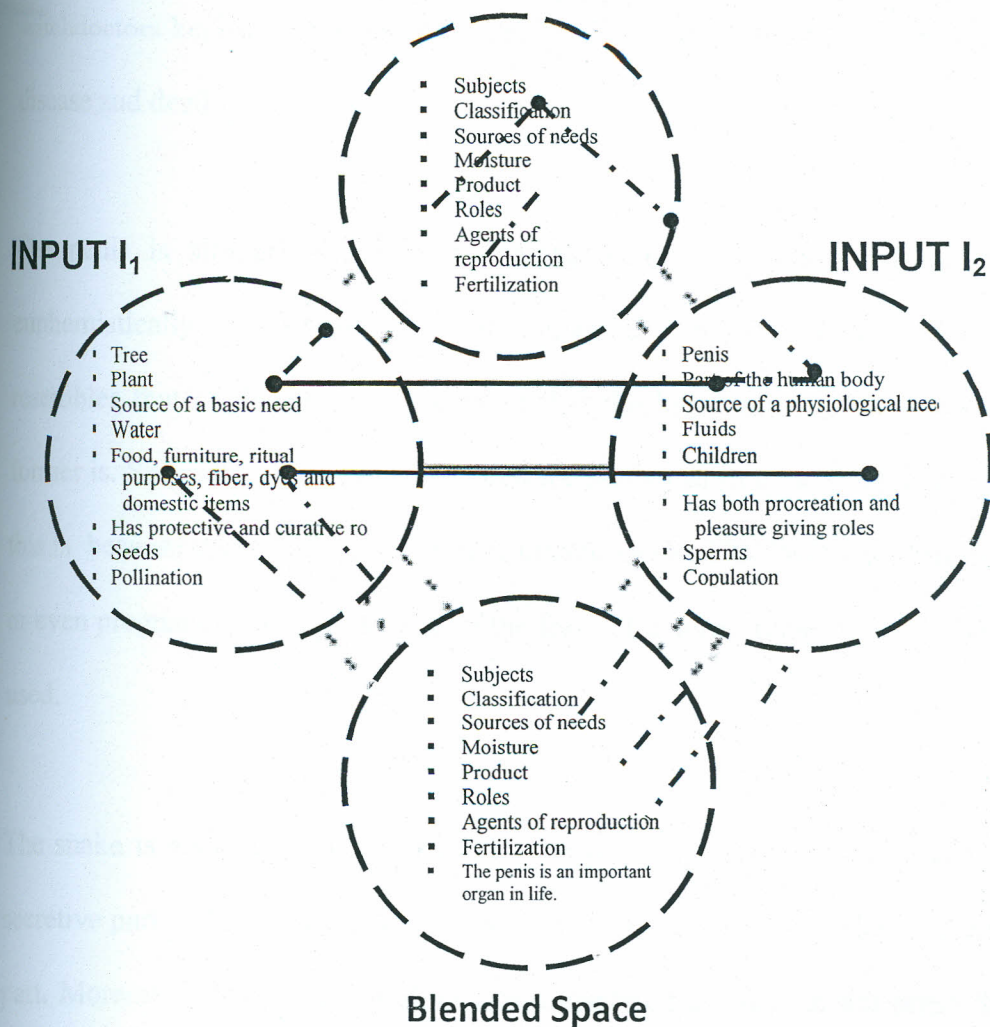


Figure 3: The mapping of the euphemism 'The penis is a tree'

### (b) The penis is 'a black mamba'

The second euphemism to be discussed elaborately is 'The penis is a black mamba.' Just like the previous one it is also analyzed using the Conceptual Integration Theory. Mboya (2001) posits that the black mamba is one of the most feared snakes in the Luo community due to its potent venom, large size and ferocity of its attacks. The skin of the black mamba

was used to make traditional regalia such as hunting shields as well as small bags in which witchdoctors kept their treatment paraphernalia. It was noted that a snake means danger, disease and death.

The penis is similar to the black mamba in multiple ways and that is why it is euphemistically referred to as the black mamba. First, the shape of the black mamba resembles that of the penis in the sense that the latter when erect is long just like the former is. Secondly, it was observed that the penis just like the black mamba is ferocious this is because it can lead to sex-related infections like HIV/AIDS, syphilis and gonorrhoea or even pregnancy when protection in the form of contraceptives such as condoms are not used.

The snake is also shy and secretive just the way the penis is. The penis is located in a secretive part and it is an organ that should not be exposed openly hence the name private part. Moreover, this organ could also be considered as 'shy' in the sense that when the 'owner' is ambushed or frightened, it shrinks.

It was observed that the snake 'devours' its victim since bites from it can kill a person within a very short time. In such incidences, the snake emerges victorious over its victim and the substance that is used to bring victory to it is the venom. Similarly, sexual relations involve victory and conquest on the part of the male and defeat and surrender on the part of the female as Mungwini and Matereke, (2010) assert. They observe that the

object that is used to bring victory in this case is the penis, which is a tool that is associated with aggression and the desire to subdue.

It was noted that both the black mamba and the penis play penetrative roles. In both cases, the penetration is with negative consequences. For example, the fangs of the black mamba penetrate the part of the victim's body where it bites while the penis penetrates the vagina forcefully during rape. It was pointed out that the way the snake moves its head about when it is angry and ready to bite is the same way the penis makes movements when it is erect. It was further added that the black mamba bites its victim the same way the penis 'bites' the vagina. The snake's venom can be likened to the sperms from the penis.

It was observed that both prefer bushy areas this is because the black mamba is found in bushy areas and the penis also penetrates the pubic hair around the vagina during sexual intercourse. Similarly, it was noted that both of them are feared. The sight of a black mamba sends cold chills down the spines of many people just the way the sight of a naked man out of the blues does to women.

The euphemism 'The penis is a black mamba' is then mapped onto the different mental spaces (cf. pg 28). There are two input spaces for the black mamba and penis which correspond to the source and target domains as exemplified in Lakoff's and Johnson's Conceptual Metaphor Theory (1980) (cf. pg 28). The euphemistic term occupies the source domain while the dysphemistic term occupies the target domain. This is then followed by fixed counterpart mappings (The attributes of the black mamba and those of

the penis) as projected by the Conceptual Integration Theory. In this euphemism, 'The black mamba' which is the euphemistic expression is mapped onto penis which is the dysphemistic expression.

It was noted that the black mamba is a reptile while the penis is part of human anatomy. Further, the black mamba produces saliva while the penis produces secretions. In addition, it was pointed out that the snake bites its victim while the penis is a component in sexual intercourse. The parts of a black mamba are the head, body, belly and fangs while the penis has the scrotum and the testicles. It was observed that the skin of the black mamba is used to make small bags or even hunting shields. These two are products from the black mamba while the penis contains sperms which may meet the ovum and if fertilization takes place, procreation occurs. Therefore, children are seen as the products of the penis.

The snake plays a destructive role in the sense that bites from it can kill the victim within a short time since its venom is poisonous. The penis on the other hand, has both pleasure-giving and destructive roles. It was noted that the people involved in sexual intercourse find pleasure in the act when there is mutual consent between them. But when there is no consent, and one partner rapes the other, the victim not only suffers from physical bruises inflicted by the other partner but also psychological torture which may destroy the life of such a person completely.

From the two input spaces we move to the third which is the generic space. This space contains information that is common to both inputs. For instance, the subjects are black

mamba and penis. While the black mamba is classified as a reptile, the penis is classified as part of human anatomy. Saliva from the black mamba and secretions from the penis can collectively be referred to as fluids. The snake does the biting while the penis is involved in sexual intercourse which is a way of biting. These could collectively be referred to as actions. Both the snake and the penis have different parts and they also have different roles to play.

The fourth is the blended space which contains matched information projected from the generic space as well as a new piece of information that is called the emergent structure (the meaning of the euphemism). In this case this euphemism means that the penis is a poisonous and dangerous organ in the sense that many women at times undergo problems that are penis related, for example, they may get unwanted pregnancies or sexually transmitted infections especially if they engage in sex with infected partners. Presented next are the fixed counterpart mappings in table form.

<u>Input 1 (Source domain)</u>	<u>Input 2 (Target domain)</u>
Black mamba	→ Penis
Reptile	→ Part of human anatomy
Saliva	→ Secretions
Biting	→ Sexual intercourse
Head, body, belly and fangs	→ Scrotum and testicles
Skin	→ Children
Destructive role	→ Pleasure giving and destructive roles

Generic space

Blended space

Subjects	→	Subjects
Classification	→	Classification
Fluids	→	Fluids
Action	→	Action
Parts	→	Parts
Products	→	Products
Roles	→	Roles

Emergent structure → The penis is a symbol of danger, disease and death.

This euphemism takes into consideration the three component processes that are propagated by the proponents of the Conceptual Integration Theory. In essence, composition entails the elements projected from the source as well as the target domains. In completion the frames of reptiles (a snake is a reptile) and those of human anatomy (the penis is part of the human body) are introduced. In elaboration the meaning of the euphemism is given. It means that the penis is a dangerous organ that connotes evil, which could be viewed from the perspective of rape or defilement resulting in the infliction of psychological and physical pain to the victim as a result of the ferocity of 'attacks' on the vagina. The snake is a symbol of protection as well as a source of income in the sense that witchdoctors use it to protect themselves and also to make charms which they sell to their clients at a fee.

The principles of integration, unpacking, topology and good reason with the exception of the web have been satisfied by this euphemism. The elements from the source domain of black mamba are mapped onto the elements from the target domain of penis thereby

combining and interacting in the process. The principle of unpacking is also satisfied by this metaphor in the sense that the entire network can be reconstructed in which case materials from the blended space can be transferred back to the target and source domains respectively. The elements in the blended space have a relationship with the elements in the source and target domains in the principle of topology.

Finally, the principle of good reason has also been satisfied by this metaphor as all elements in the four mental spaces have significant roles to play in the effective running of the blend. The elements from the source and target domains are projected to the generic space and from this mental space they are further transferred to the blend space hence completing the blend cycle. Just like in the first euphemism, this one fails to satisfy the principle of web because it also has all its elements projected to the blended space thereby going against the basics of this principle. Figure 4 shows the mapping of the euphemism 'The penis is a black mamba'

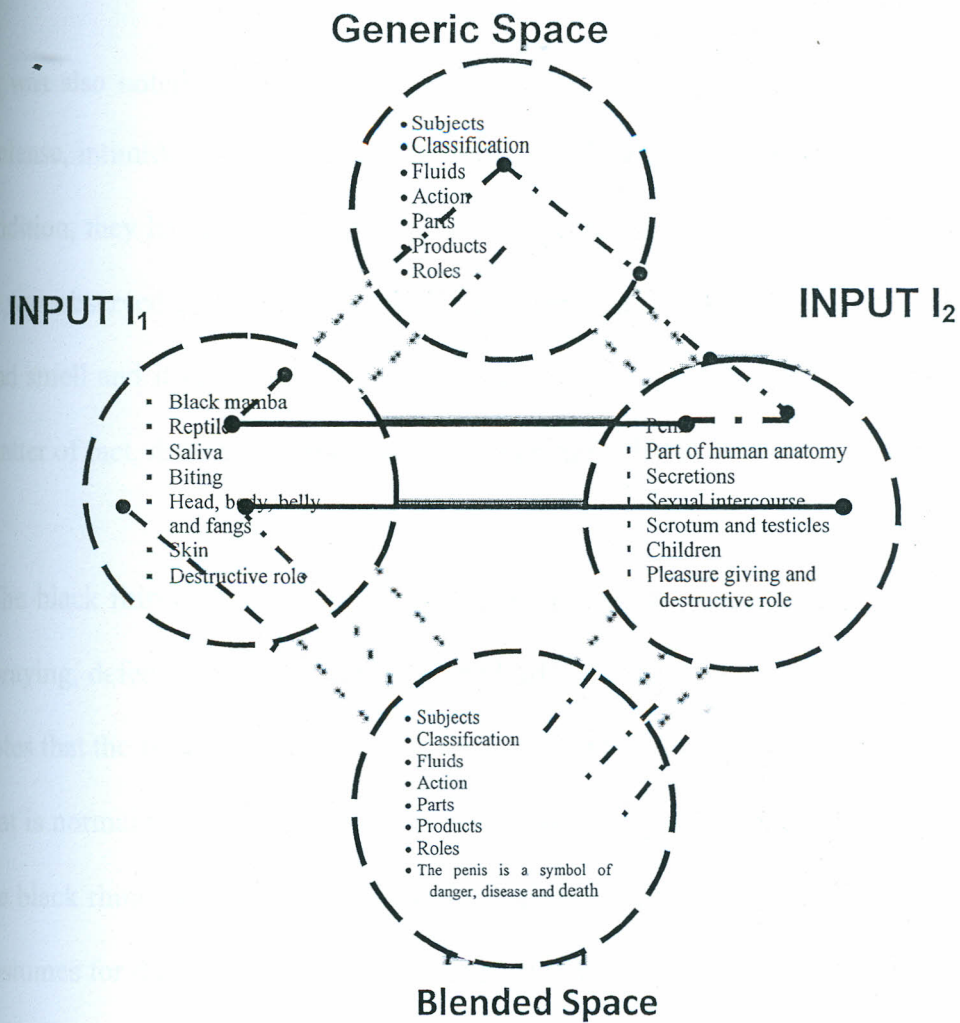


Figure 4: The mapping of the euphemism 'The penis is a black mamba'

(c) The penis is 'a rhinoceros'

This is the third euphemism to be discussed elaborately and just like the previous ones it is also analyzed using the Conceptual Integration Theory. The black rhinoceros are extremely aggressive animals that attack out of fear, panic and confusion. It was observed that black rhinos are relatively very fast animals that live in grasslands and tropical bush land habitats. These animals as was noted have a prehensile lip that is used much like a finger to select and pick leaves and twigs that they prefer during feeding. Apart from the twigs and leaves, they also feed on certain fruits.

It was also noted that the black rhinos have two horns on the skull which are used for defense, intimidation and digging up roots as well as breaking branches during feeding. In addition, they have a thick layered skin that protects them from thorns and sharp grasses. It was observed that because of their poor eyesight, black rhinos rely heavily on hearing and smell and it is this sense of smell that alerts them of the presence of predators. As a matter of fact, rhinos are generally solitary animals that only come together to mate.

The black rhinos exhibit many forms of communication including scent marking, urine spraying, defecation on the same spot and different types of vocalizations. Mboya (2001) notes that the flesh of the black rhino is eaten in the Luo community. Its meat is a delicacy that is normally served at special occasions to distinguished guests. Moreover, the skin of the black rhino was used to make traditional war attire for the warriors as well as dancing costumes for dance troops. In addition, their horns are also used as musical instruments.

The penis is euphemistically referred to as the 'black rhinoceros' because of the similar traits that the two entities possess. Firstly, the penis just like the black rhinoceros is solitary because it only joins the vagina during mating time. It was observed that even though the black rhino has poor eyesight, it has a strong sense of smell just like the penis which is considered blind among the Luo hence euphemistically referred to as '*Ojwang muofu*' (Ojwang' the blind). Moreover, the strong sense of smell that the penis also has enables it to enter the vagina with little or no assistance at all.

It was noted that just the way the black rhinoceros wallows in the mud to cool its temperature, so does the penis which 'wallows' in the vagina thus cooling its temperature especially when it is erect. It was further observed that the most ferocious of the rhinoceros predator is the crocodile that attacks and drags it under water in a split second. Similarly, the most ferocious of the penis 'predator' is the sexually transmitted infection HIV/AIDS.

Just the way crocodiles that attack and drag the black rhinoceros under water do so in a split second, is the same way a person gets the HIV/AIDS infection through sexual intercourse in a split second. It was noted that the predators live in fluids in the sense that the crocodiles that attack the rhinoceros live in the water the same way the virus that is responsible for HIV/AIDS is found in the semen thus making the habitat of the predators in both cases dangerous.

When browsing for food the black rhinoceros moves through the thickets the same way the penis wades the pubic hair as it enters the vagina. Moreover, when excited, the rhinoceros sheds tears the same way the penis produces sperms during sexual intercourse. Similarly, the testicles can be likened to the horns of the black rhinoceros which it uses as a weapon in the event of an attack. This is because it is in the testicles that the sperms are produced and these sperms are the 'weapons' that a man uses against a woman.

It was observed that both display signs of aggression and the aggression of the penis is explainable in terms of polygamous settings which are acceptable among the Luo. In this

community, one man can have several wives meaning that one penis enters several vaginas. It was further argued that the wealth of an individual notwithstanding, it is plausible to note that in most instances for a man to marry several wives, he must be aggressive just the way the adult male rhinoceros, which protects its territory from the invasion of other males, is.

The penis and by extension the sperms have both negative and positive consequences just the way the horns of the rhinoceros that they are likened to, may also have positive and negative gains. It was mentioned that sperms have positive consequences in the sense that if they meet the ovum and fertilization takes place the fetus begins to develop and this therefore implies that the sperms play a significant role in procreation. Mboya (2001) asserts that in the traditional Luo society, a man who had many children was considered wealthy. In another perspective, the sperms may have negative effects for instance, they may lead to unwanted pregnancies should fertilization take place.

Horns on the other hand, are weapons that can be used both negatively and positively. For example, when they are used to attack an enemy they bring negative results because of the harm inflicted on the victim. Positively, they are used for digging up roots as well as breaking branches during feeding.

The euphemism 'The penis is a black rhinoceros' is then mapped onto the different mental spaces (cf. pg 28). There are two input spaces for the black rhinoceros and penis which correspond to the source and target domains as exemplified in Lakoff's and Johnson's

Conceptual Metaphor Theory (1980) (cf. pg 28). The euphemistic term occupies the source domain while the dysphemistic term occupies the target domain. This is then followed by fixed counterpart mappings (The attributes of the black rhinoceros and those of the penis) as projected by the Conceptual Integration Theory. In this euphemism, 'The black rhinoceros' which is the euphemistic expression is mapped onto penis which is the dysphemistic expression.

The black rhinoceros is a wild animal while the penis is a sex organ. Moreover, this animal has two horns while the penis has two testicles. From the black rhinoceros we get meat and skin and from the penis we get children as a result of fertilization that takes place when the sperm meets the ovum. It was pointed out that rhinos inhabit bushy areas while the penis is surrounded by the pubic hair. In addition, meat from the black rhinoceros is a delicacy while the penis brings pleasure during sexual intercourse in instances where there is consent between the people involved.

The generic space is the third mental space and it contains information that is common to both inputs in this instance the subjects of the inputs are black rhinoceros and the penis. The black rhinoceros is classified as a wild animal while the penis as a sex organ. It was noted that meat and skin from the black rhino are classified as products and so are children from the target domain (penis). It was stated that the environment in which the black rhino and penis inhabit is collectively referred to as habitat. The meat from the black rhino is used for nourishment while sex brings pleasure. Moreover, different products come from them thereby making them sources.

The fourth is the blended space which contains matched information projected from the generic space as well as a new piece of information known as the emergent structure which is the meaning of the euphemism. It means that the penis is a dangerous weapon just the way the rhinoceros is. It was posited that the rhino not only destroys trees that are vital to human beings by digging up their roots and breaking their branches but also attacks, injures and kills human beings. The penis on the other hand, could destroy the lives of unsuspecting partners hence it is considered a dangerous weapon. This could happen in cases where a man rapes a woman leaving her not only physically bruised but also psychologically traumatized. It could also happen in cases where a woman engages in sexual intercourse with a man who is infected with a sexually transmitted infection. The fixed counterpart mappings of this euphemism are presented below in table form.

<u>Input 1 (Source domain)</u>		<u>Input 2 (Target domain)</u>
Black rhinoceros	—————→	Penis
Wild animal	—————→	Sex organ
Has two horns	—————→	Has two testicles
Meat, skin	—————→	Children
Bushy land	—————→	Pubic hair
Source of nourishment	—————→	Source of pleasure

<u>Generic space</u>		<u>Blended space</u>
Subjects	—————→	Subjects
Classification	—————→	Classification
Products	—————→	Products
Habitat	—————→	Habitat
Source	—————→	Source
Emergent Structure	—————→	The penis symbolizes a dangerous weapon

In this euphemism the three component processes that are advanced by the proponents of the Conceptual Integration Theory are accounted for. Composition entails the elements projected from both the source (black rhinoceros) and target (penis) domains. Completion introduces the frames of wild animals (black rhinoceros is classified as a wild animal) as well as those of sex organs (penis is classified as a sex organ). The meaning of this euphemism is illustrated in elaboration in which the issues of aggression, strength and virility are brought out.

This euphemism satisfies the optimality principles of integration, web, topology, unpacking and good reason. In integration the elements from the source domain (black rhinoceros) are mapped onto those of the target domain (penis) and in the process, they combine and interact. The web as a principle is also satisfied in this euphemism in the sense that one of the traits of the black rhinoceros in this case 'two horns' fail to match another trait of the penis in this case 'two testicles.'

Another principle that this euphemism satisfies is that topology in the sense that elements that are found in the blended space have a relationship with the elements in the source and target domains. Further, the principle of unpacking is also satisfied by this metaphor since the entire network can be reconstructed. In other words, the elements that are found in the blended space can be transferred back to the target and source domains where they initially originated. For example, a common feature in this euphemism is 'habitat' which when transferred back to the input space is 'bushy land' in the source domain and in the target domain is 'pubic hair.' Last to be satisfied is the principle of good reason because

all the elements in the four mental spaces have significant roles to play in the smooth running of the blend. Figure 5 shows the mapping of the euphemism ‘The penis is a black rhinoceros.’

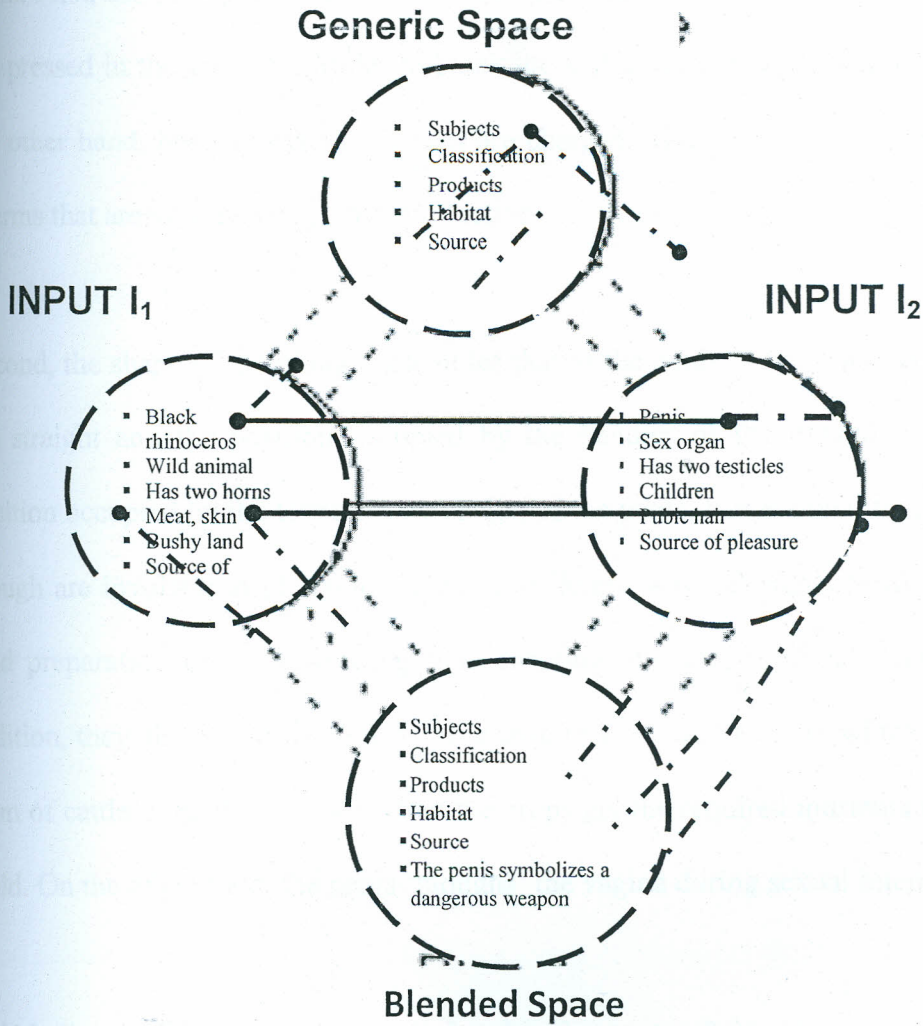


Figure 5: Mapping of the euphemism ‘The penis is a black rhinoceros’

(d) The penis is ‘a plough’

This is the fourth euphemism to be elaborately discussed and also analyzed using the Conceptual Integration Theory. It was noted that a plough is an important farm tool that is

used break land ready for ploughing. Moreover, during planting time the plough is used to create shallow trenches for planting seeds and bulbs. It was posited that the penis is euphemistically referred to as 'a plough' because of the similarities that exist between them. First, the plough has two handles that are held during ploughing and it is these that are pressed in the ground in order to break the soil during land preparation. The penis on the other hand, has two testicles which are charged with the responsibility of producing sperms that are vital elements in reproduction.

Second, the shape of the plough resembles that of the penis in the sense that both of them are straight and the position occupied by the handles of the plough is likened to the position occupied by the testicles (two balls) of the penis. It was noted that both penis and plough are involved in ploughing albeit in different ways. Ploughs break the soil during land preparation or even weeding thus ensuring that the farms are free of weeds. In addition, they also invert the soil burying crop residues and manure which could be in the form of cattle dung thus ensuring that the crops get the required nutrients for a good crop yield. On the other hand, the penis 'ploughs' the vagina during sexual intercourse.

It is believed that this continuous 'ploughing' may result in pregnancy and that is why couples who are looking for a child are encouraged to engage in frequent sexual intercourse. Both of them involve penetration in the sense that the plough penetrates the soil during ploughing as the penis penetrates the vagina during sexual intercourse. Last, the end product of ploughing the garden is food while that of 'ploughing' the vagina is children.

The euphemism 'The penis is a plough' is then mapped onto the different mental spaces (cf. pg 28). There are two input spaces for the plough and penis which correspond to the source and target domains as exemplified in Lakoff's and Johnson's Conceptual Metaphor Theory (1980) (cf. p 28). The euphemistic term occupies the source domain while the dysphemistic term occupies the target domain. This is then followed by fixed counterpart mappings (The attributes of the plough and those of the penis) as projected by the Conceptual Integration Theory. In this euphemism, 'The plough' which is the euphemistic expression is mapped onto penis which is the dysphemistic expression

A plough is a farm implement while the penis is part of the body. A plough has two handles just as the penis has two testicles also referred to as balls. It was mentioned that from ploughing the farm we get different types of food while from the penis we get children if the sperms meet the ovum and fertilization takes place. Ploughs aid in digging gardens in readiness for planting as well as in weeding them. Similarly, the penis penetrates the vagina during sexual intercourse and the movement of the former inside the latter could as well be likened to the ploughing done by the plough. From the two input spaces we move to the third mental space known as the generic space.

The generic space contains information that is common to both source and target domains. Both inputs have subjects which are a plough and a penis. It was noted that both elements in the inputs have been classified with the plough as a farm implement and the penis as part of the body. It was further mentioned that from ploughing the garden we get different

food products while from the penis we get children. In addition, ploughs work on gardens as the penis works on the vagina and these tools penetrate the surfaces that they work on. The blended space is the fourth one and it contains matched information projected from the generic space as well as the meaning of the euphemism. It means that the penis is a symbol of production since it plays a primary role in procreation. The fixed counterpart mappings of this euphemism are presented in the table that follows.

<u>Input 1 (Source domain)</u>		<u>Input 2 (Target domain)</u>
Plough	—————→	Penis
Farm implement	—————→	Part of the body
Two handles	—————→	Two balls
Food	—————→	Children
Garden	—————→	Vagina
Digging	—————→	Sexual intercourse

<u>Generic space</u>		<u>Blended space</u>
Subjects	—————→	Subjects
Classification	—————→	Classification
Products	—————→	Products
Areas	—————→	Areas
Penetration	—————→	Penetration
Actions	—————→	Actions
Emergent structure	—————→	The penis is a symbol of production

This euphemism takes into account the three component processes that give rise to its meaning. In composition, the elements from the source together with those from the target domains are projected. Completion on the other hand introduces the frames of farm

implements (a plough is classified as a farm implement) as well as parts of the body. In elaboration the meaning of this euphemism is illustrated with the concept of production being brought out.

The principles of integration, web, unpacking, topology and good reason are satisfied by this euphemism. The elements from the source domain (plough) are mapped onto those from the target domain (penis) thereby combining and interacting in the process. The web principle is also satisfied by this euphemism since other elements such as 'two handles' and as well as 'two balls' which are found in the source and target domains respectively are not projected to the blended space because they fail to match. The third principle which is satisfied by this metaphor is that of unpacking. In this one, elements can be reconstructed in the sense that features which are found in the blended space can be returned back to the source and target domains where they initially originated.

For example, in the blended space we find 'the subjects' which is a common feature used to represent elements which in their respective input spaces appear as 'a plough and the penis.' The topology principle is also satisfied since the elements found in the blended space have a relationship with those found in the source and target domains. The principle of good reason has also been satisfied because all the elements in this euphemism are important and they assist in the effective running of the blend. Figure 6 shows the mapping of the euphemism 'The penis is a plough.'

## Generic Space

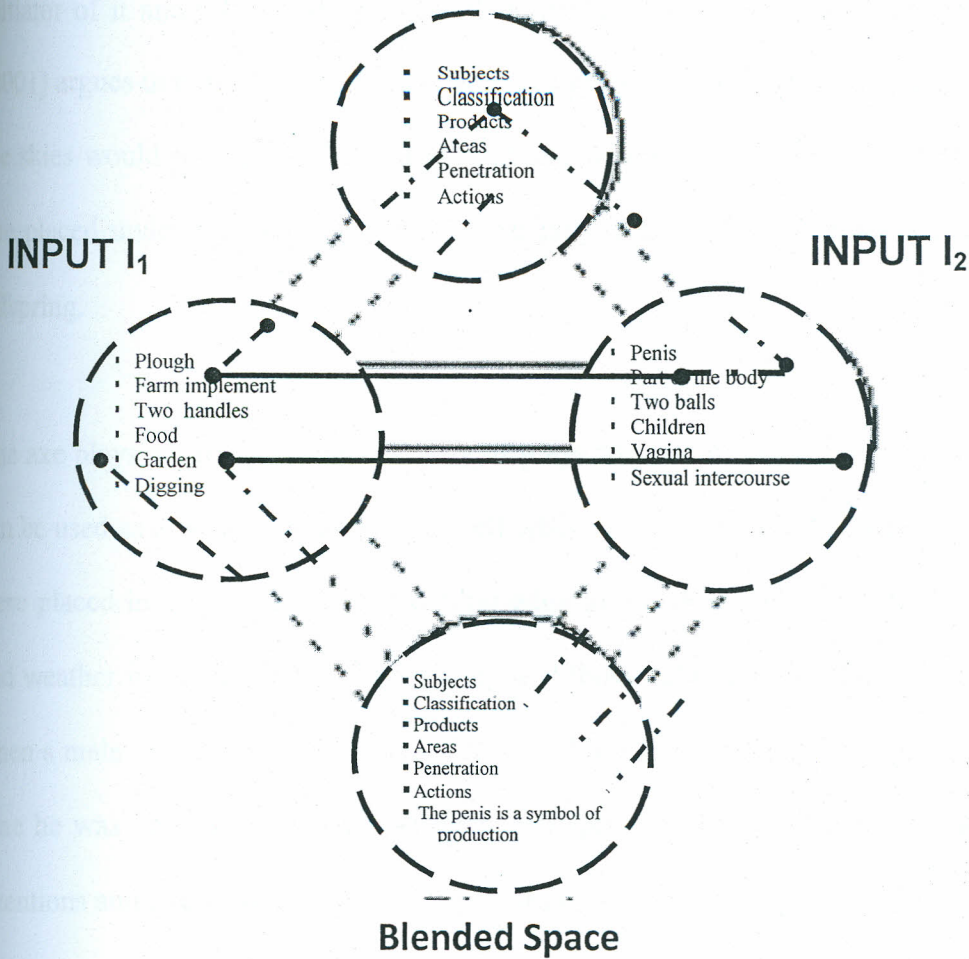


Figure 6: Mapping of the euphemism 'The penis is a plough'

### (e) The penis is 'an axe'

This is the fifth euphemism to be discussed elaborately and just like the previous ones it is also analyzed using the Conceptual Integration Theory. It was noted that an axe is a very important tool in the Luo community. It has several functions such as to fell, split or shape wood. An axe symbolizes authority and power to execute. For example, during the construction of a homestead, the owner of the home carries an axe to the site where the home is to be built. On reaching this place, he uses the axe to cut a tree. This symbolically

gives the man the authority henceforth, to control the affairs of his home since he is the initiator of it and all decisions that will be made in this home lie in his hands. Mboya (2001) argues that the Luo believed that an axe placed in the crops with the cutting edge to the skies would protect the harvest against bad weather. Moreover, they believed that an axe placed under the bed of a couple especially during sexual intercourse assures male offspring.

The axe plays a variety of roles. Firstly, it plays the role of protection in the sense that it can be used as a weapon to defend oneself when attacked by an adversary. Secondly, axes were placed in the crops with the cutting edge to the skies to protect the harvest against bad weather in the traditional Luo setting as Mboya (2001) noted. Thirdly, he posits that when a male child was born, an axe was placed inside the bathing basin of this child each time he was bathed to protect him from evil spirits and any other person who had evil intentions and to ensure that he grew up a strong person.

Fourthly, an axe also plays a destructive role as was noted. For example, in the Luo community, when a woman digs up the floor of her hut using an axe, she commits a dysphemism that is very serious and which may end up destroying her family especially her husband. Because of such an action, disaster strikes her husband and he gets *chira*, which is a wasting away disease whose symptoms resemble those of fully blown HIV/AIDS. It was noted that the life of such a man can only be saved by carrying out elaborative and detailed sacrifices to appease the ancestors. This process is then rounded up by the drinking of *manyasi* (cleansing medicine) by both the woman and her husband.

The penis is euphemistically referred to as an axe because of their similar traits. First both of them are involved in breaking for example, when an axe is used to split wood, the wood breaks into pieces. In the Luo community, the penis is used to 'break a woman's leg' meaning that the woman has been impregnated. Second, both may be destructive. It was observed that in the Luo community, when a woman commits a dysphemism such as digging the floor of her hut, disaster strikes and her husband gets *chira* (a wasting away disease) which leads to his death. His life can only be saved if a quick remedy in the form of *manyasi* (cleansing medicine) is found and both husband and wife partake of it. Similarly, when a man infected with a sexually transmitted disease engages in sexual intercourse with a woman, chances are that the woman will get the infection. If it is a deadly one like HIV/AIDS, the woman's life gets destroyed.

Lastly, it was posited that an axe though small can bring down a very big tree just the same way the penis is 'small' in size but is able to bring down a powerful man by destroying him just as it happened to Bill Clinton, a former president of The United States of America whose sexual exploits with a White House intern were exposed to the whole world. Consequently, all men become weak when hit below the belt since their physical strength lie in their manhood thereby insinuating that the penis symbolizes strength.

