Conceptual Mappings of Metaphorical Euphemisms in Ekegusii Circumcision Ceremonies

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Abstract

Conceptual mappings are a key tenet of the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) and are sets of systematic correspondences between the source and target domains. As observed in the relevant literature, it is argued that metaphors establish a conceptual link between a source and target concept such that the target domain is understood through a source domain. As a result, the correspondences are constrained by different mapping scopes which help avoid the transfer of just any kind of feature from the source to the target concept. In this study, we sought to examine the conceptual mappings of metaphorical euphemisms in Ekegusii Circumcision Ceremonies. The study analyzed the conceptual mappings of metaphorical euphemisms used in EC based on the essentials of cognitive metaphor analysis and principles of Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT). The metaphor-related words (MRWs) identified using the Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIPVU) were subjected to conceptual analysis using the CMT. The conceptualization of the target domain euphemisms was obtained through projections in the source domain such as objects, animals, plants, and human beings. In this view, the study identified the following four generic metaphors in Ekegusii Circumcision Discourse; Circumcision is a Human being, Circumcision is an Animal, Circumcision is a Plant and Circumcision is an Object. The study employed a descriptive research design. A combined method of elicitation and the native speaker's intuition was used to collect culture-specific metaphorical euphemisms through Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). The quantitative data on the other hand was analyzed using the statistical Package for Social Sciences which is; Chi-square at a significant level of 0.05 was employed to test the association between the overall cross-tabulated corpus of the generic level metaphors versus the influence of demographic variables on the usage of euphemisms in Ekegusii Circumcision ceremonies. The findings of this study not only contribute to the existing literature in cognitive linguistics but also indicate that Ekegusii speakers conceptualize circumcision through metaphorical euphemisms. The findings of this study are of benefit to the ethnographers and metaphor theorists for further reference.

Keywords: Culture; Egekusii; Euphemisms; metaphorical euphemisms; Cognitive linguistics

1 Introduction

Euphemisms are tropically marked by advocate language and indirect construction. Burridge (2012) argued that human beings create euphemisms when they encounter the complicated issues of how to express themselves in varied situations. Language truth and concepts only exist metaphorically hence language can be thought of as a metaphor which means that as people use euphemistic language to cover for the taboo words (social custom prohibiting a particular practice), this can be referred to as metaphorical euphemism. In this key function, euphemisms are ways of talking about taboos while at the same time spelling out acceptable and unacceptable behavior. At present, a lot of lexicon concerning Ekegusii circumcision is in the minds of older native speakers because of the ban on Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), modernization of male circumcision, and death of older members of Ekegusii speaking community (Obwoge 2014). Because the lexicon is not documented, studies carried out regarding the topic have not described the meaning of individual lexical items about Ekegusii circumcision. This may partly be because word meanings are sometimes left largely unanalyzed. An important consideration about language and circumcision is the fact that circumcision is an aspect of culture.

According to Obwoge (2014), Culture being a way of life as lived by a people in a particular moment in history has a role to play in the way linguistic items are chosen, used, and meaning realized within it. Therefore, it is worth noting that human beings will avoid behaviors considered to be taboo except on occasions where they deliberately disregard a taboo to accomplish a certain communicative function. Another important consideration is the role of gender in the context of Ekegusii Circumcision. Men use language differently from women (Obwoge 2014). Studies carried out by Okindo (1995) and Choti (1998) depict a woman as being positioned lower than a man in the Abagusii society. Language refers to concepts in the mind as informed by Talmy (1988). Therefore, anything a person knows about a concept forms part of meaning. The truth of an expression is considered to be secondary because truth concerns the relation between a cognitive structure and the world (Regier, 1996). This implies that meaning comes before truth. The present study sought to unveil how cultural factors influence the conceptualization of euphemisms in Ekegusii Circumcision ceremonies based on how people perceive them to be and the conceptual structures they form in the mind. It is the culture of an individual that decides the way he or she behaves. In other words, culture is nothing but the values of an individual (Regier, 1996). Conceptual structures such as schemas, categories, and metaphors that come into existence are a result of interactions between members of a cultural group hence conceptualization of abstract concepts influenced by the cultural factors.

Words and other linguistic units do not encode meaning but are foundations for the construction of meaning in a particular context (Saeed, 1997). Saeed further provides that meaning is a mental experience and linguistic units only serve to trigger the process of conceptual operations and the recruitment of background knowledge. Therefore, this study sought to reveal how circumcision is conceptualized metaphorically in Ekegusii through euphemisms and how euphemisms are used to construct meaning. Metaphorical euphemisms refer to euphemisms that adopt metaphorical mapping of both source and target domains to express the notion of a forbidden domain as a result of conscious choices. Since metaphors as pointed out by Fauconnier and Turner (2002), are linguistic concepts, metaphorical expressions are used to conceptualize world phenomena in Cognitive Semantics. Metaphorical euphemism is a tool that helps make sense of abstract notions through concrete ones (Lakoff, 2008). According to Kovecses (2002), metaphors play a role in human thought, understanding, and reasoning as well as the creation of people's social, cultural, and psychological reality. In other words, metaphors are primarily conceptual, universal, and conventionally part of a system of thought.

