

**THE LINGUISTIC DEVICES OF EUPHEMISM IN KAMBA: A CASE OF KAMBA
BENGA MUSIC**

BY

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DECLARATION

I declare that this research project is my original work. It has never been presented to any other university or institution. Where other people's works have been used, they have been duly acknowledged.

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This research project has been submitted with my approval as the University Supervisor.

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DEDICATION

To my loving mother for support and encouragement.

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DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Benga music - This is fast-paced music characterized by a lead guitar (which follows the track of vocals) overriding the rhythm and bass and whose lyrics dwell on love, money, personal experiences and at times praising a person of high standing in the society.

Context: - this is the knowledge that the parties taking part in a conversation bring to the conversation.

Processing Effort: - this is mental effort required to interpret an utterance.

Euphemism: - this is use of language that is intentionally indirect, conventionally imprecise and socially acceptable when discussing taboo, embarrassing or unpleasant topics.

Inference – a conclusion brought about by linguistic stimuli.

Explicature – these are incomplete propositions which need some form of enrichment so as to become full semantic propositions. (Sperber & Wilson 1995)

Implicature – an assumption communicated by a linguistic expression which is not explicit. (Sperber and Wilson 1986)

ABSTRACT

This research presents a relevance theoretical approach on the linguistic devices of euphemism in Kamba Benga music. The work sought to establish whether listeners of Kamba Benga music were able to interpret euphemisms used in the music correctly. It also sought to establish the process of comprehension of euphemisms as well as the role of context in the interpretation. Additionally, this research work focuses on identifying the linguistic devices of creating euphemism and the specific functions of euphemism in Kamba Benga music. The research utilises Relevance Theory by Dan Sperber and Deidre Wilson (1986 & 1995). The theory explains how hearers infer meaning (from a non-compositional language). The researcher obtained data through recordings of songs and also questionnaires. The euphemisms gathered were analyzed using the tenets of Relevance Theory. The tenets that proved useful in this study are context, cognitive principle of relevance, communicative principle of relevance, relevance theoretic comprehension procedure, processing effort and implicature. The research found out that listeners of Kamba Benga music are able to interpret the euphemisms in the music correctly provided they understood the context in which the utterances were used in. It was also established that the linguistic devices of euphemism in Kamba Benga music include: metaphor, overstatement, understatement, circumlocution, metonymy, implication, internal borrowing, external borrowing and lastly using stories from religion. Further, the functions of euphemism in Kamba Benga music were found to be: shielding offence, misrepresenting information and deceiving, isolating and also entertainment.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

According to Mutsembi (2015: 4), Benga music traces its origin from Nyanza in Kenya in the early 1940s. It is distinguished by a blending of traditional Kenyan music and a vivacious arrangement of guitars, bass and vocals. The lyrics dwell on love, money, personal experiences and at times praise important personalities in the society. Benga music in Kenya is classified into western, central and eastern. It is from the eastern classification where Kamba Benga music lies. Amongst the Akamba, Benga music has a great range of uses and gratifications. Benga music addresses quite a number of issues in today's society. It is a popular genre among the people and there are copyright laws which protect the artist from piracy.

The word euphemism originates from Greek 'eu' which means 'good' and 'pheme' which means 'speech' or 'saying', that is 'to speak in a good way' (Hughes 2006:151). In western society, euphemisms have been related to politeness. Ortony (1993:43) defines euphemism as the saying of something innocuous that either hints at or establishes a precondition of some previous offensive intended act. Hughes (2006:151) defines euphemism as use of language that is intentionally indirect, conventionally imprecise and socially acceptable when discussing taboo, embarrassing or unpleasant topics.

Burridge (2012: 67) observes that euphemisms are tropically marked by advocate language and indirect construction. She further argues that human beings create euphemism when they encounter the complicated issues of how to express themselves in varied situation. In this key function, euphemisms are ways of talking about taboo while at the same time spelling out acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. It is worth noting that human beings will avoid behaviour considered to be taboo except in occasions where they deliberately disregard a taboo so as to accomplish a certain communicative function.

There exists a relationship amongst language, society and culture. Allan and Burridge (2006) state that though certain words and phrases have not been banned, they are only used in certain fora and by a specific class of people. Since most societies embrace good behaviour which is in one way or another expressed through decent language, many speech communities will advocate for language that inculcates positive moral order. A euphemism can thus be said to be a word or a phrase that is used instead of an expression that is direct or considered unpalatable, embarrassing or offensive and that which is socially unacceptable. More specifically, a euphemistic expression is a less harsh expression that stands for another expression (often considered unpleasant) and is used to conceal the real meaning of what is being expressed. The euphemistic expression allows one to express outrage, disappointment and pain without losing one's face.

It is generally agreed that it is the presence of taboo that necessitates the euphemizing of words and expressions. Fromkin, Rodman and Hyams (2003: 476) argue that certain words and expressions in virtually every speech community are regarded as taboo. They opine that the term taboo was initially used in Tongan, a Polynesian language in which taboo denotes acts that are prohibited or to be shunned. They further claim that when a doing is taboo, mention of the same may also be considered taboo. That is to say that people are disallowed from doing something and then prohibited from talking about it. Taboo words are avoided in any communication at individual as well as at institutional levels under the supposition that usage of the taboo may cause harm and consequently strain the relationship between the interlocutors. Using euphemisms indicates that one is conscious of their public self-image. According to Burridge (2012: 67), taboo acts or words include private parts, sex, bodily functions, anger, dishonesty, drunkenness, madness, disease, death, dangerous animals, fear, God among others.

It is important to point out that euphemistic expressions are not only used when we are dealing with taboo topics. Speakers/writers use euphemistic expressions to avoid offending sensitive people or the underprivileged in society. For instance, instead of saying that one is old, a speaker may opt to refer to him/her as a senior citizen. Similarly, we may refer to a mad person as one who is mentally challenged. By referring to a mad person as "a mentally challenged person," the speaker is stressing that one should not be defined by one's disability. We can thus conclude that euphemisms are sweet sounding or at least inoffensive alternatives for expressions that speakers

or writers prefer not to use in executing a particular communicative intention on a given occasion. Since the words used in Benga music occasionally border on taboo topics, use of euphemism is inevitable.

Euphemisms are also used to elevate low-sounding or pejorative occupational titles and institutional names. For instance, instead of referring to one as “a cleaner”, one can euphemize the title and refer to such a person as the “sanitation officer.” Thus, euphemisms make the unpalatable acceptable to somebody’s sensibilities. In order to fully appreciate the usefulness of euphemisms, one needs to know the unpalatable and unacceptable word or phrase that the speaker/singer/writer is trying to avoid.

Fromkin and Rodman (1988) observe that speech communities invent words and phrases when they are in the process of growth and then later an agreement is arrived at concerning categories of polite words which are termed obscene. The obscene words are then tagged and they are never used anyhow. It is important to note that the obscenity or appropriateness of certain utterances will be determined by the interlocutors based on the context of the utterance. The capacity of a euphemism to mask reality tends to diminish over time. This is to say that over time, the euphemism becomes more and more closely related with its referent, and if it is still taboo to talk about the referent, a fresh euphemism needs to be found out. Though euphemisms are used in both spoken and written language, they are more typical of spoken language since taboo words and obscene language are less likely to occur in written language.

1.1.1 Kamba Language and the Distribution of its Speakers

Kamba is among the major languages of Kenya based on the figures of the national census conducted in 2009. There are about 3,893,157 Kamba speakers in Kenya. In terms of percentage, the Akamba constitute about 11 percent of Kenya’s total population. Historically, the Akamba came into Kenya from Tanganyika (presently referred as Tanzania). From Tanganyika they are said to have moved from the north through Taita hills and then settled in the former Machakos district, Kenya. They further settled in Mbooni hills which are found in the eastern side of present Machakos County, Kenya. They then dispersed to other regions starting with Kitui. Maundu (1980:

5) observes that Kamba as a language is spoken in Machakos, Kitui, Makueni and Mwingi regions of the former eastern province of Kenya.

Mulatya (2013) while quoting Lindbolm (1926:3) observes that the Akamba are among the largest ethnic groups in British East Africa and occupy the eastern part of East African highlands between the upper railways. She further states that Lindbolm claims that the original root of the term 'kamba' was 'hamba' meaning to travel or move around. However, the word 'hamba' is not found in Kamba language but can be tracked down in other Bantu languages as witnessed in Lindbolm (1926:7).