The euphemism 'The penis is an axe' is then mapped onto the different mental spaces (cf. pg 28). There are two input spaces for the axe and penis which correspond to the source and target domains as exemplified in Lakoff's and Johnson's Conceptual Metaphor

Theory (1980) (cf. pg 28). The euphemistic term occupies the source domain while the dysphemistic term occupies the target domain. This is then followed by fixed counterpart mappings (The attributes of the axe and those of the penis) as projected by the Conceptual Integration Theory. In this euphemism, 'an axe' which is the euphemistic expression is mapped onto penis which is the dysphemistic expression. An axe is a tool that is used to fell, split and shape wood while the penis is used in sexual intercourse. Moreover, the axe is used on wood while the penis on the vagina.

It was noted that the axe also plays a productive role as it is an equipment that is used to fell trees which are then shaped into timber and used to make a variety of things like furniture and other domestic items like cooking sticks, walking sticks and even wooden spoons. An axe also plays a productive role in the sense that Mboya (2001) posits that the Luo believed that an axe placed under the bed of a couple especially during sexual intercourse assures one of male offspring. This (male) was the sex that was preferred by most couples in the traditional Luo set up and a woman who gave birth to many sons was not only proud but was also respected by her peers.

It was mentioned that the penis on the other hand, plays two important roles which are pleasure giving and procreation in which case two consenting adults enjoy the company of each other during sexual intercourse, a process that may lead to conception. It was argued that the axe-head can be likened to the testicles with the former being charged with responsibility of felling, splitting and shaping wood and the latter with the duty of producing sperms which meet the ovum and if fertilization takes place, conception occurs.

An axe is made of wood and metal while the penis is made up of skin, veins and blood. From the roles that the axe plays, it was concluded that it is a multipurpose tool just the way the penis is a multipurpose organ since it not only plays an instrumental role in procreation and in giving pleasure but also as a transport channel.

The generic space contains information that is common to both inputs. It is the third mental space and it contains the subjects which in this case are the euphemistic and dysphemistic expressions represented in the source and target domains respectively. It was noted that the actions involved in the source domain are felling, splitting and shaping wood while the action in the target domain is sexual intercourse. It was mentioned that the roles in input one (source) are destruction and protection while in input two (target) are pleasure giving and procreation. The composition of an axe is metal and wood while for the penis is blood, veins and skin. Both (the axe and the penis) are devices.

The blended space contains all the matched information projected from the generic space together with one additional information which is the meaning of the euphemism. This euphemism means that the penis just like an axe, symbolizes power and authority to execute in which case, an axe which is likened to the penis is carried by heads of families during the home construction exercise in the traditional Luo setting. The axe in question is then used to cut a tree at the site where the home is to be constructed and this symbolically gives the owner of the home power and authority to control all the affairs of his home.

In the traditional Luo set-up, men were regarded as the sole decision makers and initiators of development projects and this being a male dominated society, they are the custodians of power. Moreover, men are the rulers at family, community and national levels and the powers that they enjoy are embedded in the ways that the body and its parts are constantly defined. The fixed counterpart mappings mentioned are presented in the table that follows.

<u>Input 1 (Source domain)</u>		<u>Input 2 (Target domain)</u>
Axe	—————>	Penis
Felling, splitting and shaping wood	—————>	Sexual intercourse
Wood	—————>	Vagina
Protective and Destructive role	—————>	Pleasure giving and Procreation role
Axe-head	—————>	Testicles
Wood and metal	—————>	Skin, veins and blood
Multipurpose tool	—————>	Multipurpose organ

<u>Generic space</u>		<u>Blended space</u>
Subjects	—————>	Subjects
Actions	—————>	Actions
Area	—————>	Area
Roles	—————>	Roles
Composition	—————>	Composition
Device	—————>	Device
Emergent structure	—————>	The penis is a symbol of strength, authority and power to execute

In this euphemism the three component processes that give rise to its meaning are accounted for. Composition entails the projection of elements from the source domain of

'axe' and target domain of penis. Completion introduces the frames of tools (an axe) as well those of sexual organs (a penis) while in elaboration the meaning of the euphemism is expounded such that the issues of power, strength and authority are brought out.

The principles of integration, topology, unpacking and good reason have been satisfied by this euphemism, 'The penis is an axe'. In integration, the elements from the source domain of axe are mapped onto those from the target domain of penis and in the process, they combine and interact. The euphemism has satisfied the principle of topology since the elements that are found in the blended space have a relationship with those in the source and target domains. That of good reason has also been effectively satisfied because all the elements in this euphemism play a significant role in the running of the blend.

The principle of unpacking has been satisfied in the sense that the elements projected to the blended space can be transferred back to the source and target domains where they initially occupied for example, in this instance, 'roles' is a common feature in the blend and when transferred back to the input spaces it becomes 'protective and destructive' in the source domain and 'pleasure giving and procreation' in the target domain. The only principle that has not been satisfied by the euphemism is the web because all the elements have been projected to the blended space since they all match. This fact goes against the basics of this principle. Figure 7 shows the mapping of the euphemism 'The penis is an axe.'

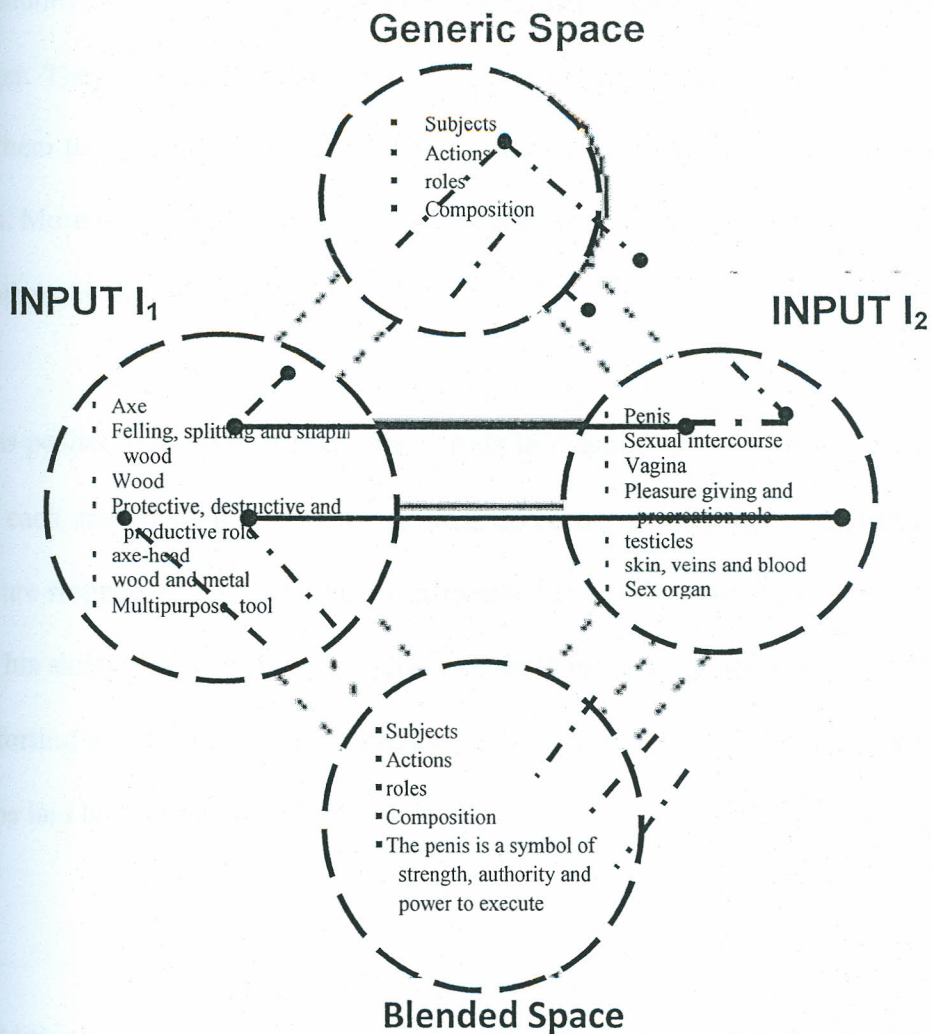


Figure 7: Mapping of the euphemism 'The penis is an axe'

**(f) The penis is 'a rod'**

This is the next euphemism that has been discussed and illustrated. It has also been analyzed using the conceptual mappings which are the tenets of the Conceptual Integration theory. A rod is a type of club that is majorly used by shepherds in the Luo community. They are normally made from young saplings that are dug from the ground and which are then carefully curved and whittled down. It was observed that in this

community, shepherds rely on rods to safeguard both themselves and their flock from danger. They use their rods to drive off predators like wolves and stray dogs. They also use them to 'beat' the bush, discouraging snakes and other creatures from disturbing the flock. Moreover, any wayward livestock that insists on wandering away is brought back to the others by use of the rod.

It was posited that shepherds use these rods to examine the herd to ensure that all is well with each animal such that as the animals come out of their kraals and through the gate, they are stopped by the shepherd's outstretched rod which part their fleece as the shepherd runs his skilful hand over their bodies and feels for any sign of trouble. This process is a comforting session for the animals since it is only in this way that their hidden problems can be laid bare before the shepherd.

In addition the penis is euphemistically referred to as 'a rod' because of the similarities that exist between these two entities. Firstly, the rod can be thrown at different angles so that it can hit its target and the angle used dictates the intensity with which it hits this target. Moreover, different styles used during sexual intercourse achieve different results. It is also believed that knowledge of each other's erogenous zones will make the parties involved obtain the desired results.

It was further noted that both are used as symbols of strength in the sense that the shepherd can lean on it for support while in the field herding animals. A man's strength

lies in his penis and hitting him below the belt is like sapping away his strength therefore rendering him powerless since he is not able to defend himself anymore. Apart from this physical strength, communal strength is also dependent on the penis since it is the genesis of procreation.

Both the penis and the rod are symbols of power. Luo elders carry rods with them especially when they attend important functions such as funerals of fallen heroes or significant persons in society and Council meetings among other functions. It was posited that the penis symbolizes power in the sense that it is revered as the giver of life. In other words, it is the phallic symbol of power and authority. Similarly, the rod just like the penis is long.

This euphemism like the others is analyzed using the four mental spaces that are propagated by the proponents of the Conceptual Integration Theory. The first of these four mental spaces are the input spaces which has the source (a rod) and the target (the penis) as the first elements. These are then followed by fixed counterpart mappings (The attributes of the rod and those of the penis) as projected by the same theory.

In this euphemism, 'a rod' which is the euphemistic expression is mapped onto penis which is the dysphemistic expression. It was noted that while a rod is made up of wood, the penis is made up of flesh and blood. The shape of the head of the rod is similar to the shape of the testicles since all of them are ball like. The rod has both disciplinary and protective roles. It is normally used by shepherds to correct wayward livestock that may

wander away from the others as well as to safeguard both the shepherd and the flock from danger. On the other hand, the penis is regarded as a weapon that cuts into the female genitalia during sexual intercourse.

The generic space is the third mental space and it contains matched information from both the source and target domains. In this euphemism 'the penis is a rod,' the respondents argued that the elements in the subject slots are rod and penis, composition (the rod is made from wood and the penis is made up of flesh and blood), components (the head is part of the rod and the testicles part of the penis), roles (disciplinary and protective roles carried out by the rod while procreation and pleasure giving roles carried out by the penis) and actions (the rod is involved in disciplining and protecting the animals and the shepherd from attack while the penis performs the duty of disciplining women).

The fourth mental space is the blended space that contains matched information which is projected from the generic space as well as the meaning of the euphemism which is referred to as the emergent structure. It was pointed out that this euphemism means that the penis is a symbol of both discipline and protection. From this perspective, men who are represented by the phallic symbol 'penis' are disciplinarians or pacifiers of the females. Further, the society bestows upon them the responsibility of not only protecting their wives but also their children and this is why in the Luo society wife inheritance is encouraged upon the death of a husband. This is to ensure that the inheritor continues with the responsibility of protecting the woman after the demise of her spouse. The fixed counterpart mappings discussed above are presented in the table that follows.

Input 1 (Source domain)

Input 2 (Target domain)

Rod	—————>	Penis
Wood	—————>	Flesh and blood
Head	—————>	Testicle
Protective and disciplinary roles	—————>	Procreation and pleasure giving roles
Mainly used on animals	—————>	Used on females
Disciplining animals	—————>	Disciplining the woman

Generic space

Blended space

Subjects	—————>	Subjects
Composition	—————>	Composition
Components	—————>	Components
Roles	—————>	Roles
Actions	—————>	Actions

Emergent structure —> The penis is a symbol of discipline and protection

In this euphemism the three component processes that give rise to its meaning are considered such that, the elements in the source as well as those in the target domains are projected in composition. In completion the frames of plants (a rod can be made from the branch of a tree) and those of parts of the human body (the penis is part of the human anatomy) are introduced. In elaboration the meaning of this euphemism is illustrated in which case, the issues of discipline and protection are brought to the fore.

Several principles have been satisfied by this euphemism. To begin with, the elements from the source domain (input one) are mapped onto those of the target domain (input

two) thereby combining and interacting in the process. The web principle is also satisfied since there are some elements such as 'head' (source) and 'testicle' (target) which fail to match and are therefore, not projected to the blended space. The elements that are found in the blended space have a relationship with those in the source and target domains and this implies that the principle of topology has been satisfied.

The unpacking principle has also been satisfied since the elements in the blended space can be returned back to the source and target domains where they initially originated. For example, 'actions' is a common feature in the blended space and it is used to represent the elements which in their respective input spaces are 'disciplining animals' and 'disciplining women.' Finally, all the elements in the four mental spaces are important in the smooth running of the blend hence the satisfaction of the good reason principle. Figure 8 shows the mapping of the euphemism 'The penis is a rod.'

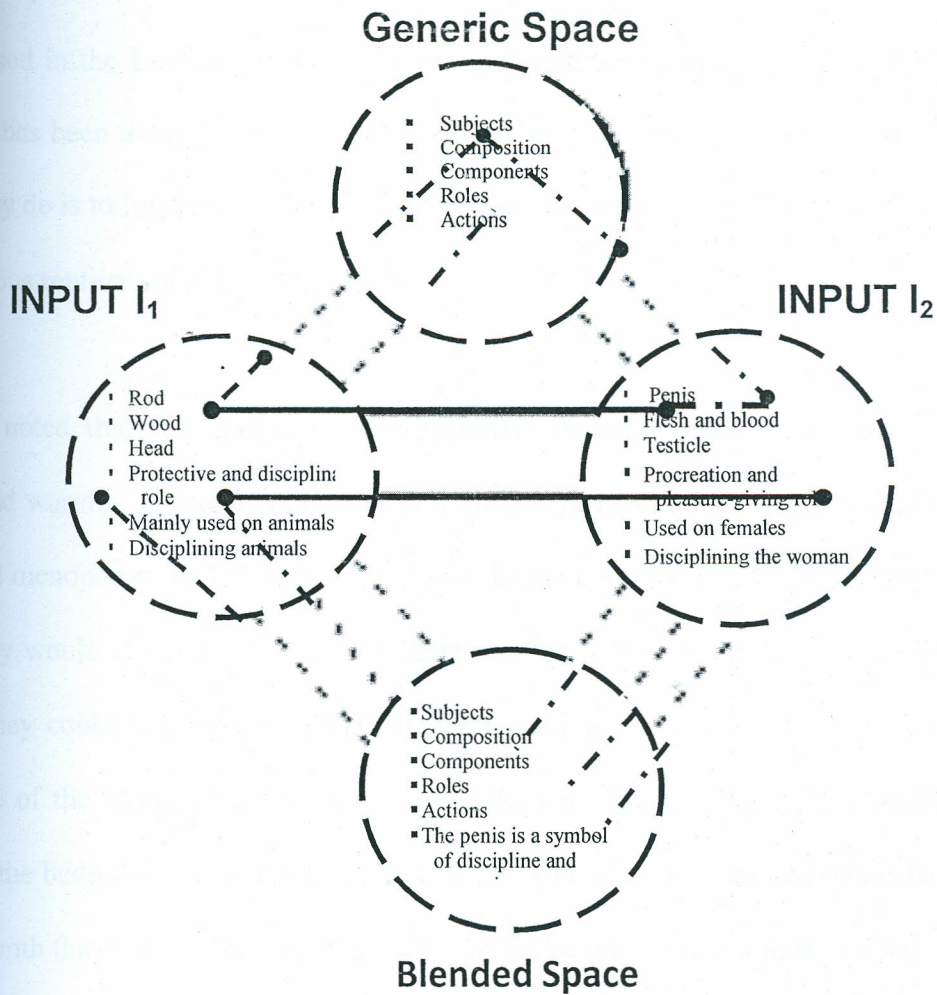


Figure 8: Mapping of the euphemism 'The penis is a rod'

The next section discusses and diagrammatically illustrates the seventh euphemism which is 'The penis is fire' and then analyzes it using the conceptual mappings which are the tenets of the Conceptual Integration Theory.

(g) The penis is 'fire'

Fire is used to generate heat that is used by human beings for cooking and providing light. In the traditional Luo society, fire was not only used to make tools stronger but also help

people capture animals for food. It was mentioned that from time immemorial fire has been used in the Luo community to keep nocturnal animals at bay and that is why if a person has been away from home, the day that they arrive from a journey the first thing that they do is to light fire in the house since the heat and even smoke emitted from it send dangerous reptiles such as snakes away.

It was noted that fire was also very important in home building ceremonies since it provided warmth. It was mentioned that a brother-in-law to a widowed woman, who had reached menopause, would light a fire in the house that he had established for the widow and they would sit around it chatting. This was the only way that they could get warmth since they could not engage in the ritual sexual intercourse of welcoming a new home because of the status of the woman. It was further observed that in the traditional Luo setting the bedroom is referred to as '*Kor mach*' (the place of fire) and this is in respect to the warmth that sexual intercourse provides to the people involved in it.

Fire and penis are similar and that is why the penis is euphemistically referred to as 'fire.' To start with, both of them can be disastrous this is because fire burns the things that it comes into contact with while a woman who engages in sexual intercourse with a man who has a sexually transmitted infection could get this disease and if the infection is one that has no cure, the victim may end up dying.

It was noted that both of them have consumptive roles. Fire consumes the things that it comes into contact with while the penis 'consumes' the vagina during sexual intercourse

because in the Luo set-up, sexual intercourse is regarded as eating whereby the penis 'eats' the vagina thus consuming it in that sense. Moreover, both can cause damage to the recipients and this could happen for instance when a person is burnt or when the penis forcefully penetrates the vagina in cases of rape/defilement.

The euphemism 'The penis is fire' is then mapped onto the different mental spaces (cf.pg 28). There are two input spaces for the fire and penis which correspond to the source and target domains as exemplified in Lakoff's and Johnson's Conceptual Metaphor Theory (1980) (cf. pg 28). The euphemistic term occupies the source domain while the dysphemistic term occupies the target domain. This is then followed by fixed counterpart mappings (The attributes of the fire and those of the penis) as projected by the same theory.

In this euphemism, 'fire' which is the euphemistic expression is mapped onto penis which is the dysphemistic expression. It was noted that while fire generates both heat and light, the penis is a component in sexual intercourse. Fire causes damage through burning what it comes into contact with as forceful penetration of the vagina causes damage through tearing the vaginal tissues of the victim.

It was posited that fire is a basic need in the sense that it is used to cook a variety of foods that are eaten by human beings. Sex on the other hand, is a physiological need. Fire consumes objects that it comes into contact with just as the penis consumes the vagina. Also noted were the roles that both the fire and the penis play. Fire has both protective and

destructive roles in the sense that it is used to make tools stronger thereby making them durable and in a way protecting them. In addition, it is not only used to warm the body hence ensuring that it is protected from cold but it also helps keep nocturnal predators at bay. It is destructive in the sense that it increases hazard to human life by increasing soil erosion hence making the soil infertile.

The penis on the other hand has protection, procreation and pleasure giving roles. It was argued that partners find pleasure in one another during sexual intercourse as the penis also provides warmth to the vagina and should sperms meet the ovum and fertilization takes place, then conception occurs. In addition, fire is a substance while the penis is a sexual organ. It was therefore concluded that both the penis and the fire may be agents of destruction depending on how they are used. Hence, they should be carefully harnessed since both of them are crucial in life.

Next is the generic space that contains matched information from both input one and two. The subjects in this case are fire (source domain) and penis (target domain). It was noted that heat and light generation as well as sexual intercourse are the actions of input one and two respectively. It was observed that the damages caused by the euphemistic as well as the dysphemistic expressions are burning and tearing. Moreover, the element in the source domain is a basic need while that in the target domain is a physiological need. Input one consumes objects while input two consumes the vagina. The roles played by both inputs are protective, destructive, pleasure giving and procreation.

The fourth is the blended space which contains matched information from the generic space in addition to the meaning of the metaphor. It means that the penis is a symbol of warmth as well as destruction. It was argued that during sexual intercourse when the bodies of the male and female meet, warmth is generated and this is coupled with the pleasure of the activity. The penis just like fire symbolizes destruction and this is so especially when couples engage in unprotected sex which may lead to unwanted pregnancies. Alternatively, when couples engage in unprotected sex there are high chances that both may get infected especially if one of the partners say the man, is infected with a sexually transmitted infection which may end up destroying the life of the female partner since certain infections like HIV/AIDS do not have a cure. Next is the table that gives the fixed counterpart mappings of this euphemism.

<u>Input 1 (Source domain)</u>		<u>Input 2 (Target domain)</u>
Fire	—————→	Penis
Generating heat and light	—————→	Sexual intercourse
Damage through burning	—————→	Damage through tearing
Basic need	—————→	Physiological need
Consumes objects	—————→	Consumes the vagina
Protective and destructive roles	—————→	Procreation and pleasure-giving roles
Substance	—————→	Sexual organ

<u>Generic space</u>		<u>Blended space</u>
Subjects	—————→	Subjects
Actions	—————→	Actions
Damages	—————→	Damages
Needs	—————→	Needs

Consumption      —————> Consumption

Roles              —————> Roles

Classification    —————> Classification

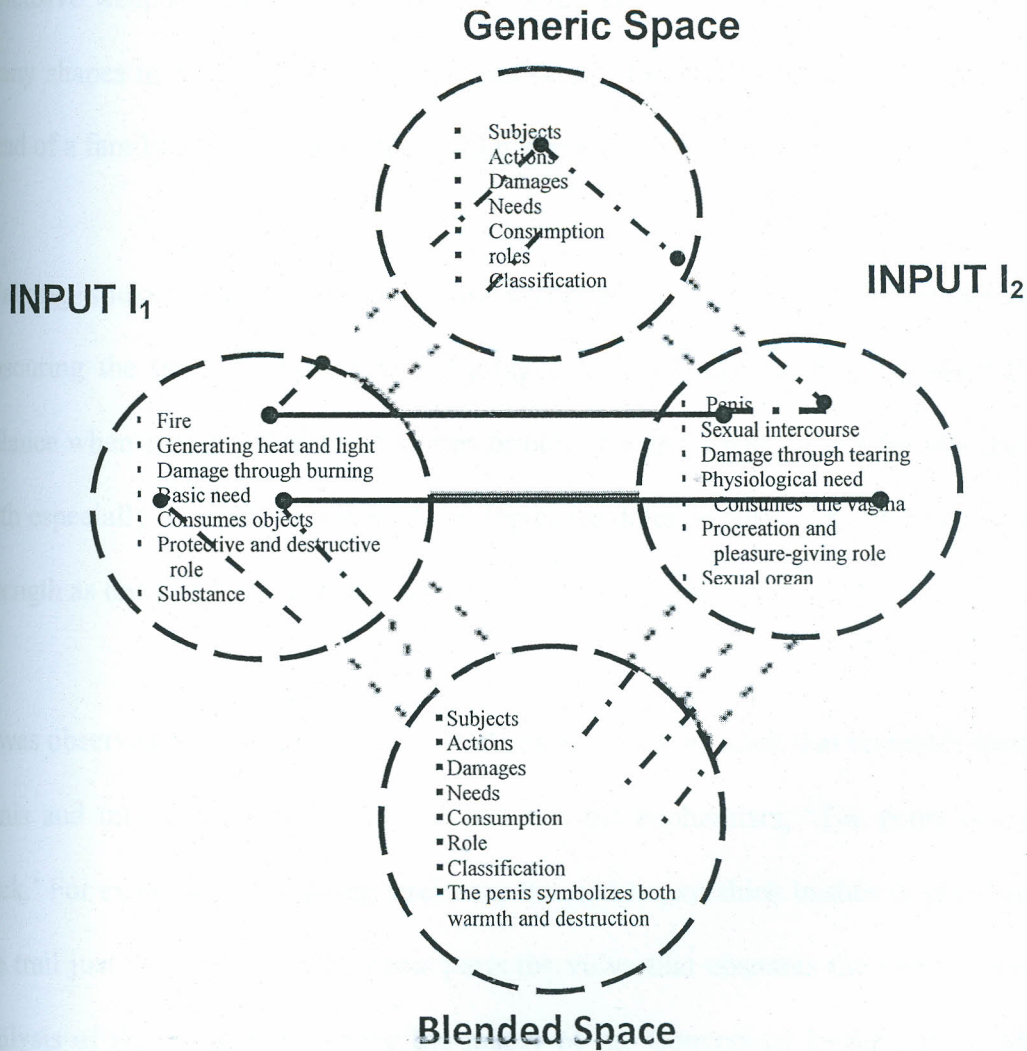
Emergent structure    —————> The penis symbolizes both warmth and destruction.

Composition, completion and elaboration which are the three component processes that give rise to the meaning of this euphemism are adequately taken care of. In this case, elements from the source and target domains are projected. In completion the frames of substances (fire) as well as those of sexual organs are introduced. In elaboration the meaning of this euphemism is expounded for instance, the issues of warmth and destruction are brought out.

In this euphemism, the principles of integration, unpacking, topology and good reason have been satisfied. In integration, the elements from the source domain are mapped onto those of the target domain and in the process, they combine and interact. The elements found in the blended space have a relationship with those elements found in both input one and input two in topology.

In unpacking, the elements in the blended space can be transferred back to the source and target domains where they initially originated. For example, the element 'damage' that is found in the blended space was initially 'damage through burning' in the source domain and 'damage through tearing' in the target domain. Last to be satisfied is the principle of good reason since all elements in the four mental spaces (two input spaces, the generic and blend) are important in the effective running of the blend. Just like in some previous

instances, the web principle has not been satisfied because all the elements in the input spaces have been projected to the blended space and this goes against the tenets of this principle. Figure 9 shows the mapping of the euphemism ‘The penis is fire.’



**Figure 9: Mapping of the euphemism ‘The penis is fire’**

The next section discusses and diagrammatically illustrates the eighth euphemism which is ‘The penis is a walking stick’ and then it is analyzed using the conceptual mappings which are the tenets of the Conceptual Integration Theory.

#### (h) The penis is 'a walking stick'

It is common knowledge that a walking stick is used to facilitate balancing while walking. It was noted that in the Luo community, walking sticks have been used as offensive or defensive weapons and they may conceal either knives or swords. These sticks come in many shapes and sizes. It was pointed out that in the traditional Luo community; every head of a family had a walking stick which was a symbol of authority.

Walking sticks have several functions which include parting thick bushes or grass obscuring the trail; as support when going uphill or brake when going downhill; as a balance when crossing streams, swamps or other rough terrain; to feel for obstacles in the path especially at night; to test mud for depth; for defense purposes; it is also a symbol of strength as one can lean on it for support.

It was observed that there are certain features of a walking stick that resemble those of the penis and this is the reason why the Luo use the euphemism, 'The penis is a walking stick.' For example, the walking stick may be used to part thick bushes or grass obscuring the trail just the same way the penis parts the vulva that obscures the vagina. Next is the analysis of this euphemism using the theory of the Conceptual Integration in which the features of the euphemistic term in this case 'walking stick' and those of the dysphemistic term 'penis' are presented in the form of conceptual mappings using this theory's four mental spaces.

The first two spaces correspond to the source and target domains and in them the features of the walking stick as well as those of the penis which are presented in the form of fixed counterpart mappings are found. A walking stick is majorly used to facilitate balancing when walking while the penis plays a major role in sexual intercourse. Moreover, a walking stick is a non-living thing while a penis on the other hand, is a living thing.

It was noted that the walking stick touches the ground as it aids one in walking while the penis penetrates the vagina thereby touching it during sexual intercourse. A walking stick has been used from time immemorial as a defensive or offensive weapon and in most cases, it may conceal either a knife or a sword so that in the event of an attack by an adversary, a person can easily defend himself or herself. On the other hand, the penis plays a primary duty in procreation while giving the vagina pleasure.

The generic which is the third space contains matched information from input one and two. The subjects in this euphemism are a walking stick and the penis with the former performing the duty of facilitating balancing while the latter playing an instrumental role in sexual intercourse. A walking stick can be classified as a non-living thing and the penis as a living thing. It was observed that when the walking stick is used it gets into contact with the ground just as the penis gets into contact with the vagina during sexual intercourse. Lastly, the roles played by elements of both domains are defensive or offensive for the euphemistic expression and pleasure-giving and procreation for the dysphemistic expression.

The fourth is the blended space that contains all the matched information projected from the generic space as well as the meaning of this euphemism. This euphemism means that the penis symbolizes strength and authority (just the way the owner of a walking stick uses it to stamp his authority in different decision making arenas). This could be exemplified by the fact that the penis is a phallic symbol of power and by extension strength because in most cases men are physically stronger than women. The table that shows the fixed counterpart mappings is presented in the next section.

<u>Input 1 (Source domain)</u>		<u>Input 2 (Target domain)</u>
Walking stick	—————→	Penis
Facilitates balancing	—————→	Sexual intercourse
Non-living thing	—————→	Living thing
Ground	—————→	Vagina
Defensive or offensive role	—————→	Procreation and pleasure giving roles

<u>Generic space</u>		<u>Blended space</u>
Subjects	—————→	Subjects
Actions	—————→	Actions
Classification	—————→	Classification
Areas	—————→	Areas
Roles	—————→	Roles

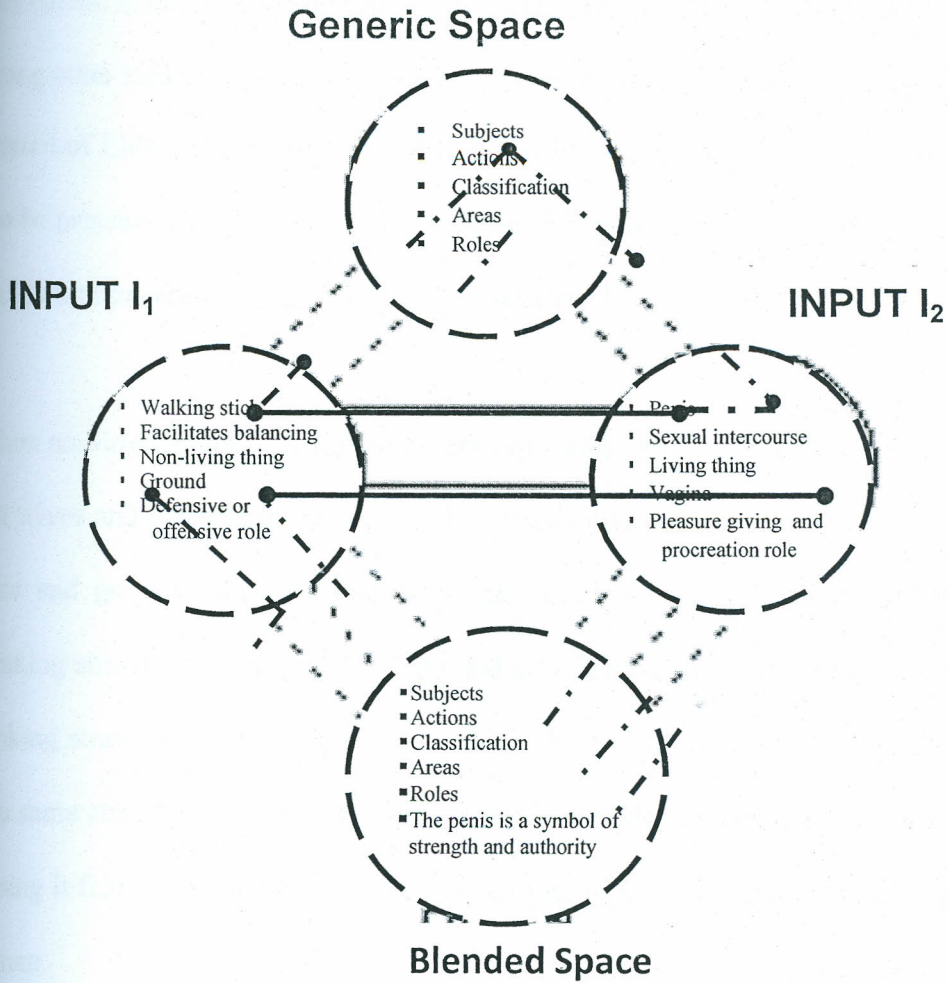
Emergent structure —→ The penis is a symbol of strength and authority.

This euphemism effectively takes into consideration the three component processes discussed in the theory of Conceptual Integration. To begin with, the traits of the walking stick and those of the penis are projected in composition whereas in completion the frames

of non- living things (a stick could be classified so) together with those of living things (penis) are introduced and the meaning of this euphemism comes out in elaboration where the issues of strength and authority are brought to the fore.

This euphemism on its part satisfies a number of principles. In integration, elements from the source domain are mapped onto those from the target domain and in the process, they combine and interact. In topology, there is a relationship between the elements in the blended space with those found in the source and target domains.

The elements in the blended space can be transferred back to the source and target domains where they initially originated in unpacking. In this case, one element in the blended space is 'role' and when this is returned to the input spaces, for the source domain it becomes 'defensive or offensive' and for the target domain it is 'procreation and pleasure giving.' These are the ones that initially originated from the source and target domains. Good reason is another principle that is satisfied since all the elements stipulated are important in the effective running of the blend. The web principle has not been satisfied because all the elements from the input spaces have been projected to the blended space. Figure 10 shows the mapping of the euphemism 'The penis is a walking stick.'



**Figure 10: Mapping of the euphemism ‘The penis is a walking stick’**

The next section discusses and illustrates the ninth euphemism which is, ‘The penis is a drinking straw’ and then it is analyzed using the conceptual mappings which are the tenets of the Conceptual Integration Theory.

**(i)The penis is’ a drinking straw’**

Mboya (2001) posits that among the Luo *seke* (drinking straw) was used to sip the traditional brew called *kong’o*. The straws were made from thin reeds collected by the

river banks. *Kong'o* could be drunk by elders presiding over cases of debts, and marriage among other issues. It was the complainant who brought a certain amount of *Kong'o* to the Council of Elders so that their cases could be heard. He further notes that this brew could also be prepared for the owner of the home and he would invite his brothers or friends to discuss matters concerning their homes over a drink.

When an elder invited his fellow elders to a drink, they would be accompanied by their first wives and if the first wife was sick or was not around, the second wife would take her place and go with their husband to such drinking sprees on behalf of the first wife. Drinking straws were normally shared and an elderly person was the one who first used a drinking straw before the others. After this elder had used his straw, he left it to his wife. This same straw was the one that the other women who accompanied their husbands used, passing it from one person to the next according to marriage seniority till it got to the last woman.

It was mentioned that the Luo used this euphemism because of the similarities that exist between a straw and a penis. It was argued that both are transportation channels in the sense that the straw transports drinks into the mouth the same way the penis transports urine as well as sperms into the vagina. Also, just the way a straw takes soft drinks from the bottle, is the same way the penis takes fluids (semen) into the vagina.