Since most abstract concepts that people use in their everyday lives are metaphorically structured and not understood.

Therefore, the study of metaphor becomes significant for an adequate understanding of abstract reality. In Ekegusii Circumcision ceremonies, interlocutors use abstract concepts which at times prove elusive and for this reason, there is a need to study how these metaphorical euphemisms are conceptualized. This is premised on the fact that metaphors are pervasive in nature and their experiential focus varies. The conceptual framing of metaphors can also be different over time and across communities depending on the context. Furthermore, given that a language is an embodied and a cultural phenomenon, one would expect cultural variations in the way communities think about abstract linguistic concepts like euphemisms and how cross-domain mappings take place to facilitate abstract conceptualization of such concepts used in Ekegusii Circumcision ceremonies. There is also a need to explore the role of cultural and bodily factors of a particular community in the creation of these metaphors. This is important as metaphorical euphemisms have the function of politeness and beautification which is helpful to develop benign in Ekegusii Circumcision and to reveal cultural information which is a resource for the investigation of human languages.

2 Literature Review

The principle of conceptual mappings is an important tenet in Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980). According to CMT abstract concepts are motivated by both the physical experiences (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980) and cultural background surrounding us (Kovecses, 2005; Yu, 2003), through which they fit into a system. A conceptual metaphor thus consists of a set of corresponding mappings which are technically called the Target domain (TD) and source domain (SD) (Lakoff and Johnson 1999, p45-49). The conceptual structures for euphemisms such as schemas, categories, and metaphors that come into existence as a result of interactions between members of a cultural group, align with what the researchers suggest that cultural cognition which is distributed across the minds in a cultural group plays a key role as a source of cross-cultural variations. Metaphorical euphemisms reflect the thinking of people, their language, and their culture. Therefore, they can be used to explore their thoughts and language.

Empirical studies on metaphor have focused on different concepts. For instance, Mashak and Pazhakh (2012) investigate the universality of metaphorical conceptualization of emotion and the dominant pattern in English and Persian based on Kovecses's (2003) model for linguistic expression of metaphor. The emotions investigated were happiness, anger, sadness, fear, and love. In their study, expressions were categorized under their general and specific target and source domains. In the second phase, in each category, metaphorical expressions were compared based on their conceptual metaphor and literal meaning. At this phase, three patterns of totally the same, partially the same, and different were identified. The results of the Chi-square applied to these three patterns demonstrated that anger was the most universal emotion, whereas sadness was the least universal emotion in the study. This study is relevant to the present study because it will provide useful data on the application of Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) Conceptual Metaphor Theory. In addition, the Chi-square analysis employed by the study will be employed in the present study. However, whereas Mashak and Pazhakh derive their data from literary works and related articles, this study derives its data from focused group discussions with respondents of different genders and ages.

Imre (2010) studies metaphors using a cognitive linguistics framework in the Netherlands. He notes that any traditional approaches to linguistics that can account for metaphors are limited. This prompts linguists like Fauconnier and Turner (2002) to devise the Cognitive Linguistics (CL) paradigm to analyze deviant linguistic features like metaphor.

According to Imre (2010), Cognitive Linguistics focuses on language in terms of the concepts and it is not only

interested in meaning but also in the uncovering of a network within interconnected elements. These elements often offer explanations about the nature of metaphor. He further provides that the pervasiveness of metaphor cannot be overlooked in human understanding because metaphors offer an insight into our everyday experience and helps us understand what is unknown to us. Imre also argues that the pervasiveness of metaphors in human understanding can be best characterized by the phenomenon whereby a target domain is structured and understood concerning a concrete source domain. Therefore, the source domain serves as the background for structuring and understanding the target domain thus, metaphors bring about changes in how we act in the world.

The present study analyzed euphemisms within the cognitive semantics framework which is one of the branches of CL. This is because cognitive semantics hold the view that meaning is a product of a nexus among language, the mind, and social and cultural experiences. This study employed the corresponding conceptual mappings between the concrete source domains to abstract target domains as suggested by Imre in his study to objectively reveal the conceptualization of the euphemisms used in Ekegusii Circumcision. Imre (2010) however does not explain how metaphors of study should be identified from texts something the present study fills that gap by explaining the importance of using the Metaphor Identification Procedure to establish metaphors from texts.