1.1.2 Kamba and its Dialects

Greenberg's classification places Kamba in the Niger- Congo family. The speakers of Kamba language are known as Akamba. Guthrie (1948) categorised Bantu languages into zones. He placed Kamba in class 50 of E zone, a cluster which comprises languages such as Kikuyu E51, Meru E53, Embu E52, Kamba E55 and Thaisu E56. Heine and Mohlig (1980:9) document five Bantu groups in Kenya. They claim that these Bantu languages are the Taita, Coastal, South Nyanza, Central Kenya and the Luhya. Kamba is consequently categorized in the central group with Gikuyu, Embu, Meru, Mbeere and Tharaka. This classification could be said to be both genetic and areal since it singles out Bantu languages in Kenya based on geographical proximity.

Typologically, Kamba language can be classified using syntactic, phonological (vowels and tone) or morphological criteria. Syntactically, Kamba belongs to the SVO languages. Phonologically, it's a tone language while morphologically, it's classified as agglutinative.

According to Mulatya (2013), Kamba language has three regional dialects. The first is the Machakos dialect found in Machakos County and a large area of Makueni County. The second is Kitui dialect spoken in Mwingi and Kitui parts of lower Eastern. The last dialect, Kikilungu, is spoken in areas around Kilungu hills found in Makueni County. Maundu (1986) recognizes five major Kamba dialects. Three of the five dialects are spoken in Kitui and the remaining two are spoken in Machakos and Makueni. The dialects he identifies are: Kitui North (spoken in Mwingi), the Central Kitui dialect (spoken in Central Kitui), Eastern and Central Kitui varieties, Kilungu

and Makueni varieties and finally the Machakos dialect (also known as Masaku dialect) spoken in Machakos. The present research agrees with Maundu's research that there are five Kamba dialects. There are lexical variations among the three dialects. However, the lexical variations do not affect mutual intelligibility of the dialects. The present research is not dialectology-oriented. The researcher is a native speaker of Kamba and specifically the Kikilungu dialect.

The artiste who uses vulgar language will have lower sales compared to the one who uses acceptable language. Since the artistes are in the business of making money from the sales of their music, they have little choice in using palatable language. This is where euphemisms come in handy. For instance, an artiste talking of a woman who was on her periods would say, '*Mueni nunoonete*', literally translated as 'Mueni was seeing'. The unpalatable expression for being on monthly period is 'Mueni eina nthakame ya mwei' literally translated as 'Mueni had monthly blood' which is considered offensive. This would be so because talking of menstruation directly in Kamba is unacceptable.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The study focuses on analyzing Kamba Benga music with the intention of coming up with the approaches that have been used to create euphemism. To the best of the researcher's knowledge, the devices the artists use to create euphemism in Kamba Benga music have not been researched on. Using Kamba Benga music, the researcher identifies euphemistic expressions in specific songs which are then critically analyzed in order to lay bare the linguistic devices that are used to create such euphemism.

According to Keli (2016: 7) ordinary conversations among the Kamba are characterized by usage of different figures of speech. These figures of speech (where euphemisms fall) are incorporated by the artistes in the region in their songs so as to mask their message from the general public. Euphemisms are widely used in Kamba Benga music since the artistes have wide demographics in terms of their audience - fans are varied in age, religion, sex and political inclination. So as to appeal to the wide audience, the artist must make sure that their language is polite and thus euphemizing their words and expressions is inevitable.

All cultures characteristically use euphemisms to talk about issues they consider terrifying or explicit in the context of the interlocutors or writers in which case they consider it important to replace specific words which may be disconcerting. The Benga artiste in our case uses one or more of the linguistic devices for creating euphemism when addressing issues such as death, sex, love or politics which are common topics among Benga artistes. It is the work of the linguist to analyze the music and come up with the linguistic devices.

1.3 Research Questions

This research is guided by the following questions:

- a. What are the euphemisms used in Kamba Benga music?
- b. What linguistic devices are used to create euphemism in Kamba Benga Music?
- c. What are the specific functions of euphemism in Kamba Benga music?

1.4 Research Objectives

The objectives which guide this research are:

- a. To establish the euphemisms used in Kamba Benga music.
- b. To analyze the linguistic devices used to create euphemism in Kamba Benga music.
- c. To identify the specific functions of euphemism in Kamba Benga music.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This work will make people and scholars in particular aware of the nature of language used in Kamba Benga music. Halliday (1978: 9) observes that it is through language systems that the values, beliefs and thought systems of a speech community are communicated. Since euphemisms are part and parcel of language, we can validly claim that euphemisms reflect the values of a society. In light of the foregoing, this research will shed light into the values, beliefs and thought systems of the Akamba people.

Arguably, song and dances are a substantial mode of artistic expression amongst the Kamba. Secular songs (where Benga music falls) and euphemism cannot be divorced. This implies that it is unusual to find songs that address taboo topics in a direct manner. In addition, this research will also be useful to other scholars interested in studying figures of speech in songs as well as acting as a reference to scholars studying Bantu languages.

Furthermore, this work will go a long way in contributing to the debate on the functions of euphemisms in African languages. To the best of my knowledge as a researcher, there is little research that has been undertaken on the devices of realizing euphemism in Kamba Benga music.

1.6 Scope and Limitation

This research concerns itself with euphemism which is a figure of speech used by many Kamba Benga musicians. There are other figures of speech used in Benga music such as hyperbole, similes, metaphors among others which will not be studied in this work.

In addition, the research focuses on the linguistic devices for creating euphemism in Kamba Benga music. We did not look at the functions of euphemisms in other types of songs. Moreover, our research is limited to Benga songs though there are other different types of songs such as gospel, hunting songs, war songs. Besides, there are euphemisms used in war songs, gospel songs and other types of songs that will not be the focus of the present research.

1.7 Theoretical Framework

This research uses Relevance theory as a tool for analysis. Relevance theory as proposed by Sperber and Wilson (1986, 1995) concerns itself with meaning in context. The theory strives to describe the second method of exchanging information, in other words, communication that factors implicit inferences. Relevance theory is used in this research to explain how listeners of Benga music assign meaning to euphemisms in accordance with the context in which they are used. Pragmatics is mainly concerned with meaning in context and deals with how the hearer/reader interprets the speaker's/writer's utterances.

Relevance theory (being pragmatic in nature) seeks to explain how the hearer recognizes the speaker's intended interpretation. Sperber and Wilson (1986b: 108) observe that the intended interpretation is not worked out from the words in the utterance but inferred from the context by a non-demonstrative inference process. The interpretation the hearer comes up with is based on the evidence provided. Pragmatics is key in interpreting euphemistic expressions as the meaning is considered "invisible". Pragmatics concerns itself with how that which is 'invisible' and unsaid is useful in the conversation. This aspect of Relevance Theory will be useful in this research since the listener of Kamba Benga music does not rely exclusively on the words used in the songs to get

the intended interpretation. There is more than decoding the sentence meaning. The listener has to use the knowledge he/she already has plus the sentence meaning so as to arrive at the singer's intended interpretation.

Relevance theory's major claim is that the expectations of relevance raised by an utterance are exact and predictable enough to direct the listener towards the speaker's meaning. The aim of the theory is to explain cognitively what these expectations add up to, and how they might influence the realization of a realistic account of understanding. According to Sperber and Wilson (1986b: 108), relevance is a conceivable feature of not only utterances and other noticeable phenomena but also of thinking, recall and assumptions. Utterances always raise expectations of relevance simply because the hunt for relevance is a key attribute of human cognition.

Sperber and Wilson (1986: 260) note that an input (a sight, a sound, an utterance, a memory) is relevant if and only if it relates with background information (that the individual has) to generate conclusions that matter to the individual. The theory further states that an input will be relevant to one if its processing in a context of available assumptions yields a positive cognitive effect. Cognitive effects are defined as aspects such awareness, perception, reasoning and judgement - all of which help in interpreting stimuli. A positive cognitive effect is worth having as it aids in the individual's interpretation of the world. The most important cognitive effect is a contextual implication, which is a conclusion inferred from input combined with context. The other types of cognitive effect are strengthening and revision or abandonment of available assumptions. For example, a singer singing about his illicit love affairs and says: "Then I knocked down the damsel." The input here is 'knocked down'. It will combine with the knowledge that listener already has: that the singer was not singing about driving or running but love. If it is interpreted to mean that the two had sex, then the input is relevant. If the listener does not arrive at the intended interpretation, the input does not yield a positive cognitive effect.

Sperber and Wilson (1986: 153)) note that relevance is a matter of degree. At any given moment, there are potentially relevant inputs surrounding us but it is impossible to attend to them all. What makes one pick a particular input amongst the competing stimuli is that the one picked is more relevant than any alternative input available to one at that time. It is stated in relevance theory that

the greater the positive cognitive effects achieved by processing an input, the greater the relevance will be. Accordingly, Sperber and Wilson (1986b: 153), the greater the processing effort required, the less relevant the input will be. Processing effort can be described as the mental effort required to interpret a certain utterance. Similarly, the greater the cognitive effect achieved by processing an input, the greater the relevance of the input at that particular time.