It was posited that the straw reduces the liquid contact with the teeth thus preventing one from having tooth decay and also reducing the risk of cavities just the same way a condom

worn on the penis can be used to prevent pregnancies as well as sexually transmitted infections since the fluid is not 'drunk directly from its source.' The penis and the drinking straw are similar in shape since both of them are hollow and when one sucks the traditional brew in excess, one becomes drunk and may thereafter throw caution to the winds and engage in unruly behavior. Similarly, too much sex is also poisonous as it may lead to partners burning themselves out too soon. Mungai (2011) posits that sex, like all fine things in life should be taken in small doses and savored to maximize the pleasure.

Both of them are shared in this community. For example, all the women who accompanied their husbands to the drinking sprees drank the brewed alcohol from the same straw. During this activity, protocol was observed such that drinking would take place according to marriage seniority till they got to the last woman. The penis on the other hand, is shared since polygamy is practiced in this community.

Next is the analysis of this euphemism using the theory of the Conceptual Integration in which the features of the euphemistic term in this case 'a drinking straw' and those of the dysphemistic term 'penis' are presented in the form of conceptual mappings using this theory's four mental spaces. The first two spaces correspond to the source and target domains and in them the features of the drinking straw as well as those of the penis which are presented in the form of fixed counterpart mappings are found.

Among the Luo, drinking straws were used to sip the locally made brew and such straws were made from reeds that grew along river banks. The penis on the other hand plays an

instrumental role in sexual intercourse and it is composed of flesh. It was further noted that the substances that pass through the straw are drinks while those that pass through the penis are sperms and urine.

A drinking straw is an object that facilitates drinking while the penis is part of human anatomy. It was additionally stated that the locally made brew (*Kong'o*) was drunk from pots in which they were brewed while the sperms are ejaculated into the vagina via the penis. The brew is transported into the mouth and then swallowed just the same way the sperms are ejaculated into the vagina which 'swallows' them. If these sperms meet the ovum and fertilization takes place, conception occurs.

The generic space is the next one and it contains matched information from the source and target domains. This includes the subjects of both domains which in this case are drinking straw and the penis. It was posited that composition simply implies what the drinking straw and the penis are made of. The functions of the drinking straw and the penis are sucking liquids and sexual intercourse. The substances that are transported by the drinking straw and the penis have also been mentioned as drinks and sperms respectively. The sources of the substances (alcohol and sperms) have also been highlighted as a pot and a penis while the parts of the body that receive the fluids are mouth and vagina.

The blended is the fourth space that contains all the matched information projected from the generic space as well as the meaning of the metaphor which is referred to as the emergent structure. This euphemism means that the penis just like a drinking straw is used

as a mode of transport. It transports sperms and urine while the straw transports drinks be they alcoholic or otherwise to the mouth. The fixed counterpart mappings of this euphemism are presented in the table that follows.

<u>Input 1 (Source domain)</u>		<u>Input 2 (Target domain)</u>
Drinking straw	—————>	Penis
Reeds	—————>	Flesh
Sucking liquids	—————>	Sexual intercourse
Drinks	—————>	Sperms
Object	—————>	Part of human anatomy
Pot	—————>	Penis
Mouth	—————>	Vagina

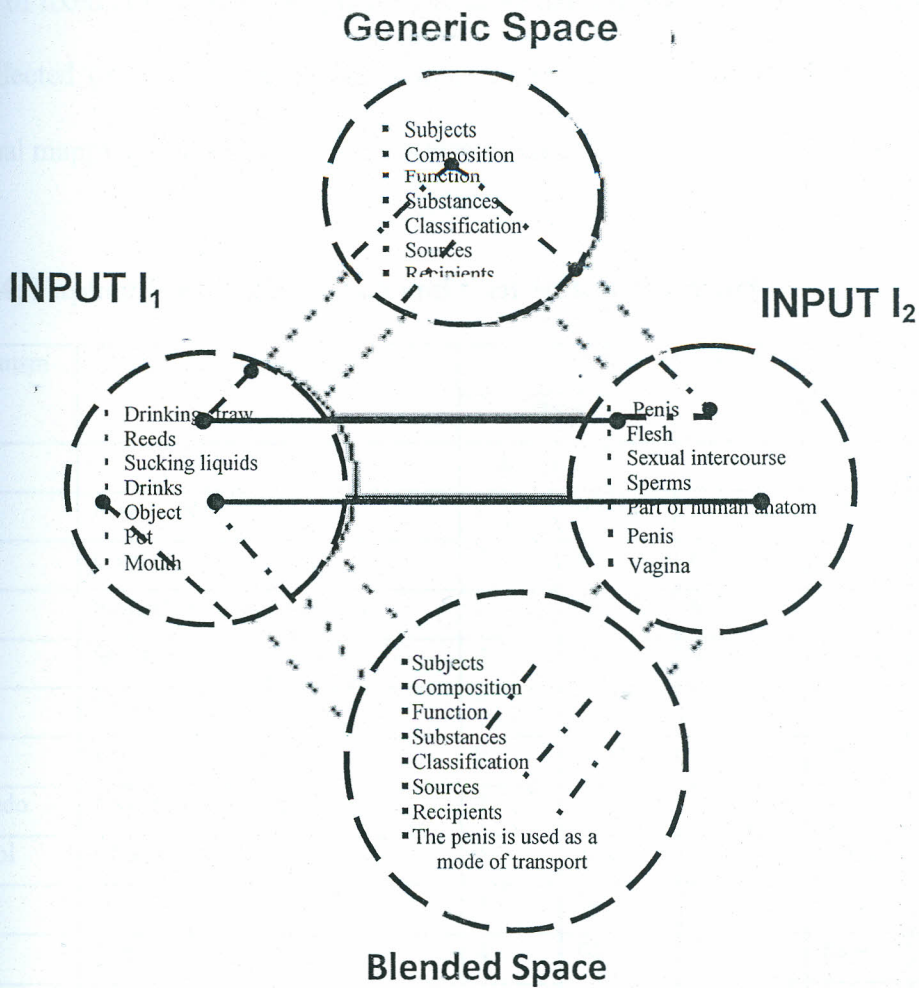
<u>Generic space</u>		<u>Blended space</u>
Subjects	—————>	Subjects
Composition	—————>	Composition
Functions	—————>	Functions
Substances	—————>	Substances
Classification	—————>	Classification
Sources	—————>	Sources
Recipients	—————>	Recipients

Emergent structure    —————> The penis is used as a mode of transport

This euphemism further accounts for the three component processes that give rise to its meaning. To begin with, the features of the euphemistic expression 'straw' together with those of the dysphemistic expression 'penis' are projected. Secondly, in completion plants (the straw is classified so) as well as parts of human anatomy (penis) are introduced. Thirdly, the meaning of this euphemism is taken care of in elaboration and it is here that the concept of transportation is brought out.

A number of principles are satisfied by this euphemism and they include integration, topology, unpacking and good reason. The elements found in the source and target domains combine and interact in the principle of integration thereby becoming a joint entity. There is a relationship between the elements found in the blended space together with those found in the two input spaces in the principle of topology.

Also, the elements found in the blended space can be reconstructed and transferred back to the source and target domains where they initially originated in the principle of unpacking. For example, one element in the blended space in this euphemism is 'recipients' which receive the fluids from the sources. This common element initially originated from the target and source domains where it was represented by 'vagina' and 'mouth' respectively. All elements in this metaphor are important and they contribute to the swift running of the blend hence the good reason principle. Figure 11 shows the mapping of this metaphor 'The penis is a drinking straw.'



**Figure 11: Mapping of the euphemism ‘The penis is a drinking straw’**

The section that follows looks at the euphemisms of the vagina and their lexical frequencies. A total of 24 euphemisms were collected and these were grouped into nine conceptual mappings of food, tool, place, wealth, garden, medicine, river, passage and organ. A sample of nine euphemisms was analyzed and this was based on the number of items from each category. For each euphemism, a discussion as well as an elaborate analysis of the euphemism using the theory of Conceptual Integration is provided.. In the analysis, the traits of the dysphemistic term and those of the euphemistic term are given in

the form of fixed counterpart mappings. The table that follows shows the euphemisms that were collected on the female sexual organ. Also shown is another table that gives the conceptual mappings in which the vagina was grouped into.

**Table 4.4: Euphemisms of the vagina and their lexical frequencies**

Euphemism	Gloss	Lexical Frequencies					
		Male		Female		Total	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
Duong'	Private part	9	100.0	9	100.0	18	100.0
Puodho	Garden	8	88.9	6	66.7	14	77.8
Gir lach	Something used to urinate	6	66.7	6	66.7	12	66.7
Soko	Stream	4	44.4	9	100.0	13	72.2
Bungu	Forest	7	77.8	5	55.6	12	66.7
Chiemo	Food	9	100.0	6	66.7	15	83.3
Yadh nindo	Medicine for sleep	7	77.8	6	66.7	13	72.2
Dag nyuol	Channel of birth	5	55.6	9	100.0	14	77.8
Bugo	A hole	4	44.4	2	22.2	6	33.3
Mwandu	Wealth	4	44.4	8	88.9	12	66.7
Aora madiere	The middle river	5	55.6	8	88.9	13	72.2
Rangach	Gate	4	44.4	8	88.9	12	66.7
Ng'wen	A type of flying ant	4	44.4	3	33.3	7	38.8
Dek	A type of vegetable	6	66.7	5	55.6	11	61.1
Oganda	Bean	4	44.4	3	33.3	7	38.8
Agucha	My pot	2	22.2	7	77.7	9	50.0
Migingo	Name of an island	3	33.3	-	0.0	3	16.6
Kar nyodo	A place for giving birth	4	44.4	8	88.9	12	66.7
Nyanja	My tomatoes	8	88.9	6	66.7	14	77.8
Okong'o	Clitoris	2	22.2	2	22.2	4	22.2
Buk	A book	6	66.7	6	66.7	12	66.7
Giri	Your thing	9	100.0	9	100.0	18	100.0
Okweya	Cooler	8	88.9	6	66.7	14	77.8
Mor kich	Vagina	8	88.9	5	55.6	13	72.2

The euphemisms collected on the female sexual organ were grouped using the conceptual mappings illustrated on table 4.5

**Table 4.5: Conceptual mappings in the interpretation of the vagina on the basis of gender**

Conceptual mappings for the vagina	Males		Females	
	n	%	n	%
Organ	29	19.21	34	20.00
Garden	15	9.93	11	6.47
Passage	26	17.22	46	27.05
River	9	5.96	17	10.00
Food	42	27.81	29	17.05
Medicine	7	4.64	6	3.53
Wealth	10	6.62	14	8.24
Tool	10	6.62	13	7.64
Place	3	1.99	0	0.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>100.0</b>

### 4.3.2 Euphemisms of the vagina

#### (a) The vagina is 'a garden'

This is the first euphemism to be discussed in this category and just like those of the penis, this euphemism is analyzed using the conceptual mappings of the Conceptual Integration Theory. In gardens, various types of food that provide different nutrients are grown. Therefore, for a good yield to be realized gardens must properly be taken care of and this entails proper watering and frequent weeding to remove weeds that may hinder proper growth of crops. The Luo supplement what they get from the lake through taking part in farming.

The euphemism 'The vagina is a garden,' is used because of the similarities that exist between the two items. It was noted that both of them must be properly taken care of if good results are desired. For example, the garden must be frequently watered and properly weeded to rid it of weeds which compete with the crops for nutrients if a good yield is expected. The vagina on the other hand, must also be taken care of and this involves frequently washing it to rid it of infections.

Both of them require fluids for better results. For example, the vagina should be properly lubricated during coitus and this lubrication is done by the vaginal fluids which also help in cleaning the vagina. The garden on the other hand, must also be properly watered if a good yield is expected. It was observed that the pubic hair around the vagina can be likened to the vegetation in the garden. This pubic hair helps prevent the genital organs from the effects of rubbing against each other during the act of sex in addition to preventing heat loss. Similarly, the vegetation in the garden protects plant cover from the effects of heat when temperatures are high.

It was posited that while the garden is ploughed using a hoe, the vagina on the other hand, is 'ploughed' using the penis. When the garden is dug, the hoe penetrates the soil the same way the penis penetrates the vagina during sexual intercourse. It was further noted that end-product from the garden is crops while the end-product from the vagina is children and these two products are regarded as wealth in the Luo society.

If the garden was big, the owner invited other people to help cultivate it. This was likened to polygamous settings where the heads of the homes were in most cases aged or had suffered from certain ailments that prevented them from carrying out their conjugal duties therefore, such men gave room to their brothers and cousins to help them 'cultivate their gardens' (take care of their wives sexually). This was the essence why in most polygamous homes small gates called *rode* were created to allow other men (mainly brothers-in-law) who came to 'visit' their sisters-in-law in the absence of their husbands to get away before the men of the homes found them in their houses.

It was pointed out that usually, polygamous men would announce their arrival in different ways either by coughing or shouting from far in order to alert the wives of their presence and also to give any would be intruder time to go away . Wives it was noted, were allowed by tradition to have secret affairs with their brothers-in-law especially if their husbands were aged since it was argued that at times one penis was not able to sufficiently serve several vaginas and that is why such affairs were given room. This as was concluded, is the same as inviting other people to help cultivate a big garden.

Next is the analysis of this euphemism using the theory of Conceptual Integration in which the features of the euphemistic term in this case 'a garden' and those of the dysphemistic term 'vagina' are presented in the form of conceptual mappings using this theory's four mental spaces. The first two spaces correspond to the source and target domains and in them the features of the garden as well as those of the vagina which are presented in the form of fixed counterpart mappings are found. The elements in the

source domain are mapped onto those in the target domain. It was posited that a garden is a person's property while a vagina is a person's organ. Food from the garden is a basic need while sex is a physiological need and for a garden to produce good yields, the plants must be frequently watered just the same way the vagina must be properly lubricated during coitus in order to reduce friction so that those involved in the act get maximum pleasure.

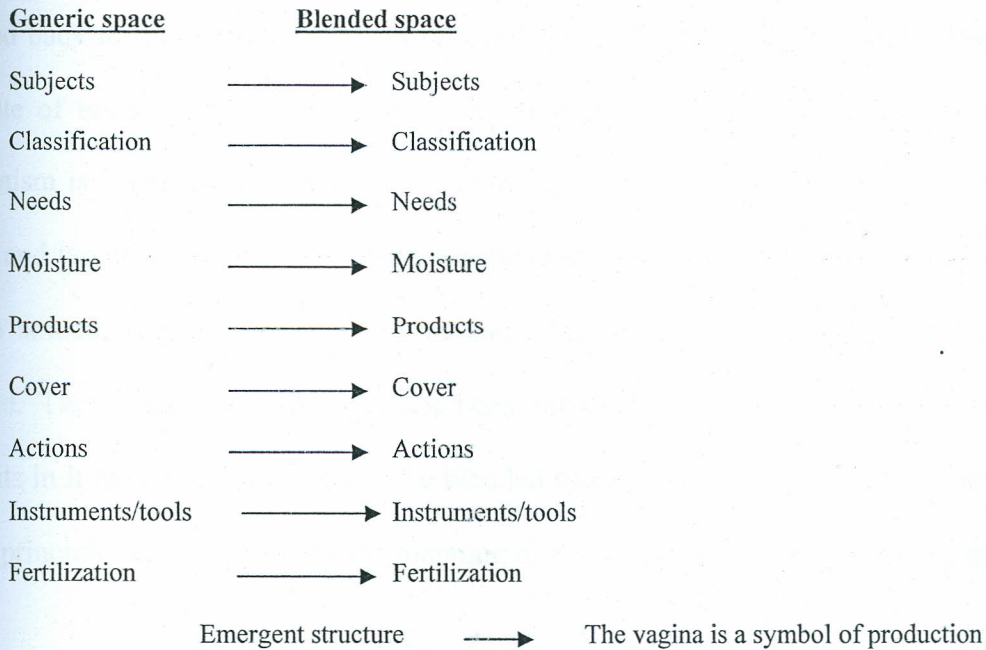
It was mentioned that from the garden we get different crops that provide nutrients and vitamins to the body. It was further pointed out that in the gardens pollination take place just as fertilization may take place during sexual intercourse. Gardens are covered by vegetation which is important since this helps in reducing heat loss while the vagina is covered by pubic hair which is equally important because it not only reduces heat loss but also protects the genital organs from the effects of rubbing during coitus. Moreover, gardens are ploughed as the vagina acts as a receptacle to the penis and the man's ejaculated sperms during sexual intercourse.

Generic space is the third mental space that contains matched information from the source and target domains. This includes subjects in this case, the subject of the source domain is garden since it is what is being talked about and that of the target domain is the vagina. It was noted that the garden could be classified as a property and a vagina as a sexual organ. Both garden and vagina are sources of needs the former being a source of a basic need while the latter being a source of a physiological need.

It was pointed out that water and fluids could collectively be referred to as moisture and that the garden is covered by vegetation just as the vagina is covered by pubic hair. It was further mentioned that ploughing and sexual intercourse are actions carried out in the source and target domains. The tool used in ploughing the garden is a hoe while the one used in 'ploughing' the vagina is a penis. Pollination and fertilization both entail some element of contact between two items.

The blended is the fourth space which contains all the matched information projected from the generic space as well as the emergent structure which is the meaning of the euphemism. This euphemism means that the vagina is a symbol of production as the physiological process of child birth is associated with it. Similarly, just the way a garden is fenced from invaders for the purposes of protection, so is the vagina which is protected by societal norms and values. The fixed counterpart mappings of this euphemism are summarized in the table that follows.

<u>Input 1 (Source domain)</u>		<u>Input 2 (Target domain)</u>
Garden	—————→	Vagina
Property	—————→	Sexual organ
Source of a basic need	—————→	Source of physiological need
Water	—————→	Fluids
Crops	—————→	Children
Vegetation	—————→	Pubic hair
Ploughing	—————→	Sexual act
Hoe	—————→	Penis
Pollination	—————→	Fertilization



This euphemism takes into account the three component processes that give rise to the emergent structure as initiated by the proponents of this theory. The elements in the source and target domains are projected in composition. In completion, the frames of property (garden) as well as those of human anatomy are introduced. While in elaboration the meaning of the euphemism is exposed with the issue of life being brought out.

This euphemism satisfies the principles of integration, unpacking, topology and good reason. In integration, the elements found in the source domain of garden are mapped onto those found in the target domain of vagina thereby combining and interacting in the process. In topology there is a relationship between the elements found in the blended space together with those found in the two input spaces.

The elements found in the blended space of this euphemism can be reconstructed and returned back to the source and target domains where they initially originated hence the principle of unpacking. For example, a common feature in the blended space of this euphemism is 'moisture' which has a relationship with 'water' and 'fluids' found in the source and target domains respectively. All the elements in this euphemism are important for the smooth running of the blend as such, the principle of good reason has been satisfied. The principle of web has not been satisfied by this euphemism because all elements in it have been projected to the blended space, a fact that goes against the basics of this principle. Figure 12 shows the mapping of the euphemism 'The vagina is a garden'

## Generic Space

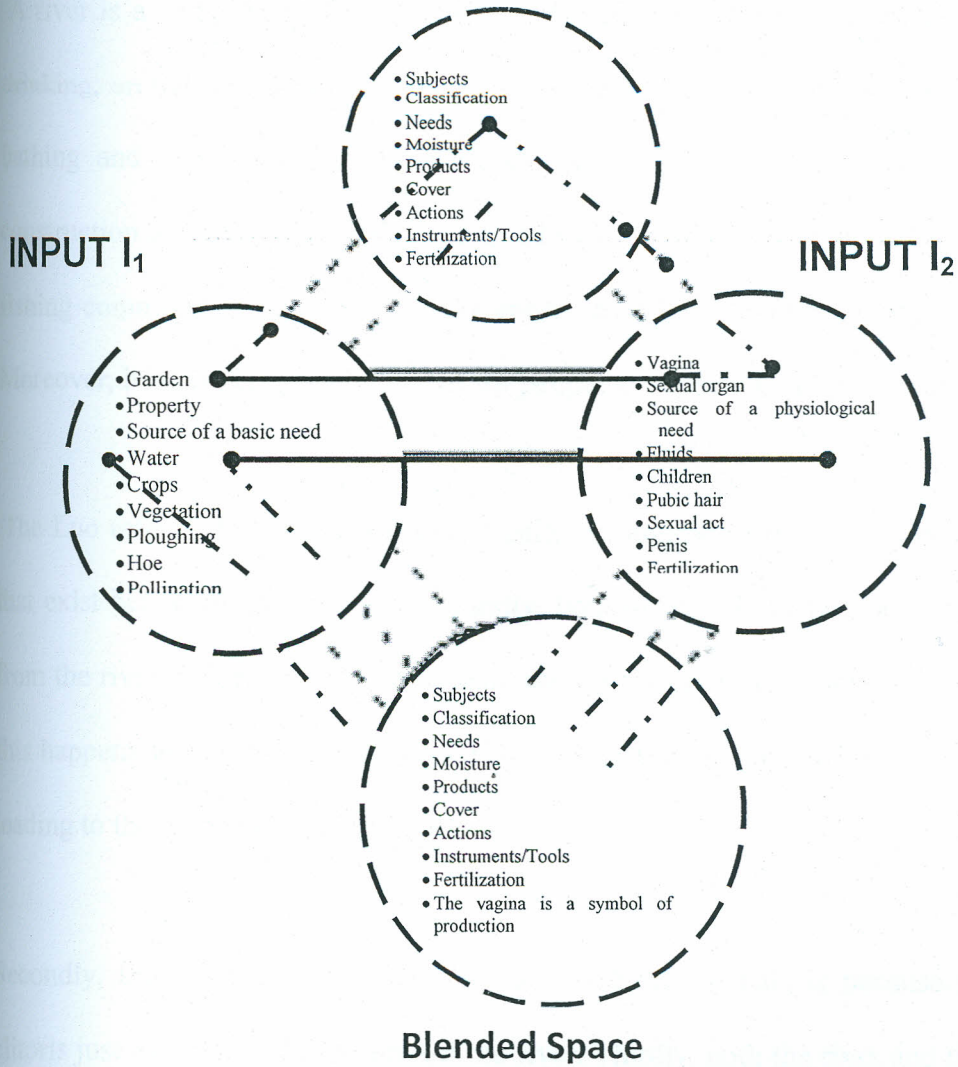


Figure 12: The mapping of the euphemism 'Vagina is a garden'

The next section discusses and illustrates the second euphemism which is 'The vagina is a middle river' and then it is analyzed using the conceptual mappings which are the tenets of the Conceptual Integration Theory.

**(b) The vagina is 'a middle river'**

A river is a water body that can be used for various purposes for example in cooking, drinking, on the farms (agriculture is key to the production of enough food), in washing, bathing and even for building purposes. Also, sand which is used in building and construction as well as fish which is a good source of protein, are got from rivers. Being a fishing community, the Luo undertake sports such as boat racing, swimming and diving. Moreover, beaches are popular places for people to relax and enjoy recreation.

The Luo refer to the vagina euphemistically as 'middle river' because of the similarities that exist between the two entities. Firstly, both of them have products in the sense that from the river we can get fish, water and sand while from the vagina we get children and this happens when the sperms ejaculated in it meet the ovum and fertilization takes place leading to the development of a fetus.

Secondly, the vulva can be likened to the river banks. This is because it protects the clitoris just as the river banks protect the river. Thirdly, both the river and the vagina cool body temperatures in the sense that when it is hot and one bathes in a river, he or she feels refreshed and the hotness that was initially experienced goes away since the cool atmosphere around the river is refreshing and comforting. Lastly, when a man is erect, his body temperature rises and when his penis enters the vagina he feels relieved after sexual intercourse since this act calms his body thus reducing its temperature.

Next is the analysis of this euphemism using the theory of Conceptual Integration in which the features of the euphemistic term in this case 'a middle river' and those of the dysphemistic term 'vagina' are presented in the form of conceptual mappings using this theory's four mental spaces. The first two spaces correspond to the source and target domains and in them the features of a middle river as well as those of the vagina which are presented in the form of fixed counterpart mappings are found. It was noted that the elements in the source domain are mapped onto those in the target domain. Water from the river has several uses such as cooking, drinking, washing, fishing and watering plants amongst other uses while the vagina is a major component in sexual intercourse.

It was posited that a river is a natural feature and the vagina is part of the human body therefore also natural. From the river water is got while the vagina periodically emits menstrual blood as well as other secretions which are responsible for lubricating it. In addition, we get fish and sand from the river just as children are got through the vagina. It was pointed out that water is a vital fluid and it is something that one cannot do without thereby making it a basic need while sex on the other hand is a physiological need. Moreover, the river banks protect the river just as the vulva that covers the clitoris protects it.

The generic space is the third mental space and it contains matched information from the source and target domains. It has the subjects on which the euphemism is based that is, river and vagina. The actions carried out in the two input spaces are cooking, washing, drinking, fishing, watering plants, sexual intercourse and transportation. It was mentioned

that a river may be classified as a natural feature while vagina as part of the human body. Blood and other vaginal secretions could generally be referred to as fluids. It was pointed out that fish, sand and children are products from the river and vagina respectively and while water is a basic need, sex is a physiological need.

The blended is the fourth space that contains matched information projected from the generic space as well as the emergent structure which is the meaning of this metaphor. It means that vagina is not only a source of life just as water from the river is, but also a transport channel.

Graap (1998) posits that the Vagina is a main component in procreation in the sense that it serves as a receptacle for a man's penis and his ejaculated sperms which may move on through the cervix. When these sperms meet the ovum and fertilization takes place, conception occurs. When the fetus is fully developed, the vagina again acts as a passageway during birth in addition to transporting wastes such as urine and menstrual blood. The fixed counterpart mappings of this euphemism are summarized in the table that follows

<u>Input 1 (Source domain)</u>		<u>Input 2 (Target domain)</u>
River	—————→	Vagina
Cooking, drinking, fishing, washing and watering plants	—————→	Sexual intercourse
Natural feature	—————→	Part of a human body
Water	—————→	Blood and other vaginal secretions
Fish and sand	—————→	Children
Basic need	—————→	Physiological need

River banks



Vulva

Generic space

Blended space

Subjects



Subjects

Actions



Actions

Classification



Classification

Fluids



Fluids

Products



Products

Needs



Needs

Boundaries



Boundaries

Emergent structure



The vagina is a source of life and a transport channel

The three component processes that give rise to the emergent structure are taken care of by this euphemism. In composition, the source and target domains are projected. The frames of geographical features (a river can be classified as a geographical feature) as well as those of human anatomy are introduced in completion while the meaning of this euphemism is illustrated in elaboration in which case the concepts of transportation and production are brought out.

This euphemism satisfies the principles of integration, unpacking, topology and good reason. The elements in the source domain are mapped onto those in the target domain and in the process, they combine and interact. Elements in the blended space can be reconstructed and transferred back to the source and target domains where they initially originated thus satisfying the unpacking principle. For example, a common trait of the blended space is 'boundaries' which has a relationship with the elements 'river banks'

and 'vulva' that are found in the source and target domains respectively. Moreover, the elements in the blended space of this euphemism have a relationship with those in the target and source domains. This shows that the principle of topology has been taken care of. Furthermore, all the elements in this blend play an effective role in its smooth running thus satisfying the principle of good reason. Figure 13 shows the mapping of the euphemism 'The vagina is a middle river.'

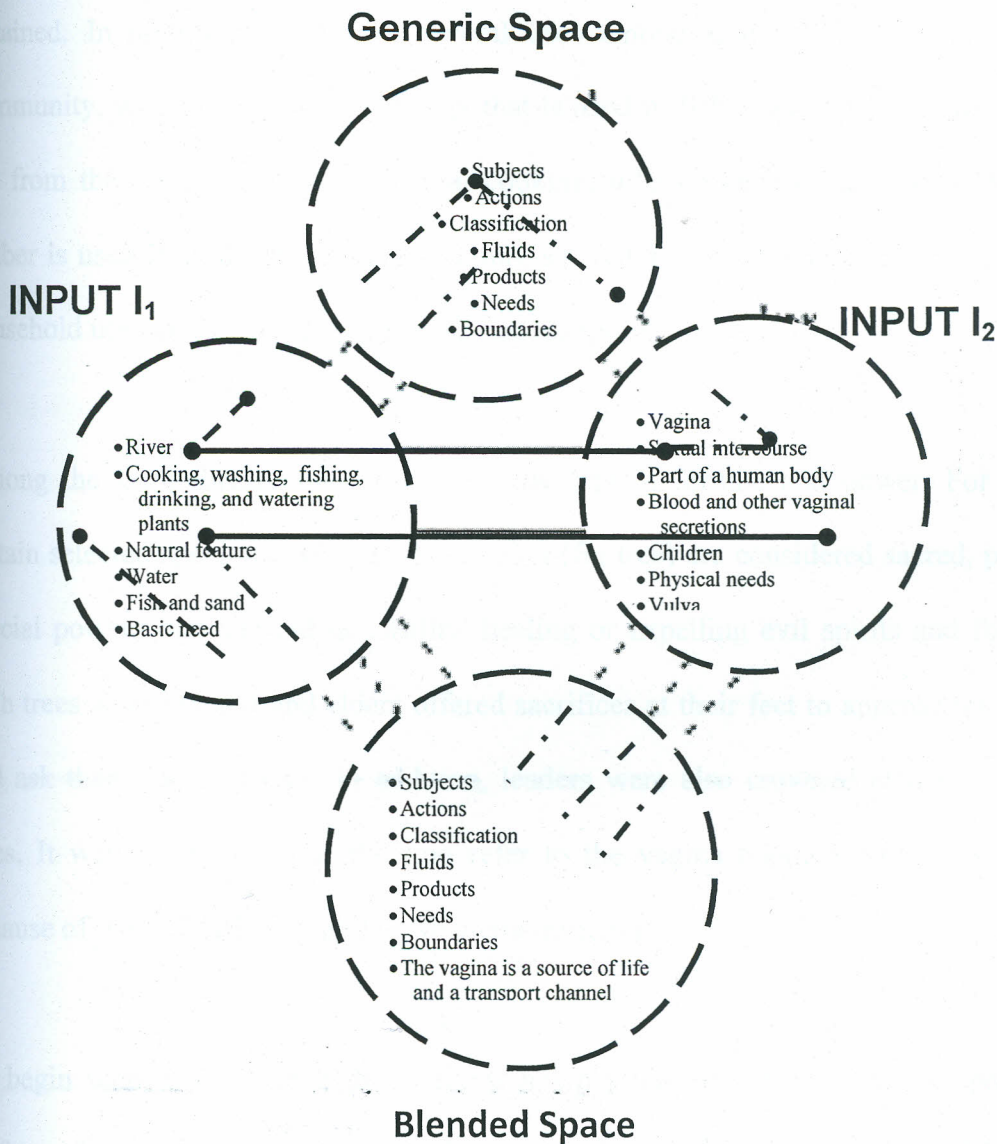


Figure 13: Mapping of the euphemism 'Vagina is a middle river'

The next section discusses and illustrates the third euphemism which is 'The vagina is a forest' and then it is analyzed using the conceptual mappings which are the tenets of the Conceptual Integration theory.

### **(c) The vagina is 'a forest'**

Forests are essential to mankind since it is from them that trees, certain types of fruits, vegetables as well as fodder that is instrumental in supporting livestock population are obtained. In addition, trees have several uses among Luo. Firstly, being a fishing community, wood is a source of energy that is used in fish smoking. Secondly, firewood got from these trees is used in general cooking, tobacco curing and baking. Moreover, timber is used in building, making furniture as well as a wide range of products such as household utensils and agricultural tools and equipment.

Among the Luo, forests are viewed as providers of fortune and power. For example, certain selected species of trees such as *ng'ou* (fig tree) are considered sacred, possessing special powers that can aid in fertility, healing or expelling evil spirits and that is why such trees were revered and elders offered sacrifices at their feet to appease the ancestors and ask them for blessings. In addition, leaders were also crowned at the foot of such trees. It was mentioned that the Luo refer to the vagina euphemistically as 'a forest' because of the similarities that the two elements possess.

To begin with, it was noted that a forest has plant cover (vegetation) that protects the surface of the soil. Moreover, leaf fall from deciduous trees also provide mulch that help

build up the organic content of the soil and by so doing, nutrients are added to the soil and this speeds up the growth of vegetation in the forest. Pubic hair, which is likened to the vegetation around the forest, is important in that it serves not only to protect the genital organs from the effects of rubbing together during sexual act but also to prevent heat loss.

It was posited that just like a forest, a vagina also has several functions. First, it provides a passageway for the menstrual flow from the uterus to the outside. Graap (1998) notes that it serves as a receptacle for a man's penis and his ejaculated sperms. Then, it provides a passageway for the baby during birth. Lastly, it produces its own secretions which clean it and its walls secrete a watery substance which serves as a lubricant during coitus thus reducing friction.

It was observed that the forest and the vagina are also similar in the sense that they may be dangerous. For instance, in the forest one may be attacked by wild animals, bitten by a poisonous snake or even get lost. The vagina on the other hand, may be dangerous in the sense that if a man engages in sex with a woman who has a sexual infection, he may get infected. Moreover, some of these sexually transmitted infections are deadly and may lead to loss of lives, infertility or even insanity. Also, due to poor hygiene the pubic hair that covers the vagina could harbor parasites such as lice that could lead to diseases that may affect the vagina.

Both provide accommodation though in different ways for example, forests provide shelter to animals, reptiles and birds thus accommodating them just the way the vagina

accommodates the penis though for a short while during coitus. It was mentioned that reptiles such as snakes that are found in forests find refuge in holes. During dry seasons, these holes are cool and are comfortable accommodations for the snakes. These snakes could be likened to the penis that gets accommodation in the vagina which warms it during cold seasons and cools it during hot seasons.

Next is the analysis of this euphemism using the theory of the Conceptual Integration in which the features of the euphemistic term in this case 'a forest' and those of the dysphemistic term 'vagina' are presented in the form of conceptual mappings using this theory's four mental spaces. The first two spaces correspond to the source and target domains and in them the features of a forest as well as those of the vagina which are presented in the form of fixed counterpart mappings are found. The elements in the source domain are mapped onto those in the target domain and while the forest is a geographical feature, the vagina is part of human anatomy.

It was noted that vegetation covers forests just the same way pubic hair covers the vagina. In addition, from forests a variety of things are got and this include food, fodder, timber and herbs while from the vagina we get children. Fruits and berries can also be gotten from forests and these supplement diets. These two could be likened to the ovaries which are located inside the abdomen on either side of the uterus and which produce eggs which are released into the fallopian tubes. These eggs are the ones that meet the sperms from the penis leading to conception if fertilization occurs.

It was pointed out that the roles played by the elements in the source and target domains are productive, protective, pleasure-giving and procreation. Water is important to plants as well as animals in the forests just as vaginal secretions are important since they not only clean the vagina but also lubricate it during sexual intercourse. Pollination takes place in plants found in forests just as copulation takes place in human beings with the vagina being a main component.

The third mental space is the generic space which contains matched information from the source and target domains. This entails the subjects of both domains which are forest and vagina. It was mentioned that a forest can be classified as a geographical feature while a vagina as part of human anatomy. Forests are covered by vegetation just as the vagina is covered by pubic hair. What we get from both forest and vagina are products. It was further asserted that forests have fruits and berries just as the ovaries release eggs which may be fertilized by the sperms if they meet. The roles of the subjects of the source and target domains were clearly stipulated. Water and vaginal secretions can collectively be referred to as fluids. Moreover, pollination and copulation may entail fertilization.