According to Kovecses (2010), the natural and physical environment shapes a language, primarily its vocabulary, in an obvious way; consequently, it shapes metaphors as well. Given a certain kind of habitat, speakers living there will be attuned to things and phenomena that are characteristic of that habitat; and they will make use of these things and phenomena for the metaphorical comprehension and creation of their conceptual universe thus two languages may share the same conceptual metaphor, but the metaphor is elaborated differently in the two languages. Furthermore, embodiment may consist of a variety of aspects, or components, and any of these may become the preferred one in a given culture and at a given time. Which aspects, or components, of universal embodiment receive more attention from speakers of a language largely depends on the broader cultural context (Kovecses, 2010). In the investigation of conceptual metaphors in Ekegusii, the present study established if the implication of the metaphor conceptualization in EC affects the interlocutors.

3   Methodology

The present study employed descriptive research design which falls within the qualitative research approach (Dulock 1993). The research goes beyond merely describing the characteristics, to analyzing and explaining why and how the phenomenon being studied is happening. To explain the use of euphemisms in Ekegusii Circumcision, an examination of the various linguistic expressions was deemed necessary. Descriptive research aims to obtain information to systematically describe a phenomenon, situation, or population (cite). This design helps answer the question of what, when, where, and how regarding the research problem rather than why. It involves gathering data that describe events and then organizing, tabulating, depicting, and describing the data collection (Glass and Hopkins 1984). According to Williams (2007), descriptive research is a method that can determine the situation in a current phenomenon. Nassaji (2015) states that the goal of descriptive research is drawing and classifying the phenomenon.

4   Results and Discussion

In this study, we sought to examine the conceptual mappings of metaphorical euphemisms in Ekegusii Circumcision Ceremonies. The study analyzed the conceptual mappings of metaphorical euphemisms used in EC based on the essentials of cognitive metaphor analysis and principles of Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT), Lakoff and Johnson (1980). As observed in in the relevant literature, it is argued that metaphors establish a conceptual link between a source and target concept such that the target domain is understood through a source domain (Deignon, 1997; Lakoff and Johnson, 1980, Vakhovska,2017). In this perspective, Ungerer (2006) argues that the correspondences are constrained by different mapping scopes which help avoid the transfer of just any kind of feature from the source to the target concept.

Furthermore, Lakoff and Johnson (1980) posit that conceptual mapping is systematic and what constitutes the conceptual metaphor is not any particular word but cross-domain mapping of the specific source concepts that contribute to given target concepts. Kovecses (2010), collaborates with this view as he observes that the source domain does not contribute randomly selected material instead what is widely agreed upon regarding that source in the specific social-cultural context.

Conceptual mapping is a key tenet of the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) by Lakoff and Johnson (1980). The conceptual mappings are sets of systematic correspondences between the source and target domains (Chow,2010). The metaphor-related words (MRWs) identified using the Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIPVU) were subjected to conceptual analysis using the CMT. The conceptualization of the target domain euphemisms was obtained through projections in the source domain such as objects, animals, plant, and human beings. In this view, the study identified the following four generic metaphors in Ekegusii Circumcision Discourse; Circumcision is a Human being, Circumcision is an Animal, Circumcision is a Plant and Circumcision is an Object. The set of correspondences in the knowledge structures in these metaphors was discussed as follows;

4.1   Human Being Metaphor

Human beings occupy an attractive position in the generic Great Chain of Being Metaphor (GCBM) (López, 2009). It is, therefore, considered acceptable to compare human beings with other human characters. However, the comparison elicits varied degrees of approbation or disdain depending on the metaphor used. The present study classified the conceptual metaphor of CIRCUMCISION as A HUMAN BEING into two subdomains. The first is CIRCUMCISION IS A HUMAN BEING (whole person) subdomain while the second is CIRCUMCISION IS A HUMAN BEING (body part) subdomain. This was motivated by the presence of the metaphors that refer to the whole person and those that allude to human body parts in EC. Kovecses (2002) points out that the phenomenon of body part metaphors is taken as another argument for the ubiquity of embodied experience. The conceptual metaphor of CIRCUMCISION IS A HUMAN BEING is also discussed in the two subdomains in this study because the human level is the focal link in all metaphoric and other mental and linguistic transitions between the area and levels of the GCBM (Krikmann,1998). Krikmann further notes that a human being is simultaneously the most known and unknown object. Therefore, the human being level within the GCBM is the most typical target and source of metaphors.