1.7.1 Cognitive Principle of Relevance

Sperber and Wilson (1986b: 260) come up with the cognitive principle of relevance which states that human cognition tends to be geared towards maximization of relevance. This means that one makes the best use of available processing resources. Relevance theory claims that the tendency to maximize relevance is not by choice but automatic. That is the way our cognitive systems have evolved. Thus, human cognitive system has developed in such a way that it tends to automatically pick the most relevant stimulus and then process the same in the most productive way. For example, if a singer uses the word 'tree' in a song euphemistically, only a few of the interpretations of the word will be activated in the mind of the listener. That is, not all possible interpretations will be considered since we cannot maximize by considering all options. This is the principle that governs any kind of information-transmission. The principle is applicable in this research in that when a singer sings, the listener pays attention to any information they can get that is relevant to them. The information could be derived from the content of the singer's utterance, their pauses, hesitations and (if visual) their facial expressions, gestures and accompanying behavior and then the listener processes this information in a context that is likely to maximize its relevance. The listener has to pay attention to all these aspects of the song so as to correctly interpret euphemistic expressions.

1.7.2 Ostensive - inferential Communication

According to Relevance theory, the ostensive-inferential communication explains the role of intention in communication. Sperber and Wilson (1986b: 46) observe that for one to understand a certain utterance, one must recognize the intentions underlying it. The two scholars go ahead to propose two types of intention:

- a) The informative intention.

The intention is to inform listeners of something.

b) The communication intention.

This is the intention to inform the audience of one's informative intention. Relevance theory argues that understanding is achieved when the communicative intention is achieved via the audience's recognition of the informative intention. For example, in a given song the singer says, "Mary irrigated the crops", then in the accompanying video clip, the singer squats just as he/she says those words. It is of utmost importance that the listener infers that the singer is intentionally producing his/her non-verbal behaviour (squatting) to inform the viewer/listener of something; otherwise, the listener might think that squatting is a way dancing. It is only by inferring the singer's intentionality can the listener/viewer understand the singer correctly. In Relevance theory's terms, only by inferring the singer's communicative intention can the listener/viewer understand the right informative intention, ("Mary urinated on the crops").

This tenet of Relevance Theory is useful in this work since the interpretation of euphemistic expressions is in one way or another aided by the singer's behaviour.

1.7.3. Communicative Principle of Relevance

This principle states that every ostensive stimulus conveys a presumption of its own optimal relevance. Wilson and Sperber (2004: 611) define ostensive stimulus as an overt act by the communicator "designed to attract an audience's attention and focus on the communicator's meaning." The apparent stimulus should be relevant enough to be worth the audience's processing effort. Additionally, the ostensive stimulus is the most relevant one compatible with communicator's abilities and preferences at the time. The listener of an ostensive stimulus is allowed to have even higher expectations. Since the speaker /singer wants to be understood, it is in their interest to make their ostensive stimulus as easy as possible for the audience to understand. Therefore, the Benga artiste will make his intention known which will enable the hearer to work out the meaning of the euphemistic expressions used in the song. The general undertaking of deducing the speaker's/ singer's meaning may be split into a number of pragmatic sub-tasks. These include ambiguities and referential ambivalences to resolve, truncations to deduce, and other indeterminacies of explicit content to work out. There could also be implicatures to discover, illocutionary indeterminacies to resolve, as well as metaphors and ironies to resolve. To correctly

interpret the speaker's meaning, the hearer must supply the appropriate contextual assumptions to the above pragmatic subtasks.

Though the decoded logical form of an utterance is a vital clue to the speaker's intentions, it can be argued that the explicit content of an utterance may be more than what is linguistically encoded. The concern here is how these context-dependent aspects of explicit content are recovered.

The communicative principle of relevance provides clues as to how the listeners of Kamba Benga music identify the singer's meaning. Such is necessary because an utterance may have a number of linguistically possible interpretations. Some of the interpretations may be highly relevant, some quite relevant while others might be completely irrelevant. The rational listener should choose the one that best satisfies their expectation of relevance raised by the utterance.

1.7.4 Relevance-theoretic Assumption about Communication

Sperber and Wilson (1995) came up with the following assumption about communication:

- a) Every expression has a range of linguistically possible interpretations consistent with the decoded sentence meaning (by using the word interpretation, Sperber and Wilson mean overly intended interpretation; the one the speaker wants the hearer /audience to recover and is actively assisting the hearer to recover and what he/she would not deny if asked.)
- b) Not all these interpretations are equally accessible to the hearer. That is, not all these interpretations are likely to come to the hearers mind on a given occasion.
- c) Hearers are armed with one very general yardstick for assessing interpretations as they occur to them, and the hearer will go ahead and use that criterion to accept or reject these interpretations as the best hypotheses about the speaker's meaning.
- d) This single criterion is so powerful that it rejects all interpretations but one; such that the hearer is permitted to suppose that the first hypothesis that satisfies their expectation is the only plausible one.

1.7.5 Relevance –theoretic Comprehension Procedure

This is the procedure that the hearer uses to elaborate the encoded sentence meaning into a fully developed speaker's meaning using the contextual information provided by the utterance as well as conversation context.

The procedure is as follows:

- a) Follow a path of least effort in obtaining cognitive effects. In addition, interpretations should be thought through in order of their accessibility.
- b) Stop considering the interpretations when your expectations of relevance are fulfilled.

The consequences that result from that relevance-theoretic comprehension procedure are:

- (a) The first suitable interpretation is the only suitable one and the one the hearer should choose. This is the interpretation that makes the utterance relevant in the expected way.
- (b) Any extra effort needed means extra or different cognitive effects. (Sperber and Wilson 1986b: 45)

The relevance-theoretic comprehension procedure will be useful in this research since it provides answers to the three questions that the listener of the Kamba Benga music has to answer in coming up with a hypothesis about the singer's meaning. The three questions are:

- (a) What is the singer's explicit meaning?
- (b) What is the singer's implicit meaning?
- (c) What is the intended context?

In summary, the communicative principle of Relevance, the cognitive principle of relevance, the idea of optimal relevance and the relevance –theoretic comprehension procedure are the key aspects of Relevance Theory. These aspects are used to show how the listener arrives at the meaning of the euphemism in the selected Kamba Benga songs.

1.7.6 Explicatures and Implicatures

Relevance theory notes that presuppositions communicated by a speaker are classified into either explicators or implicates. The two concepts (implicatures and explicatures) enable the hearer to

come up with the intended meaning. The intended meaning of the euphemisms in Kamba Benga songs will be gotten through implicatures.

According to the Sperber and Wilson (1986/95:182) an implicature is “an assumption communicated by an utterance U and is explicit if and only if it is a development of a logical form encoded by U.” Sperber and Wilson come up with the word ‘explicature’ to describe what is explicitly communicated.

Cartson (2002: 124) observes that decoding is key to explicit communication and that the more encoding is involved, the more explicit the communication will be. Cartson also observes linguistic decoding will yield to a logical form of an utterance in order to yield a truth-evidence assumption. The inferential processes are: reference assignment, enrichment and disambiguation. A linguistic expression and the context in which it is used constitute an explicature. Consider a song with the line:

“I was Mueni’s bank.” For the listener to correctly interpret this line, he/she will engage in the following pragmatic processes:

- (a) Reference assignment- The listener has to understand that the pronoun “I” refers to the singer.
- (b) Disambiguation- The expression above is ambiguous because of the use of the word ‘bank’ which can be assigned a number of meanings. The listener will choose the meaning that relates to ‘money’.
- (c) The listener has also to infer the time was past because of the verb ”was”

Only what is linguistically encoded can be explicitly communicated hence explicature. Explicature is used in this research to explain sentence meaning. This is necessary since the interpretation of euphemistic expressions begins with the listener first decoding the sentence meaning. The sentence meaning is then fully contextualized for it to be a meaningful proposition, which is “The singer used to support Mueni financially.”

Cartson (2002:377) defines implicature as “a communicated assumption derived solely via processes of pragmatic inference.” Implicature involves saying one thing to mean something else. According to Kitheka (2014), implicatures can be part of sentence meaning or dependent on

conventional or unconventional. Implicature serves beyond communication in that it helps maintain good social relations. Implicature is found in most figures of speech. For example, metaphors, verbal irony, indirect answers among others.

New information combines with contextual information to generate intended conclusions (implicatures) which would otherwise be difficult to obtain from this new information or from the contextual information taken separately, but is only possible by bringing the two sets of information together. (Sperber and Wilson 1986b: 137). For example, in one of his songs, a singer says: “Mwikali is the most generous woman I have ever met.” In arriving at the intended conclusion, the listener has to combine the literal meaning of the sentence above with contextual information (that since the singer is male and Mwikali is female, then this generosity should be in terms of casual sex) in order to get the intended interpretation (implicature) that is, “Mwikali is a prostitute.”