The fourth is the blended space that contains matched information projected from the generic space as well as the meaning of the euphemism which in this case is the emergent structure. It was noted that this euphemism means that the vagina is a symbol of destruction. Just the way a forest shelters dangerous animals and reptiles that can harm an individual is the same way the vagina is destructive because if a man engages in sexual intercourse with a woman who has a sexually transmitted infection, then he is likely to get

it. It was further pointed out that some of these infections are disastrous and may therefore lead to the death of the victims. The fixed counterpart mappings of this euphemism are summarized in the table that follows.

<u>Input 1 (Source domain)</u>		<u>Input 2 (Target domain)</u>
Forest	—————>	Vagina
Geographical feature	—————>	Part of human anatomy
Vegetation	—————>	Pubic hair
Food, fodder, timber and herbs	—————>	Children
Fruits/berries	—————>	Ovaries
Productive and protective roles	—————>	Pleasure-giving and procreation roles
Water	—————>	Vaginal secretions
Pollination	—————>	Copulation

<u>Generic space</u>		<u>Blended space</u>
Subjects	—————>	Subjects
Classification	—————>	Classification
Cover	—————>	Cover
Products	—————>	Products
Roles	—————>	Roles
Fluids	—————>	Fluids
Fertilization	—————>	Fertilization

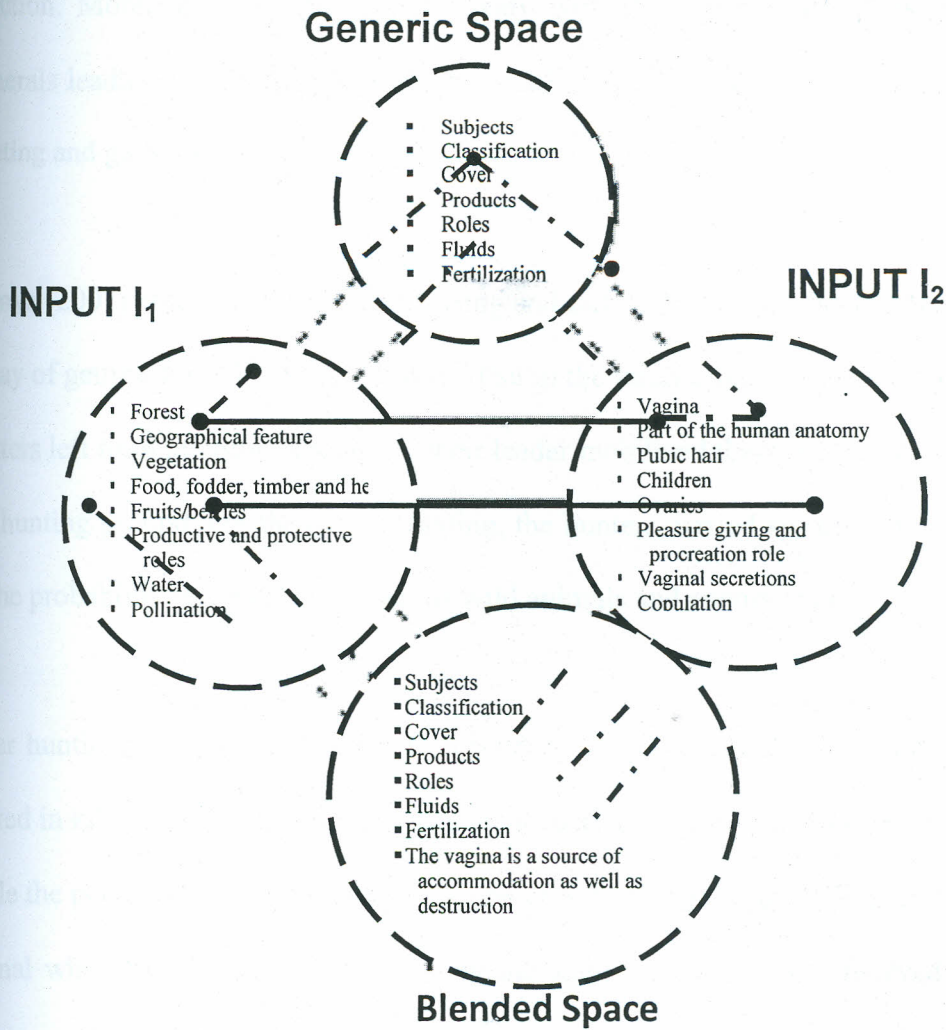
Emergent structure	—————>	The vagina is a symbol of destruction
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The three component processes that give to the emergent structure are taken into account by this euphemism. Elements in the source and target domains are projected in composition. In completion, the frames of geographical features (a forest) as well as those

of human anatomy are introduced while in elaboration, the meaning of the euphemism is illustrated with the issue of destruction being brought to the fore.

The principles of integration, web, unpacking topology and good reason have been satisfied by this euphemism. The elements from the source domain are mapped onto those from the target domain and in the process, they combine and interact. Not all elements in this euphemism have been projected to the blended space because some fail to match for instance, the element 'fruits/berries' found in the source domain and 'ovaries' found in the target domain are all important but they do not match. Therefore, they are not projected to the blended space hence the principle of web has been satisfied.

All the elements found in the blended space can be reconstructed and returned back to the source and target domains where they initially originated thereby satisfying the principle of unpacking. For example, a common feature in the blended space is 'fluids' which has a relationship with the elements 'water' and 'vaginal secretions' in the source and target domains respectively. Also, the elements found in the blended space have a relationship with those found in the source and target domains of this euphemism thus satisfying the principle of topology. The principle of good reason has been satisfied in the sense that all the elements in this euphemism are vital for the effective running of the blend. Figure 14 shows the mapping of the euphemism 'The vagina is a forest.'



**Figure 14: Mapping of the euphemism 'Vagina is a Forest'**

The section that follows discusses and diagrammatically illustrates the fourth euphemism which is 'The vagina is food' and then it is analyzed using the conceptual mappings which are the tenets of the Conceptual Integration Theory.

**(d) The vagina is 'food'**

Food and healthy ones at that are very important to human beings since they lead to increased energy and vitality, easier digestion, better skin and increased immune system

function. Moreover, they provide the body with the required nutrients, vitamins and minerals leading to a healthy growth. In addition, food can be obtained from agriculture, hunting and gathering.

Mboya (2001) noted that apart from fishing and farming, the Luo also practiced hunting as a way of getting food. He further posited that in the traditional Luo set up, a day before the hunters left for a hunting expedition; their leader mobilized them and informed them about the hunting ground. On the day of hunting, the hunters carried spears and shields because of the probability of meeting dangerous wild animals and enemy tribes.

After hunting, a kill was shared out depending on one's position and the role that they played in killing it. In most cases it was the leader of the hunting group who took the head while the person who made the kill took one or both hind legs depending on the size of the animal while the rest was shared among the team. It was further observed that when a hunter made a kill, he praised the name of his maternal uncle and his people. Also hunted by the Luo were edible birds such quails and guinea fowls.

There are similarities between vagina and food and that is why the former is euphemistically referred to as the latter. To begin with, food provides physical nourishment to the body making it have increased energy and vitality. Physiologically, the vagina provides 'nourishment' to the penis and vice versa. Sex makes people feel energized and full of life because from it the other 'food' which is also very significant for one's well being is got.

It was pointed out that the sweetness of food is dependent on several things for example, the methods of cooking, spices that have been used to enrich it and even its presentation at the table. On the same note, the sweetness of sex is also dependent on several factors including the hygienic status of both the vagina and penis, the styles used during sexual intercourse which can be likened to the spices added to food, knowledge of each other's erotic zones and the preparation taken by the parties involved prior to sexual intercourse.

Both food and vagina can be harmful or even poisonous and can lead to loss of lives when consumed. For example, certain foods which have high cholesterol levels can lead to long-term illnesses such as hypertension or obesity that may even lead to cardiac arrest also when one eats stale food, they may get food poisoning. On the other hand, engaging in sexual intercourse with a female partner who is infected with sexually transmitted infections such as syphilis, gonorrhoea or even HIV/AIDS can lead to the infection of the other partner and eventually death of such a person thus making the vagina harmful or poisonous.

Both food and vagina are enjoyable and it was argued that if one lacks food, hunger and malnourishment sets in just like lack of sex may lead to problems such as backache. Moreover, sexual intercourse is something to look forward to just like one looks forward to eating when hungry. Next is the analysis of this euphemism using the theory of the Conceptual Integration in which the features of the euphemistic term in this case 'food'

and those of the dysphemistic term 'vagina' are presented in the form of conceptual mappings using this theory's four mental spaces.

The first two spaces correspond to the source and target domains and in them the features of food as well as those of the vagina which are presented in the form of fixed counterpart mappings are found. It was noted that the elements in the source domain are mapped onto those in the target domain. Food is mapped onto vagina with the former being chewed or drunk while the latter is a main component in sexual intercourse.

Food contains water and nutrients while the vagina produces blood and other vaginal secretions. It was posited that while food is eaten through the mouth, the penis enters the vagina through the vaginal opening. Moreover, food can be classified as a substance while the vagina is part of the human body. It was also noted that food protects the body, prevents it from certain infections and gives one the energy to undertake different duties while sexual intercourse is done either for pleasure or for procreation purposes. The teeth are responsible for chewing solid food just as the penis is responsible for 'chewing' the vagina. Finally, food is a basic need while sex is a physiological need.

The generic is the third mental space which contains matched information from the source and target domains. It contains the subjects that is, what the euphemism is all about and in this case, the subject of the source domain is food while that of the target domain is vagina. The actions undertaken in both input spaces are drinking, chewing and sexual

intercourse. While food is made up of water and nutrients, the vagina is made up of flesh and blood.

It was pointed out that the channel through which food enters the body system is the mouth as the penis enters the vagina through the vaginal opening. Also, food is classified as a **substance** while the vagina as part of the human body. The roles that both food and vagina play have been highlighted. The teeth are vested with the duty of chewing food just as the penis 'chews' the vagina. Lastly, food is a basic need while sex is a physiological need.

The fourth mental space is the blended space that contains matched information projected from the generic space as well as the emergent structure which is the meaning of this euphemism. It means that the vagina is a source of nourishment and just the way food nourishes the body, so does the vagina which nourishes the penis. It was further mentioned that the euphemism also denotes the sweet pleasure gotten from the vagina during sexual intercourse. The fixed counterpart mappings of this euphemism are summarized in the table that follows.

<u>Input 1 (Source domain)</u>		<u>Input 2 (Target domain)</u>
Food	—————>	Vagina
Chewing and drinking	—————>	Sexual intercourse
Water and nutrients	—————>	Flesh and blood
Mouth	—————>	Vaginal opening
Substance	—————>	Part of human body

Protective, preventive and energy giving roles	—————>	Procreation, pleasure giving and transportation roles
Teeth	—————>	Penis
Basic need	—————>	Physiological need

<u>Generic space</u>		<u>Blended space</u>
Subjects	—————>	Subjects
Actions	—————>	Actions
Composition	—————>	Composition
Channels	—————>	Channels
Classification	—————>	Classification
Roles	—————>	Roles
Agents	—————>	Agents
Needs	—————>	Needs

Emergent structure      ———>      The vagina is a symbol of nourishment.

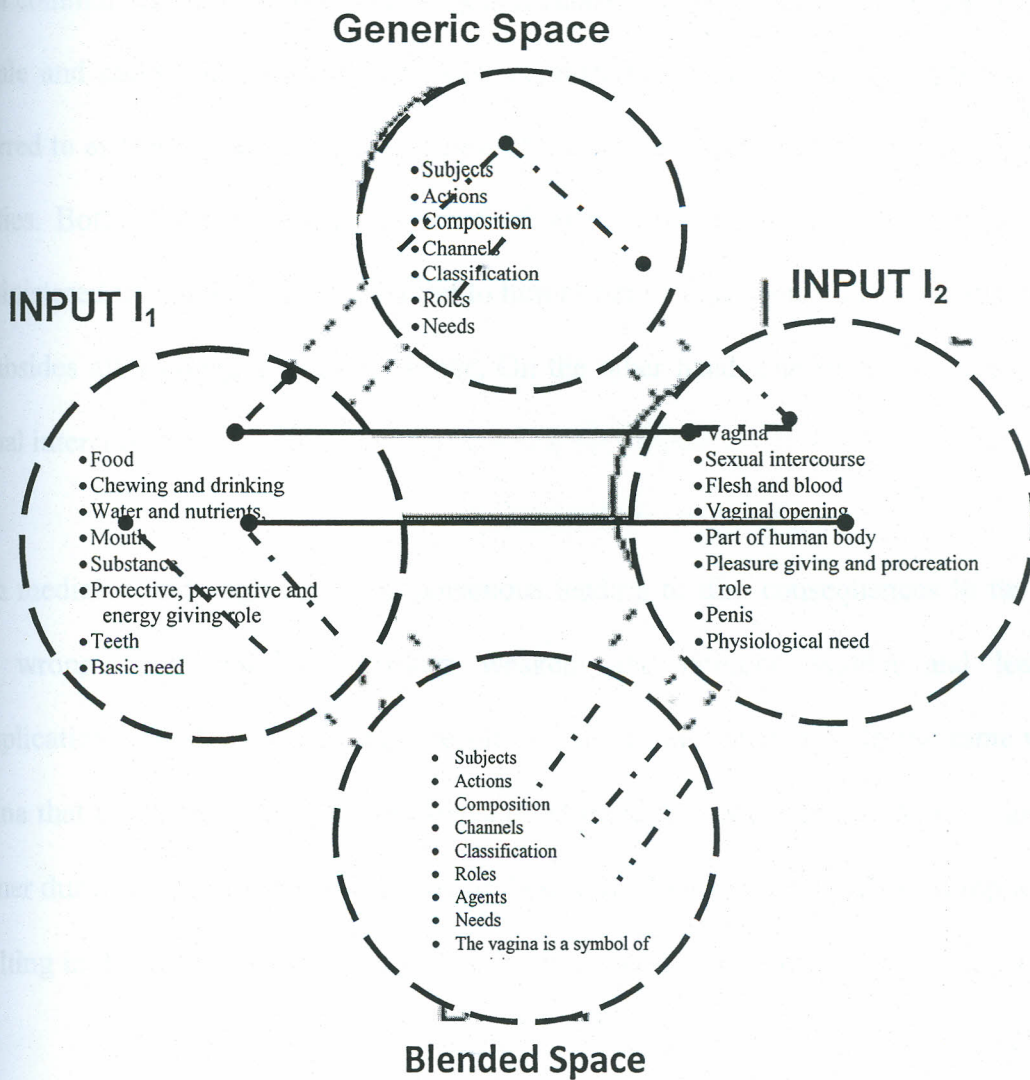
This euphemism takes into account composition, completion and elaboration which are the three component processes that give rise to the meaning of this euphemism. In composition elements from both the source and target domains are projected as the frames of substances (food is classified as a substance) as well as those of parts of the body are introduced in completion. In elaboration, the meaning of this euphemism is illustrated and in this case, the concept of nourishment is emphasized.

There are certain principles that have been satisfied by this euphemism. To begin with, the elements in the source domain are mapped onto those in the target domain and in the process; they combine and interact in the principle of integration. In topology, the elements in the blended space have a relationship with those in the source and target

domains. For instance, in the blended space there is the element 'channels.' This has a relationship with the elements 'mouth' and 'vaginal opening' that are found in the source and target domains respectively since it is through the mouth that food enters the body system and through the vaginal opening that the penis enters the vagina.

The principle of unpacking in which the elements from the blended space can be reconstructed and transferred back to the source and target domains where they initially originated has also been satisfied. For example, in the blended space we have the element 'agents,' a common feature, that represents attributes which when traced back to their respective domains appear as 'teeth' (source) and 'penis' (target). The principle of good reason has also been satisfied because all the elements in this blend are important in its smooth running since they have roles that they play and they contribute in one way or another in helping one understand the comparisons that can be made between the subjects of the source and target domains.

There is one principle fronted by the proponents of the Conceptual Integration Theory that has not been satisfied by this euphemism and it is that of web. This is because all the elements in this blend have been projected to the blended space, a fact that goes against the tenets of this principle. Figure 15 shows the mapping of the euphemism, 'The vagina is food.'



**Figure 15: Mapping of the euphemism 'Vagina is food'**

The fifth euphemism to be discussed in detail is 'The vagina is medicine for sleep.' Just like the previous ones it is also analyzed using the Conceptual Integration Theory.

**(e) The vagina is 'medicine for sleep'**

Medicine helps maintain and restore health by the prevention and treatment of illnesses. In the Luo set up, there are different kinds of herbalists who treat different illnesses. The

most common of these are personal doctors (*nyamrerwa*) who are liked because they help people and cannot harm anyone. It was mentioned that the vagina is euphemistically referred to as 'medicine for sleep' because of the similarities that exist between these two entities. Both of them bring about relief of some sort for example, when medicine is administered to a patient, it brings relief to him or her so that if such a person was in pain, it subsides after taking a given medicine. On the other hand, one finds some relief after sexual intercourse.

Both medicine and vagina may be poisonous leading to dire consequences in the sense that wrong medication or overdose weakens the immune system and leads to complications which may eventually result in death or incapacitation. In the same vein, a vagina that is infected with sexually transmitted infections will transfer them to the other partner during sexual intercourse. Some of these infections may bring about complications resulting in death or incapacitation just like wrong medication does.

It was pointed out that both of them are needed for the well being of body. To begin with, when a disease strikes, the body does not function as is expected of it since the effects of disease may make it weak and the affected person uncomfortable. Such side effects reduce a person's ability to efficiently perform his or her daily chores. After administration of drugs, a person feels full of life again in the sense that he or she feels energized since the fatigue brought about by the effects of the disease are wiped out by the medicine.

The generic is the third mental space which contains matched information from the source and target domains. In this space the subjects of the source and target domains which are medicine for sleep and vagina are highlighted. The actions carried out by medicine as well as vagina have also been stipulated as wiping or expelling disease-causing organisms and sexual intercourse respectively. The roles that the subjects play have also been mentioned and they are preventive, curative, protective, pleasure-giving and procreation. Compositions (medicine is made from plant matter or chemical substances while the vagina is made of flesh and blood) and classifications (medicine can be classified as a substance and the vagina as part of human anatomy) of the subjects of the source and target domains have been stated.

The blended is the fourth space that contains matched information projected from the generic space and the meaning of the euphemism which is the emergent structure. This euphemism means that the vagina is a source of relief and relaxation in the sense that it calms the penis during sexual intercourse and vice-versa. Therefore, lack of it can lead to torment. The fixed counterpart mappings of this euphemism are illustrated in the table that follows.

<u>Input 1 (Source domain)</u>		<u>Input 2 (Target domain)</u>
Medicine	—————→	Vagina
Wiping or expelling disease causing organisms and relieving pain	—————→	Sexual intercourse
Preventive, curative and protective roles	—————→	Pleasure giving and procreation roles
Plant matter or chemical substances	—————→	Flesh and blood
Substances	—————→	Human body part

Generic space

Blended space

Subjects                    →                    Subjects

Actions                    →                    Actions

Roles                      →                    Roles

Composition              →                    Composition

Classification            →                    Classification

Functions                 →                    Functions

Emergent structure      →                    The vagina is a source of relief, relaxation and well being.

Composition, completion and elaboration, the three component processes that give rise to the emergent structure, are taken care of in this euphemism. In composition the elements from the source domain and those from the target domain are projected. The frames of substances (medicine is a substance) as well as those of parts of the human body are introduced in completion while in elaboration the meaning of this euphemism is illustrated in which case the issues of relief, relaxation and well being are brought to the fore.

The principles of integration, topology, unpacking and good reason have been satisfied by this euphemism. The elements from the source domain are mapped onto those from the target domains thereby combining and interacting in the process. The elements in the blended space have a relationship with those in the source and target domains in topology. In unpacking, elements in the blended space can be reconstructed and returned back to the source and target domains where they initially originated. For example, a common feature in the blended space is 'roles' which is used to present elements that in their respective input spaces appear as 'preventive, curative and protective' (source domain) and 'pleasure giving and procreation' (target domain).

All elements in this metaphor are important in the smooth and effective running of the blend thus satisfying the principle of good reason. The principle of web on the other hand, has not been satisfied because all the elements have been projected to the blended space therefore going against the basics of this principle. Figure 16 shows the mapping of the euphemism, 'The vagina is medicine for sleep'

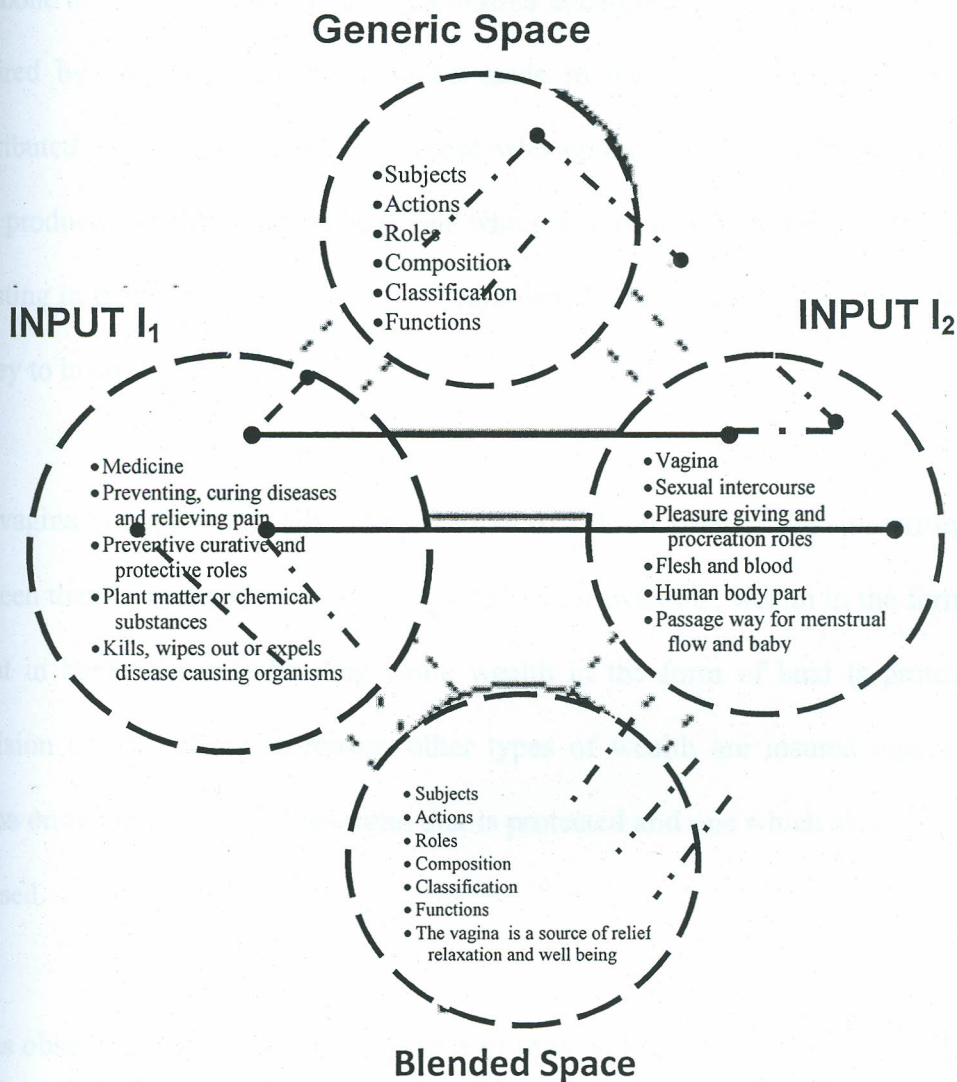


Figure 16: Mapping of the euphemism 'Vagina is medicine for sleep'

The sixth euphemism to be discussed in detail is 'The vagina is wealth.' Just like the previous ones it is also analyzed using the Conceptual Integration Theory.

**(f) The vagina is 'wealth'**

Wealth comes in various forms. Mboya (2001) posits that the Luo respect wealthy people and they believe that the community cannot be stable without them, since they are the backbone or strength of the society. He further added that in the olden days, the payments required by communal meetings to be made to diviners or rainmakers were usually contributed by wealthy people and those who could afford. Wealth includes livestock, farm produce and children therefore, one who gives his or her children quality education is investing in them for a brighter future. Moreover, a wealthy person is one who has a lot of money to his or her name.

The vagina is euphemistically referred to as wealth because of the similarities that exist between them. First, both of them are protected for example, wealth in the form of money is put in banks for safe keeping while wealth in the form of land is protected by the provision of title deeds moreover, other types of wealth are insured against loss. The vagina on the other hand, is an organ that is protected and one which should not be openly exposed.

It was observed that both involve the use of time and energy. For one to become wealthy they must work hard and spend a lot of time in order to amass wealth. In addition, resources in the form of money have also to be put into use for one to become wealthy.

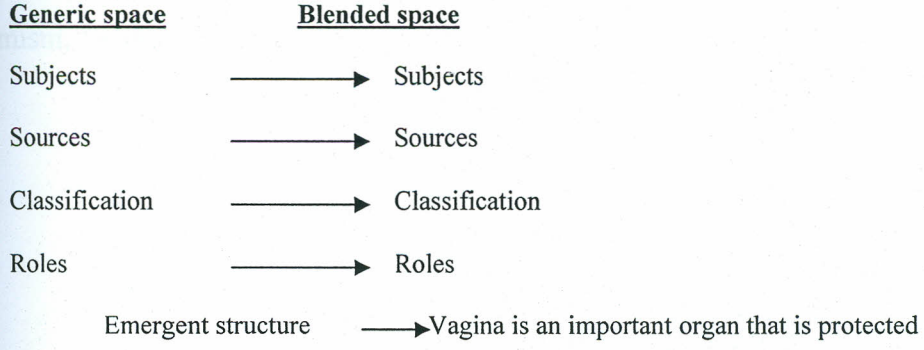
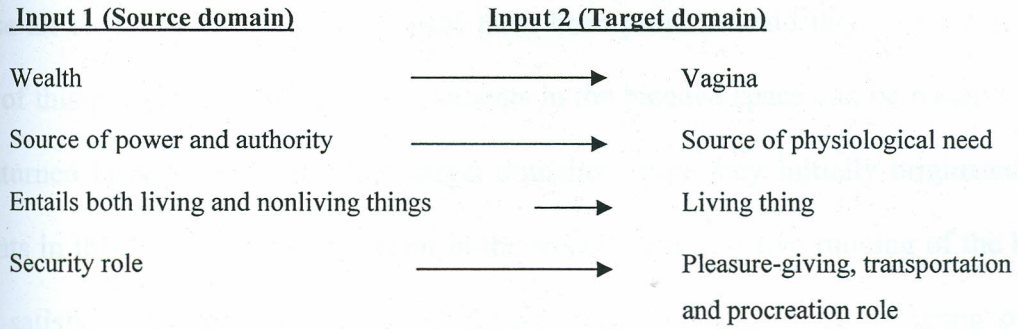
Sexual intercourse in which the vagina plays a role, also involves the use of time and energy.

Next is the analysis of this euphemism using the theory of Conceptual Integration in which the features of the euphemistic term in this case 'wealth' and those of the dysphemistic term 'vagina' are presented in the form of conceptual mappings using this theory's four mental spaces. The first two spaces correspond to the source and target domains and in them the features of wealth as well as those of the vagina which are presented in the form of fixed counterpart mappings are found. It was noted that the elements in the source domain are mapped onto those in the target domain. Wealth is mapped onto vagina, a main component in sexual intercourse.

Wealth is a source of power and authority while sex is a physiological need. Moreover, wealth could be in the form of both living and non-living things while vagina is a living thing. Lastly, it was pointed out that while wealth gives one the security to forge ahead into the future, vagina plays the roles of procreation, transportation and pleasure-giving.

The generic is the third mental space which contains matched information from the source and target domains and the subjects of the domains are wealth and vagina. It was mentioned that wealth is a source of power while vagina is a source of a physiological need. Moreover, wealth could be classified as a living or non living thing while vagina as a living thing. Both subjects play different roles as mentioned.

The blended space is the fourth mental space that contains matched information projected from the generic space as well as the meaning of the euphemism. It means that the vagina is an important organ that is protected this is because it is a source of income and by extension wealth to female sex workers who engage in commercial sex. The fixed counterpart mappings of this euphemism are presented in the table that follows.



The three component processes that give rise to the emergent structure are taken into consideration in this euphemism. In composition, elements from the source and target domains are projected. The frames of living and non-living things are introduced in completion. In elaboration, the meaning of the euphemism is illustrated with the issue of protection being exposed.

The principles of integration topology, unpacking and good reason have been satisfied. The first to be satisfied by this euphemism is that of integration in which case, the elements from the source domain are mapped onto those of the target domain and in the process, these elements combine and interact. Second, the principle of topology has been satisfied because there is a relationship between the elements in the blended space as well as those in the target and source domains. The principle of web has not been satisfied because all elements in the blended space have been projected and this goes against the tenets of this principle. In unpacking, elements in the blended space can be reconstructed and returned back to the source and target domains where they initially originated. All elements in this metaphor are important in the smooth and effective running of the blend hence satisfying the principle of good reason. Figure 17 shows the mapping of the euphemism, 'Vagina is wealth.'

by bees. It was mentioned that apart from being eaten as food, honey has medicinal uses since it is not only effective in the treatment of coughs but it also has wound healing properties. Moreover, it is an effective form of treating wounds because it is non-irritant, non-toxic and more comfortable than other dressings.

The vagina is euphemistically referred to as honey because of the similarities that exist between them. In the first place, both of them symbolize sweetness. For example, the sweetness of sex is dependent on the styles used as well as the knowledge of each partner's erotic zones among other things. On the other hand, honey is a sweet food.

It was noted that both of them are guarded. Bees can attack and cause serious injuries to those who invade the bee hives in search of honey. Similarly, the vagina is also guarded by its owner hence the term 'private part.' Moreover, societal norms and values guard the vagina such that if a man finds out that another man is engaging in sexual intercourse with his wife or girlfriend, a fight may break out between the two and the victims of this brawl may get serious injuries which may eventually lead to death.

Next is the analysis of this euphemism using the theory of the Conceptual Integration in which the features of the euphemistic term in this case 'honey' and those of the dysphemistic term 'vagina' are presented in the form of conceptual mappings using this theory's four mental spaces. The first two spaces correspond to the source and target domains and in them the features of honey as well as those of the vagina which are presented in the form of fixed counterpart mappings are found.

The elements in the source domain are mapped onto those in the target domain in which case honey is mapped onto vagina, a main component in sexual intercourse. It was pointed out that honey has several uses for example, it is eaten, used as a flavor in cooking, heals wounds and treats coughs while vagina is a main component in sexual intercourse.

Honey could be classified as a substance while vagina as part of human anatomy. Secondly, honey is obtained from bees which are insects while the vagina is an organ in the body of a human being. Thirdly, honey plays healing and energy giving roles while the vagina plays procreation and pleasure giving roles. In the harvesting of honey, it was noted that one needs to be very careful since they can be stung by bees that protect the hives that contain honey combs. This stinging could be likened to what the penis does to the vagina during coitus.

The next mental space is the generic space which contains matched information from the source and target domains. The subjects of the source and target domains are honey and vagina respectively. Honey may be classified as a substance and vagina as part of human anatomy. The roles that both domains play have been highlighted with honey playing a protective role and the vagina playing procreation and pleasure giving roles. It was pointed out that a bee is a source of honey while the vagina is an organ found in the human body. It was mentioned that a bee stings its enemies (those who get closer to the bee hive) just the way the penis 'stings' the vagina.

The blended is the fourth mental space that contains matched information projected from the generic space as well as the meaning of this euphemism. This euphemism means that just the way honey is a symbol of sweetness and protection so is the vagina. This is because sexual intercourse between two consenting adults brings pleasure and sweetness to the people involved in it. Moreover, the vagina just like the bee hive is protected by the owner. The fixed counterpart mappings of this euphemism are presented in the table that follows.

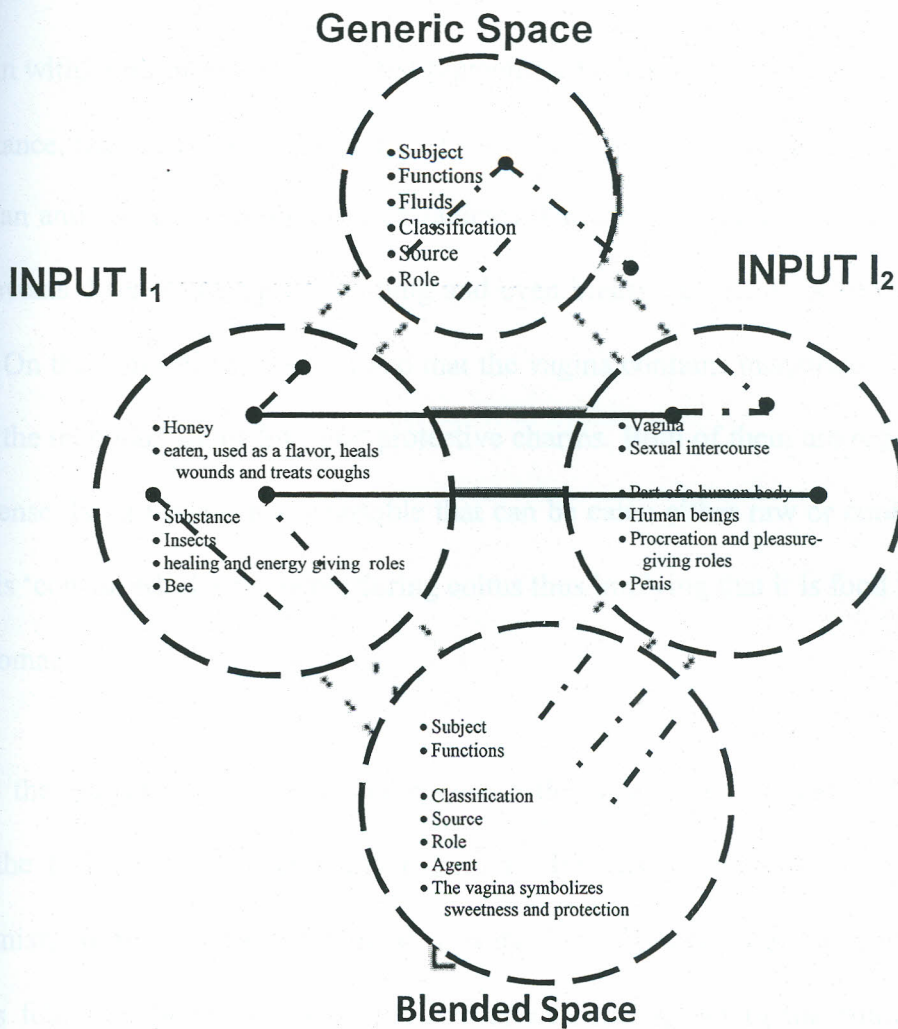
<u>Input 1 (Source domain)</u>	→	<u>Input 2 (Target domain)</u>
Honey	→	Vagina
Eaten, used as a flavor, heals wounds and treats coughs	→	Sexual intercourse
Substance	→	Part of human anatomy
Insect	→	Human being
Healing and energy giving roles	→	Procreation and pleasure giving roles
Bee	→	Penis

<u>Generic space</u>	→	<u>Blended space</u>
Subjects	→	Subjects
Functions	→	Functions
Classification	→	Classification
Source	→	Source
Role	→	Role
Agent	→	Agent
Emergent structure	→	Vagina symbolizes sweetness and protection

The three component processes that give rise to the emergent structure have been catered for in this euphemism. The elements from the source and target domains are projected in composition. The frames of substances as well as those of parts of human anatomy are introduced in completion. The meaning of this euphemism has been illustrated in elaboration whereby the concepts of sweetness and protection have been expounded.