4.2   Circumcision is a Human Being (whole person) Sub Domain

Figure 1 below displays metaphors denoting CIRCUMCISION IS A HUMAN BEING (whole person) subdomain in Ekegusii Circumcision

No	Ekegusii	Gloss
1.	Bware n'okoba abanto	Circumcision is people
2.	Bware n'omosacha	Circumcision is a man
3.	Bware n'erabera	Circumcision is a woman

Figure 1: Circumcision is a Human Being (whole person) Subdomain

Circumcision can be understood based on human beings' behaviors. For instance, circumcision is being been labeled as a man. The human being metaphor, thus, is a common ontological metaphor as in (1) and (2):

(1) bware n'erabera- circumcision is a woman

(2) Bware n'omosacha- circumcision is a man

In metaphors (1) and (2) above, circumcision is conceptualized as omosacha (man). bware (circumcision), therefore, is the target domain (TD) while omosacha (a man) is the source domain (SD) as per the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT). Therefore, one of the corresponding conceptual mappings of the SD corresponding to the TD is: physical attributes corresponding to a person's behaviors and attitudes. The following is an excerpt from key informant interviews;

Interviewer: Maganio nareo ekenyoro kebwate ase omonto ochire bware? (Does the society have any expectations on people who have been circumcised?)

Key informant 8: omonto ochire bware naganerie koba ekeorokererio ase abande. Chimbwa chiaye nciganerigwe koba chia ebikoro ebiya yagera twateba bware n'omosacha gose bware n'erabera. Eise koba buna omonto bwarokire tarikobwatia amaganio ye ekebwanyabanto, oyio bono nigo tokogoteba obeire richara. (a circumcised person has a lot of expectations that comes with it because there is a way, he should carry himself hence circumcision is a man and he ought not depict characters of an insane person. Failure to adhere to such norms, he can be referred to as a foolish person.)

Omosacha (a man), is regarded as someone with courage who is ready and capable to have a family, fend for his family and protect his family. Circumcision was and is still considered important for the Gusii individual because its actualized socialization of the Gusii person into Gusii language and culture This conceptualization is a vivid way of emphasizing the manner in which a circumcised man ought to carry himself in the society with dignity and responsibility as well as courage rather than carry himself casually. The cultural expectation of boys and men is that they ought to be tough, stoic, aggressive and unemotional hence circumcision being conceptualized as a man.

Erabera (woman), is a woman ripe and ready for marriage. Circumcision is conceptualized as erabera(woman) since a lady who has gone through circumcision and circumcision school is considered ready to be a wife and perform the roles of a wife. Eyarogoro ceremony commences the process of clitoridectomy. The song is sung at dawn when the sun form sugusu(north) is reddish and this song is meant to prepare the girls for circumcision. The erabera (woman) after circumcision has been made ready for marriage and marriage in Gusii is meant to procreate and keep the culture going. Hence bware (circumcision) is the target domain (TD) while erabera(woman) is the source domain (SD) as per

the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT).

According to Ahrens (2002), the conceptual mappings determine the underlying source-target domain pairings of a conceptual metaphor. The source and target domains are the conceptual domains of a metaphor (Lakoff and Johnson,1980). The source domain provides properties that are attributed to the target domain (Gibbs,2011). Chow (2010) points out that people's understanding of the source domain which is concrete help motivate and create comprehension of the target domain which is abstract.

4.3   Circumcision is a Human Being (Body Part) Sub Domain

According to Kovecses (2002), abstract targets can be conceptualized in terms of the human body parts as the body parts are close and tangible to the human beings. Yu (2003) argues that human body parts are potentially source domains for metaphors which conceptualize abstract concepts. According to Yu (2004), the phenomenon of body metaphors is taken as another argument for the ambiguity of embodied experience. The present study examines the body parts which are used to characterize abstract concepts in the Ekegusii Circumcision. Figure 2 shows the metaphors of CIRCUMCISION IS A HUMAN BEING (body pats) Sub domain in EC.

No	Ekegusii	Gloss
1.	Bware n'omotwe	Circumcision is a head
2.	Bware n'rigegu	Circumcision is a molar tooth
3.	Bware n'obongaini	Circumcision is wisdom

Figure 2: Circumcision is a Human Being (body part) Subdomain

People usually make sense of abstract phenomena using concrete notions (Kovecses, 2009). For example, the body part metaphor rigegu (a molar tooth) in metaphor (3) below is appreciatively used to conceptualize circumcision. Thus,
(3) bware n'rigegu- circumcision is a molar tooth
from key informant 3, bware (circumcision) in Ekegusii is conceptualized as rigegu (molar tooth). Daubert and Kelly (2016) describe molar teeth as very useful, flat, large and strong located at the back of the mouth and used to grind food during chewing. The rearmost molar, which is the last to appear, is referred to as the wisdom tooth (Daubert and Kelly, 2016). In instantiation (3) above, bware (circumcision) is the target domain (TD) while rigegu (a molar tooth) is the source domain (SD) as per the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT). Therefore, one of the corresponding conceptual mappings of the SD corresponding to the TD is physical attributes corresponding to use of a tooth. Hence, from the excerpt in key informant 3 a human being especially a man who has gone through circumcision should be able to portray the characteristics of a molar tooth.