The difference between implicature and explicature lies in the fact that explicatures involves semantic decoding and enrichments whereas implicatures are derived by inferences only. In analyzing euphemistic expressions in the selected songs, getting their meaning is by using inferences hence the conclusion that euphemisms involve implicit communication.

Relevance Theory categorizes assumptions communicated by a speaker into explicatures and implicatures. These two notions are very useful in data analysis. This is because the two notions enable the listener derive the intended meaning of the singer. The most useful aspect in our data analysis is implicature because the meaning of euphemisms is derived from these implicatures.

1.8 Literature Review

1.8.1 Literature Review on Kamba Songs

Musyoka (2011) in her research on Kamba popular song studies performances by Bosco Mulwa and Kennedy Wambua. Songs sung by the two artistes belong to Kamba Benga music. Musyoka observes that the two artistes aforementioned sing songs that voice various concerns ranging from love, entertainment, marriage, gender, class and the love for the earthly possessions. In her

research, Musyoka concluded that the singer's choice of song to be performed in a particular occasion is determined by the context of the performance.

The researcher further states that among their many songs, the two artistes will choose songs whose content is appropriate in a particular function. She still argues that the language that artistes use in their songs is very rich and this shows the vitality of Kamba language and by extension the Akamba culture. In order to concretize the messages in the songs, Musyoka observes that the artistes employ figures of speech in their songs. Those figures of speech cited in the songs by Bosco and Wambua include symbolism, paradoxes, metaphors and similes. In addition, sayings have also been incorporated in the songs. The present research borrows heavily from the work of Musyoka since euphemism can be achieved by symbolisms, metaphors and figures of speech which have been dealt with in Musyoka's research.

Kieti (1988) comes up with two major categories of songs which are "*myali and mbathi sya kivalo*." He observes that the '*myali*' songs were unaccompanied by musical instruments and they were also not danced to. He claims that the '*myali*' were sung at '*kituto*' (an open land between two or three villages.) '*Mbathi sya kivalo*' included songs that were accompanied by dance and musical instruments. The songs that were accompanied by instruments include: '*Ngutha, Mbalya, Kiili, Mbeni and Ngulukulu*'. There were those that were unaccompanied songs and they were: '*Nzai, Kithakyo, Musya, Kilamu, Mukungo, Kilui, Kileve, Mawese and Mbalu*'. Kieti looks at '*Myali*' songs paying attention to how imagery and allusion enhance the thematic concerns addressed in the songs. She argues that the language in '*Myali*' songs is highly figurative in the sense that names, places and events mentioned in these songs have symbolic hidden meanings best explained through a close references to Akamba life, beliefs and tradition. Kieti's research is linked to the present study in that the songs she studied use figurative language and the present research is concerned with euphemism - which may use figures of speech - in Benga music.

Keli (2016) did a lexical study on the functions of hyperboles in secular Kamba songs. He concluded that more information or competence in one's language is necessary in order to correctly interpret hyperbolic expressions in Kamba. He further observed that for one to correctly interpret hyperbolic expressions in Kamba, one also needs that additional information. He also concluded

that the communicative functions of the hyperboles were emphasis, persuasion, humour among others. Hyperbole is used in order to communicate more effectively than would have been the case had they used plain language or statements. The present research is related to Keli's work in that just as the interpretation of hyperbolic expressions needs competence in one's language, so does the interpretation of euphemisms. Additionally, Keli's research concerns itself with the study of the functions of hyperboles which are a figure of speech. Since the functions of euphemisms as a figure of speech are a concern of the present research, this work is inclined to borrow from the approach used by Keli in his study of the functions of hyperboles.

1.8.2 Literature Review on Euphemisms

Warren (1992) observes that word meanings are dynamic and negotiable. This best applies in figurative language. Euphemisms at times use figures of speech where words and phrases are given meaning not found in their dictionary description. Speakers use euphemism to avoid possible offence or conflict. Warren further observes that whether the speaker means the term to be euphemistic or not is determined by the context and that the hearer interprets it in that light. For example, in Judges 19:25, the Bible says,

But the men would not hearken to him: so the man took his concubine, and brought her forth unto them; and they knew her, and abused her all the night until the morning: and when the day began to spring, they let her go.

The Bible reader in the example above would interpret the word "knew" to mean, "to have sexual intercourse." The context enables the reader to arrive at such. As such, the word is used euphemistically. However, the case is different in the following example: "Tom knew his client well. He did not bother her further for he was well aware that she was suffering from pneumonia." The listener/reader of these sentences would interpret the word "knew" to mean, "to be aware of something." Hence, the word is not used euphemistically. The context leads the reader/listener to arrive at the dictionary meaning of the word, "knew".

Burridge (2012) notes that there are quite a number of linguistic devices employed in the formation of euphemisms. She observes that all those different linguistic devices can be grouped into three overarching mechanisms namely: analogy, distortion and borrowing. Her research further states that it is the function of the euphemism that determines the strategy to be used. The present research

borrows from Burridge's research in identifying linguistic devices for creating euphemism in Kamba Benga music. This is made possible by the fact that both works deal with devices or strategies of creating euphemism.

Nguti (2003) engaged in a comparative study of Kamba and Kiswahili on the use of euphemisms in the home place. Nguti's research notes that each and every society makes effort to impart ethical values to members of the society by use of euphemisms at home. In his research, Nguti demonstrates that euphemisms are an essential communication tool in home and family setting. Nguti's research is related to the present one in that just as Nguti is able to prove that euphemisms are an indispensable tool for communication at home, this research aims at establishing that the Kamba Benga music artiste is unable to achieve certain communication functions without the use of euphemisms.

Qanbar (2011) did a sociolinguistic study on the linguistic taboos in the Yemeni speaker. He argues that the Yemenis circumvent and avoid using certain words by using more acceptable words and expressions. The replacements involve using more acceptable words by strategies such as using jargon, creating antonyms, euphemisms, metaphoric expressions, circumlocution and use of standard Arabic terms. The paper also claims that the above processes are shaped up by the cultural and religious norms of the society. The research also explains why specific words are thought to be taboo in the society and why such taboo words go along with particular conventionally fixed words. Qanbar's research deals with the devices of creating more acceptable words which replace taboo words. The present research is related to Qanbar's since the former also deals with devices of creating euphemisms - a polite and socially acceptable way of expressing oneself. Hence, this research borrows heavily from the approach taken by Qanbar.

Njoroge (2014) did a research on taboo words and euphemisms in Gikuyu's Kabete dialect. She uses politeness Theory by Brown and Levinson (1987) to discuss the relationship between informativeness and interpretation of euphemism as well as taboo words and context in which they are used by speakers of Gikuyu language. Her research concludes that native speakers of Gikuyu look for alternatives that can hide or cover up the harmonious power of taboo words so as to avoid sounding embarrassing and hence losing face. She further observes that euphemisms are used by

the native speaker to replace offensive expressions which can be harmful and shameful. This study is connected to the present research in that it looks at the interpretation of euphemisms which is also a key concern in our study.

Gathigia et al (2015) authored a paper on sexual intercourse euphemisms in the Gikuyu, a Bantu language spoken in central parts of Kenya. The study sought to explain how euphemisms are interpreted in Gikuyu using the Conceptual Metaphor Theory. The research discusses the semantic and lexical processes used in the formation of euphemisms in the said language. According to Gathigia et al, Fernandez (2006) and Zizheng (2005) observe that linguistic devices used in the formation of euphemism can be grouped into semantic and lexical processes. The semantic processes comprise metaphor, metonymy, ideophone, hyperbole, circumlocution, particularization and understatement/meiosis. On the other hand, the lexical processes include substitution/synonymy, borrowing, use of vague words and expressions as well as use of stories from religion and the use of technical terms. The work of Gathigia et al is related to the present research in that both works are concerned with processes of realizing euphemisms.

Margaret (2015) engaged in a pragmatic study of Kipsigis euphemism with emphasis on their form, function and interpretation. With reference to gender, she observes that females generally use euphemisms compared to their male counterparts. This argument is further reinforced by Croates (2004) who argues that previous research on gender differences has demonstrated that women are more courteous and indirect because they are subordinate to men while men are impolite and direct. Margaret's research goes ahead to observe that males choose to use direct expressions more so when they are of same age group. This is so when young male adults converse with their peers. The young males did not alter their speech in their company of female peers. However, the tendency to use direct, unpleasant expressions changed when the interlocutors were mature adults in the society. This claim has been supported by previous research which has shown that use of euphemisms increase as we get older. The older generation also uses a wide range of euphemisms. Her research further states that the elderly and the young generation were talked to using euphemistic language if the topic involved is considered taboo. She noted that this behaviour was motivated by the need to maintain respect for the aged and the wish to act as role models and in so

doing bring up a morally upright generation. Margaret's thesis is related to the present research in that both look at the functions as well as the interpretations of euphemisms in the two languages.