The principles of integration, topology, unpacking and good reason have been satisfied by this euphemism. The elements in the source domain are mapped onto those in the target domain and in the process, they combine and interact. The elements in the blended space have a relationship with those elements in the source and target domains in the principle of topology.

In addition, the elements in the blended space can be reconstructed and returned back to the source and target domains where they initially originated thereby satisfying the principle of unpacking. For example, a common feature in the blended space is 'agent' this is used to collectively represent the traits 'bee' and 'penis' that are found in the source and target domains respectively. Further, all the elements in this euphemism are vital for the smooth running of the blend thereby satisfying the principle of good reason. The web principle has not been satisfied by this euphemism because all its elements have been projected to the blended space and this fact goes against this principle. Figure 18 represents the mapping of the euphemism, 'The vagina is honey.'



**Figure 18: Mapping of the euphemism 'Vagina is honey'**

The eighth euphemism to be discussed in detail is, 'The vagina is a tomato.' Just like the previous ones it is also analyzed using the Conceptual Integration Theory.

**(h) The vagina is 'a tomato'**

Tomatoes are grown in farms and they are used to add flavor to the food that is being cooked. In certain instances, they may be eaten raw or cooked as a whole meal. It is because of the similarities between the vagina and a tomato that the former is euphemistically referred to as the latter.

To begin with, both of them contain red pigments which are used for protection purposes. For instance, the red pigment in the tomato is called lycopene and it is a compound that acts as an antioxidant neutralizing free radicals that can damage cells in the body and it also prevents diseases like prostate, lung and even breast cancers as posited by Carattina (2002). On the other hand, it was noted that the vagina contains menstrual blood which is used in the manufacture of love and protective charms. Both of them are regarded as food in the sense that a tomato is a vegetable that can be eaten either raw or cooked while the vagina is 'consumed' by the penis during coitus thus implying that it is food for the man's other stomach.

Next is the analysis of this euphemism using the theory of Conceptual Integration in which the features of the euphemistic term in this case 'a tomato' and those of the dysphemistic term 'vagina' are presented in the form of conceptual mappings using this theory's four mental spaces. The first two spaces correspond to the source and target domains and in them the features of tomato as well as those of the vagina which are presented in the form of fixed counterpart mappings are found. It was noted that the elements in the source domain are mapped onto those in the target domain.

Tomato contains a red pigment called lycopene while the vagina contains blood and other vaginal secretions. It was observed that a tomato is round while a vagina is oval. The former is a vegetable while the latter is part of a human body. The subject of the source domain plays protective and curative roles while that of the target domain plays procreation, transportation and pleasure-giving roles.

The third mental space is the generic space which contains matched information from the source and target domains. It entails the subjects of both domains as well as the contents of the tomato (contains red pigment) and vagina (contains blood and other secretions). The shapes of the subjects have also been highlighted. A tomato is classified as a vegetable while vagina as a sexual organ. Lastly, the roles that both subjects play have also been mentioned with the tomato playing curative and preventive roles and the vagina playing procreation, pleasure-giving and transportation roles.

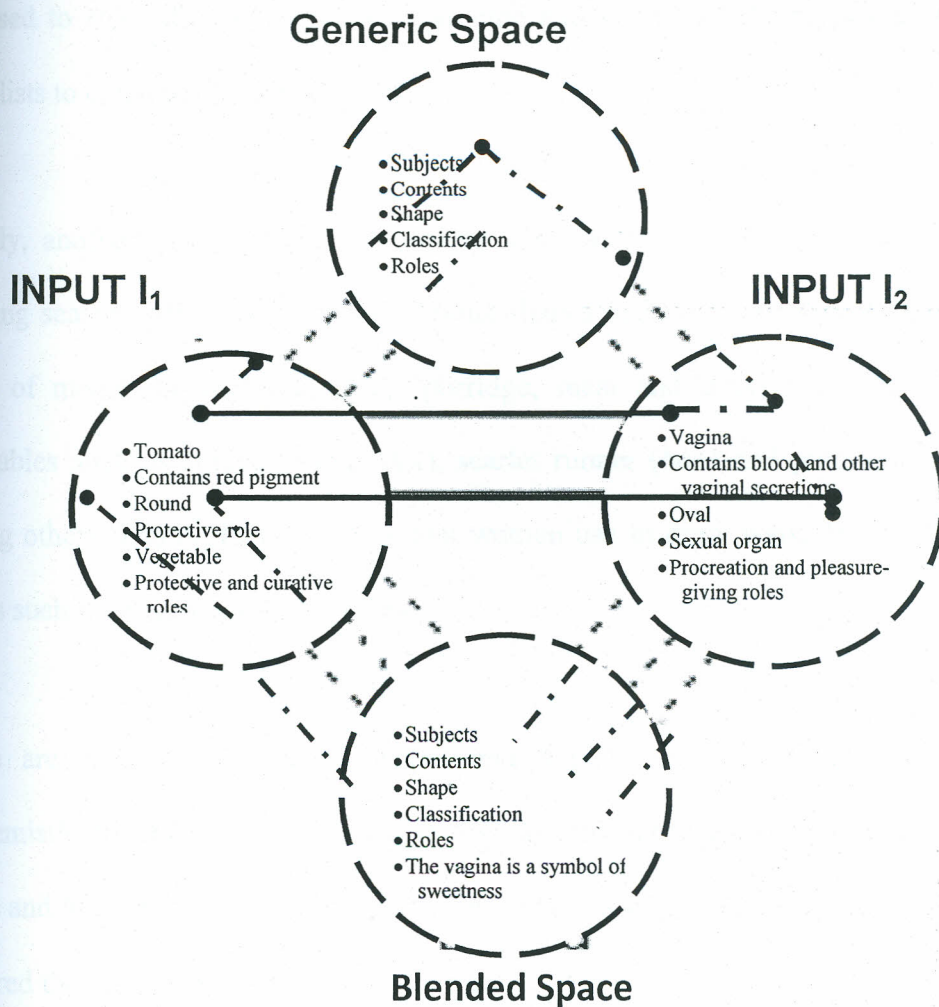
The blended space is the fourth mental space and it contains matched information from the generic space as well as the emergent structure which is the meaning of the euphemism. This euphemism means that the vagina, just like a tomato, is a source of sweetness. It denotes the sweet intense pleasure one gets from the vagina during coitus. The fixed counterpart mappings of this euphemism are presented in the table that follows.

<u>Input one (source domain)</u>		<u>Input two (target domain)</u>
Tomato	—————→	Vagina
Contains red pigment	—————→	Contains blood and other vaginal secretions
Round	—————→	Oval
Vegetable	—————→	Sexual organ
Protective and curative roles	—————→	Procreation, transportation and pleasure-giving roles

<u>Generic space</u>		<u>Blended space</u>
Subjects	—————→	Subjects
Contents	—————→	Contents
Shape	—————→	Shape
Classification	—————→	Classification
Roles	—————→	Roles
Emergent structure	—————→	Vagina is a symbol of sweetness

Composition, completion and elaboration are the three component processes that give rise to the emergent structure. These processes are taken care of in this euphemism and in composition the elements from the source and target domains have been projected. In completion the frames of plants (tomato is a vegetable) as well as those of sexual organs (vagina is a sexual organ) have been introduced. The meaning of this euphemism has been illustrated in elaboration in which case, the issue of sweetness is brought out.

The principles of good reason, unpacking, topology and integration have been satisfied in this euphemism. All the elements in it are significant for the smooth running of the blend hence the principle of good reason. Also, the elements in the blended space can be reconstructed and returned back to the source and target domains where they initially originated in unpacking. For example, in the blended space, there is a common feature referred to as 'shape' which is used to collectively represent the elements 'round' and 'oval' in the source and target domains respectively. Moreover, the elements in the blended space have a relationship with those in the source and target domains in topology and lastly, the elements in the source are mapped onto those in the target domains and in the process, they combine and interact. The principle of web has not been satisfied because all elements in this euphemism have been projected to the blended space, a fact that goes against the tenets of this principle. Figure 19 shows the mapping of the euphemism 'The vagina is a tomato.'



**Figure 19: Mapping of the euphemism ‘Vagina is a tomato’**

The ninth euphemism to be discussed in detail is, ‘The vagina is a pot.’ Just like the previous ones it is also analyzed using the Conceptual Integration Theory.

**(i)The vagina is ‘a pot’**

Pots are very important containers in the Luo society and they have several uses. To begin with, there are those that are used to brew and store the traditional alcohol called *kong’o*. This brew is boiled in a huge earthen pot after which it is sieved and poured into several smaller pots to be served to different groups of people. Secondly, there are other pots that

are used to store different types of medicine and other paraphernalia that are used by herbalists to cure various ailments.

Thirdly, another group of pots is used to store seeds that are to be sown during the planting season. Moreover, pots of various shapes and sizes are used to cook different types of meals for example, ugali, porridge, meat and different types of traditional vegetables such as spider flower (*dek*), scarlet runner (*boo*) and pumpkin leaves (*susa*) among others. Lastly, there are pots that women use to draw water from different water points such as streams, rivers or lakes.

There are similarities between a pot and vagina and that is why the vagina is euphemistically referred to as a pot. It was pointed out that both of them are hollow in shape and they are used for storing different things. For instance, the vagina is where urine is stored though scientifically this is not true.

Both of them act as coolers in the sense that pots that are used to store water make it cool and as a matter of fact, such pots do the same work as that of modern day refrigerators. As such, during hot days a person who quenches his/her thirst with water from such pots feels relieved. In the same vein, it was observed that the vagina acts as a tool that is used to remove sexual heat from the penis. When a man is aroused, the penis becomes erect and during this time his body temperature is high. When this erect penis enters a vagina during sexual intercourse, the body temperature goes down after completion of the act.

Both of them have openings where substances can be inserted and removed. For example, one can pour water through the mouth of the pot and draw it from the same place. Similarly, menstrual flow exits through the vaginal opening and sperms are deposited through the same avenue. The same exit is the passage way of the baby during birth.

Next is the analysis of this euphemism using the theory of Conceptual Integration in which the features of the euphemistic term in this case ‘ a pot’ and those of the dysphemistic term ‘vagina’ are presented in the form of conceptual mappings using this theory’s four mental spaces. The first two spaces correspond to the source and target domains and in them the features of a pot as well as those of the vagina which are presented in the form of fixed counterpart mappings are found. It was noted that the elements in the source domain are mapped onto those in the target domain. In this case, a pot which is found in the source domain is mapped onto vagina which is found in the target domain.

Pots have several uses such as brewing alcohol, storing grains, drawing water and cooking food while vagina is a main component in sexual intercourse. While a pot, which is made of clay, is a container that is used to store a variety of things, a vagina, which is made of flesh and blood, is a sexual organ. The third mental space is the generic space which contains matched information from the source and target domains. The information in this space includes the subjects of both source and target domains, functions that they both play (a pot is used for storage, brewing alcohol and drawing water while the vagina is a

component in sexual intercourse) as well as their classification (a pot is a container and a vagina is a sexual organ). The pot is made of clay as the vagina is made of flesh and blood.

The fourth mental space is the blended space that contains matched information projected from the generic space as well as the meaning of the euphemism which is the emergent structure. This euphemism means that the vagina is a container of storage just as the pot is. This is so because the vagina is where the urine is stored. The fixed counterpart mappings of this euphemism are presented in the table that follows

<u>Input 1 (Source domain)</u>		<u>Input 2 (Target domain)</u>
Pot	→	Vagina
Used for brewing alcohol, storing grains, drawing water and cooking food	→	Sexual intercourse
Container	→	Sexual organ
Storage role	→	Pleasure-giving and procreation roles
Clay	→	Flesh and blood
<u>Generic space</u>		<u>Blended space</u>
Subjects	→	Subjects
Functions	→	Functions
Classification	→	Classification
Roles	→	Roles
Composition	→	Composition
Emergent structure	→	The vagina is storage equipment

Composition, completion and elaboration are the three component processes that give rise to the emergent structure and they are accounted for in this euphemism. The elements in the source and target domains have been projected. In completion the frames of containers as well as those of sexual organs have been introduced. The meaning of this euphemism has been illustrated with the concept of storage being brought out in elaboration.

The principles of integration, topology, unpacking and good reason have been satisfied by this euphemism. The elements from the source are mapped onto those of the target domain thereby combining and interacting in the process. In topology, the elements in the blended space have a relationship with those in the source and target domains.

The elements in the blended space can be reconstructed and transferred back to the source and target domains where they initially originated hence satisfying the principle of unpacking. For example, a common feature in the blended space is 'classification' which is a term that collectively refers to the elements 'container' and 'sexual organ' found in the source and target domains respectively. The principle of good reason has also been satisfied because all the elements in the four mental spaces are significant in the effective running of the blend. On the contrary, the principle of web has not been satisfied since all the elements have been projected to the blended space therefore going against the basics of this principle. Figure 20 shows the mapping of the euphemism 'Vagina is a pot.'

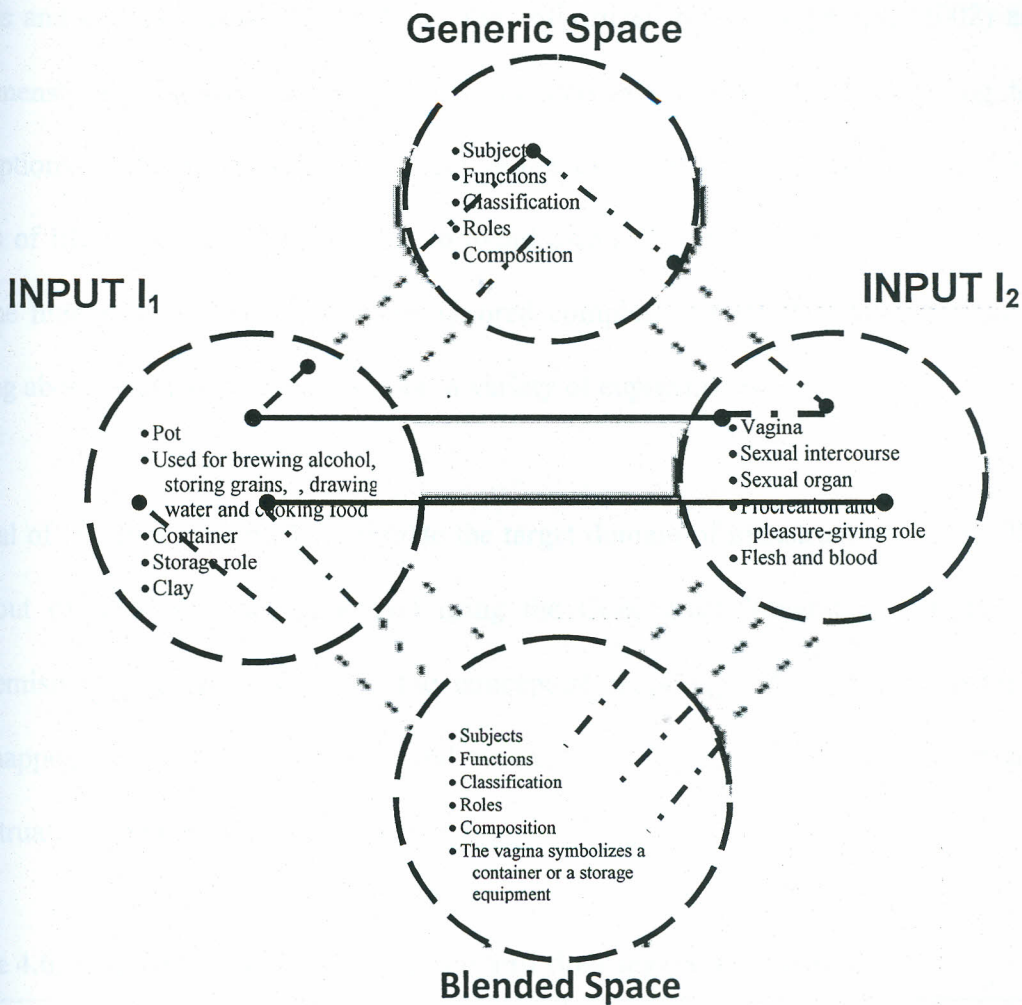


Figure 20: Mapping of the euphemism ‘Vagina is a pot’

Next is the elaborate presentation, discussion and analysis of the euphemisms of menstruation. Out of those collected, the euphemism ‘Menstruation is rain’, is analyzed using the tenets of Conceptual Integration Theory.

### 4.3.3 Euphemisms of Menstruation

Gathigia (2010) posits that menstruation is a biological change that leads to the breakdown of the endometrium, in which blood soaked regions crumble and are released, along with

mucus and cellular debris that includes the unfertilized ovum. Agyekum (2002) argues that menstrual dysphemism is culturally oriented and is interpreted according to the perceptions, attitudes, beliefs, norms and values of a particular culture. People from all walks of life try as much as possible to avoid mentioning menstruation but since it is a routine human state and it cannot be ignored completely, strategies must be found for talking about it hence, menstruation has a variety of euphemisms.

A total of ten euphemisms that mitigate the target domain of menstruation were collected and out of these one was analyzed using the Conceptual Integration Theory. These euphemisms were grouped under the conceptual mappings of a period, visitor, dirt, rain/happenings of the atmosphere and wetness. Table 4.6 shows the euphemisms of menstruation and their lexical frequencies.

**Table 4.6: Euphemisms of menstruation and their lexical frequencies**

Euphemism	Gloss	Lexical frequencies					
		Male		Female		Total	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
Dhi e dwe	Having a monthly period	9	100.0	9	100.0	18	100.0
Neno malo	Seeing up	5	55.6	9	100.0	14	77.8
Welo	Visitors	5	55.6	9	100.0	14	77.8
Nyamwalo ywak	She from the lower side is crying	-	0.0	7	77.8	07	38.9
Lwedo oilil	Hands are dirty	-	0.0	9	100.0	09	50.0
Kendo ng'ich	The hearth is wet	-	0.0	7	77.8	07	38.9
Yeng'o	Slaughtering	-	0.0	5	55.6	05	27.8
Piny rach	The lower part is bad	-	0.0	4	44.4	04	22.2
Koth	Rain	1	11.1	4	44.4	05	27.8
Kamwalo ng'ich	The lower part is wet	1	11.1	6	66.7	06	33.3

The euphemisms collected for the target domain of menstruation were later grouped into six conceptual mappings of a period, a visitor, dirt, rain/activities of the atmosphere and wetness as presented in table 4.7.

**Table 4.7 Conceptual mappings in the interpretation of euphemisms of menstruation on the basis of gender**

Conceptual mappings for menstruation	Lexical frequencies					
	Male		Female		Total	
	n	%	n	%	N	%
A period	9	10.00	9	10.00	18	20.00
A visitor	5	5.56	9	10.00	14	15.56
Dirt	0	0.00	13	14.44	13	14.44
Rain/ activities of the atmosphere	6	6.66	13	14.44	19	21.11
Wetness	1	1.11	25	27.79	26	28.89
<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>23.33</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>76.67</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Most euphemisms on this physiological process are used by females since they are the ones who experience this phenomenon. Men on the other hand consider menstruation a topic that should be avoided at all costs and scarcely ever are terms for menstruation initiated in discourse by them. It was noted that women normally use the euphemisms in their own conversations for example, if one of them experiences something unusual during her menses she can share this with other women with a view of finding a solution.

Adolescent girls could also share their menstrual problems such as too much blood flow that could make them weak or very little flow that may cause menstrual pain with their peers or mothers. It was posited that menstrual euphemisms are also used between lovers or married couples for instance, a married woman may inform her husband about her

periods. Even though men rarely use terms for menstruation, herbalists of either sex who trade in different markets that are in the environs where the research was carried out such as Awendo, Uriri and the neighboring Migori normally use some of the euphemisms for menstruation when they are talking about herbs for treating menstrual ailments such as *sigete* (a disease associated with menstruation that makes the victim experience painful stomach ache).

Women who seek medical help from a physician or a *nyamrerwa* (personal doctor) of either sex may also use the euphemistic expressions mentioned above to explain their predicament. Most societies, Luo included, view menstruation in two different lights namely negatively and positively though in reality, menstruation is regarded with distaste by many cultures. In the traditional Luo set up, menstruating girls and women were always put in seclusion till their monthly periods were over. They did everything in their secluded areas because menstruation was viewed as filthy and the menstrual blood was considered toxic and polluted.

This notion of pollution has existed from time immemorial. It was observed that among the Luo menstrual blood is believed to pollute crops especially vegetables and this is why a woman whose hands are 'soiled' is not allowed to visit a vegetable garden. During such a time, she may ask her husband or another woman who is not menstruating to pluck vegetables for her from the garden. This is because if a menstruating woman visits such a garden, it is believed that she will 'burn' the vegetables. In addition it was observed that menstruation is seen as a barrier to conception and thus to procreation.

Allan and Burrige (1991) also argue that menstruation is viewed negatively and they state that in some societies, men will not walk where a menstruating woman might have passed. They add that in the European Middle Ages for example, menstrual blood was believed to contain defiled spirits and many of the feared diseases such as leprosy and syphilis, were thought to be transmitted through menstruating women.

The positive view considers the importance that societies attach to menstruation. Women themselves emphasize the fact that menstruation has powerful and purifying aspects. In a positive sense it is believed that menstrual blood in itself may be used to make charms and love potions. It was noted that menstrual blood together with specified herbs could be used to make love potions which are added to a man's food to make him more interested or 'glued' to his wife or girlfriend and that it is an effective way of taming the man.

Menstrual cycles can also be used positively to women's benefit by avoiding being degraded or victimized by men. It was noted that women use menstrual expressions as preventive devices to prohibit sex even when they are not menstruating. Thus a woman may tell a man that she is in her period when a man meets her for the first time and proposes sex. Anytime a woman tells a man that she is in her menses, the man becomes a little scared and does not insist on having sex with her. This is so because according to the Luo custom, men should not engage in sex with menstruating women as this could make them contract certain infections.

Agyekum (2002) says that menstrual blood is used in symbolically powerful objects to protect a person from threatening forces. He further argues that traditional priests use the strength of menstrual blood to assure their own safety. For example, Asante Priests manufacture a portion called Kunkuma out of brooms defiled with menstrual blood and a priest who has this concoction with him is safe without any other charm.

Similarly, Akans also believe that old brooms and polluted substances like menstrual blood can deactivate the potency of a harmful charm, thus demystifying its power. The next section discusses and analyzes the euphemism 'menstruation is rain,' using the Conceptual Integration Theory. Only one euphemism on this target domain was analyzed after the number collected was grouped under five conceptual mappings.

**(a) Menstruation is 'rain'**

Rain is a sign of blessing to any community that receives it since water from it has several uses for instance; it is used in agriculture which is instrumental to the production of enough food. After land preparation, a farmer has to wait for rains before sowing seeds in his or her farm. In addition, water that is got from the rain is also used for washing, cooking and for recreational purposes among other uses.

Mboya (2001) noted that the Luo believed that rainmakers came from tribes such as Wagasi, Wanyore and Waswa who enjoyed prestige among different communities. He further posits that if there was no rain in a given community, the chief collected livestock and sent someone to take them as presents to the highest owner of the rain so that they could get this precious substance. The chief rainmaker would then send his assistant with

the rain in a pot to take to the chief's homestead. This would then be mixed with medicine that he had brought along and when it started raining, this representative would walk in people's homes catching chicken to be taken back as presents to the chief rainmaker.

It was noted that menstruation is referred to as rain because of the similarities that exist between the two entities. To begin with, both of them are symbols of fertility in the sense that frequent rain provides water that transports nutrients to various parts of the plant leading to high yields just the way menstruation is a symbol of fertility in a woman. Too much of each one of them may cause destruction in the sense that excess water causes floods that may destroy property and even kill people just as excess menstrual flow may cause paleness, and body weakness to the victim. Moreover, both of them flow or pour.

Next is the analysis of this euphemism using the theory of Conceptual Integration in which the features of the euphemistic term in this case 'rain' and those of the dysphemistic term 'menstruation' are presented in the form of conceptual mappings using this theory's four mental spaces. The first two spaces correspond to the source and target domains and in them the features of rain as well as those of menstruation which are presented in the form of fixed counterpart mappings are found.

Rain which is found in the source domain is mapped onto menstruation which is found in the target domain. Rain is a colorless substance while blood is red. It was observed that water got from rain has several uses which include cooking, watering plants, washing, drinking and bathing while menstrual flow is used by some Luo women to manufacture

love portions that they use to tame their men. In addition, rain plays preventive, productive and destructive roles. Preventive because when there is sufficient water, drought and famine are kept at bay. Also, crops grow well leading to high yields when rainfall is plenty. On the contrary, it can also be destructive because excess water leads to floods, which may sweep away livestock and even submerge buildings.

Menstruation has both preventive and destructive roles in the sense that the love portions manufactured from it prevent men from straying and it is destructive in the sense that excessive flow may lead to body weakness and paleness. The third mental space is the generic space which contains matched information from the source and target domains. It was noted that the information in this space includes the subjects of both input one and two, the colors of the substances, the functions as well as the roles that these subjects play. The fourth is the blended space that contains matched information projected from the generic space as well as the meaning of this euphemism which is the emergent structure. It was noted that just like rain, menstruation is a symbol of fertility and it is what the society uses to define a woman since it a woman's jewel. The fixed counterpart mappings mentioned are presented in the table that follows.

Input 1 (Source domain) Input 2 (Target domain)

Rain	—————→	Menstruation
Colorless	—————→	Red
Water	—————→	Blood
Cooking, watering plants, washing, drinking and bathing.	—————→	May be used in manufacturing love portions
Preventive, productive and	—————→	Protective and destructive roles

Generic space

Blended space

Subjects



Subjects

Colors



Colors

Substances



Substances

Functions



Functions

Roles



Roles

Emergent structure

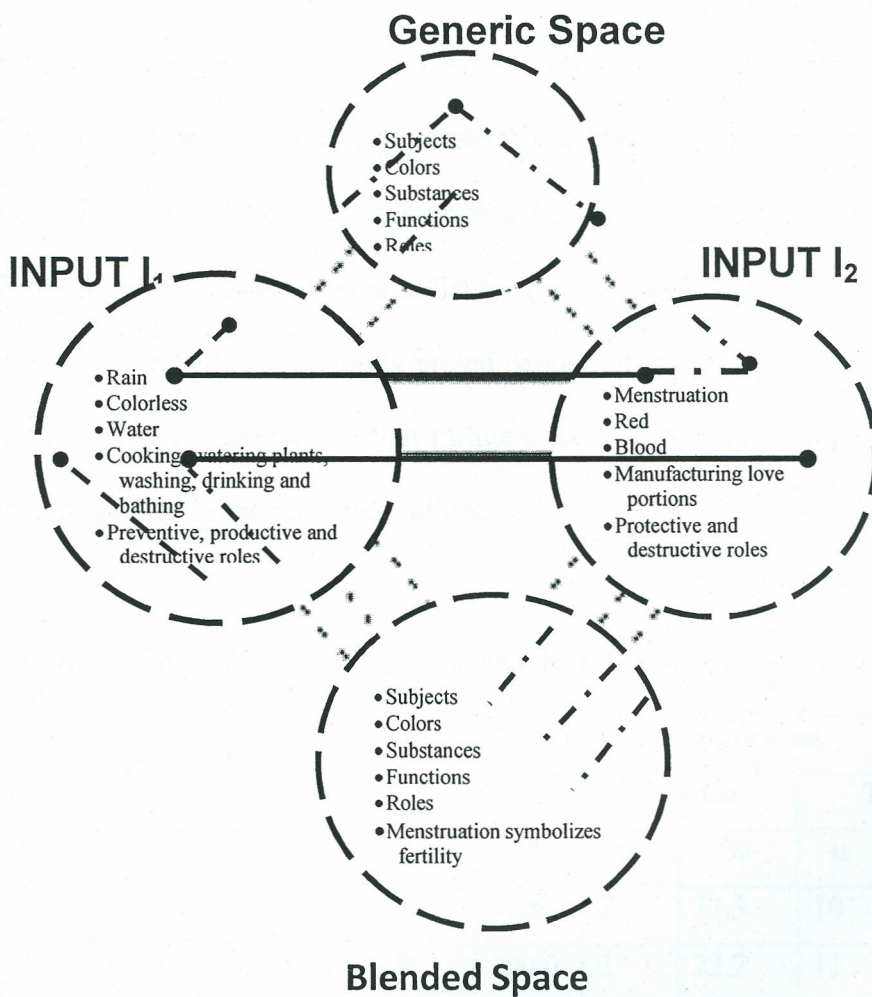


Menstruation symbolizes fertility

This euphemism takes into consideration the three component processes initiated by the proponents of theory of Conceptual Integration. In this euphemism, the elements in the source domain and those in the target domain are projected. The frames of fluids (menstrual flow and rain) are introduced in completion while in elaboration the meaning of the euphemism comes out in which case, the concept of fertility is exposed.

This euphemism satisfies several principles that include integration, topology, unpacking and good reason. The elements from the source domain are mapped onto those of the target domain thereby combining and interacting in the process. In topology, the elements in the blended space have a relationship with those in the source and target domains. The elements in the blended space can also be reconstructed and transferred back to the source and target domains where they initially originated in unpacking. For example, one of the features in the blended space is 'colors' which has a relationship with 'colorless' and 'red' which are found in the source and target domains respectively. All the elements have roles to play in the effective running of the blend hence satisfying the principle of good reason. That of web has not been satisfied because all the elements have been projected to the

blended space thereby going against the basics of this principle. Figure 21 shows the mapping of the euphemism ‘Menstruation is rain.’



**Figure 21: The mapping of the euphemism ‘Menstruation is rain’**

The next section looks at the euphemisms of ejaculation, and giving birth as well as the euphemisms of sexual intercourse.

#### 4.3.4 Euphemisms of ejaculation

Douglas (2004) posits that ejaculation is a physiological process that involves ejection of semen (usually carrying sperms) from the male reproductive tract and is usually

accompanied by orgasm. It is usually the final stage and natural objective of sexual stimulation and an essential component of natural conception. The female and male physiologies are seen as equivalent to a vessel that is cautioned not to pour away or dilute its vital fluids. In this arrangement, females are seen literally as the entry point of the male's 'pure content' (semen) and as a counterfoil to this, men are seen as pores through which the sperm is released. This configuration restricts the medium of the body to an expression of patriarchal ideology. It establishes sexuality in a singular (male) form that is preoccupied by the 'rightful' and highly prized deposit of sperm in its resting place – the female's vagina. Three euphemisms that mitigate the target domain of ejaculation were collected and displayed in the table that follows.

**Table 4.8: Euphemisms of ejaculation and their lexical frequencies**

Euphemism	Gloss	Lexical frequencies					
		Male		Female		Total	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
Layo	Urinating	7	77.8	3	33.3	10	55.6
Chuer	Pouring	9	100.0	2	22.2	11	61.1
Thek	Freeing/relieving oneself	9	100.0	9	100.0	18	100.0

Ejaculation was referred to as freeing/relieving oneself. It was argued that these are terms that are considered polite and can be used without one feeling ashamed and in the presence of both the young and the old. Ejaculation was also referred to as urinating and it was argued that this act makes men feel relieved just as one would after urinating. Among the Luo, it is believed that a man who rarely engages in sexual intercourse develops waist

problems because of the accumulation of sperms. Therefore, such a problem is solved through sexual intercourse where these accumulated sperms are ejaculated into the vagina and deposited therein. It was noted that ejaculation is euphemistically referred to as 'pouring' and this is attributed to the fact that something that is poured is one of no value. In the next section, the euphemisms of giving birth are discussed in detail.

#### **4.3.5 Euphemisms of giving birth**

Reproduction is central to all human cultures, so central it is that it shapes, affects and influences most other aspects of culture. Within African cultures, the great value attached to procreation manifests itself more glaringly in the existence of large monogamous families, the practice of polygamy and elaborate social rituals and ceremonies connected with birth, marriage, motherhood and death (Tangwa, 2008).

The social content of motherhood and the meanings attached to birthing events are a good genesis for appreciating Luo constructions of the institution. According to the Luo, giving birth is a very important as well as a frightening experience especially if complications arise. The traditional birth attendant gave the following account during the interview.

*When a woman was giving birth in the olden days, an experienced midwife was summoned to assist in the delivery process and she was assisted by other mature women. If a woman delivered a baby girl, the umbilical cord was tied round three times and if it was a baby boy it was tied round four times using a string from the mother's public dress. After cutting of the cord, the child's mother crushed some charcoal finely between her teeth and she put this mixture on the umbilical cord, which was cut off. The afterbirth (biero) was normally buried on the verandah on the left of the house for a baby boy and on the veranda on the right of the house for a baby girl. Should complications arise such that the afterbirth refuses to come out smoothly then a specialized medicine person or a knowledgeable woman was brought to insert her hand in the woman's uterus to remove it.*

Giving birth was regarded a frightening experience because of the complications that arose which could result in death. If the delivery was difficult, a member of the Luo Council of Elders had this to say:

*If a daughter-in-law experienced difficulties during birthing, her father-in-law was summoned by one of the women assisting in the delivery and informed of the situation. He had to go and collect grass from a deserted home (gunda) came with it and tied it into a small bundle and took it to the house where the woman having difficulties in delivery was. He then untied the grass on the woman and wiped her with a grinding stone as he beseeched his ancestors to allow his daughter-in-law deliver safely. If matters failed to improve then divine interventions were sought from a traditional priest.*

The euphemisms of the target domain of giving birth that were collected in the study are illustrated in table 4.9.

**Table 4.9: Euphemisms of giving birth and their lexical frequencies**

Euphemism	Gloss	Lexical frequencies					
		Male		Female		Total	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
Kelo wendo	Bringing a visitor	9	100.0	9	100.0	18	100.0
Konyruok	Getting help	9	100.0	9	100.0	18	100.0
Pogruok	Being freed from someone or something	3	33.3	7	77.8	10	55.6
Puko gimoro	Pouring something	-	0.0	9	100.0	09	50.0

It was noted that mothers are in essence the cornerstones of societies, therefore, at the moment of birth, attention is paid to two main entities: the mother and her child because it is the women are the ones who carry babies to term; they know the joys and pains that come with birthing and are therefore in better positions to describe the process using a wide range of euphemisms.

Giving birth is euphemistically referred to as 'bringing a visitor.' This is so because the Luo valued visitors as they regarded them a blessing to the family visited. It was further pointed out that the blessings that those visited got could be in the form of material or spiritual. When a household receives visitors, there is change of diet in the family as well as joy and merry making and this is likened to the joy that the birth of a child brings in a family.

Among the Luo children are valued and motherhood is revered. So important are children that a woman who has stayed without a child for a relatively long period of time after marriage is advised by her friends and close female relatives to look for a child elsewhere (*manyo oko*). This is because in the Luo culture, the idea of a childless marriage is considered to be a veritable oddity.