Another metaphor closely associated with (3) is metaphor (4) below. Omotwe (a head) is a very important body part. The head is home to the brains from which the control and coordination of human functions emanates (McIntosh, 2000). Therefore:

(4) bware n'omotwe -circumcision is a head

Data from informant indicates that all attributes of a rational human beings should be like those of a head. Manaseh (2016) posits that, a head is used as a synecdoche to denote the leaders of homes, institutions, government and states. The head (leader), therefore, undertakes administrative roles and responsibilities focused on realizing certain goals. Metaphor (4) above is appropriately used to indicate that bware (circumcision), once an individual has undergone it, he /she has been given the power to lead.

Animal metaphor The conceptual metaphor circumcision is an animal was used in conceptualizing euphemisms in Ekegusii. The metaphor utilizes attributes from specific animals to name and understand the target domain of circumcision. Olateju (2005) argues that the attributes and actions associated with an animal are transferred to the person being predicted of an animal. In Ekegusii Circumcision, attributes and actions associated with specific animals are used to reason about the metaphorical euphemisms. Olateju (2005) also observes that motivation is culture dependent, that is, whatever attribute an animal is claimed to have is largely dependent of the culture of the speakers and philosophy of life. However, we can differentiate various levels of generality based on a hierarchical relationship and the notion of class inclusion so that the organism is the superordinate and includes animals. In this view, animals can be further subdivided into mammals, birds and reptiles. Furthermore, the basic level category members of reptiles can include snakes and lizards. On this basis, the findings inferred that people have varied experiences with animals depending on whether such animals are domestic or wild.

Circumcision can be understood based on animal characteristics. Charles Darwin's ground breaking studies on evolution declare that a human being is an animal (Bayne,2007). Animals, like human beings have conceptual understanding as an adaptive strategy (Cheney and Seyfarth, 2007). According to Deignan (2003), animal metaphors are culturally motivated as they highlight the attitudes, norms and beliefs by a given community towards certain animal species and, therefore, may vary from culture to culture, in time and space. The following animal metaphors are used in description of circumcision in EC. Figure 3 below displays metaphors of CIRCUMCISION IS AN ANIMAL conceptual domain in the EC.

No	Ekegusii	Gloss
1.	Bware n'eng'iti	Circumcision is a serpent
2.	Bware n'enyamweri	Circumcision is a beast
3.	Omware n'egesimba	An initiate is a wild cat

Figure 3: Circumcision is an Animal

In metaphor (5), circumcision is conceptualized as eng'iti (serpent). Ekegusii speakers in Circumcision Discourse understand euphemisms using the metaphorical expression bware n'enyamweri (dragon) and Eng'iti (serpent). In a

ceremony known as ogosuba or esubo, the initiate is subjected to pain and fear. The initiate is tested on the knowledge of Ekegusii folklore. Esubo ceremony is accompanied by enyabububu (sound of the dragon/serpent). The ceremony prepares one for adulthood as well as the responsibility of motherhood for girls. In this metaphor, the attributes of a dragon and beast are used as source domain to reason about the target domain Circumcision. First the dragon and serpent are attributed to destruction or disaster and in this metaphorical expression it is indicated that the serpent represents evil. This is connected to the fact that venomous snakes often deliver defensive bites without notice to unwitting victims hence it is this reason that the initiates are schooled to prepare how to deal with such situations as they are ushered to adulthood. Olateju (2005) similarly observes that animals have distinctive features which motivate their metaphoric interpretation.

(5) bware n'eng'iti – circumcision is a serpent

In the instantiation (5) above, bware (circumcision) is the target domain (TD) while eng'iti (serpent) is the corresponding source domain (SD) as per CMT. In the corresponding conceptual mapping of the SD corresponding to the TD. The metaphor of egesimba (wild cat) in (6) below elicits a connotation in EC is used to aptly conceptualize an initiate. For example;

(6) Omware n'egesimba – an initiate is a wild cat

Here, initiates are referred to as Ebisimba (wild cats) because the actual names of the initiates were not mentioned while in seclusion. From the characteristics of Egesimba (a wild cat), which is known to be more active at night the initiates while in seclusion were not supposed to be seen during the day not even mentioning their names was allowed. They were expected to exhibit the characteristics of Ebisimba (wild cats). From this observation, the findings established that the attributes of the source domain, wild cat, were projected onto the target circumcision(initiate). The findings of the study established that this mapping did not generate multiple correspondences. It involved a generic source concept mapping onto an abstract concept. The generic source contributed knowledge that was predetermined by conceptual material that characterized the specific abstract target.