Generally, most of the researches mentioned above concern themselves with the use of figures of speech in songs. They are interested in finding out the functions of the figures of speech as well as the interpretation of the same by the listener. Other researches mentioned in this work also look at the interpretation of euphemisms in various contexts. In all the researches reviewed above, the context of the utterance or song is key in its interpretation. The context has to be 'right' for the figure of speech to be interpreted correctly by the listener. Similarly, euphemisms are interpreted against their context of usage. Therefore, the present research borrows from all the works cited in literature review.

1.9 Methodology

This is the section that will discuss the research methodologies that are used in this study. The data collection procedures and how data is analyzed are discussed in details in this section.

1.9.1 Data Collection

Data was collected from recorded songs that make use of euphemism. The researcher listened to the local radio stations which include Mwatu Fm, Mbaitu Fm, Musyi Fm and Athiani Fm, all of which broadcast in Kamba. These radio stations play Kamba Benga music for the better part of the day. Kithome (2012), while studying vernacular music practices among the Kamba in Kenya observes that the main reason as to why majority of Kamba radio listeners are fond of listening to stations that broadcast in Kamba is music.

From the listening, the researcher used purposive sampling to identify songs that exploit euphemism. Some of the songs were then downloaded from YouTube. For those artistes whose CDs were still available in the market, the researcher bought them. The songs were from 8 artistes: four were from Machakos, two from Kitui and the last two from Makueni. Mulatya (2013) identifies 3 Kamba regional dialects. These are Machakos dialect found in Machakos County and a larger area of Makueni, Kitui dialect spoken in Mwingi and Kitui and lastly Kilungu dialect spoken in Kilungu hills in Makueni County. As such, the 8 artistes represent all the three dialects.

The reason as to why the Machakos dialect has more artistes chosen than the other two dialects is that former is spoken in both Makueni and Machakos counties while the latter are each identified with a specific county.

The euphemisms elicited from the ten Kamba Benga songs were then translated into the English equivalent freely, not literally so that a non-Kamba would be able to understand them. The researcher used his friends to get meanings of words used in the songs and which he was unable to understand. The original Kamba text and the translation in English are attached in the project.

More data was collected through questionnaires which were administered to determine the interpretation of euphemistic expressions. Ten questionnaires were administered to listeners of Kamba Benga music. In the questionnaire, respondents were required to write down their interpretation of the various euphemistic expressions. Since context is very important in the interpretation of euphemistic expressions, the researcher had to first establish fully that the respondent had listened to the whole song at one point in their lives. This was done orally by asking the respondent if they had listened to the song before. The questionnaire was only administered if the answer to the question was “yes.” The respondents filled the questionnaire immediately it was administered with the assistance of the researcher.

The respondents were native Kamba speakers who were able to read and write in addition to being of eighteen years and above. This is due to the fact that at such age, one is able to establish a relation between the idea in the euphemism and the intended interpretation. Through ordinary conversations, they would have come across expressions that are used to substitute obscene or vulgar language. In addition, the respondents were from the two sexes to ensure that data collected represented interpretations from both males and females. They were also from different residential areas, levels of education and age groups.

1.9.2 Data Analysis

The researcher first transcribed the songs from audio form to written form then translated them into English showing instances of euphemism. The data was then analyzed using the tenets of Relevance theory. The analysis featured the verbatim meaning of the euphemism versus the

interpretation the listener comes up with as well as the functions of the euphemistic expressions. It was after getting the listener's interpretations that the strategies for realizing euphemisms in the specific songs were investigated and analyzed. As stated in relevance theory, assumptions made by a speaker are grouped into explicatures and implicatures. It was investigated how these two notions enabled listeners of Kamba Benga music derive the intended meaning by the singer and also other implications that the Benga artiste might not have intended but are implied in the euphemisms they use in their songs. The most relevant notion of the two in this research is implicature which was used in the analysis of the collected data. The meaning of the euphemisms in the selected songs was derived using implicatures.

Conclusion

This chapter has stated the background to the research through a sneak preview of Kamba language, its dialects as well as the distribution of its speakers. The chapter has also outlined the background of the study by looking at what euphemism entails. It has stated the research problem, the research questions, research objectives, the significance of the study as well as its scope and limitation. The chapter has also provided the theoretical framework on Relevance theory within which this research is conducted. In addition, it has provided literature review in works related to this research. Finally, the chapter outlines the research methodology and conclusion.

CHAPTER TWO

EUPHEMISMS IN KAMBA BENGA MUSIC AND THEIR INTERPRETATION

2.0 Introduction

This chapter will explain the concept of euphemism in details. Data from the ten Kamba Benga songs and also from the ten questionnaires will be presented. Excerpts that have euphemistic expressions from the songs will be analyzed alongside the listener's interpretations in the questionnaire. The researcher will identify the euphemisms in the songs chosen and then group them according to the subjects they address.

2.1 Euphemism and its Connection with Benga Music

Burridge (2012: 66) defines euphemisms as sweet-sounding, less offensive alternatives for expressions that speakers and writers prefer to avoid in performing certain communicative functions. Hudson (2000: 261) defines euphemism as "the extension of ordinary words and phrases to express unpleasant and embarrassing ideas." In the current research, euphemisms mean indirect or pleasant ways of talking about taboo topics for the purpose of saving the singer's face and also enabling the listener to listen to songs dealing with taboo topics comfortably and unashamedly.

Wambua (2009) observes that the way a language is used in a given community is determined by social, political, cultural and historic aspects of that given community. Consequently, the social, political, cultural and historical aspects of the Akamba affect their pattern of language usage. The Akamba culture allows the use of certain taboo words during some cultural practices. For instance, the Akamba allowed use of taboo words during traditional circumcision ceremonies. Initiates sang songs characterized by vulgar language freely. However, the same words and/or songs were disallowed outside these ceremonies. With the passage of time, Christianity and modernity have rendered some of the traditional ceremonies irrelevant. Though taboo words are still in use among the Akamba, modernity has really reduced the usage of taboo words. From the data gathered in this research, it is evident that euphemisms have replaced most of the taboo words and expressions in Kamba.

Wambua (ibid) further observes that the euphemisms commonly used in Kamba are majorly obtained from day to day aspects of life specific to the speech community. Her research found out

that Kamba speakers obtain their euphemisms from the social environment, linguistic environment, borrowing from foreign languages and Biblical references. It is along this line of thought that the present research is being conducted.

As stated earlier in the methodology section of this work, the main reason why majority of Kamba radio listeners are fond of listening to radio stations that broadcast in their vernacular is Kamba Benga music. The music has a varied range of uses and gratifications amongst them social needs, providing information as well as imparting good morals on the society. Thus, this research is an attempt to unearth how euphemisms used in Kamba Benga music help in the fulfillment of the aforementioned functions of Benga music.

The Benga artiste recognizes that taboo topics in Kamba need to be addressed with caution to avoid offending the listeners' sensibilities. This is because listeners/readers are put off by obscene language. As such, Kamba Benga music fans will not buy music that is known to contain such 'dirty' language. Musyoka (2011) observes that in order to concretize the message in songs, the artiste ends up employing figures of speech in their songs. If this does not happen and listeners buy music with obscene language unknowingly, most fans will stop listening to such music the moment they discover the nature of its language. Alternatively, they would listen to such music with obscene words while in seclusion. Indeed, there have been cases where listeners of local FM stations switch off their radios when certain music is played. This is because the fans consider the language in such music as vulgar and thus offending their sensibilities. Another reason why listeners switch off their radios when such 'dirty' music is played is that: to be found listening or to be known to listen to such music is considered embarrassing. Based on the foregoing, Kamba Benga music and euphemisms are two inseparable entities. It is for this reason that the songs studied in this research exploit euphemism to a great extent.

2.2 Euphemisms in Kamba Benga Music

Euphemisms are indispensable linguistic tools that are so deeply ingrained in our language that hardly anyone completes a day without using them. Data from the songs studied indicated that there are a number of sensitive topics that the Kamba Benga artiste has to deal with constantly. In order to address such topics, euphemisms come in handy to the artistes' rescue thus enabling them to address an array of issues without the fear of sounding vulgar. This research found that there

are those euphemisms for sex, death, drug abuse, diseases and even some to deal with superstition and witchcraft.

2.2.1 Euphemisms for Sex

The use of euphemism is both socially and emotionally uplifting. The topic of sex, being potential in causing embarrassment, is a likely source of euphemisms for people of different ages and social status (Ham, 2005: 229). In this research, euphemisms were found to enable the singers discuss the taboo topic of sex without outraging or upsetting the listeners. Euphemisms for sex were found to be wide and encompassing so as to take care of the sexual act itself, the organs involved in the act, the clothing that covers those body parts and also the bodily fluids/excretions associated with the act.