It was pointed out that looking for a child outside marriage involves discrete assistance from fertile male relatives (especially brothers-in-law). In this community, there is a belief that it is only the mother of the child who knows the biological father of that child. Therefore, such knowledge is considered a privileged secret that a mother is never obliged to reveal except in rare ritual contexts. As a matter of fact, childlessness is a cause of break-up of marriages as well as the justification for the widespread practice of polygamy among the Luo. Children are identified by the duties that society has stipulated for them and right from birth they are expected to grow into useful members of the society. The next part deals with the euphemisms of sexual intercourse.

### 4.3.6 Euphemisms of sexual intercourse

In the Luo traditional socio-cultural life, sex plays a very important role as it is intricately woven into the social, economic and cultural fabric. It was noted that the Luo believe that their lives revolve around sex therefore, it is an activity that is given the attention it deserves. Allan and Burridge (1991) argue that sexual intercourse may be spoken of lyrically, tenderly, beautifully and sometimes even profanely. A total of 21 euphemisms were collected in our corpus to mitigate the target domain of sexual intercourse. Table 4.10 shows the euphemisms and their lexical frequencies.

**Table 4.10: Euphemisms of sexual intercourse and their lexical frequencies**

Euphemism	Gloss	Lexical frequencies					
		Male		Female		Total	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
ando	Sleeping	5	55.6	9	100.0	14	77.8
adho	Rubbing	7	77.8	3	33.3	10	55.6
chemo	Food/ Eating	9	100.0	5	55.6	14	77.8
gamo	Chewing	9	100.0	4	44.4	13	72.2
godo	Entangling	9	100.0	3	44.4	12	66.7
gomo	Trampling	9	100.0	4	44.4	13	72.2
gogo	Touching gently	7	77.8	3	33.3	10	55.6
goro	Seducing	7	77.8	6	66.7	13	72.2
gawowo	Pricking	8	88.9	-	0.0	08	44.4
chwado kede	Beating with a stick	9	100.0	3	33.3	12	66.7
Mirruok moo	Giving each other oil	7	77.8	8	88.9	15	83.3
Bilo	Tasting	7	77.8	7	77.8	14	77.8
Caro	Nailing	6	66.7	-	0.0	06	33.3
Soyo	Inserting	6	66.7	1	11.1	07	38.9
Yadho	Eating hurriedly	5	55.6	-	0.0	05	27.8
Wdukruok	Copulation	5	55.6	1	11.1	06	33.3
Miyo mach	Giving fire	6	66.7	4	44.4	10	55.6
Miyo yunga	Giving the penis	3	33.3	3	33.3	06	33.3
Goyo siala	Beating with a markhamia tree	3	33.3	-	0.0	03	16.7
Tugo	Game/ Playing	9	100.0	7	77.8	16	88.9
Soyo gimoro	Inserting something	4	44.4	4	44.4	08	44.4

The euphemisms above clearly justify the fact that when it comes to sex in the Luo community, the woman is usually on the receiving end. It was noted that sexual intercourse should be an activity where the parties involved take part actively for positive results. However, in the Luo culture it is a one-man affair. It is the man who initiates, dominates and controls sexual interaction. Comel (2003) posits that the position of sexual power is often associated with a dominant masculinity that values risk-taking or that sees virility as a measure of a man's worth.

Sexual intercourse was referred to as food since it was argued that sexual desire makes an individual hunger for the 'food' which is used to satisfy a man's other stomach. Sex is euphemistically referred to as 'playing' because in the traditional Luo set – up, people engaged in pastime activities (such as playing *ajua*) in the evenings after working so hard during the day and sex was the game that crowned all forms of relaxation. Sex was also referred to as 'nailing' and it was argued that sexual intercourse is a game that may at times attract violent overtones in which the man, uses his tool (in this case the penis) to attack and injure an enemy (a lover).

The next section deals with the analysis of those euphemisms that could not be catered for using the Conceptual Integration theory thus prompting the researcher to use the Politeness theory in their analysis. The main tenet of the politeness theory that is applied in this case is that of saving face and the strategy used is positive politeness (cf. pg 35). In this category, euphemisms used for ritual sex that are performed in different circumstances, are explored.

#### **4.4 Ritual Sexual Intercourse**

The researcher has mentioned and shown how the euphemisms of ritual sex performed in different circumstances in the Luo set up reflect the perceptions and way of life of the Luo in the subsequent sections. Also noted are the consequences that befall a person who fails to undergo these sex related rituals. The first to be discussed are the euphemisms associated with marriage.

#### 4.4.1 Ritual sex associated with marriage

Marriage in the Luo community is not a husband and wife affair. It is the affair of the extended family and its aim is to integrate the couple into a defined social system, the complex Luo network of the extended family relations. The woman becomes part and parcel of the husband's family and clan (Ogutu, 2007).

Before going to one's matrimonial home, the parents of the bride must receive bride wealth since in this community; no marriage is recognized by both families (the bride's and the groom's) if the man never pays bride wealth. During this occasion, ritual sex is performed by the parents of the bride on the receipt of bride wealth. This type of sexual intercourse is euphemistically referred to as '*rwako nyombo*' (welcoming the bride wealth).

It was observed that on arrival at the groom's home, the bride is welcomed with pomp and color since this is a day of celebration and feasting. The groom's family invites friends and stories are told way into the night. A little flirting is allowed between the maidens that have accompanied the bride and the groom's brothers and friends. The groom's parents retire to bed early and they engage in a ritual sexual intercourse that is euphemistically referred to as '*rwako kend*' (welcoming marriage).

Way into the night the newly married couple also engages in the same ritual sex to welcome their marriage. If a twin child gets married, after the completion of the ritual sexual intercourse of welcoming their marriage, they do not share the same bed with their

spouses till morning. Tradition dictated that they separate their sleeping places with their spouses immediately upon completion of the welcoming of the marriage ritual.

It was also noted that marital sex has an important role to play in facilitating procreation. Therefore, during early pregnancy frequent sex is essential in nourishing the fetus to healthy development. This frequent sexual intercourse is euphemistically referred to as '*tego nyathi*' (strengthening the baby). The next section looks at ritual sex that is performed upon the death of different members of the family.

#### **4.4.2 Ritual sex associated with death**

Gunga (2009) posits that in the Luo community death is never seen as natural and when it occurs, explanation is sought either in witchcraft or bad medicine. When a spouse dies, there are several rituals that the bereaved spouse has to undergo and it is only after performing such rituals that they are integrated back to the society. Ogutu (2007) argues that because of the binding nature of marriage and the rituals entailed in the consummation of it, the disorientation that is caused by the death of a spouse is not a small matter among the Luo. Therefore, purification is performed so that the wife or husband is cleansed and cleared to mix freely with people and to perform his or her duties normally without undue pressures

##### **(a) Death of a husband**

Death of a husband involves specific rituals for the widow or widows. Following her husband's death, the widow had *chola* (mourning garments), which she wore till the cleansing rituals were performed. Traditionally, a widow symbolically tied a belt of

banana fibers (*okola*) around her waist and also dressed in her late husband's clothes while she observed the mourning period.

After the mourning period, a meeting was called between the widow and her in-laws. In this meeting the widow was asked whether she had a person in mind who could inherit her. Widows choices of inheritors were respected except where there was a cultural impediment such as if her choice was a person who was still in his *simba* (a young man's traditional hut) in his father's homestead for tradition demands that it is only a man who has built his homestead who is allowed to inherit a widow. Where a widow had nobody in mind, the brothers-in-law in consultation with her and the elderly women in the family, decided on who should take charge of the deceased's home. This decision was made public and all those involved were informed of the date that was set for the process of restoration and neutralizing the assumed cultural impurity to begin.

Ogutu (2007) argues that sex is central and key to the cleansing ritual and it is the genesis of placing the widow under the care of the inheritor who will assume the responsibilities of the deceased husband. At this point it is worthy to note that in the Luo culture, the widow remains the wife of the deceased and not that of the guardian or inheritor. Where a widow was still sexually active in her child bearing age, the process begins by breaking her sexual fast through obligatory sexual intercourse that is performed by *jatiek kwer* (one who finishes the forbidden). Ocholla – Ayayo (1996) notes that:

A *jakowiny*, a sexual perverse or a psychopath capable of doing what normal human beings cannot do, is persuaded to perform a sexual cord cutting ritual to separate the widow from her deceased husband, so that the widow may be free to remarry or be inherited. It is preferable that the *jatiek kwer* be an outsider because

his undertaking to cleanse the widow means his assuming 'uncleanliness', thus accepting to be separated from the clan (1996:4).

It was noted that tradition demands that ritual sex must be penetrative to facilitate mixing of fluids. If this does not happen then cleansing is said not to have taken place and this is why in some cases an elderly woman who is a member of the family usually observes this ritual cleansing ceremony to ascertain that the penis penetrates the widow's vagina to effect cultural cleansing. It was also noted that where a widow had reached menopause, there was no sexual intercourse involved rather, a symbolic format was put in place and this involved the inheritor either staying vigil in the widow's house and hanging his clothes in the widow's bedroom or giving her a roll of tobacco.

In polygamous marriages widow cleansing ceremonies did not necessarily take place on the same night for all widows since junior widows could only be visited by their chosen guardians after the cleansing of the senior widow. In all cases the venue of the ritual was the deceased's house where the widow had continued living.

After the rituals, the responsibility of taking care of the widow and her offspring was now vested on the guardian and those who failed to perform their roles were divorced and new guardians chosen with the help of elders. It was also noted that on the night of '*chodo okola*' (breaking the banana fiber) if the widow had married sons, then these sons were not supposed to engage in sexual intercourse with their wives. '*Chodo okola*' is the euphemistic term that is used to refer to the sexual ritual that takes place after the death of the husband to free his wife from his ghost. Another observation made was that if a post-

menopausal widow died before the observance of the cleansing ritual, a person was hired either to lie on top of her without performing any sexual act or alternatively, the person lifted his leg and pointed his penis at the vagina of the corpse without penetrative sex.

If a widow who was still in the child-bearing age died before being cleansed a psychopath was hired to perform a sexual act on her in which case, he was expected to put the deceased's legs apart and perform penetrative sex on her in the full view of those who were observing the cleansing ritual to ensure that it was done in accordance with the demands of tradition. Next is the ritual sexual intercourse observed by a man whose wife passes on and the euphemistic expression used to refer to it.

#### **(b) Death of a wife**

Upon the death of a wife, a husband also acquires a state of cultural pollution and just like a widow the widower too is expected by the Luo customs to undergo a cleansing ritual though not as detailed as a widow's. The widower's movements as well as social interactions are restricted for about a fortnight after the death and burial of his wife. During this period, he has to stay at home awaiting sexual purification (*chodo kode*).

It was noted that the widower must dream that he is having sex with the dead wife and he must have wet dreams. This act cleanses him from cultural pollution as he symbolically fulfils his sexual duty to his late wife. This process is euphemistically referred to as *gonyo* (freeing). There is no short cut to it and there are no telling lies about it since the normative role has to be adhered to.

After being set free, the widower can now continue using their bedroom. It was pointed out that being set free is dependent on how the couple related with each other in life such that a wife who was never loved by the husband might decide to retaliate in death by refusing to symbolically free her husband hence making him 'a prisoner.' If the symbolic sexual intercourse was taking too long to materialize, the victim was advised to put his wife's pant under the pillow while he slept at night as this it is believed would in some cases speed up the process. After completing the freeing process, a widower could opt for an unsuspecting sex worker, pay for her services and get over the ritual pollution.

Ogutu (2007) posits that there are moral justifications for widowhood rituals among the Luo. Firstly, these rituals are a sacred practice at the heart of the Luo culture and they ensure the future prosperity of the home that is, they 'open the way' for future familial well being and growth. Secondly, the widow's offspring are made free to engage in activities such as farming, marriage and construction of homes when the right time comes. Thirdly, the rituals bring about renewal and regeneration after death. Moreover, they accord the widow or widower a sense of belonging and continued contractual responsibility and respect for the dead as well as ensuring that the rights and privileges of the widow are not infringed and the family not exploited.

### **(c) Death of a child**

When a child dies, the parents must observe certain rituals in accordance with the Luo customs. It was noted that after the burial of the child, that night, the parents must engage

in sexual intercourse which is euphemistically referred to as *tieko lop nyathi* (completing the soil of the dead child). The husband has to stay in the bereaved woman's house till the grave is swept then he spends one more night in this house after which he has freedom to go and sleep in the houses of his other wives if he is polygamous. Next is the sex ritual that married children observe upon the death of either parent.

#### **(d) Death of parents**

When parents die certain rituals must be observed by married sons and daughters. After the burial of either parent, it is time for the children (married ones) to observe the sex-related rituals. The eldest son goes to sleep in his house on this night where he and his wife engage in sexual intercourse which is euphemistically referred to as *tieko lop wuoro* (finishing the soil of the father) in case it is the death of a male parent or *tieko lop miyo* (finishing the soil of the mother) if it is a female parent. It was posited that if the eldest son does not have a wife while other sons have, he has to go and look for a woman with whom to perform this sexual ritual and this is where sex workers come in handy. After this, the other sons can engage in the same ritual with their wives.

The married daughters also have to *kee* (disperse) after the death of either parent. Dispersing in this case is a polite term that is used to refer to the sexual intercourse that the daughters and their husbands engage in after the burial of the woman's parent and it starts with the eldest daughter who goes back to her matrimonial home where on the night of her arrival, she engages in the ritual sexual intercourse with her husband so that she can

complete the soil of her dead parent. It is only after performing this ritual that a polygamous man is allowed to visit the house of other wives and have sex with them.

It was noted that it is only after the eldest daughter has performed this ritual that the younger married sisters do. Just like the eldest son if the eldest daughter is not married and her younger sisters are, she has to look for a man with whom to carry out the sex ritual. Before dispersing, such a daughter is called by her elderly aunts and grandmothers and she is reminded of the significance of the ritual and advised on how to go about it for tradition demands that she must disperse after the death of either parent before her younger married sisters. The next section mentions and discusses the euphemisms associated with ritual sexual intercourse performed by parents on the arrival of a new born.

#### **4.4.3 Ritual sex associated with birth**

In this part, the researcher discusses the euphemism that is used to refer to ritual sex that parents of a new born baby perform. Also mentioned are the reasons why this ritual sexual intercourse is undertaken.

##### **(a) Birth of a child**

Among the Luo women are expected to produce many children and births should follow at regular intervals. Women especially need sons to symbolically carry on the male lineage and to practically support them in old age (Shipton, 1989). If a baby boy is born, it is taken outside the house for the first time after four days and if it is a baby girl, it is taken outside for the first time after three days. This ceremony is referred to as '*chien'g yiego nyathi* (the day of taking a newly born outside for the first time).

On this day, the parents have ritual sex for the first time since the birth of the child, the euphemism for this sexual ritual is *ng'ado imbo nyathi* (ritual sex connected with the birth of a child). This ritual is undertaken in order to maintain the fertility of the woman as well as to promote the continuity of a generation. It was noted that the ritual sex connected with giving birth was not performed if a woman gave birth to twins for it was believed that should it be carried out, then this woman would never conceive again.

Mboya (2001) argues that the sexual ritual is important since it 'guards' the child against sex-related dysphemisms such as adultery especially on the part of the mother. The ritual also frees the mother as other women and children are now permitted to enter her house. This ritual is very significant especially in a polygamous setting and should the husband sleep with other wives before having a ritual sexual intercourse with the wife who has given birth then, she cannot conceive again. The section that follows discusses the euphemisms used to refer to the ritual sexual intercourse undertaken during the different stages of the farming process.

#### **4.4.4 Ritual sex associated with the farming process**

Mboya (2001) argues that the Luo are an industrious people and this community thinks highly of a man whose hard work provides food for his family throughout the year. Shipton (1989) further adds that women's productive capacity is also valued and they are expected to produce food for their own children and husbands. The surplus from the women's agricultural activities is also needed for other day-to-day expenses such as clothing, soap and salt.

(a) **Land preparation**

The farming process among the Luo starts with land preparation and during this time, a polygamous man first goes to his own personal farm (*mondo*) with all members of his family as this marks the beginning of the land preparation process. Sexual intercourse takes place to mark the onset of land preparation and the euphemism that is used for this sexual intercourse is *golo pur* (beginning of ploughing). This sexual ritual is undertaken to bring order, discipline and preparedness during this period.

Order is brought in the sense that it is the first wife who initiates land preparation after which the other wives follow. For married sons likewise, protocol has to be followed such that the first son prepares his land before the others. All the members of the home must maintain discipline and follow the stipulated rules and regulations laid down during the farming period.

(b) **Sowing**

Protocol continues to be observed during the sowing period in which case parents sow before the children and the senior wife also sows before the other wives. Moreover, the night before the sowing process, the head of the family engages in ritual sexual intercourse which is euphemistically referred to as *golo kodhi*, (removing seeds) with his wife or first wife in case of polygamous settings. Family members are again reminded to be cautious during this time.

Mboya (2001) posited that after the owner of the home had fulfilled this sexual ritual with his wife, the following day the two sow seeds. Other wives would wait for the seeds in the eldest wife's garden to germinate before they sow seeds in their respective farms. Such precautions are taken because of the jealousy and hatred that might exist between co-wives and cunning first wives may see this as an opportunity to hit back at the other wives, who they blame for interfering in their marriages. During the farming process, Luo tradition dictates that a widow finds a sexual partner otherwise, her grown up children whether married or not cannot plant seeds on their farms.

### (c) **Harvesting**

During the harvesting time, another sexual ritual takes place and this is euphemistically referred to as *duogo kodhi e dala* (returning the seeds to the homestead). This ritual sexual intercourse brings joy to the people concerned as the work of their hands has been blessed by the harvest gotten and they also have seeds in readiness for the next planting season. Rules are still applied at this juncture. The following section looks at the euphemisms that are used when different ritual sexual intercourse, which is associated with fishing are performed.

#### **4.4.5 Ritual sex associated with fishing**

The Luo adapted fishing, a major economic activity, when they migrated south from Sudan centuries ago. They used long nets and lines to draw Tilapia and other species of fish, including the Nile perch whose introduction into the lake in the mid 1960's has upset the lake's delicate ecosystem (Mojola, 2008). Mboya (2001) posits that when men are preparing to go and cut dried papyrus that are used to make fish traps, tradition dictates that they should not engage in sexual intercourse this is because it is believed that having

sex will make them 'unclean' as a result this would later prohibit them from making a good catch using these fish traps. They were only free to engage in sex after the completion of these tasks. Moreover, so serious were the rules regarding fishing that even a person preparing the *ugali* that would be used as bait in rod fishing was to remain 'clean' if a bountiful catch was expected. Also, a menstruating woman was not allowed to touch the fishing net.

The night after the net had been cast into the water and the first catch from it retrieved, the owner of this net engaged in ritual sexual intercourse with his wife. This ritual is euphemistically referred to as *guedho gogo* (blessing the net). It was posited that on the night after the boat is put on the water to start its operations, the owner of the boat must engage in sex with his wife. This ritual is politely referred to as *guedho yie* (blessing the boat).

Should the owner of the boat still be living in his father's homestead then this sexual ritual is bestowed upon his parents who bless the boat so that it can bring good fortunes. Moreover, blessing the boat is for the purposes of prosperity as well as productivity. Next is a section that looks at the euphemism that is associated with ritual sex that is performed during the process of building a home.

#### **4.4.6 Ritual sex associated with building a home**

It was noted that building a home (*goyo ligala*) is an important ceremony in the Luo community. One of the elders interviewed had this to say: *in the past when someone wanted to establish a home, it was the father of such a person to identify the spot where the son was to establish the new home. As a sign that he had selected a specific spot, he would tie grass together in that place. In certain clans, a diviner would be consulted to*

*find out if the place the father had chosen was the best for the son. The diviner played cowry shells and on seeing a problem ahead in the new home, told the man not to leave his father's home. If he said that there would be peace, then the man proceeded to establish his new home there. The night before the man sets up his new home if he is polygamous, he spends the night in the house of the first wife from where he goes to start the new home. On the day of establishing this new home, the man, his first wife and his eldest son are the ones who go to the site accompanied by the man's father if he is still alive and his father's brother. The man would on this day carry an axe and a machete, his son a cock and his wife foodstuff. On the first night of building the new home, the first wife and the husband engage in sexual intercourse in the newly built home. This is referred to as 'rwako dala' (welcoming the new home). This is done to fulfill the requirements of a new home. Also, it is only after this ritual act has been fulfilled that the new home would be officially theirs. The sexual ritual is additionally important because sons would build their huts and they would have sex with their wives in their houses so the parents had to 'pave way' for them by engaging in the sex ritual since they are the owners of the new home. If a woman who was widowed and had reached menopause wanted to establish a new home, she got one of the men she called a brother-in-law to establish the home for her. The man came, cut trees and oversaw the construction of houses in the new home. When everything was complete, in the night he would light a fire in the house and they would both sit around it chatting. When it was time to sleep, he would hang his cloth in this new house and go back to his house. The following day, he would go to check on the woman. Since this woman had reached menopause, sexual ritual for welcoming a new home was not performed.*

Ritual sexual intercourse is a pointer to a new beginning in one's life. It means that one has moved to a higher level socially where they now assume full responsibility in their 'new' homes. It is also a sign of maturity since all the decisions taken henceforth lie squarely in the hands of the head of such a home. This ritual brings goodwill to the occupants of the new home as such, the home is blessed and just like a plant that flourishes when watered, the home too flourishes after this act.

It was noted that the Luo believe that failure to go through traditional cleansing rituals including the sex-related ones mentioned above leads to 'chira,' which Ochola-Ayayo (1976) defines as a misfortune that can befall a person and his or her family for acting contrary to the prescribed rules that govern particular forms of social behavior. He further

posits that 'chira' will underline all moral acts, the consequences of which may inflict misfortune, suffering and punishment upon the individual and his or her family. The breaking of the law may cause death to the children or may prevent a family from producing one sex; female or male children. The next section discusses in detail the relationship between gender and age in the choice and usage of sex euphemisms.

#### **4.5 The Relationship between Gender and Age in the Choice and Usage of Euphemisms**

This part deals with the analysis of the third objective which is discussing the relationship between gender and age in the usage of euphemisms. The sex related euphemisms analyzed in this study are those that deal with the male and female sexual organs, sexual intercourse, the physiological processes of menstruation, ejaculation as well as giving birth. The lexical frequencies of these euphemisms are presented taking into account the variables of gender and age. Thereafter, inferential statistics is carried out to ascertain whether the differences noted are significant or not. A Chi- square test is used because of the nominal nature of the data.

##### **4.5.1 The euphemisms of the penis based on gender and age**

To begin with, a total of thirty one euphemisms were collected for the male sexual organ and these were presented using six conceptual mappings of weapon, tree, animal, reptile, leg/protrusion of body and a tool for work taking into account the variables of gender and age. Thereafter, a Chi- square test was carried for each of these two variables to determine

whether or not they have an influence on the choice and usage of the sex-related euphemisms in the study. Table 4.11 shows the euphemisms of the penis based on gender.

	Male	Female	Male	Female
1	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
2	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
3	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
4	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
5	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
6	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
7	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
8	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
9	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
10	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
11	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
12	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
13	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
14	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
15	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
16	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
17	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
18	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
19	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
20	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
21	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
22	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
23	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
24	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
25	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
26	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
27	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
28	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
29	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
30	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
31	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
32	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
33	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
34	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
35	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
36	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
37	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
38	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
39	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
40	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
41	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
42	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
43	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
44	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
45	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
46	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
47	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
48	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
49	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
50	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
51	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
52	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
53	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
54	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
55	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
56	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
57	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
58	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
59	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
60	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
61	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
62	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
63	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
64	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
65	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
66	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
67	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
68	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
69	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
70	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
71	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
72	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
73	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
74	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
75	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
76	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
77	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
78	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
79	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
80	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
81	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
82	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
83	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
84	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
85	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
86	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
87	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
88	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
89	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
90	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
91	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
92	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
93	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
94	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
95	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
96	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
97	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
98	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
99	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
100	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

**Table 4.11: Euphemisms of the penis and their lexical frequencies**

Euphemism	Gloss	Male		Female		Total	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
En	Tree	4	44.4	7	77.8	11	61.1
Alala	Markahamia tree	2	22.2	6	66.7	8	44.4
Machier	Black mamba	4	44.4	8	88.9	12	66.7
Muga	Black rhinoceros	5	55.6	9	100.0	14	77.8
Mwath	Bull	3	33.3	7	77.8	10	55.6
Malam	Pen	5	55.6	3	33.3	8	44.4
Mupur	Hoe/jembe	6	66.7	4	44.4	10	55.6
Mondo	A type of traditional tree	1	11.1	4	44.4	5	27.8
Mede	Stick	6	66.7	8	88.9	14	77.8
Muth	A walking stick	9	100.0	7	77.8	16	88.9
Masira	Danger/ calamity	6	66.7	7	77.8	13	72.2
Matuchi	Something used to make a hole/ opening	5	55.6	7	77.8	12	66.7
Mwer	Plough	5	55.6	3	33.3	8	44.4
Magwar	A fork	6	66.7	5	55.6	11	61.1
Mhuma	Metal	7	77.8	8	88.9	15	83.3
Me	Axe	6	66.7	4	44.4	10	55.6
Mungu	Club	5	55.6	9	100.0	14	77.8
Melo machiek	Short leg	6	66.7	8	88.9	14	77.8
Meke	A straw	9	100.0	3	33.3	12	66.7
Myim	That which is in front	6	66.7	9	100.0	15	83.3
Mir tich	A tool for work	9	100.0	7	77.8	16	88.9
Makula	A bent individual	7	77.8	-	0.0	7	38.9
Mala	Sword	9	100.0	5	55.6	14	77.8
Melo mar adek	A third leg	2	22.2	7	77.8	9	50.0
Mhuma maliet	A hot metal	1	11.1	4	44.4	5	27.8
Makuny	Something used to make a hole/ opening	4	44.4	1	11.1	5	27.8
Muong'	Private part	9	100.0	9	100.0	18	100.0
Magina	Gun	4	44.4	6	66.7	10	55.6
Mach	Fire	9	100.0	7	77.8	16	88.9
Moboko	A type of Congolese music	2	22.2	-	0.0	2	11.1
Mjwan'g muofu	Blind Ojwan'g	6	66.7	3	33.3	9	50.0

From Table 4.11, six conceptual mappings for penis as shown in Table 4.12 were identified. In the latter, lexical frequencies and percentages of conceptual mappings in terms of gender were elaborately displayed. These conceptual mappings were arrived at by grouping the euphemisms thematically.

**Table 4.12: Conceptual mappings in the interpretation of the euphemisms of the penis on the basis of gender**

Conceptual mappings for the penis	Males		Females	
	n	%	n	%
Weapon	56	22.95	61	26.07
Tree	17	6.97	25	10.68
Animal	8	3.28	16	6.84
Reptile	11	4.51	17	7.26
A leg / protrusion of body	75	30.74	61	26.07
A tool for work	77	31.55	54	23.08
<b>Total</b>	<b>244</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>234</b>	<b>100.0</b>

From the results presented in Table 4.12 above, it was observed that women (26.07%) conceptualized the penis more as a weapon than men (22.95%). This may be attributed to the fact the penis is a tool that is used to subject women to violence since the vagina is regarded as an enemy. Women also view the penis as a weapon more than their male counterparts. This is because sexual intercourse is seen as war and during a fight, warriors must carry weapons that will help them battle and eventually come out as conquerors by emerging victorious. Women additionally conceptualize the penis more as a tree than men. This could be attributed to the fact that the penis just like a tree is a source of life. Also, the seeds from a tree give life to other trees and even human beings just like the 'seeds' from the penis give life to other human beings during reproduction. Moreover, the shape of the tree is also likened to the shape of the penis when it is erect.

Women conceptualize the penis more as an animal and a reptile than men do. This is because snakes are dangerous and when they bite they produce poisonous venoms that may lead to the death of the victim. Moreover, when the penis forcefully penetrates the vagina in incidences of rape or defilement, the victim may suffer serious bodily harm, trauma and deadly infections like HIV/AIDS or even death. Animals like black rhinoceros on the other hand, are also very dangerous and when they attack an individual they cause grievous harm just the way the penis can also cause harm to the vagina.

Men conceptualize the penis more as a tool of work than women. This is because of the many duties that the penis plays such as instilling discipline, providing pleasure, procreation and transportation. For example, it provides pleasure during coitus, plays an instrumental role in procreation, transports both urine and sperms, the latter being the seeds of life. Lastly, it instills discipline on the vagina which is considered a deviant and insatiable organ.

Further analysis involved carrying out Chi-square test to determine whether or not the differences observed are statistically significant. The results of the analysis are summarized and presented in Table 4.13.

**Table 4.13: Results of Chi-square Test on the gender variable in the interpretation of the euphemisms of the penis**

Pearson Chi-square value	5.143
Degrees of freedom (df)	1
Significant value (p) at 95% confidence level	0.023*

Significant at 0.05\*

From Table 4.13 above it was noted that the variations in the interpretation of the penis are significant. The results of the Chi-square test reveal that the computed value 5.143 is greater than the critical value at 0.05 level of significance hence the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the interpretation of the penis between males and females is rejected. This means that men and women conceptualize the penis differently. The study further sought to establish the differences in the euphemisms used to refer to the penis across the age brackets. The results of the findings are summarized and presented in Table 4.14.

**Table 4.14: Age as a variable in the Euphemisms of the penis**

Euphemism	Gloss	20-40 years		41-60 years		Above 60 years	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
Tien	Tree	2	33.3	4	66.7	5	83.3
Sala	Markahamia tree	3	50.0	2	33.3	3	50.0
Machier	Black mamba	3	50.0	4	66.7	5	83.3
Omuga	Black rhinoceros	3	50.0	5	83.3	6	100.0
Kwath	Bull	2	33.3	4	66.7	4	66.7
Kalam	Pen	5	83.3	3	50.0	0	0.0
Rapur	Hoe/jembe	2	33.3	3	50.0	5	83.3
Pondo	A type of traditional tree	0	0.0	1	16.7	4	66.7
Kede	Stick	6	100.0	4	66.7	4	66.7
Luth	A walking stick	5	83.3	5	83.3	6	100.0
Masira	Danger/ calamity	6	100.0	6	100.0	1	16.7
Ratuchi	Something used to make a hole/ opening	2	33.3	6	100.0	4	66.7
Kwer	Plough	0	0.0	5	83.3	3	50.0
Ragwar	A fork	0	0.0	6	100.0	5	83.3
Chuma	Metal	6	100.0	6	100.0	3	50.0
Le	Axe	2	33.3	4	66.7	4	66.7
Rungu	Club	6	100.0	5	83.3	3	50.0
Tielo machiek	Short leg	6	100.0	6	100.0	2	33.3
Seke	A straw	4	66.7	4	66.7	4	66.7
Nyim	That which is in front	6	100.0	4	66.7	5	83.3
Gir Tich	A tool for work	6	100.0	6	100.0	4	66.7
Rakula	A bent individual	1	16.7	3	50.0	3	50.0
Pala	Sword	6	100.0	5	83.3	3	50.0
Tielo mar adek	A third leg	4	66.7	4	66.7	1	16.7
Chuma maliet	A hot metal	4	66.7	1	16.7	0	0.0
Rakuny	Something used to make a hole/ opening	1	16.7	4	66.7	0	0.0
Duong'	Private part	6	100.0	6	100.0	6	100.0
Magina	Gun	6	100.0	4	66.7	0	0.0
Mach	Fire	4	66.7	6	100.0	6	100.0
Ojwan'g muofu	Blind Ojwan'g	6	100.0	3	50.0	0	0.0

From Table 4.14 it was observed that there are variations in the euphemisms used to refer to the penis across the age brackets. The euphemism 'your thing' and 'private part' are used equally across these age brackets. This is because the euphemism 'private part' is a polite term which is used to show respect and it can be used in the presence of both the young and the old without one feeling ashamed. Also, this term (private part) is used equally across the age brackets because the penis is not only valued but also treasured. Moreover, it is an organ that plays a significant role in procreation.

Similarly the euphemism 'straw' is used equally across the age brackets. This is because the straw is an instrument that is used by peers during the drinking of the traditional brew *kong'o*. The euphemism *Loboko* is used by those in the age bracket of 20-40 years. This is attributed to the fact that *Loboko* is a type of Congolese music that has sexual connotations as such; it is liked and enjoyed by the younger generation.

The euphemisms *pondo* and *siala* are commonly used by those above 60 years of age as compared to the other two age brackets. This is attributed to the fact that the trees mentioned, are species that were only common in the olden days but because of constant deforestation as well as logging, such species of trees have become rare and are on the verge of extinction. Therefore, few people in the age bracket of 20-40 years may be acquainted with them.

Euphemisms keep on changing and each generation comes up with its own euphemisms as evidenced in the table. This leads to the birth of novel euphemisms such as *Ojwan'g the*

*blind* and 'pen.' Among the Luo, the penis is considered blind but despite this visual impairment, it still finds its way into the vagina without being guided when erect.

The vagina and the penis are also associated with tools of learning. Moreover, writing, a learning activity, is likened to sex. In this context, a pen is likened to a penis and a book to the vagina. The euphemism 'axe' is used by those in the age bracket of above 60 years since this group attaches a lot of significance to this equipment which plays an important role during home establishment ceremonies. Table 4.15 shows the conceptual mappings in the interpretation of the penis on the basis of age.

**Table 4.15: conceptual mappings in the interpretation of euphemisms of the penis on the basis of age**

Conceptual mappings for the penis	20-40 years		41-60 years		Above 60 years	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Weapon	49	30.82	42	23.33	26	17.45
Tree	9	5.66	14	7.78	19	12.75
Animal	5	3.14	9	5.00	10	6.71
Reptile	9	5.66	10	5.56	9	6.04
A leg /protrusion of body	48	30.19	51	28.33	37	24.84
A tool for work	39	24.53	54	30.00	48	32.21
<b>Total</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>100.0</b>

From Table 4.15 it was noted that the highest frequency (49) for the use of words that relate the penis to weapon is noted among those aged 20 to 40 years. The use of words relating the penis to tree is highest among those aged over 60 years (19), this is same with

animal (10). Words relating the penis to reptile, a leg/ body protrusion and a tool for work are highest among those aged between 41 to 60 years (10, 51 and 54 respectively).

Words relating the penis to a tool of work are more frequent. Among those aged between 20 to 40 years, the most frequent words relate the penis to a weapon (30.82%), those aged between 41 to 60 years and above 60 years, a tool for work (30.0% and 32.21% respectively). In order to find out if the differences noted are statistically significant a Chi-square test was carried out. The results of the Chi-square test are summarized and presented in Table 4.16.

**Table 4.16: Results of Chi-square Test on the age variable in the interpretation of euphemisms of the penis**

Pearson Chi-square value	8.550
Degrees of freedom (df)	2
Significant value (p) at 95% confidence level	0.014

Significant at 0.05\*

From Table 4.16, it was pointed out that the variations in the interpretation of the penis on the basis of age is significant. The results of the Chi-square test reveal that the computed value 8.550 is greater than the critical value at 0.05 level of significance hence the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the interpretation of the penis on the basis of age is rejected. This means that people of different age categories conceptualize the penis differently. The section that follows discusses in detail the euphemisms of the

vagina on the basis of gender and age. Also shown are the Chi-square tests performed to determine whether or not these variables influence the usage of euphemisms of the vagina.