Plant Metaphor Kleparski (2008) posits that, plants are intermittently used to conjure up phenomena. Kleparski further observes that the process of transference of plant names to refer to various qualities of human beings and or with reference to humans is referred to as plantosemy. Plants, according to Rosinska (2016), are well represented in cognitive models. The folk conception of the Great Chain of Being Metaphor (GCBM) points out that when people are compared with plants, they are normally demeaned (López, 2009). In the EC, the following cases of plant metaphors are used to conceptualize human beings. Figure 4 below highlights metaphors of CIRCUMCISION IS A PLANT in Ekegusii Circumcision.

Kovecses (2002) posits that plants are one of the most common source domains for ontological mappings. This is because plants are useful to human beings as they are a source of food, shelter, fuels and timber. Abagusii are predominantly agriculturalists (Akama and Maxon, 2006) which prompts the interlocutors in EC to use plants metaphors to conceptualize phenomenon. For example, in metaphor (7) below, enkorogoinwa (wild fruit) metaphor is used to highlight a positive conceptualization of circumcision.

(7) bware n'enkoroginwa – circumcision is a wild fruit.

Enkorogoinwa, (wild fruit) is known to be bitter and as having potential supply of human health due to their energetic compounds that are chargeable for their various antioxidant, antidiabetic, antibacterial and antimalaria activities. So, from these characteristics of Enkorogoinwa (wild fruit), a circumcised male initiate is compared to this fruit as he is ready to face marital and life challenges. In metaphor (7) above, enkorogoinwa (wild fruit) is the source domain (SD)

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No	Ekegusii	Gloss
1.	Bware n'enkorogoinwa	Circumcision is a wild fruit
2.	Bware n'ensobosobo	Circumcision is a cape goose berry
3.	Bware n'esuguta	Circumcision is grass
4.	Bware n'omwobo	Circumcision is Markhamia lutea

Figure 4: Circumcision is a Plant

while circumcision is the target domain (TD) as per the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT). This validates Rosinska's (2016) assertion that human beings can be conceptualized as plants because the source domain of plants is well grounded in people's everyday experience.

(8) bware n'ensobosobo – circumcision is a cape goose berry
The metaphoric expression bware n'ensobosobo (circumcision is a cape goose berry) also aids in understanding the conceptualization of circumcision from plants point of view. This metaphor is used in Ekegusii Circumcision to refer to enyaroka (circumcised girl) ready for marriage. Ensobosobo (cape goose berry) is not only just pretty to look at but also tasty to eat. Cape goose berries also carry some nutrition value and are flexible that is, they can be consumed raw or cooked. Ramadan (2011), asserts that the fruit play an important role in nutrition as an excellent base for low calorie and dietetic products and it is highly valued for its unique flavor, texture and color. This is how the Abagusii perceive a circumcised girl who is ready for marriage.

Therefore, metaphor (8) above is positively employed in EC to conceptualize a circumcised woman. In the metaphor, bware (circumcision) is the target domain (TD) while ensobosobo (cape goose berry) is the source domain (SD). Therefore, one of the corresponding conceptual mappings of the SD corresponding to the TD is physical satisfaction corresponding to sexual satisfaction. A woman is food that can be eaten to physically satisfy one which can be compared to the sexual desire. Another corresponding conceptual mapping of the SD corresponding to the TD is appearance corresponding to color image whereby a cape goose berry is yellow which is a bright. Another metaphorical expression that was used by Ekegusii respondents was in reference to esuguta (grass). Esuguta is a drought-resistance grass that spreads after being transplanted. The grass symbolizes the renewed self of the initiate. The initiate is meant to grow and spread like esuguta. The grass is transplanted from a path near etoigo (wetland) by omosegi (fighter) and omosichi (helper). Some of the esuguta grass is used to make riburu (initiate's bed) while some is planted near the riburu and watered daily. Hence the metaphor bware n'esuguta (circumcision is grass), circumcision is the target domain (TD) while esuguta (grass) is the source domain (SD). Therefore, one of the corresponding conceptual mappings of the SD corresponding to the TD is the physical spreading (to prosper) like the grass.

4.4   Object metaphor

Objects are the common sources from which the study derived metaphorical euphemisms in Ekegusii Circumcision. They highlight concreteness and abstractness in the source domains. The parts of the source concepts that were utilized related to the people's experiences with the items in their social cultural setting. The highlighted parts involved the aspects of the target concept that corresponded to the knowledge structure of the source concept.