From the data collected, sex appears to be the greatest taboo topic. There is a high turnover rate for euphemisms in the sex topic and this has resulted to a large number of euphemistic expressions. Halliday (1978: 165) terms this phenomenon as “over-lexicalization” which marks a problem area in a language. This in essence implies that that sex is a great secret being discussed constantly thus necessitating the creation of synonyms and circumlocutions.

The Kamba Benga artiste is no exception and will address the tabooed topic of sex with caution. The data studied indicated that the singer has to circumvent this problematic topic in one way or another. The artiste creates new meanings for words when escaping from talking about sex directly. The creation of new words is governed by rules and the acceptability of the new meanings is heavily dependent on the ties that exist between the palatable expression and its referent (Warren, 1992: 130). Since words and phrases used as euphemisms in Kamba Benga music acquire new meanings, the listener will use the context of the song so as to assign the euphemisms the correct interpretation. Without the context being provided, the listener would be unable to associate the new words and phrases with sex.

Consider the following euphemisms for the sex act as identified the songs studied:

Euphemistic Expression	Listener's Interpretation
<i>Kukama</i> (Milk)	Make love
<i>Twitinda too</i> (We slept a lot)	Made love
<i>Kwika misa</i> (Conduct mass)	Make love

The excerpts below provide a detailed discussion of how Relevance theory accounts for how listeners arrive at the intended meaning by the singer. The euphemisms are in bold.

1. ***Twitinda too kwaku**, na sitalee mbingi.* (Kamba)

We slept a lot in your home, and had a lot of fun. (Gloss)

The translation is the literal meaning of the euphemism. Relevance theory maintains that the search for relevance is a key attribute of human cognition. The listener has to then interpret this line in the most relevant way possible and will only stop processing when his/her expectations of relevance are satisfied. The listener in this situation will not understand the line literally but will realize that it is a euphemism and hence search for the implied meaning. The context will assist the listener in constructing a hypothesis of the singer's meaning.

The listener of Kamba Benga music upon hearing this euphemistic expression will pursue the fact that it is unusual for two people (a man and a woman) to spend a lot of time just sleeping together. He will take the encoded conceptual representation as the point where to start their inference process. More information which is provided by the context (that the sleeping went hand in hand with some other forms of fun) will yield positive cognitive effects to the listener. By combining this new information with what he/she knows about sleeping, the listener builds up a connection between sleeping and making love and by so doing derives the relevance of the implication, that is, the two spend a lot of time making love.

From the context provided in the song, the listener understands that these are two people in a romantic relationship. This is information that the speaker already has and it will combine together with the new information that the two are spending a lot of time together and more so in bed and a conclusion is arrived at. The conclusion is that the two are spending a lot of time making love and it satisfies the listener's expectation of relevance. Among the Akamba, issues to do with sexuality are not talked about directly. The singer being a Kamba has to euphemize when he sings

about individuals engaging in sex. Nevertheless, he/she has to make sure that they provide hints that lead the hearer to uncover the ‘hidden’ meaning.

2. *Nokandwaa nathi isu Eden kuya matunda. Nthi isu yai mbailu. Naisaa ona manyanya_ndeukia kindu nundu kundu ku ni kuathime. (Kamba)*
You took me to the Garden of Eden to eat fruits. That **garden** was so fine. I would **eat tomatoes** fearlessly for that place is blessed. (Gloss)

The translation provided is the literal meaning of these lines. Upon the listener considering the literal meaning of the euphemism, his/her expectations of relevance are not satisfied. The listener then goes ahead to search for relevance of the euphemism in the line both metaphorically and Biblically. This is from the understanding that the Garden of Eden had all types of fruits which were meant to be a source of joy for man. This background information will then combine with new information that a human being can provide another being with joy.

The source of joy will then be understood metaphorically. The meaning of ‘Garden of Eden’ will be broadened to accommodate ‘parts of the body of a human being that can cause joy to another person’. This will now demand knowledge of the context of the utterance as it plays a crucial role in determining the meaning. Assumptions about the world at this point prove useful in helping the listener realize that a human being can only provide joy to another being by first loving them. Since we get from the context that the singer is male and the person they are singing about is female, then the listener combines this background information with some other new information that the lady is providing joy to the man by ‘eating her fruits’. The listener will then go ahead to consider the encyclopaedic assumptions associated with ‘eating’. When the assumptions are considered in order of accessibility with the idea that it is happening between a man and a woman, then the meaning of the word ‘eat’ would be broadened metaphorically to include ‘making love’. Thus, the listener would come to a conclusion that the singer is talking about having a sexual relationship with the mentioned lady. Upon arriving at this conclusion, the listener stops processing the information as their expectations of relevance have already been met.

3. *Ngakumbuka mukuni wakwa wakamaa nathi wiani. (Kamba)*
I remember my **diary cow he used to milk** while I was at work. (Gloss)

The translation is the literal meaning or in other words the explicature of this line. In order to get the intended interpretation, the listener must first of all understand the context of this song: that the singer is talking about a love affair between his lover/wife and another man. Without the context of the utterance, the euphemism above would produce multiple interpretations all of which are consistent with literal meaning of the euphemism.

The hearer of the euphemism in the example above has to search for its relevance from a metaphorical perspective in addition to bringing in their knowledge about culture. Culturally, dairy cattle are kept for milk and for them to produce milk optimally; they should be given adequate care. From this background and the context of the utterance, the listener then starts the process of deriving relevance. The hearer then accesses the encyclopaedic assumptions associated with the phrase ‘milking a dairy cow.’ The resultant process is one of pragmatic adjustment and it leads to the creation of ad hoc concepts broader in denotation than the encoded literal meaning. The phrase ‘milk a dairy cow’ is therefore broadened figuratively to indicate a situation in which ‘a person makes love with another’. The verb ‘milk’ is therefore assigned the figurative meaning of ‘having sex’ while ‘the dairy cow’ is assigned the meaning ‘the partner with whom you make love.’ The information gotten from this process of pragmatic adjustment is considered new here and it is combined with information already in the context ‘that the act was taking place while the singer was at work’ to yield the contextual implication that this was an illicit affair between the singer’s lover/wife and somebody else. This process of comprehending the singer’s meaning follows a path of least effort.

Other than the euphemisms that are used to refer to the act of making love, the study also came up with other euphemisms used for activities related to the act of making love.

Euphemistic Expression	Interpretation
<i>Mboka sya aume</i> (Men’s dishes)	Men’s lovers
<i>Wienda ukwatwa</i> (You want to be touched)	You want to be caressed
<i>Ndweesi nai</i> (You did not know sin)	You were a virgin

Now consider the euphemisms in context and an explanation of how the listener arrives at the intended interpretation.

4. *Mulolongo, Kasina vena pastor wisie uka muno **ukuthi aivoka mboka sya aume na moko mena kiko.** (Kamba)*

In Mlolongo, Kasina there is a pastor who has gone overboard by **partaking men's dishes with dirty hands.** (Gloss)

The literal meaning is that in Mlolongo and specifically a place called Kasina, there is a clergy who is eating dishes that belong to other men and that his hands are unclean. The interpretation by the listeners does not correspond to that gotten from the literal meaning of the constituent parts.

The euphemism does not refer to the mere act of eating food but requires the hearer to metaphorically broaden the reference so as to meet the expectations of relevance. The listener tries the literal meaning of the phrase 'partaking men's dishes' but fails to get enough contextual assumptions related to the concepts encoded in the words of the euphemism. He/she then processes the information further by accessing the encyclopaedic assumptions related to the concept encoded by the words of the euphemism. This process of pragmatic adjustment will lead to the creation of ad hoc concepts which are broader in denotation than the encoded literal meaning. The listener would access the meaning contained in the euphemism 'partaking men's dishes' by metaphorically broadening it to the context in which it was uttered. He/she would then come to a conclusion that the euphemism 'partaking men's dishes' is a metaphorical extension of 'engaging in adultery with other men's wives.' At this point the listener stops processing since relevance has already been achieved.

5. *Iso mama watumie visa kwakwa, sya mapenzi ukandavya **wienda ukwatwa.** (Kamba)*

The day before yesterday you sent me love photos and then told me that **you wanted to be touched.** (Gloss)

The literal meaning of the line is that two days ago, a lady sent the singer some love photos which were captioned with a message that she wanted to be touched. To the listener, the literal meaning of the euphemistic phrase "you wanted to be touched" does not yield contextual implications that

matter. The search for relevance continues with the context being activated so that it can combine with both existing assumptions and new information. The hearer then activates the connection between being touched and the resultant ‘nice feeling.’ He/she will then go ahead to use a path of least effort in combining these assumptions with the context while looking for positive cognitive effects. To increase contextual implications, the hearer will engage in the process of selection. From the many encyclopaedic assumptions associated with the word ‘touch’ the listener will narrow down and select the meaning ‘caress.’ This will be made possible by the fact that the hearer has easily accessible encyclopaedic assumptions about the implications of being caressed and difficult to find contextual assumptions about the implications of a mere touch.