#### 4.5.2 The euphemisms of vagina based on gender and age

A total of twenty four euphemisms were collected then presented using nine conceptual mappings of food, wealth, garden, medicine, river, a passage, an organ, tool and place. Then, Chi- square tests were carried out to determine if gender and age variables have influence on the choice and usage of the euphemisms of the vagina. Table 4.17 illustrates the euphemisms of the vagina based on the variable of gender.

**Table 4.17: Euphemisms of the vagina and their lexical frequencies**

Euphemism	Gloss	Lexical Frequencies					
		Male		Female		Total	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
Duong'	Private part	9	100.0	9	100.0	18	100.0
Puodho	Garden	8	88.9	6	66.7	14	77.8
Gir lach	Something used to urinate	6	66.7	6	66.7	12	66.7
Soko	Stream	4	44.4	9	100.0	13	72.2
Bungu	Forest	7	77.8	5	55.6	12	66.7
Chiemo	Food	9	100.0	6	66.7	15	83.3
Yadh nindo	Medicine for sleep	7	77.8	6	66.7	13	72.2
Dag nyuol	Channel of birth	5	55.6	9	100.0	14	77.8
Bugo	A hole	4	44.4	2	22.2	6	33.3
Mwandu	Wealth	4	44.4	8	88.9	12	66.7
Aora madiere	The middle river	5	55.6	8	88.9	13	72.2
Rangach	Gate	4	44.4	8	88.9	12	66.7
Ng'wen	A type of flying ant	4	44.4	3	33.3	7	38.8
Dek	A type of vegetable	6	66.7	5	55.6	11	61.1
Oganda	Bean	4	44.4	3	33.3	7	38.8
Agucha	My pot	2	22.2	7	77.7	9	50.0
Migingo	Name of an island	3	33.3	0	0.0	3	16.6
Kar nyodo	A place for giving birth	4	44.4	8	88.9	12	66.7
Nyanja	My tomatoes	8	88.9	6	66.7	14	77.8
Okong'o	Clitoris	2	22.2	2	22.2	4	22.2
Buk	A book	6	66.7	6	66.7	12	66.7
Giri	Your thing	9	100.0	9	100.0	18	100.0
Okweya	Cooler	8	88.9	6	66.7	14	77.8
Mor kich	Honey	8	88.9	5	55.6	13	72.2

In table 4.18 that follows, lexical frequencies and percentages of conceptual mappings for the vagina in terms of gender were shown. These conceptual mappings were arrived at by grouping the euphemisms into categories of wealth, food, organ, passage, river, medicine and garden.

**Table 4.18: Conceptual mappings in the interpretation of euphemisms of the vagina on the basis of gender**

Conceptual mappings for the vagina	Males		Females	
	n	%	n	%
Organ	29	19.21	34	20.00
Garden	15	9.93	11	6.47
Passage	26	17.22	46	27.05
River	9	5.96	17	10.00
Food	42	27.81	29	17.05
Medicine	7	4.64	6	3.53
Wealth	10	6.62	14	8.24
Tool	10	6.62	13	7.64
Place	3	1.99	0	0.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The results in Table 4.18 reveal that men conceptualize the vagina more as food, medicine, garden and place than women. It is conceptualized as food because sexual intercourse is referred to as 'eating.' When one eats, they get satisfaction and because of the nature of the work that men do, they require more physical strength than women in order to undertake the tasks before them. This other 'food' (vagina) satisfies the man and gives him the strength to do other duties unperturbed.

Food is usually sweet; this could be likened to the sweet pleasure that men get from the vagina during sexual intercourse. Also, the absence of certain types of food in the diet could lead a person to suffer from a certain disease and if action is not taken such person's health may deteriorate. This is the same case with absence of sexual intercourse in a male adult's life. Those men who are sexually starved normally complain of waist pains and this may prevent them from carrying out their duties effectively meaning that without this

'food' life may be unbearable to them. Just as metal tools need to be oiled for them to function efficiently, in the same way a penis needs to be oiled during coitus so that the man may carry out his duties efficiently and effectively.

The men, moreover, conceptualize the vagina more as medicine for sleep than women. This could be attributed to the fact that after a hard day's job a person needs to relax and this could be in the form of sleep. It was noted that the duties that men undertake during the day crowned by sexual intercourse at night make them very tired because they sap energy. Therefore, one is bound to fall asleep due to exhaustion.

Men generally conceptualize the vagina as medicine. It is a known fact that medicine cures ailments just as the vagina can cure stress and it can also calm a man's body when his temperature rises and his penis becomes erect. The vagina to an extent is regarded as a pain reliever and once the penis penetrates it the man springs back to life.

Men also conceptualize the vagina more as a forest than women. This may be attributed to the fact that in the Luo tradition society, it is the men who are vested with the responsibilities of establishing homes as well as taking care of their families. A forest has trees, grass and even shrubs and these trees provide timber that can be used for various purposes such as building houses, making domestic items such as furniture and some trees have edible fruits. Moreover, grass from forests can also be used to thatch roofs for mud-walled huts and also as food for domesticated animals such as cattle and sheep. Therefore, forests are more beneficial to men than to women in this society.

On the same account, men liken the vagina to a forest since it is beneficial to them just as a forest is. Apart from cooling their temperatures during coitus, the vagina also performs several functions. The vagina acts as a receptacle of the penis and the ejaculated sperms which meet with the ovum and upon fertilization, conception occurs. It also acts as a passageway for the baby during birth (Graap, 1998). In the traditional Luo set up, a man who had many children was considered wealthy and was the envy of his peers.

Women on the other hand conceptualize the vagina more as a passage of birth than men. This could be attributed to the fact that birthing is a process that is experienced by women and one of the duties of the vagina is acting as a passageway for the baby during birth. Women also conceptualize the vagina more as a river than do men. This is because the physiological process of menstruation which is associated with women is likened to the flow of water in a river and menstruation is a topic that men consider messy to talk about.

Women in addition conceptualize the vagina more as wealth as compared to their male counterparts. This could be attributed to the fact that the vagina is the passageway for babies and in the traditional Luo society, women and children were regarded as wealth. Therefore, the more wives and children a man had, the wealthier he was considered to be.

Some women see the vagina as wealth in the sense that menstrual flow from it is used to make love portions which are used to trap men especially those that are regarded to be of high economic standing in the society. This could justify the saying 'use what you have to

get what you want'. In these days and times certain women have resorted to using their wealth (vaginas) as a source of earning a livelihood. They practice prostitution to make ends meet.

Women conceptualize the vagina more as an organ than men. This is because of the duties that the vagina plays. Firstly, it plays an important role in procreation and in pleasure-giving. Secondly, Graap (1998) notes that it serves as a receptacle for a man's penis and his ejaculated sperms which may meet the ovum and when fertilization takes place, conception occurs.

Thirdly, it provides a passageway for the baby during birth from the uterus to the outside. Fourthly, it provides pleasure in the sense that during sexual intercourse, the vaginal walls secrete a watery substance which serves as a lubricant during coitus. Lastly, the vagina also acts as a transport channel since it transports urine and menstrual flow which are considered waste products. Further analysis involved carrying out a Chi-square test to determine whether or not the differences observed are statistically significant. The results of the analysis are summarized and presented in Table 4.19.

**Table 4.19: Results of Chi-square Test on gender in the interpretation of euphemisms of the vagina**

Pearson Chi-square value	6.923
Degrees of freedom (df)	1
Significant value (p) at 95% confidence level	0.009*

Significant at 0.05\*

From Table 4.19 it was observed that the variations in the interpretation of the vagina are significant on the basis of gender. The results of the Chi-square test reveal that the computed value 6.923 is greater than the critical value at 0.05 level of significance hence the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the interpretation of the vagina between males and females is rejected. This means that men and women conceptualize the vagina differently. The study further sought to establish the differences in the euphemisms used to refer to the vagina across the age brackets. The results of the findings are summarized and presented in Table 4.20.

**Table 4.20: Age as a variable in the Euphemisms of the vagina**

Euphemism	Gloss	20-40 years		41-60 years		Above 60 years	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
Duong'	Private part	6	100.0	6	100.0	6	100.0
Puodho	Garden	4	66.7	5	83.3	5	83.3
Gir lach	Something used to urinate	5	83.3	5	83.3	2	33.3
Soko	Stream	3	50.0	6	100.0	4	66.7
Bungu	Forest	4	66.7	4	66.7	4	66.7
Chiemo	Food	6	100.0	5	83.3	4	66.7
Yadh nindo	Medicine for sleep	6	100.0	6	100.0	1	16.7
Dag nyuol	Channel of birth	4	66.7	4	66.7	6	100.0
Bugo	A hole	4	66.7	2		0	0.0
Mwandu	Wealth	6	100.0	4	66.7	2	33.3
Aora madiere	The middle river	5	100.0	4	66.7	4	66.7
Rangach	Gate	3	100.0	6	100.0	3	50.0
Ng'wen	A type of flying ant	4	66.7	3	50.0	0	0.0
Dek	A type of vegetable	3	50.0	4	66.7	4	66.7
Oganda	Bean	2	33.3	5	83.3	0	0.0
Agucha	My pot	1	16.7	5	83.3	3	50.0
Milingo	Name of an island	3	50.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Kar nyodo	A place for giving birth	2	33.3	4	66.7	6	100.0
Nyanja	My tomatoes	6	100.0	6	100.0	2	33.3
Okon'go	Clitoris	0	0.0	2	33.3	2	33.3
Buk	A book	6	100.0	6	100.0	0	0.0
Giri	Your thing	6	100.0	6	100.0	6	100.0
Okweya	Cooler	6	100.0	5	83.3	3	50.0
Mor kich	Honey	6	100.0	5	83.3	2	33.3

From Table 4.20, it was observed that the metaphors 'your thing and private part' are used equally across the age brackets. This is because the phrase 'private part' is a polite term that one can use freely and comfortably in the company of both young and old without feeling ashamed. It is further argued that the term 'forest' is also used equally across the age brackets because of its significance since time immemorial. In the forest people find

timber that is used in the construction of houses and even cattle sheds. Firewood from trees in the forest are used in cooking, smoking fish and even curing tobacco while herbs that are used to cure various ailments such as stomach ache, body rashes and even diarrhea are also found in the forest. Therefore, the value of forests just like that of the vagina cannot be underestimated.

The euphemisms 'channel of birth and passage of birth' are commonly used by those above 60 years of age as compared to the other age brackets. This may be attributed to the value that the older generation placed on children. It was argued that children were a symbol of wealth in the traditional Luo set up and the more one had them, the wealthier they were regarded. Therefore, people could go to great extents like offering sacrifices to the gods to bless them with children. Nowadays this is not the case because changes have occurred with many people aping western lifestyles to an extent that many couples feel very comfortable without children.

Moreover, the euphemisms 'channel and passage' are also commonly used by those above 60 years as compared to the other age brackets. In the traditional Luo society, women were expected to be very submissive during sexual intercourse. In addition, women were required to be passive players throughout the process and their only role was to be entered and exited from. This brings to the fore male dominance that exists in most African societies.

Euphemisms keep on changing and a respondent noted that the younger generation have replaced old euphemisms with novel ones such as *nyamwalo*, *abila* (the lower part and one that is tasted) and *Migingo* (name of an island) which have been coined by taking into consideration the traits of the vagina as seen from their perspective. A novel euphemism such as *Migingo* (name of an island in Kenya) was coined as a result of the conflict that was going on in the island. Two countries (Kenya and Uganda) were fighting over the ownership of this island with each country claiming that the island was situated in its territory.

Several people lost their lives in this fracas and there were bitter exchange of words between representatives of both governments. This conflict could be likened to one that arises when a man realizes that another man has invaded his territory and is busy eating his 'bearded meat' (vagina). When this happens in most cases the individuals involved fight and this may lead to the death of the victims involved in such a fracas. The use of different euphemisms by people of different ages was also mapped. The results of the findings are summarized and presented in Table 4.21.

**Table 4.21: Conceptual mappings in the interpretation of euphemisms of the vagina on the basis of age**

Conceptual mappings for the vagina	20-40 years		41-60 years		Above 60 years	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Organ	16	14.16	23	18.55	24	28.57
Garden	8	7.08	9	7.26	9	10.71
Passage	23	20.35	27	21.77	22	26.19
River	8	7.08	10	8.06	8	9.52
Food	30	26.55	29	23.39	12	14.29
Medicine	6	5.31	6	4.84	1	1.19
Wealth	12	10.62	10	8.06	2	2.38
Tool	7	6.19	10	8.06	6	7.14
Place	3	2.65	0	0.00	0	0.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>100.0</b>

From Table 4.21 it was noted that the young people frequently used the words that relate the vagina to food, while the old frequently used the words that relate vagina to passage. The old were more interested in the primary duty of the vagina which is acting as a baby's exit and this is because this generation valued children. The young frequently used the words that relate the vagina to food because they were more interested in another duty of the vagina which is acting as a receptacle to the man's penis. To them, the vagina is an important component in sexual intercourse thereby leading to the satisfaction of a man's other stomach.

It is also worth noting that young people more frequently relate vagina to wealth than old people. This is because with the changing times, moral standards have gone down and

people ape Western lifestyles a lot and this has led to the increase in vices such as prostitution in which both males and females use their bodies as sources of income. Hence, the young relate this organ to wealth. In order to find out if the differences noted are statistically significant a Chi-square test was carried out. The results of the Chi-square test are summarized and presented in Table 4.22.

**Table 4.22: Results of Chi-square Test on the variable of age in the interpretation of euphemisms of the vagina**

Pearson Chi-square value	6.279
Degrees of freedom (df)	2
Significant value (p) at 95% confidence level	0.043*

Significant at 0.05\*

From Table 4.22 it was observed that the variations in the interpretation of the vagina on the basis of age is significant. The results of the Chi-square test reveal that the computed value 6.279 is greater than the critical value at 0.05 level of significance hence the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the interpretation of the vagina on the basis of age is rejected. This means that people of different age brackets conceptualize the vagina differently. The section that follows discusses in detail the euphemisms of menstruation on the basis of gender and age. Also shown are the Chi-square tests performed to determine whether or not these variables influence the choice and usage of euphemisms of menstruation.

### 4.5.3 The euphemisms of menstruation based on gender and age

This section looks at the euphemisms of menstruation which were ten in number and presented using five conceptual mappings of a period, a visitor, dirt, rain/happenings of the atmosphere and wetness. Just like the previous ones, Chi-square tests were carried to determine whether gender and age influenced the usage of the euphemisms of menstruation. Table 4.23 illustrates in detail the interpretation of menstruation on the basis of the gender variable.

**Table 4.23: Conceptual mappings in the interpretation of the euphemisms of menstruation on the basis of gender**

Conceptual mappings for menstruation	Lexical frequencies					
	Male		Female		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
A period	9	10.00	9	10.00	18	20.00
A visitor	5	5.56	9	10.00	14	15.56
Dirt	0	0.00	13	14.44	13	14.44
Rain/ activities of the atmosphere	6	6.66	13	14.44	19	21.11
Wetness	1	1.11	25	27.79	26	28.89
<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>23.33</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>76.67</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 4.23 indicates that females tend to interpret the target domain of menstruation as a period, a visitor, dirt, rain and wetness more than the males. This was attributed to the fact that it is the females who experience menstruation as a biological process. Therefore, it is right to argue that they have high lexical frequencies for this physiological process than

the males. Both males and females interpret the target domain of menstruation as a period because it is an event that is temporary and it occurs within a certain time frame.

Women conceptualize menstruation more as 'a visitor' than men. It was pointed out that a visitor is usually unexpected and is considered a blessing to the household that he or she visits. It was noted that in most homes it is the women who welcome visitors because they are the ones mostly found at home. Also, when there are visitors there are certain duties that are suspended till the visitor departs for example, a person cannot leave the visitor on their own to go and tend to their farms just the way a woman cannot perform certain duties when she is menstruating. Expressions related to 'the visitor' are normally used by a wife to her husband or by a girlfriend to her boyfriend in situations where the man wants to have sex and the woman wants to convey that it is not possible.

Women conceptualize menstruation more as 'dirt' than men. This is attributed to the negative view of menstruation in the sense that there are certain activities that a menstruating woman is not allowed to undertake because she is believed to be dirty and this dirt (menstruation) may pollute the things that she may come into contact with. For example, a menstruating woman cannot pluck vegetables or tomatoes during such a time because it is believed that she will 'burn' such crops and they may end up rotting in the farm. In the olden days, a menstruating woman was not allowed to shake hands with her father-in-law because her hand was considered 'dirty.'

Women also liken menstruation to ‘rain’ more than the males and this is because menstrual blood comes out in drops just like rain does. The presence of rain is a good sign since it assures one of a bountiful harvest and even plenty of water to use in different activities. Similarly, menstruation is a symbol of fertility and it is what the society uses to define a woman. In other words, it is a woman’s precious thing and they are proud of it. The way rain makes the ground wet is the same way menstrual flow makes the vagina wet. Further analysis involved carrying out a Chi-square test to determine whether or not the differences observed are statistically significant. The results of the analysis are summarized and presented in Table 4.24.

**Table 4.24: Results of Chi-square Test on the variable of gender in the interpretation of the euphemisms of menstruation**

Pearson Chi-square value	18.553
Degrees of freedom (df)	1
Significant value (p) at 95% confidence level	0.001*

Significant at 0.05\*

From Table 4.24, it was observed that the variations in the interpretation of the menstruation are significant. The results of the Chi-square test reveal that the computed value 18.553 is greater than the critical value at 0.05 level of significance hence the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the interpretation of menstruation between males and females is rejected. This means that men and women conceptualize the physiological process of menstruation differently. The study further presented the

conceptual mappings in the interpretation of menstruation on the basis of age and the results of the findings are summarized and presented in Table 4.25.

**Table 4.25: Conceptual mappings in the interpretation of the euphemisms of menstruation on the basis of age**

Conceptual mappings for menstruation	Lexical frequencies							
	20-40		41-60		Above 60		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
A period	6	6.67	6	6.67	6	6.67	18	20.00
A visitor	3	3.33	5	5.56	6	6.67	14	15.56
Dirt	5	5.56	4	4.44	4	4.44	13	14.44
Rain/ activities of the atmosphere	9	10.00	7	7.78	3	3.33	19	21.11
Wetness	4	4.44	10	11.11	12	13.33	26	28.89
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>30.00</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>35.56</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>34.44</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>100.0</b>

From Table 4.25 it was noted that majority of the young people (20-40 years) relate menstruation to rain/activities of the atmosphere. This was attributed to the fact that rain is a symbol of production in the sense that when it rains, plants in the farms get water that aid in the transportation of nutrients and this in turn leads to bountiful harvests. Similarly, menstruation is a sign of fertility and people in the age group mentioned are still in the child bearing age bracket hence they value it.

To them (those above 60 years), it is a sign of discomfort because women in this age group no longer bear children for they have reached menopause and they therefore, do not

attach significance to this flow. In order to find out if the differences noted are statistically significant a Chi-square test was carried out. The results of the Chi-square test are summarized and presented in Table 4.26.

**Table 4.26: Results of Chi-square Test on the age variable in the interpretation of the euphemisms of menstruation**

Pearson Chi-square value	7.961
Degrees of freedom (df)	2
Significant value (p) at 95% confidence level	0.023*

Significant at 0.05\*

From Table 4.26, it can be pointed out that the variations in the interpretation of menstruation on the basis of age is significant. The results of the Chi-square test reveal that the computed value 7.961 is greater than the critical value at 0.05 level of significance hence the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the interpretation of menstruation on the basis of age is rejected. This means that people of different age limits conceptualize menstruation differently. The following section looks at the interpretation of euphemisms of ejaculation based on the variables of gender and age.

#### **4.5.4 The euphemisms of ejaculation based on gender and age**

A total of three euphemisms were collected to mitigate the target domain of ejaculation. These were subjected to Chi-square tests to determine whether or not the variables stated above influence their usage. Table 4.27 illustrates the euphemisms of ejaculation.

**Table 4.27 Euphemisms of ejaculation and their lexical frequencies**

Euphemism	Gloss	Lexical frequencies					
		Male		Female		Total	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
Layo	Urinating	7	77.8	3	33.3	10	55.6
Chuer	Pouring	9	100.0	2	22.2	11	61.1
Thek	Freeing/relieving oneself	9	100.0	9	100.0	18	100.0

Both males and females refer to ejaculation as ‘freeing/relieving’ oneself. It is argued that this is a term that is considered polite and can be used without one feeling ashamed and in the presence of both the young and the old. Since males experience ejaculation as a biological process, it is proper then to argue that they have high lexical frequencies for the euphemisms of this term than the females.

Men on the other hand, conceptualize ejaculation more as ‘urinating’ than females. Being a physiological process associated with them, this act makes them feel relieved just as one would after urinating. Among the Luo, it is believed that a man who rarely engages in sexual intercourse develops waist problems because of the accumulation of sperms. Such a problem is therefore solved through sexual intercourse where these accumulated sperms are ejaculated into the vagina and deposited therein.

Men also refer to ejaculation as ‘pouring’ more than the females. This physiological process is associated with them and the frequency with which it occurs may make them argue that it is not very important since, something that is poured may sometimes be of no

value. In order to find out if the differences noted on the basis of gender are statistically significant, a Chi-square test was performed to test the hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the interpretation of ejaculation on the basis of the gender variable. The results of the findings are summarized and presented in Table 4.28.

**Table 4.28: Results of Chi-square Test on the interpretation of the euphemisms of ejaculation on the basis of gender**

Pearson Chi-square value	3.207
Degrees of freedom (df)	1
Significant value (p) at 95% confidence level	0.201

Significant at 0.05\*

From Table 4.28 it was noted that the variations in the interpretation of ejaculation on the basis of gender is not significant. The results of the Chi-square test reveal that the computed value 3.207 is less than the critical value at 0.05 level of significance hence the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the interpretation of ejaculation on the basis of gender is accepted. This means that gender does not significantly influence the conceptualization of ejaculation. Table 4.29 gives the euphemisms of ejaculation on the basis of age.

**Table 4.29: Age variable in the euphemisms of ejaculation**

Euphemism	Gloss	Lexical Frequencies					
		20-40yrs		41-60yrs		Above 60yrs	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
Layo	Urinating	6	100.0	4	66.7	-	0.0
Chuer	Pouring	2	33.3	6	100.0	3	50.0
Thek	Freeing/relieving oneself	6	100.0	6	100.0	6	100.0

The euphemism ‘freeing/relieving’ oneself is used across all the age brackets because it is considered a polite term that can be used freely in any setting. On the other hand, the euphemism ‘urinating’ is used more by the people in the age bracket of 20-40 years as compared to other age brackets. This may be because those in this age bracket see this as a process that is not significant since its contents are disposed just as urine is.

The elderly (those in the age-bracket of above 60 years) consider this term more of a dysphemism which should therefore be avoided. Further analysis involved carrying out a Chi-square test to determine whether or not the differences observed are statistically significant. The results of the analysis are summarized and presented in Table 4.30.

**Table 4.30: Results of Chi-square Test on the age variable in the interpretation of the euphemisms of ejaculation**

Pearson Chi-square value	3.478
Degrees of freedom (df)	2
Significant value (p) at 95% confidence level	0.481

Significant at 0.05\*

The findings in Table 4.30 revealed that the variations in the interpretation of ejaculation on the basis of age is not significant. The results of the Chi-square test show that the computed value 3.478 is less than the critical value at 0.05 level of significance hence the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the interpretation of ejaculation on the basis of age is accepted. This means that age does not significantly influence the conceptualization of ejaculation. The following section looks at the interpretation of euphemisms of giving birth based on the variables of gender and age. Also shown are the Chi-square tests performed to determine whether or not these variables influence the usage of euphemisms of giving birth.

#### 4.5.5 The euphemisms of giving birth based on gender and age

A total of four euphemisms were collected to mitigate the target domain of giving birth. These were subjected to Chi-square tests to determine whether or not the variables stated above influence their usage. Table 4.31 illustrates the euphemisms of giving birth.

**Table 4.31: Gender variable in the interpretation of euphemisms of giving birth**

Euphemism	Gloss	Lexical frequencies					
		Male		Female		Total	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
Kelo wendo	Bringing a visitor	9	100.0	9	100.0	18	100.0
Konyruok	Getting help	9	100.0	9	100.0	18	100.0
Pogruok	Being freed from someone or something	3	33.3	7	77.8	10	55.6
Puko gimoro	Pouring something	-	0.0	9	100.0	09	50.0

Judging by the lexical frequencies women use euphemisms of giving birth more than the men because motherhood is an affair associated with them and birthing events are physically experienced by the women. Mothers are in essence the cornerstones of societies therefore, at the moment of birth; attention is paid to two main entities: the mother and her child. Moreover, women are the ones who carry babies to term, they know the joys and pains that come with birthing and are thus in better positions to describe the process using a wide range of euphemisms.

Both men and women equally refer to giving birth as 'bringing a visitor.' This is so because the Luo liked receiving visitors as they regarded them a blessing to the family. Moreover, there is joy and merry making when visitors are received and this is likened to what happens during the birth of a child.

When such a child grows up, he or she assists the parents in domestic chores and running errands here and there. Children come in handy during their parent's old age and this is why the euphemism 'getting help' is used equally by both male and female respondents. In order to find out if the differences noted are statistically significant a Chi-square test was carried out. The results of the Chi-square test are summarized and presented in Table 4.32.

**Table 4.32: Results of Chi-square Test on the variable of gender in the interpretation of euphemisms of giving birth**

Pearson Chi-square value	5.556
Degrees of freedom (df)	1
Significant value (p) at 95% confidence level	0.018

Significant at 0.05\*

From Table 4.32 it was observed that the variations in the interpretation of giving birth on the basis of gender are significant. The results of the Chi-square test reveal that the computed value 5.556 is greater than the critical value at 0.05 level of significance hence the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the interpretation of giving birth between males and females is rejected. This means that people of different gender conceptualize giving birth differently. The study also looked at the influence of age on the use of euphemisms of giving birth and the findings are presented in the table that follows.

**Table 4.33: Age variable in the interpretation of euphemisms of giving birth**

		20-40		41-60		Above 60		Total	
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Kelo wendo	Bringing a visitor	6	100.0	6	100.0	6	100.0	18	100.0
Konyruok	Getting help	6	100.0	6	100.0	6	100.0	18	100.0
Pogruok	Being freed from someone or something	3	50.0	4	66.67	3	50.0	10	55.6
Puko gimoro	Pouring something	3	50.0	3	50.0	3	50.0	09	50.0

From the results in Table 4.33 it was observed that respondents across the age brackets refer to giving birth as 'bringing a visitor' and 'getting help.' This is because in the Luo set-up, visitors are regarded as bearers of good things which could be in the form of blessings to the households visited. Therefore, receiving a blessing can be equated to

getting help. For example, when one gets a baby and it grows up, he or she may assist the parents by running errands or performing domestic chores as expected of them by society. To ascertain whether the differences noted in the interpretation of giving birth on the basis of age category was significant Chi-square test was performed. The results of the Chi-square analysis are summarized and presented in Table 4.34.

**Table 4.34: Results of Chi-square Test on the age variable in the interpretation of the euphemisms of giving birth**

Pearson Chi-square value	1.333
Degrees of freedom (df)	2
Significant value (p) at 95% confidence level	0.513

Significant at 0.05\*

The findings in Table 4.34 above reveal that the variations of age in the interpretation of giving birth are not significant. The results of the Chi-square test show that the computed value 1.333 is less than the critical value at 0.05 level of significance hence the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the interpretation of giving birth on the basis of age is accepted. This means that the differences noted are not statistically significant. The next section looks at the interpretation of euphemisms of sexual intercourse based on the gender and age variables.

#### **4.5.6 The euphemisms of sexual intercourse based on the variables of gender and age**

A total of twenty two euphemisms were collected to mitigate the target domain of sexual intercourse. These were subjected to Chi-square tests to determine whether or not the

variables stated above influence their usage. Table 4.35 illustrates the euphemisms of sexual intercourse.

**Table 4.35: Euphemisms of sexual intercourse and their lexical frequencies**

Euphemism	Gloss	Lexical frequencies					
		Male		Female		Total	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
Nindo	Sleeping	5	55.6	9	100.0	14	77.8
Rudho	Rubbing	7	77.8	3	33.3	10	55.6
Chiemo	Food/ Eating	9	100.0	5	55.6	14	77.8
Nyamo	Chewing	9	100.0	4	44.4	13	72.2
Duodo	Entangling	9	100.0	3	44.4	12	66.7
Nyono	Trampling	9	100.0	4	44.4	13	72.2
Lago	Touching gently	7	77.8	3	33.3	10	55.6
Sero	Seducing	7	77.8	6	66.7	13	72.2
Chuowo	Pricking	8	88.9	-	0.0	08	44.4
Chwado kede	Beating with a stick	9	100.0	3	33.3	12	66.7
Mirruok moo	Giving each other oil	7	77.8	8	88.9	15	83.3
Bilo	Tasting	7	77.8	7	77.8	14	77.8
Guro	Nailing	6	66.7	-	0.0	06	33.3
Soyo	Inserting	6	66.7	1	11.1	07	38.9
Yadho	Eating hurriedly	5	55.6	-	0.0	05	27.8
Ndukruok	Copulation	5	55.6	1	11.1	06	33.3
Miyo mach	Giving fire	6	66.7	4	44.4	10	55.6
Miyo yunga	Giving the penis	3	33.3	3	33.3	06	33.3
Goyo siala	Beating with a markhamia tree	3	33.3	-	0.0	03	16.7
Tugo	Game/ Playing	9	100.0	7	77.8	16	88.9
Soyo gimoro	Inserting something	4	44.4	4	44.4	08	44.4

Next is Table 4.36 that shows the conceptual mappings of the euphemisms of sexual intercourse as collected in the study. The euphemisms were classified using five conceptual mappings of game, work, war, food and touch/companionship/rest.

**Table 4.36: Conceptual mappings in the interpretation of euphemisms of sexual intercourse on the basis of gender**

Conceptual mappings for sexual intercourse	Male		Female		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Game	9	3.93	7	3.06	16	6.99
Work	28	12.23	8	3.49	36	15.72
War	35	15.28	10	4.37	45	19.65
Food	42	18.34	25	10.92	67	29.26
Touch/Rest/companionship	38	16.59	27	11.79	65	28.38
<b>Total</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>66.38</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>33.62</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Males tend to interpret the target domain of sexual intercourse as war and work more than the females do. This may be because such activities need a lot of physical strength therefore, being the stronger sex as viewed by most societies Luo included, men engage in activities that show their phallic power hence boosting their egos. Also, sexual intercourse is conceptualized as war more by men than women. It was noted that this is because the penis is regarded as a weapon and during war, warriors carry weapons which they use to attack the enemy and to defend themselves hence wars are associated with violence and aggression. Moreover, after a hard day's job, one is bound to be exhausted and they may want to relax which could be in the form of playing a game which is why males conceptualize sexual intercourse as a game more than women.

In addition, males conceptualize sexual intercourse more as food as contrasted to females. It is worthy to note that this is due to the significance of food in a person's life. There are different types of food which play different functions in the body like energy giving, disease prevention, body building among other functions. Kövesces (2006) argues that

sexual desire is hunger and appetizing food is normally used to conceptualize sexual intercourse. Food is often a prelude to sex in the sense that after taking supper, people normally retire to bed where couples make love to one another.

The food that they eat during sexual intercourse satisfies not the physical hunger but the physiological one. It is not uncommon to hear men complain to their friends that they are starving if they fail to engage in sexual intercourse for quite some time since eating and love-making go together. Males also view sexual intercourse more as touch or companionship /rest than the females. It was pointed out that this may be because in most African societies, males are the initiators of the sexual activity which utilizes the physical interaction of both the male and female body parts.

Also, most males engage in sexual intercourse for the purposes of company and not commitment. For them, sex is sense oriented since they are more interested in what they see, hear and touch. For women, sex is in the mind therefore, sexual intercourse is an activity that should bring partners close to one another and it should be pleasurable. In order to find out if the differences noted are statistically significant a Chi-square test was carried out. The results of the Chi-square test are summarized and presented in Table 4.37.

**Table 4.37: Results of Chi-square Test on the gender variable in the interpretation of euphemisms of sexual intercourse**

Pearson Chi-square value	11.455
Degrees of freedom (df)	1
Significant value (p) at 95% confidence level	0.001*

Significant at 0.05\*

The findings in Table 4.37 above indicate that the variations in the interpretation of sexual intercourse on the basis of gender are statistically significant. The results of the Chi-square test reveal that the computed value 11.455 is greater than the critical value at 0.05 level of significance hence the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the interpretation of sexual intercourse between men and women is rejected. This means that people of different gender conceptualize sexual intercourse differently. Table 4.38 shows the conceptual mappings of the euphemisms of sexual intercourse on the basis of age.

**Table 4.38: Conceptual mappings in the interpretation of euphemisms of sexual intercourse on the basis of age**

Conceptual mappings for sexual intercourse	20-40		41-60		Above 60		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Game	6	2.62	6	2.62	4	1.75	16	6.99
Work	14	6.11	13	5.68	9	3.93	36	15.72
War	22	9.61	15	6.55	8	3.49	45	19.65
Food	24	10.48	24	10.48	19	8.30	67	29.26
Touch/Rest/companionship	19	8.30	26	11.35	20	8.73	65	28.38
<b>Total</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>37.12</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>36.68</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>26.20</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The findings in Table 4.38 show that people in the age brackets of 20-40 and 41-60 years view sexual intercourse more as a game than those in the age bracket of above 60 years. This could be attributed to the fact that the younger generation look at sex as a pastime activity that is done for the purposes of relaxation while for the older generation it is an activity that is taken seriously and it is done more as a duty may be to fulfill a certain customary requirement. Those in the age bracket of 20-40 years view sexual intercourse as war more than those in the age- brackets of 41-60 and above 60 years.

It was noted that this could be due to the fact that war is an activity that calls for a lot of physical energy and those in the age bracket of 20-40 years are still more energetic as compared to those in the other age - groups. For one to have a lot of energy, one has to consume a good amount of energy giving foods. Moreover, people in this age - group (20-40) still have sensitive taste buds and they may want to experience with different types of appetizing foods hence their reference to sex euphemistically as 'food.' A Chi-square test was carried out in order to find out if the differences noted are statistically significant. The results of the Chi-square test are summarized and presented in Table 4.39.

**Table 4.39: Results of Chi-square Test on the variable of age in the interpretation of euphemisms of sexual intercourse**

Pearson Chi-square value	1.870
Degrees of freedom (df)	2
Significant value (p) at 95% confidence level	0.393

Significant at 0.05\*

From Table 4.39 above it can be observed that the variations in the interpretation of sexual intercourse on the basis of age are not significant. The results of the Chi-square test reveal that the computed value 1.870 is less than the critical value at 0.05 level of significance hence the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the interpretation of sexual intercourse on the basis of age is accepted. This means that age does not significantly influence the conceptualization of sexual intercourse.

From the tests carried out, it can be concluded that there are euphemisms in which age does not significantly influence their usage. Firstly, there is no significant difference in the interpretation of euphemisms of ejaculation, giving birth and sexual intercourse on the basis of age. However, people of different age brackets conceptualize the euphemisms of the penis, vagina and menstruation differently. Also, it is important to note that there is no significant difference in the interpretation of the euphemisms of ejaculation on the basis of gender. In conclusion, there is a relationship between gender and age in the choice and usage of sex related euphemisms.