The object class is the second last level in the Great Chain of Being Metaphor (GCBM). Chiape and Kennedy (2001), argue that when the target and source domains of objects metaphors refer to abstractness and concreteness, a categorization strategy should be devised to assist in comprehension. Furthermore, metaphor comprehension also requires a combination of comparative categorization and evaluative thinking (Gentner and Bowdle, 2008; Gibbs, 2011). Therefore, this study classified the objects metaphors in EC into two categories to help in comprehension. That is; the concrete objects metaphors (concreteness) and the abstract objects metaphors (abstractness).

4.5   Circumcision is an Object (Concrete Objects)

According to Crutch (2006), concreteness is the degree to which a thing may be ascertained by the human senses. Concrete objects express a quality or characteristic which is specific and tangible. Concrete objects have also been found relational in nature since they refer to objects that people can easily relate to (Crutch,2006; Crutch and Warrington ,2005). Figure 5 highlights the metaphors of CIRCUMCISION IS AN OBJECT (concrete objects) in Ekegusii Circumcision.

No	Ekegusii	Gloss
1.	Bware n'orogena	Circumcision is a grinding stone
2.	Bware n'enguba	Circumcision is a shield
3.	Bware n'itimo rituriwe	Circumcision is a sharpened spear
4.	Bware n'omorero	Circumcision is fire

Figure 5: Circumcision is an Object (concrete objects)

Ritimo (spear) metaphor is used to depict a strong positive connotation. A spear is a long-pointed rod used as a tool or weapon. Metaphor (9) below depicts a sharpened spear ready for use.
(9) Bware nitimo riturirwe – circumcision is a sharpened spear

In metaphor (9) above, it is depicted that circumcision is presently compared to ritimo riturirwe (sharpened spear). On the day of circumcision, the boy is woken up before dawn and taken to the river to bath. This makes his body numb to withstand the pain of the knife since the water is very cold at that time. Circumcised older boys and young men accompanies the boy to visit Omosari (male circumciser). Omosari (circumciser) sings esimbore y'abagaka (male

circumcision song) upon cutting the last boy in the queue and the rest men join in the chorus. Data collected from the male informant showed that esimbore y'abagaka carries an aspect of Ekegusii culture through language. As seen in the lines;

Obeire omomura he has now become a man Oturerwe itimo a spear has been sharpened for him The meaning of a sharpened spear (otureirwe ritimo) means that the man has been prepared in readiness for the many roles that lie ahead of him as the head of the family and defender of the community. In (9) above, bware(circumcision) is the target domain (TD) while ritimo (spear) is the source domain (SD). The conceptual mapping between the SD corresponding to the TD in this context is physical appearance of the sharpened spear corresponding to circumcision.

Data collected by a researcher through a female informant showed that girls are treated differently from boys. They are not required to ask for permission for them to be circumcised. Preparations for girl's clitoridectomy is done by the grandmother, aunts and the mother in consultation from the father. Girls are not required to bath in a river before visiting omokebi (girl circumciser). Therefore, metaphor (10)

(10) bware maguta motwe – circumcision is oil
is used in Ekegusii Circumcision to symbolize being empowered through the cut. Circumcision was and is still considered important for the Gusii individual because its actualized socialization of the Gusii person into the Gusii language and culture. Data collected showed that the lexicon used at every ceremony that make up Ekegusii circumcision carry meaning that is context-specific. For instance, with reference to ekeigoroigoro (raised ground) song that is sung during circumcision, meaning is understood based on context. The song advertises the making of another Gusii erabera (young woman ready for marriage) who has been empowered through the cut (oyakirwe maguta motwe). She is advised against sleeping with/having sex with uncircumcised boys. In (10) above, bware (circumcision) is the target domain (TD) while maguta motwe (oil) is the source domain (SD) as per the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT).

Orogena (grinding stone) is another object used to conceptualize circumcision. Data collected indicate that orogena (grinding stone) was a source of livelihood and food among the Abagusii. Therefore, metaphor (11)

(11) bware n'orogena- circumcision is a grinding stone
Indicates that with circumcision one is prepared to be a source of livelihood by either working hard to provide for the family or even protecting the clan. Hence, bware (circumcision) is the target domain (TD) while orogena (grinding stone) is the source domain (SD) as per the CMT.

(12) bware n'omorero – circumcision is fire
Omorero (fire) in Ekegusii circumcision symbolizes life and continuity. During seclusion of the initiates, special sticks called ekerende egetwani (male hard wood) and ekerende egekungu (female soft wood) are used to light fire that is kept burning from the time the initiate enters seclusion till the end. The making of the sacred fire using the hard wood and soft wood symbolize intercourse between a man and a woman in order to procreate. Marriage in Gusii meant to procreate and keep the culture going. Taming the sacred fire symbolize the care given to children and the significance of life. The sacred fire also symbolizes a rebirth of the initiate who takes care of his/her life as a circumcised Gusii person. Therefore, in (12) above bware (circumcision) is the target domain (TD) while omorero(fire) is the source domain (SD) as per the Conceptual metaphor Theory.