6. *Nyie mwa ndikwona wai kakethe kathambuku ona **nai ndwesi ona ika misa** na nyie ngauvundisya na vitii ta ing’ala. (Kamba)*

Me, when I saw you, you were a clean girl and **you did not know sin** even you did not know how to conduct mass but I taught you with great effort like that of a lizard. (Gloss)

The literal meaning is that, by the time the lady in the song and the singer met, the former had not committed sin and did not as well know how to conduct mass. The singer went ahead and taught the lady those things she did not know. The presupposition that the singer taught the lady (in the song) how to commit sin as well as how to conduct mass in church is unlikely to satisfy the listener’s expectation of relevance. The hearer will then activate the context and combine it with the literal meaning in search of cognitive effects. Still, no positive cognitive effects will result from this new combination.

The hearer then accesses the encyclopaedic assumptions related with the idea contained in the words of the euphemism ‘you did not know sin’. This will allow the listener access to a wide range of encyclopaedic assumptions associated with the euphemism. This process will lead to formation of ad hoc concepts which are broader in denotation than the literally encoded concept. Working out the meaning of the euphemism from this point of view, the hearer would then broaden the meaning of the utterance while enriching it with context. It is at this point that the listener gets contextual implications that satisfy his/her expectation of relevance. That is, the meaning of the

euphemism ‘you did not know sin’ is broadened metaphorically and enriched with the context to mean ‘you were a virgin.’

2.2.2 Euphemisms for Death

Mortality produces so much anxiety among human beings that they result to repressing its awareness inevitably. Such anxiety makes language users soften the effect of what they really wish to communicate through the use of euphemisms. Speaking euphemistically could be defined as a way of using language like a shield, to guard oneself against the feared, disliked and unpleasant phenomenon (Allan and Burrige, 1991: 222). Death is considered a fear-based taboo (Allan and Burrige 1991: 153). It is considered too blunt and frightening; thus, euphemisms, which have the ability to hide the unwanted and undesirable aspect of death, come in handy to make death’s reality less harsh and less upsetting. Fernandez (2006: 11) observes that euphemism is a traditional way of allowing interlocutors in a certain discourse to talk about the unspeakable.

Death taboos are motivated by a number of factors among them the fear of losing dear ones, fear of the destruction and decaying of the human body, fear of the unknown which happens after death, the fear of the spirits of the dead and lastly fear of a meaningless death (Burrige 1991: 153-154). Death is difficult to accept and people (especially the bereaved and the dying) have since time immemorial always felt reluctant to approach the subject of death using straightforward terms and that is why they often result to euphemisms as a way of mitigating the ‘blow of death.’ The euphemistic expression (which in most cases is metaphorical) serves to provide comfort to the person who is dying and at the same time provide consolation for relatives and friends. In providing us with the opportunity to skirt around and negotiate the reality of death, the euphemism acts as a denial device against the inevitability of death.

Allan and Burrige (1991: 161) place euphemisms for death into four broad categories namely death as loss, worries about the soul, death as a journey and finally death as a way of beginning of a new life. From the data studied, death has been referred to metaphorically. Since death is an abstract concept, the metaphors provide a way of creating, organizing and understanding its reality. Lakoff and Turner (1989: 2) came up with the following metaphors for death while studying

Western poetry: death is loss, death is sleep, death is departure, death is night, death is silence, death is winter, death is a final destination, and death is deliverance among other metaphors.

This study came up with the following euphemisms for death and their interpretations.

Euphemistic Expression	Interpretation
<i>Kuthela</i> (To end)	To die
Wamoni niwatwaa ndii (Wamoni had taken threads)	Wamoni had died
<i>Nikaendie</i> (He went)	He died

Consider the examples in context and an explanation of how the listener arrives at the intended meaning by the singer.

7. *Nimosete ni ukulutani mwa Mumbua, ona keka ti kuvuna*

nika uthela. (Kamba)

I am skinny because of grating, if it were not for being well fed, **I would end.** (Gloss)

The literal meaning is that the singer looks emaciated because of grating and that he would have ended long time ago had it not been for the fact he is feeding well. The meaning of the euphemism ‘I would end’ can be deduced from the meaning of the constituent parts. The comprehension process of such a euphemism follows a path of least effort because assumptions made are easily accessible by the encoded concepts. The encoded concepts provide the hearer with a starting point in deriving the singer’s meaning. By considering a number of encyclopaedic assumptions related with the phrase ‘the end of a human being’, the hearer is able to derive positive cognitive effects. These encyclopaedic assumptions associated the phrase ‘end of a human being’ then combine with the context and at this point the hearer finds his expectations of relevance satisfied.

8. *Ndikolwa syai saa inya, syai saa inya saa inya Waviki ngakwata lipoti*

Wamoni niwatwaa ndii, ngaseng’a ngavisaa ninau, ngachongaa

ninau, ngavisaa ninau uui kana ka Viki ngatelema. (Kamba)

I can't forget it was ten o'clock, ten o'clock when I got a report that **Wamoni had taken threads**, I got worried as to **whom I will be burning with**, oh my! Waviki I got shocked. (Gloss)

The literal meaning is that the singer got a report at ten o'clock that a member of his music group named Wamoni had taken threads and the former got worried about whom he would be burning and chewing khat with. The euphemism is difficult to comprehend because none of the encyclopaedic assumptions that are made accessible by the component parts considered separately or even in combination assist in the derivation of the singer's meaning. The euphemism cannot be understood without making reference to culture. This implies that some words in Kamba have a unique usage with a culturally attached signal. In trying to get relevance from the euphemism, the listener will activate knowledge about the Kamba culture that was already in their mind.

Among the Kamba, threads are used for weaving baskets and ropes. The threads are extracted from sisal plant leaves and there are people who earn a livelihood through such extraction. Weavers of baskets and ropes then buy the threads from those who extract them and go ahead to make quality baskets and ropes which fetch good prices. If for one reason or another the weaver has bought threads from those who extract but cannot make ropes and baskets, then the best way to deal with the threads already bought is to take them back to the original sellers for a refund of the amount spent. For any weaver to arrive at a point of taking back the threads to the sellers, he/she must be lacking energy to continue with the trade. The act signifies defeat on the part of the weaver just like death signifies the defeat of life. This is how the euphemism is understood and the process requires quite a substantial amount of knowledge of the Kamba culture.

9. *Ndimina Mwaniki asande na Kyalo Thaana Nzau na nundu wa ungwata vyu kwoko tukathika mwanaa Monica, kiiro kana no kwakwa, mami nye ngavisaa ninau, ngachomaa ninau uui kana ka Moni nikaendie.* (Kamba)

As I finish thank you Mwaniki and Kyalo from Thaana Nzau for helping me bury son of Monica, worry unto me, **who will I be burning with**, chewing khat with, child of Moni **went**. (Gloss)

The literal meaning of the excerpt is that the singer is thanking two friends, namely Mwaniki and Kyalo who come from a place called Thaana Nzau for working hand in hand with him to make sure that son of Monica is interred. However, the singer is worried that he will lack company for burning and chewing khat since the child of Moni is gone. In the comprehension of the euphemism 'went', the listener realizes the literal meaning does not yield sufficient contextual assumptions to satisfy his/her search for relevance. The listener finds the meaning is more than the literal assignment.

He/she then accesses the encyclopaedic assumptions about the word 'went' metaphorically. The process that is taking place here is one of pragmatic adjustment and it would result into the creation of ad hoc ideas that are larger in what they denote than the literal meaning. The effect of the said process is that the listener would broaden the meaning of the word 'went' to metaphorically refer to a process in which somebody goes somewhere and never comes back. From the context, the listener is able to retrieve the information that a person who 'goes' in the manner denoted in the euphemism is buried and those who knew him are left worried. This is new information provided by the context and which will combine with existing assumptions about the world that already exist in the mind of the listener. The interaction of the context and the new information assigns the euphemism 'went' the broader metaphorical meaning of 'death.' This is meaning that is relevant to the listener as per the context and so he/she ends the process of deriving the meaning of the euphemism at this point.

2.2.3 Euphemisms for Drug and Substance Abuse

Society is dynamic and so is language which has to accommodate socially unacceptable and acceptable issues. Today's language has to deal with ills such as the abuse of alcohol, khat, bhang and other substances since this is an issue of global concern as evident in day to day news. Holder (2008) observes that individuals dealing with the drug menace opt to use evasive language since the topic has to handle many aspects related to personal destruction. The destructions involve not only the physical and psychical health but also financial problems, family disintegration and social shame. Such reality is too harsh to be handled directly and so speakers/writers handling such topics find euphemisms inevitable so as to mask the disagreeable reality.