#### 4.6 Conclusion

In this chapter data collected using the interview schedule has been analyzed. The euphemisms have been mapped into different mental spaces as propagated by the Conceptual Integration Theory. The similarities that emerge between the source (euphemistic term) and the target domain (dysphemistic term) have been brought to the fore. Moreover, percentages and lexical frequencies have been used to ascertain that in essence there is a relationship between gender and age in the usage of Dholuo euphemisms. Finally, the information obtained has been presented using tables as well as inferential statistics.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 Introduction

In this chapter a discussion of findings from the research that was carried out is explored. The study set out with three objectives which are: to identify and explain the sex-related dysphemistic words and phrases in Dholuo; to illustrate the cognitive processes in the creation of sex-related euphemisms and to discuss the relationship between gender and age in the usage of euphemisms in Dholuo.

#### 5.2 Summary of findings

##### *(a) Sex-related dysphemistic words and phrases in Dholuo*

The first objective was to identify and explain the sex-related dysphemistic words and phrases in Dholuo. Sexual organs (vagina and penis), physiological processes like menstruation, ejaculation and giving birth as well as sexual intercourse were analyzed. It was discovered that such terms are normally avoided in virtually all types of settings because they are regarded as abusive and as such, euphemisms which are considered polite and more agreeable are used to replace them.

It was noted that the society prohibits women from using dysphemistic terms while the men are allowed to talk rough thereby employing aggressive sexual terms in their speech. Noted also was the fact that dysphemistic words and phrases are powerful and even though they are avoided, language users are compelled to preserve them (cf. section 4.1).

This study found out that the Luo society is patriarchal therefore, it is the men who are allowed to openly use sex-related dysphemisms which are regarded as obscenities.

The study noted that men generally use dysphemisms that are sex-related than women since obscenities is considered their domain as Jay (2000) asserts. He continues to argue that dysphemistic terms are emotionally powerful and breaking the rules that societies have laid down as concerns language use may have connotations of strength or freedom which people especially the men find desirable. Coates (2004) additionally observe that using dysphemisms according to some researchers help men maintain their positions in society. Impacted by the hierarchical system, men tend to be more competitive in conversations so as to maintain their power and to achieve masculinity.

*(b) Illustrating the cognitive processes in the creation of sex-related euphemisms in Dholuo*

The second objective was to illustrate the cognitive processes in the creation of sex-related euphemisms in Dholuo. The study found that the Luo society encourages communication which is indirect. Many respondents revealed that they avoid direct communication that could cause shock or embarrassment. It was found out that there is need to save the faces even of those who deserve societal rebuke. In the Luo society therefore, there is nothing more embarrassing than being told off directly. This objective was to illustrate the sex-related euphemisms using Conceptual Integration Theory which appropriately accounts for the euphemisms in Dholuo. This theory is of significance in the use and interpretation of euphemisms given that cognitive representation affects evasive

referent manipulation in a remarkable way thereby implying that the model of Cognitive Linguistics provides solid tools for understanding, interpreting and accounting for the euphemisms in Dholuo. Evidence is provided to show that this theory adequately takes into account the euphemisms of the male and female sexual organs as well as the physiological process of menstruation.

For the male sexual organ, a total of thirty one euphemisms were collected and these were presented using six conceptual mappings of weapon, reptile, tree, animal, a leg/ protrusion of body and a tool for work (cf. tables 4.1 and 4.2). A total of nine euphemisms were subjected to mappings using the tenets of Conceptual Integration Theory which fronts for the four mental spaces instead of the two that were initiated by the proponents of the Conceptual Metaphor Theory. It was noted that of these conceptual mappings, many respondents refer to the penis as a leg/ protrusion of the body because of the many roles that the penis plays.

The female sexual organ attracted twenty four euphemisms and these were presented using nine conceptual mappings of food, wealth, garden, medicine, river, a passage, an organ, a tool and a place. It was further discovered that there are more euphemisms on the vagina and the physiological processes of childbirth and menstruation that are associated with it than the penis (cf. tables 4.4, 4.7 and 4.5). For the physiological process of menstruation a total of ten euphemisms were collected in the study and these were mapped into five conceptual mappings of a period, a visitor, dirt, rain/happenings of the atmosphere and wetness. Menstruation as was found out attracted three positive

connotations like a visitor, a period and rain as well as two negative connotations that have the implications of discomfort (dirt and wetness). These could as well be viewed in two different perspectives. Positively, the importance that the society attaches to it is brought out. For example, menstruation is regarded as a visitor who brings blessings to the host and also as rain which is the source of life. Negatively, menstruation is viewed as a source of pollution and by extension dirt and that is why in the traditional Luo set-up menstruating women were kept in seclusion.

The target domain of ejaculation elicited a total of three euphemisms (see section 4.3.4) while for sexual intercourse a total of twenty one euphemisms which were categorized into five conceptual mappings of game, work, war, food and touch/companionship/rest were collected (see section 4.3.6). It was further discovered that the more conceptual mappings a target domain evokes, the higher the linguistic interdiction associated with it. This therefore implies that the penis and the vagina are the most dysphemized target domains in Dholuo.

The Conceptual Integration Theory is relevant to the study in the sense that sexual dysphemisms (male and female sexual organs and menstruation) can be analyzed and shaped in terms of conceptual metaphors. Fernández (2008) argues that metaphorical language structures the use of the dysphemistic areas and establishes how cognitive domains and mappings determine the mitigating or offensive value of the metaphorical alternative. He further posits that granted that a sex - related target concept can be expressed via different source domains (see Kövesces 2000:79), the particular

connotations of the source domain used to refer to the target concept largely influence the euphemistic force of the metaphorical substitute or, by contrast its pejorative load. For example, the dysphemistic term sexual intercourse which attracted a total of twenty one euphemisms was presented using a variety of conceptual mappings such as game, work, war, food and touch/companionship/rest, which reduced to a great extent the obscenity associated with this term. These conceptual mappings could be regarded as the source domains representing the target domain of sexual intercourse and they are terms that anyone can use comfortably regardless of the setting in which one finds himself or herself and the audience that the person addresses.

The study provides evidence to show that even though this theory is a many-space approach, it does not adequately cater for the analysis of all the euphemisms collected in the study especially those that are unique to the customs and beliefs of the Luo. Of special concern in this category, are the euphemisms of ritual sexual intercourse performed in different circumstances which were catered for by the Politeness Theory. Euphemisms of ritual sexual intercourse that were discussed included those performed during marriage, farming, building a home, when one goes fishing, after the birth of a child and when different members of the family pass on.

These rituals as was found out during the course of the study, play central roles in the lives of the Luo who believe that their strength lie in their bodies especially in their sexual organs. Therefore, ritual sexual intercourse marks the beginning and the end of every important human activity that includes the ones mentioned. This study found out that

marriage is an activity held in high esteem among the Luo and it is the affair of all members of the community. To seal a marriage relationship and to bless it, ritual sexual intercourse has to be carried out by both sets of parents (the bride's and groom's) as well as the bride and groom on the day of their marriage. The same sexual ritual is carried out by the parents of the bride on the receipt of the bride wealth. In marriage, there are bound to be good and bad times with quarrels being part and parcel of any marriage as such, ritual sexual intercourse is paramount for a married couple after any major disagreement. This is important because it is the only clear assurance of forgiveness between couples as the study found out.

The study found out that just the way the marriage process is elaborative, so are the rituals performed during such occasions. It was further noted that the rituals performed during the marriage of one child were different from those performed when a twin child was getting married. For a twin boy or girl the rituals performed were the same for tradition dictated that twin children whether fraternal or identical be married at the same time.

If a twin girl was getting married, on the day that she was taken to her husband's house she had ritual sexual intercourse with him and soon after as dictated by tradition the two had to go to their separate sleeping places. This was also applicable in the marriage of a twin boy. It is important to note that this is in contrary to what happens when marriage is of single children since they (single children) share sleeping places with their spouses after the sexual ritual of welcoming a marriage till dawn (see section 4.4.1 on ritual sex associated with marriage).

This study found out that during the farming process, from land preparation to harvesting the Luo observed certain rituals that are sex-related. These rituals were observed to ensure that a person not only gets bountiful harvest but also that protocol is observed to ensure that the senior wife, who is regarded as the owner of the home, is given the respect she deserves by her co-wives as well as making sure that like the others, she too gets her conjugal rights. As was noted, most polygamous men neglected their senior wives sexually in favor of the younger wives who are sexually active. The study further discovered that the farming period provided an opportunity for the owners of the home to get children. During the harvesting time it was the first wife who had to harvest first in polygamous settings and eat the proceeds before any other wife ate those from her farm (see section 4.4.4 on ritual sex associated with farming).

The study also found out that among the Luo death was not considered a natural phenomenon and when it occurred explanation was usually sought either in witchcraft or bad medicine. When death occurred purification was performed so that the people involved were cleansed and thereafter integrated back to the society. Purification came in the form of sexual intercourse which also attracted various euphemisms depending on whether the death was of a spouse, of one's child or of parents.

Apart from the sex-related rituals performed by parents after the death of their child, the study found out that there were other rituals that were also carried out for example if one of the twin children died, tradition dictated that the other twin be confined from the time of the death of the other one till he or she was buried. In addition, it was noted that if an

unmarried adult daughter died in her father's homestead tradition dictated that she be buried outside the homestead near the fence and if she was a virgin, a respected old woman was called upon to break the hymen as a way of imitating what her husband would have done during their first sexual encounter and there was a euphemism used to refer to this would be sexual encounter.

This operation took place at dusk on the eve of her burial and because such a task was a difficult one, the one responsible for doing it was given a cow as a form of payment. In another cases, an unmarried girl who passed away was buried in the matrimonial home of her elder sister or in that of her aunt for it was believed that should she be buried in her father's homestead the deceased could get annoyed and her ghost would haunt the other remaining unmarried sisters since she died without a husband (see section 4.4.2 on ritual sex associated with death).

This study noted that children are very important in the life of a married couple in this community and that is why couples especially the women would go to great extents in order to give birth. The study also discovered that it was only in trying to conceive that women were allowed by this society to practice 'infidelity' if they could not be impregnated by their spouses. In such circumstances, caution was thrown to the winds and such desperate women were allowed to try to conceive outside their marriage in which case, they sought the services of fertile brothers-in-law in order to get children. This information was kept a secret by such a woman and could only be revealed in certain rare rituals which demanded that the biological father of the child be named.

The birth of a child not only called for celebration but also for the sex-related rituals which were believed to guard a child against sex-related dysphemisms such as adultery especially on the part of the mother. These rituals promoted the use of a wide variety of euphemistic words and expressions. In addition the study noted that traditionally, the sexual ritual that is undertaken by parents of newborn babies three or four days after their birth was not performed in the case of twins for it was believed that if it was done then the mother would never conceive again. It was also noted that children born to twins were not bound by traditional rituals that affected their parents (see section 4.4.3 on ritual sex associated with birth).

This study found out that the rituals mentioned are part and parcel of the customs and beliefs of this community and they are revered. They are among the good customs that aid the community in the course of their daily life. Mboya (2001) asserts that a wise person will always respect and keep good customs and practice them. Moreover, a nation that is mindful of its good customs and practices grows strong and earns the respect of foreigners. Further, the study found out that failure to observe these rituals would lead one to contract a fatal ailment called *chira* which usually inflicts misfortune, suffering and punishment upon an individual or members of his or her family.

The study found out that even communication pertaining to matters of sex between lovers and married couples was mainly done in an indirect way. Thus, expressions such as 'My wife has received visitors so we cannot play,' to mean that the wife is on her monthly

period hence sexual intercourse is impossible are used. This study discovered that there are more euphemisms on the vagina and the physiological processes associated with it such as menstruation and childbirth than the penis and this is in agreement with the findings of Gathigia (2010) who also noted that the vagina and the physiological processes associated with it elicited more euphemisms than the penis in Gikuyu.

***(c) The relationship between gender and age and in the usage of euphemisms in Dholuo***

A wide range of euphemisms were used and this was dependent on factors such as age and gender. Age for instance was seen to have a considerable influence in determining the choice of euphemistic expressions in Dholuo. Age was split into three 20-40 years, 41-60 years and above 60 years.

It was noted that people who belong to the same age limit prefer particular expressions though there are other expressions that are common to all age brackets. For example, the euphemism 'Loboko' was used only by those in the age bracket of 20-40 years this was attributed to the fact that this term refers to the name of a modern Congolese music that is liked by people of this age group probably because of the sexual connotations that it has. The euphemism 'Markamia' tree, like the one mentioned above, also replaces the dysphemistic term penis in Dholuo. This euphemism is commonly used by those above 60 years of age because of the significance that the older generation attached to this tree. Expressions such as 'your thing' and 'private part' are common to all age brackets probably because they are regarded as terms that show respect. Therefore, people are

comfortable using them in different contexts and in the presence of people in different age brackets.

This study found out that biological determinism is the primary reason why females are likely to have higher lexical frequencies for all the conceptual mappings of menstruation (cf. section 4.3.3) than men. Secondly, because menstruation is a biological process experienced by the females, they are more likely to talk about it. Men on the other hand, have more euphemisms for the physiological process of ejaculation than women since they are the ones that experience it. The study discovered that females tend to exhibit more lexical frequencies for giving birth than men and this is attributed to the fact that motherhood which occupies a special place in African cultures and societies, as well as birthing events are affairs that are associated with them.

The study found out that men have higher lexical frequencies for the euphemisms of sexual intercourse than women and this is because sexual language is catalogued as impolite. Moreover, impolite language is a characteristic of men and not of women who are otherwise considered subordinate to men and are therefore expected to use euphemisms. This society like any other expects women to use 'correct, proper, polite and powerless' language as opposed to men who talk rough.

These findings agree with Coates (2004) assertion that women are more polite, indirect and cooperative in conversation while men are more impolite, direct and competitive which reveals that men pursue a style of interaction based on power while women pursue

a style based on solidarity and support. Therefore, this study concluded that dysphemism is never a belonging for women in conversation since they are expected to exhibit control over their thoughts and instead use euphemisms.

There are euphemisms that are commonly used by both men and women for example, both refer to ejaculation as 'freeing/relieving oneself' and giving birth as 'bringing a visitor.' The study found out that females use euphemisms more than males because they are constrained by societal rules hence, they get used to expressing themselves carefully when communicating with others. It was also noted that females use more euphemisms than men because of their desire to speak properly. This observation is in line with what other researchers like Trudgill (2004) and Gathigia (2010) have found out.

Trudgill (2004) notes that women traditionally play a greater role in a child's socialization which leads them to be more sensitive to the norms of accepted behavior and they are, therefore, more likely to get used to the standard forms since they may want the child to acquire them. Gathigia (2010) on the other hand, posits that females use euphemisms more than males hence postulating that polite terms are more indicative of women's speech. This study found out that both men and women resort to the use of euphemistic terms and expressions when referring to matters considered secret and private by the Luo society though direct reference in this case dysphemisms may sometimes be heard.

This study discovered that age does not significantly influence the usage of euphemisms of giving birth and those of sexual intercourse. In addition, there is no significant

difference in the interpretation of ejaculation on the basis of both gender and age. However, people of different age brackets conceptualize the penis, the vagina and menstruation differently. Therefore, the study concluded that there is a relationship between gender and age in the choice and usage of sex-related euphemisms.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

From the findings it can be concluded that the main motivating factor for the use of euphemisms is politeness. Euphemisms are used instead of dysphemisms in order to avoid offending others and to show decency and elegance. In addition euphemisms are invented to dignify certain terms and to downplay their potential offensiveness.

Analysis of metaphors can be valuable in enhancing our understanding and appreciation of many different areas including the language, culture and history of a particular people. Metaphors have the power not only to shape already existing euphemistic and dysphemistic references in their use and interpretation but they also have the power to create a new reality. As a matter of fact, cognitive linguistics cannot be omitted from the study of sex-related metaphorical language. Therefore, Conceptual Integration Theory is of relevance in euphemistic and dysphemistic use and interpretation, since cognitive representation affects evasive and abusive referent manipulation in a significant way.

To sum up, sexual euphemisms deserve special attention since they are an important part of expressive mechanisms of most languages Dholuo included. They are therefore

important since they spice up language and give people opportunities to talk about sexual dysphemism which is a very sensitive issue as was found out during data collection.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

The following recommendations can be made on the basis of the findings of this study.

First, we recommend that people be encouraged to openly discuss dysphemistic related issues and this is made possible by the wide variety of euphemisms that have been provided that will enable people discuss such dysphemisms without shying off. Second, we recommend that a study that is broad based and one that employs more than two theories be done as this would give a wider interpretation of euphemisms. The current study employed the Conceptual Integration Theory and the Politeness Theory because the former did not cater for those euphemisms that are unique to the customs and beliefs of the Luo. Another theory such as the Cognitive Theory of Metaphor and Metonymy discussed by Barcelona (2003) together with the ones used in this study would probably yield very elaborative and interesting results.

Third, we recommend that an extensive study be carried out on Dholuo euphemisms in order to come up with a comprehensive data base from which a dictionary of Dholuo euphemisms which will act as a reference material can be drafted. Such material will also help enhance the communicative competence of Dholuo speakers since they will have a variety of words from which to choose. Fourth, we recommend that topics on sexuality and reproduction which have been no go zones in the past be given emphasis especially in

the school curriculum so that the youth can get exposed to them and in this way, unexpected pregnancies as well as sexually transmitted infections can be reduced.

Fifth, the findings are very significant not only to advertising agencies but also to medical practitioners and counselors. To the former, it helps them market their goods or products to people from all walks of life. To the latter (medical practitioners and counselors), the information from the findings help them tackle issues on sex education as well as address pertinent matters as concerns the way people view and talk about sex related infections such as HIV/AIDS in order to provide them with relevant information about such diseases.

Lastly, this study is helpful especially to those that are interested in learning Dholuo as a foreign language in the sense that conceptual metaphors are a very useful tool for learners of foreign languages because they could illuminate networks of associated figurative meanings, giving access to large numbers of frequently used vocabulary items.

### **5.5 Areas for further research**

A study should be carried out in order to determine how the variables of education, social status and occupation influence the usage of euphemisms in Dholuo. Since this study dealt with sex- related euphemisms, another study that focuses on the euphemisms of death, excretion and body effluvia (faeces and urine) and diseases be carried out so that a comprehensive data base of euphemisms can be built. It was not possible to discuss the semantic, lexical, grammatical, pragmatic, morphological and phonological processes of

creating euphemisms as such a study that focuses on these processes would come in handy.

Feng (1997: 132) posits that cross-cultural research on metaphor remains 'a vast piece of virgin land to be explored.' Therefore, a contrastive or comparative approach of Dholuo and Maasai euphemisms would help us develop intercultural communicative competence. Contrastive linguistics, according to Fisiak (1984), is a subdiscipline of linguistics concerned with the comparison of two or more languages or subsystems of languages in order to determine both the structural differences and similarities between them. Such a multidisciplinary study on euphemisms would be timely.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE (RI<sub>1</sub>)

#### INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this interview schedule is to get your views on sex-related dysphemisms and euphemisms in Dholuo. The information solicited will be treated confidentially. This interview schedule will be administered in Dholuo.

Age.....

Sex.....

#### BODY PARTS

##### 1. (a) Female Body Parts

- (i) *dhok*.....
- (ii) *lemb*.....
- (iii) *ng'ut*.....
- (iv) *dho thuno*.....
- (v) *thuno*.....
- (vi) *pend*.....
- (vii) *ich*.....
- (viii) *nyar*.....
- (ix) *ther*.....
- (x) *bam*.....
- (xi) *sianda*.....

(b) Give any alternative terms used to refer to the body parts numbered ix and xi above in

Dholuo

.....

(c) In what contexts are the alternative terms used?

.....

(d) What are the sexual connotations associated with the following body parts?

*Thuno* (breasts) .....

.....

*Sianda* (buttocks) .....

.....

*Bam* (thighs) - .....

.....

*Dhok* (mouth) .....

.....

*Lep* (tongue)

.....

*Pien dhok* (lips)

.....

2. (a). Male body parts

(i) *it*.....

(ii) *lemb*.....

(iii) *dhok*.....

- (iv) *ng'ut*.....
- (v) *kor*.....
- (vi) *pend*.....
- (vii) *ich*.....
- (viii) *nyar*.....
- (ix) *chund*.....
- (x) *bam*.....
- (xi) *sianda*.....

(b) Give any alternative terms used to refer to the body parts numbered ix and xi above in Dholuo

.....

(c) In what contexts are the alternative terms used?

.....

3. Which attributes must a woman possess in order to be referred to as beautiful in the Luo context?

.....

**SEXUAL INTERCOURSE**

(a) What is the usual term used to refer to sexual intercourse in Dholuo?

.....

(b) Would one be comfortable using the term above?

.....

(c) In what contexts are the alternative terms used?

.....

(d) What happens when a man gets his wife having sexual intercourse with another man in the Luo culture?

.....

**SEX-RELATED TERMINOLOGIES**

(a). Give the equivalents of the following terms in Dholuo

- (i) **Ejaculation** .....
- (ii) **Masturbation** .....
- (iii) **Kissing**.....
- (iv) **Foreplay** .....

b) Name any alternative terms used to refer to the actions/activities mentioned above in Dholuo

.....

(c) Why are the alternative terms used?

.....

(d) When does a woman become or not become pregnant?

.....

**SOCIAL ACTIVITIES**

(a) Mention any sex-related rituals associated with building a home in the Luo community

.....

(b) What are the consequences that befall a person who fails to observe the sex-related rituals associated with the construction of a home in the Luo society?

.....  
(c) Mention any sex-related rituals associated with the farming process in the Luo community

.....  
(d) Give reasons why the sex-related rituals mentioned above are observed during the farming season

.....  
(e) Describe the sexual rituals that take place when:

(i) a child dies  
.....

(ii) a husband dies  
.....

(iii) a wife dies  
.....

(f) What is the significance of the sexual rituals mentioned above?  
.....

(g) What crowns the welcoming of a newly married woman into her husband's homestead?  
.....

(h) Name any alternative terms used to refer to "nyuol" in Dholuo  
.....

(i) In what contexts are the alternative terms used?  
.....

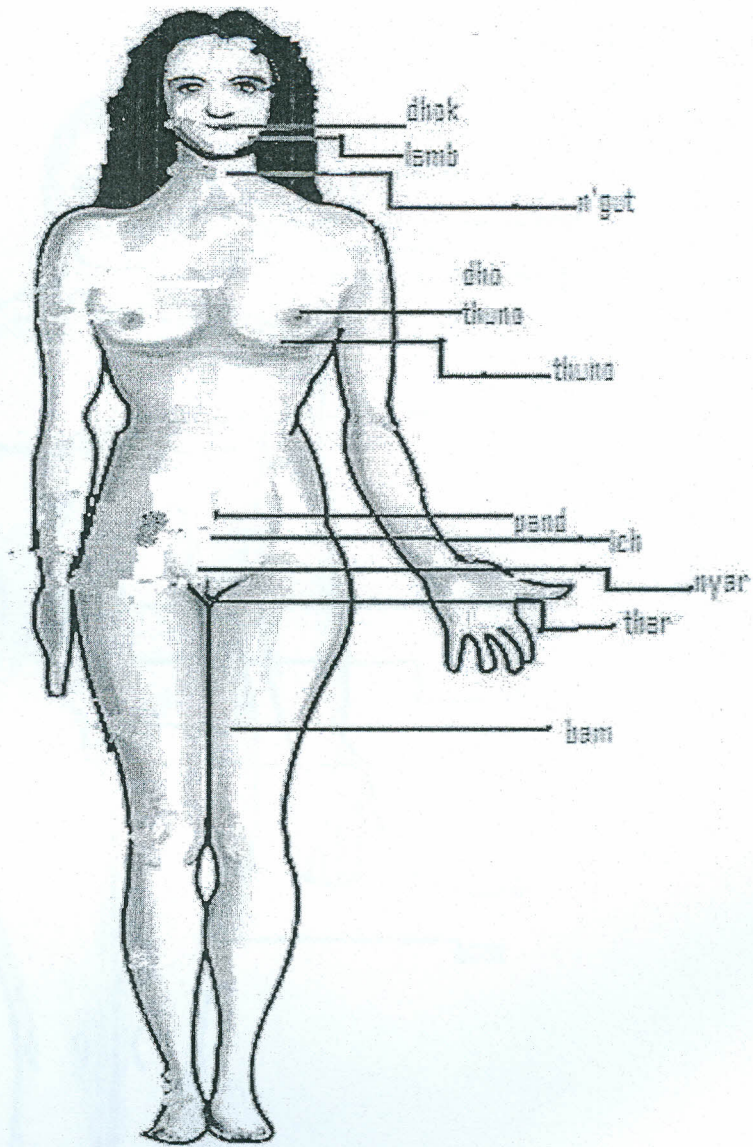
(j) What sex -related rituals are observed when a woman gives birth to a child?

.....

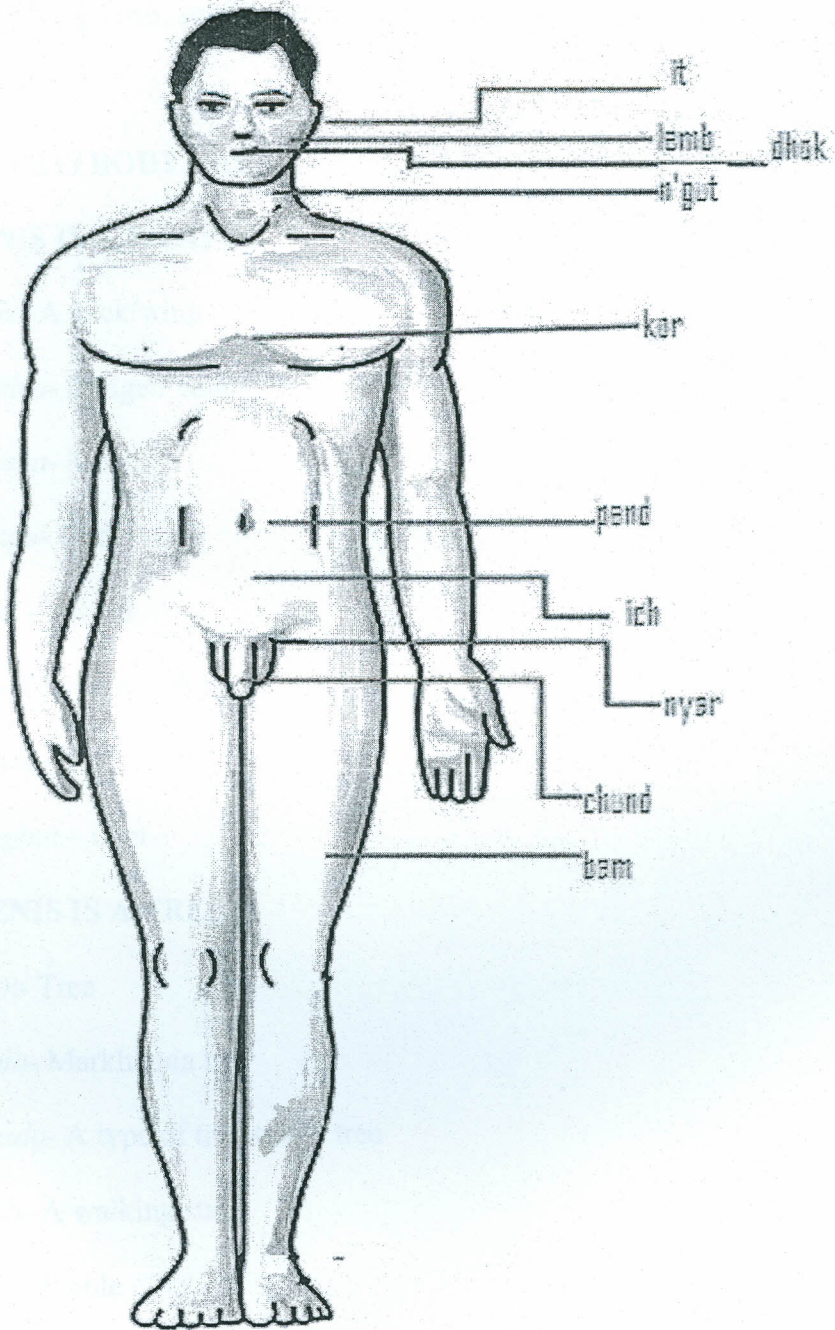
(k) What is the significance of these rituals?

.....

APPENDIX B: FEMALE HUMAN ANATOMY (RI<sub>2</sub>)



APPENDIX C: MALE HUMAN ANATOMY (RI<sub>3</sub>)



## APPENDIX D: DHOLUO EUPHEMISMS

This appendix lists the euphemistic alternatives collected using an interview schedule for the domains of human anatomy (male and female sexual organs), menstruation, ejaculation, giving birth, sexual intercourse and ritual sex.

### ANATOMY/ BODY PARTS

#### 1. PENIS IS A WEAPON

*Kede*- A stick/whip

*Masira*- Danger/ calamity

*Chuma*- Metal

*Rungu*- Club

*Pala* – Sword

*Chuma maliet* – A hot metal

*Mach* – Fire

*Magina* – Gun

#### 2. PENIS IS A TREE

*Yien*- Tree

*Siala*- Markhamia tree

*Pondo*- A type of traditional tree

*Luth*- A walking staff

*Siro*- A pole

### 3. PENIS IS AN ANIMAL

*Omuga* - Black rhinoceros

*Rwath* - A bull

### 4. PENIS IS A REPTILE

*Rachier* - Black mamba

*Koko* - Crawling creature with or without legs

### 5. PENIS IS A LEG/PROTUSION OF BODY

*Tielo machiek* - A short leg

*Nyim* - That which is in front

*Rakula* - A bent individual

*Tielo mar adek* - A third leg

*Duon'g* - Private part

*Yunga* - Penis

*Mal* - Testicle

*Nyasachi* - Your god

*Giri* - Your thing

*Loboko* - Name of Congolese music

*Ojwang' muofu* - Blind Ojwang'

*Ler* - Vein

## 6. PENIS IS A TOOL FOR WORK

<i>Kalam</i>	-	A pen
<i>Rapur</i>	-	A hoe/jembe
<i>Ratuchi</i>	-	Something used to make a hole
<i>Kwer</i>	-	A plough
<i>Ragwar</i>	-	A fork
<i>Le</i>	-	An axe
<i>Tarimbo</i>	-	Crow bar
<i>Rakuny</i>	-	Something used to make a hole/ opening
<i>Okot</i>	-	Bell
<i>Seke</i>	-	A straw
<i>Bolti</i>	-	Bolt
<i>Gir tich</i>	-	A tool for work
<i>Nyatieng'</i>	-	Round stone file/ grinder

## EUPHEMISMS OF THE VAGINA

### 1. VAGINA IS FOOD

<i>Chiemo</i>	-	Food
<i>N'gwen</i>	-	A type of flying ant that is edible
<i>Dek</i>	-	A type of vegetable called spider flower/ stew eaten with ugali
<i>Oganda</i>	-	Bean
<i>Mor kich</i>	-	Honey
<i>Nyanja</i>	-	My tomatoes
<i>Abila</i>	-	One that is tasted

## 2. VAGINA IS A GARDEN

*Puodho* - Garden

*Bungu* - A forest

## 3. VAGINA IS MEDICINE

*Yadh nindo* - Medicine for sleep

## 4. VAGINA IS WEALTH

*Mwandu* - Wealth

*Buk* - Book

## 5. VAGINA IS A RIVER

*Soko* - Stream

*Aora madiere* - The middle river

## 6. VAGINA IS A PASSAGE

*Gir lach* - Something used to urinate

*Dag nyuol* - Channel of birth

*Bugo* - A hole

*Rangach* - Gate

*Kar nyodo* - A place for giving birth to children

*Dhood nyuol* - A passage for birth

*Oloko* - A passage

## 7. VAGINA IS A TOOL

*Okweya* - Cooler

*Agucha* - My pot

## 8. VAGINA IS A PLACE

*Minggo* - Name of an Island

## 9. VAGINA IS AN ORGAN

<i>Duon'g</i>	-	Private part
<i>Nyamwalo</i>	-	Lower part
<i>Yuom</i>	-	Protruding labia
<i>Osono</i>	-	Clitoris
<i>Giri</i>	-	Your thing
<i>Mhenj</i>	-	Vagina

## EUPHEMISMS OF MENSTRUATION

### 1. MENSTRUATION IS A PERIOD

<i>Dhi e dwe</i>	-	Having periods
------------------	---	----------------

### 2. MENSTRUATION IS A VISITOR

<i>Yudo welo</i>	-	Receiving visitors
------------------	---	--------------------

### 3. MENSTRUATION IS DIRT

<i>Lweta olil</i>	-	My hands are dirty
<i>Pinya rach</i>	-	My lower part is bad

### 4. MENSTRUATION IS WETNESS

<i>Nyamwalo ywak</i>	-	She from the lower side is crying
<i>Kendo n'gich</i>	-	The hearth is wet
<i>Yen'go</i>	-	Slaughtering
<i>Kamwalo n'gich</i>	-	The lower part is wet

### 5. MENSTRUATION IS RAIN/ HAPPENINGS OF THE ATMOSPHERE

<i>Koth</i>	-	Rain
-------------	---	------

### 6. EUPHEMISMS OF EJACULATION

<i>Layo</i>	-	Urinating
<i>Chuer</i>	-	Pouring

*Thek* – Freeing / relieving oneself

## 7. EUPHEMISMS OF GIVING BIRTH

*Kelo wendo* – Bringing a visitor

*Konyruok* – Getting help

*Pogruok* – Being freed from someone or something

*Puko gimoro* – Pouring something

## EUPHEMISMS OF SEXUAL INTERCOURSE

### 1. SEXUAL INTERCOURSE IS A GAME

*Tugo* – Game

### 2. SEXUAL INTERCOURSE IS WORK

*Nyono* – Trampling

*Duodo* – Entangling

*Guro* – Nailing

*Socho* – Inserting

### 3. SEXUAL INTERCOURSE IS WAR

*Chuopo* – Pricking

*Chweto* – Whipping

*Mach* – Fire

*Goyo siala* – Beating with a markhamia tree

### 4. SEXUAL INTERCOURSE IS FOOD

*Chamo* – Eating/ food

*Nyamo* – Chewing

*Moo* – Oil

*Bilo* – Tasting

*Yetho* – Eating hurriedly

Muodo - Crushing

**5. SEXUAL INTERCOURSE IS TOUCH/ COMPANIONSHIP/ REST**

Sero - Seducing

Nindo - Sleep

Nduko - Shaking something

Miyo yunga - Giving penis

Soyo - Inserting something

Yundo - Shaking vigorously

Rudho - Rubbing

## APPENDIX E: LWALA SUB-LOCATION



Google maps

APPENDIX F: RESEARCH CONSENT

LWALA SUB-LOCATION,  
P. O BOX 205,  
URIRI,  
15<sup>th</sup> JULY, 2010.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

REF: P BLYNE N. ANUDO - ID NO. 20495301.

The above named person hails from my sub-location and is well known to me. My office has granted her permission to collect data on Dholuo Euphemisms for her Masters research project. Any assistance accorded to her will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

~~MR. ROBIN~~ ~~URIRI~~ ~~205~~  
ASST. CHIEF  
LWALA SUB-LOCATION

MR. ROBIN ~~URIRI~~ ~~205~~ MANYALA  
Assistant Chief: Lwala sub-location

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