4.6 Circumcision is an Object (Abstract Object)

According to Crutch (2006) abstractness is the degree to which a thing is not ascertained by the human senses. An abstract object, therefore, is not specific or tangible. Abstract objects have been found to be more relational or schematic and they normally evoke other abstract concepts such as situations and emotions (Crutch,2006; Crutch and Warrington, 2005). Chiape and Kennedy (2001) allude that abstract things require a high level of analytical thinking to process. The present study therefore, analyzed abstract objects metaphors in Ekegusii Circumcision (EC) to reveal their meaning. Figure 6 below highlights metaphors of CIRCUMCISION IS AN OBJECT (abstract objects) in EC.

No	Ekegusii	Gloss
1.	Bware n'obongaini	Circumcision is wisdom
2.	Bware n'obwanchani	Circumcision is love
3.	Bware n'chinsoni	Circumcision is statutes

Figure 6: Circumcision is an Object (abstract objects)

From key informant 9, the metaphor;
(12) bware n'obwanchani – circumcision is love
Obwanchani (love) according to Cambridge dictionary is to like another adult very much and be romantically and sexually attracted to them, or have strong feelings of liking a friend or person in your family. Among the Abagusii one who is circumcised is considered to be good and ready for conjugal matters hence for the reason of good cordial relations between partners, the interlocutors use the metaphorical euphemisms bware n'obwanchani (circumcision is love).

From metaphor (12) a bware(circumcision) is the target domain (TD) while obwanchani (love) is the source domain (SD) as per the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT).

An individual that has been circumcised among the Abagusii is deemed to have acquired relevant knowledge (obong'aini) that will aid him deal with various challenges that they could encounter. Every initiate has to go through circumcision school before the end of seclusion period to be guided and get equipped with this knowledge (obong'aini). For instance, data collected indicate that according to Gusii culture, it is taboo for anyone to sing esimbore y'abagaka outside the context of Ekegusii circumcision. Women are not allowed to sing esimbore y'abagaka. The song is the first sign that the male initiate has been admitted into the Gusii male circumcision school. The song gives authority (he has become a man) and norms as well as limitations of a Gusii man. This are some of teachings the initiates receive in circumcision school hence the metaphor;

(13) bware n'obongani- circumcision is wisdom
In metaphor (13) bware (circumcision) is the target domain (TD) while obong'aini (wisdom) is the source domain (SD)

as per the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT). The metaphor highlights people's subjective judgement of what is considered good and bad in the society.

The analysis of the metaphoric expressions revealed that Ekegusii speakers metaphorically conceptualize circumcision using diverse mappings. According to Kittay (1987) metaphors are conceptual and provide members of a linguistic community with a structure of perceiving and understanding the world. Kittay also posts that the cognitive force of metaphors comes not from providing new information about the world, but rather from (re) conceptualization of information that is already available to people. Similarly, Mawadza (2000) observes that metaphor names one thing by something in another domain, calling for likeness in analogy between things that are fundamentally different. The findings of this research conform to the arguments forwarded by Kittay (1987) and Mawadza (2000) in that Ekegusii speakers understood metaphorical euphemisms using other concepts. Thus, Ekegusii speakers in the Circumcision Discourse re-conceptualize the information that is already available (source domains) to refer to an abstract entity. The findings also informed Lakoff and Johnson (1980) argument that metaphors are pervasive in everyday life not just in language but in thought and action. This argument utilized the use of ubiquity tenets of the cognitive theory of metaphor in that, metaphors are abundant in both ordinary and specialized discourses.

5   Conclusion

Indeed, the CMT as postulated by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) effectively accounts for the metaphors in Ekegusii Circumcision. The study looks at the ontological correspondences between the entities in the source domains and the corresponding entities in the target domain as per the CMT. The principle of the Great Chain of Being Metaphor (GCBM) (Kovecses, 2002) was also used to classify metaphors in the conceptual domains. The GCBM is premised on the principle that every existing thing in the universe has its place in a divinely planned hierarchical order which is pictured as a vertical chain where different entity types occupy their corresponding places based on their properties and behavior (Kovecses, 2002). GCBM, however, was not able to effectively account for object metaphors in EC whose target and source domains referred to abstractness and concreteness. The study employed Chiape and Kennedy's (2001) provision that a categorization strategy should be devised to classify objects' metaphors if they allude to abstractness and concreteness to help in their comprehension

Competing Interests

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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