Holder (ibid) notes that euphemisms concerning drug and substance abuse involve the replacement of the tabooed words and expressions with the conditions that result from the usage of the intoxicants. This research agrees with Holder's assertion for the euphemisms used for alcohol in the songs studied include phrases such as 'get momentum' and 'looking like wasps'. Another euphemistic expression referring to 'taking alcohol' is 'drinking a bottle' and is used by Alex Kasau (Katombi) in his song '*Pastor Mukola*.'

This research also contains euphemistic expressions for smoking bhang. It is interesting to note that most of the artistes whose songs featured in this research confessed to smoking marijuana though the confession was masked in euphemisms such that the listener might think that the action is justifiable. The word 'burning' as a euphemism for 'smoking bhang' was used by three artistes out of the ten studied in this research. These artistes are Musyoki Kikumbi in his song '*Kavuli*', Alphonse Kioko (*Maima*) in the song '*Kindete*' and thirdly Sammy Musyoki (*Sanita*) in his song '*Ngavisaa Ninau?*' The artistes seem to refer to bhang so fondly that this could be taken as a confirmation that most Kamba Benga artistes abuse drugs to a great extent.

Consider the following examples of euphemisms used to refer to bhang in context. The process the listener goes through to comprehend the euphemism is also explained.

10. *Kavuli, umunthi ninooka, nivite vyu niilye maui. (Kamba)*

Kavuli, today I have come **burning seriously** looking like wasps. (Gloss)

The literal meaning is that the singer is telling his wife named Kavuli that he is coming on that day and that he comes burning greatly and taking the appearance of wasps. The implied meaning is that the singer is warning his wife that he is going where she is while under the influence of bhang and by extension warning her of dire consequences should she not return to their matrimonial home.

The singer derives the meaning of the euphemism 'burning' through the following process. First, he/she realizes that burning involves fire and that the material being burnt is usually used up. There is no way that the singer would be saying that he is will go where his wife is while being consumed. Therefore, the meaning of the euphemism 'burning' cannot be derived from the literal combination of the constituent parts. The hearer of the euphemism would derive sense from the context in which it is uttered. The 'burning' as per the context will be accompanied by drinking of illicit liquor. This

combination of the two, that is, ‘burning’ and the illicit liquor, is aimed at making the singer fearless so that he can batter his wife. This is new information that has been availed in the mind of the listener by the context. The new information will then combine with existing assumptions in the mind of the listener. Information already in the mind of the listener is that drug abuse makes people do the unthinkable including battering one another and also starting trouble for no apparent reason. So, the hearer metaphorically broadens the meaning of the word ‘burning’ to include ‘smoking a substance’. It is at this point that the listener derives contextual implications that matter to him/her. He/she will come to a conclusion that the substance being smoked by the singer is bhang. More information that will be made available by the derivation is that the singer is smoking bhang to make the illicit liquor that he has already taken more potent so that he may handle his wife in a ruthless manner.

11. *Indi woona nakichoma na namikolya Maima matonyawa na vilings
sya nyamu isu. (Kamba)*

But when I **burn** and hang it, holes are dug with feelings of that
animal. (Gloss)

The literal meaning is that when the singer burns and hangs his guitar, he digs holes with feelings of a certain animal. The concern here is how the euphemism ‘animal’ acquires the meaning ‘bhang’ in the mind of the listener. The literal meaning of the euphemism ‘animal’ does not appeal to the meaning ‘bhang.’ This in turn means that the listener considers its figurative meaning. Turning to the figurative meaning of the euphemism ‘animal’ implies accessing the encyclopaedic assumptions related to the concept encoded by the word ‘animal.’ The listener of this word would then broaden its meaning metaphorically to imply ‘bhang.’ This will only be possible with the activation of the context, that is, the singer is singing about an ‘animal’ that gives him ‘feelings’ to play the guitar. The animal being talked about here must be burnt first for it to produce the said feelings. The meaning of the word ‘burnt’ is also broadened metaphorically to imply ‘smoking’. The broadening will be possible when the hearer activates information already in the mind that the only form of burning or thereabout preferred by human beings is smoking of substances such as cigarettes, bhang and the like.

From this background, the listener draws conclusions that bhang is one of the substances that are smoked and will lead to hallucinations (termed as feelings by the singer). Such information will be retrieved from the encyclopaedic assumptions about the world already held in the mind of the listener. By so doing, new information combines with information already existing in the mind of the listener and the context is activated. The result is the derivation of contextual assumptions that are relevant to the listener.

2.2.4 Euphemisms for Diseases

Diseases can be defined broadly as abnormal conditions of the body or mind that cause discomfort. A disease will disrupt or impair the normal functioning of the whole human body or specific body organs and it is often accompanied by some symptoms. Allan (1991) observes that words denoting diseases are essentially bad and this is why the names of such diseases are used euphemistically.

This research identified HIV/AIDS as a disease that is referred euphemistically among the Kamba. HIV/AIDS is a sexually transmitted disease first diagnosed in Kenya in 1984 and up to date scientists are still looking for its cure. It is a disease that is associated with sexual immorality and thus it carries a lot of stigma with it. Njoroge (2014: 66-67) notes that the emergence of the HIV/AIDS pandemic has led to the creation of euphemistic expressions as communities try to come to terms with the menace and its disastrous effects on the body of the victim as well as the society. It is unusual to hear any Kamba referring to the disease directly as the mention of the disease causes panic. This can be attributed to the fact that HIV/AIDS had caused many deaths before the introduction of anti-retro viral drugs.

From the songs studied, the researcher found out that the Kamba get their euphemist terms for HIV/AIDS by referring to the effects of the disease on the human body as well as its symptoms. Consider an excerpt from the song ‘*Ngavisaa Ninau?*’ by Sammy Musyoki.

12. *Wavika naku ituni ukuliilye kwa mumbi umutavye nituukia undu wikwo
kwanza wa kuthekeva, kuya nesa no ika uthekeva, kiuwaa o kii tota
kwanza, o kimuyo kwanza uui kana ka viki kuenjoy. (Kamba)*

When you reach there in heaven ask for the creator tell him we fear **this issue of getting skinny even when feeding well**, getting skinny, it is killing as it is hard, even being sweet. Oh My! Child of Viki as we enjoy. (Gloss)

The singer here refers to HIV/AIDS as the ‘issue that causes emaciation despite the fact that one is feeding well’. The singer does not mention HIV/AIDS directly and the listener has to infer from the context whatever is being talked about. The singer is bidding his friend goodbye and also telling him to tell the creator (once he reaches heaven) that people on earth fear ‘the issue causing emaciation despite feeding well.’ We learn from the context that the friend had died and most probably from the disease. The listener would access his/her encyclopaedic assumptions about things that can cause emaciation and eventually death despite feeding well. The meaning of the euphemism ‘this issue of getting skinny while feeding well’ is broadened metaphorically to imply HIV/AIDS. This is the meaning that is relevant to the listener as far as this context is concerned.

Another euphemism for HIV/AIDS from the data studied is ‘muthelo’ loosely translated ‘that which brings the end’. This is a term which was used during the early years after the discovery of the disease. The term was aimed at showing how dangerous the disease was and it denoted hopelessness to those who had already contracted the disease. However, after the invention of anti-retro viral drugs to counter the effects of the disease, the term ‘muthelo’ as a euphemism for HIV/AIDS started disappearing and it was replaced by milder terms. This is attributed to the fact that HIV/AIDS is no longer perceived as dangerous as it was before the introduction of anti-retro viral drugs which prolong the life of the victim.

2.2.5 Euphemisms for Witchcraft and Superstition

Levack (1995: 9) notes that witchcraft in modern times is used to mean two different forms of practice, usually called *maleficium* and *diabolism*. Maleficium is defined as the performance of actions using some kind of extraordinary, mystifying, occult, or supernatural powers. Diabolism concerns itself with the association that exists between the witch and the devil (Levack, 1995: 8). From the foregoing, the witchcraft accusations in the songs studied are a form of maleficium since the singers believe that their competitors could be interested in causing them misfortunes.

Consider this example from the song ‘*Kusuvia Thayu*’ by Ken Wamaria.

13. *Kwanza wiani uyu witu, wa ngita mbaitu. Wamesya nguma niuteswa, ndukese kufaulu. (Kamba)*

Moreso in this job of ours of playing the guitar. When you become famous, **you can be messed up** so that you don’t succeed. (Gloss)

The literal meaning of this line is that when you are a Kamba Benga artiste and you become famous, you can be messed up easily so that you do not succeed. The euphemism ‘messed up’ is too broad in meaning to generate contextual assumptions to the listener. This euphemism cannot be understood away from the cultural perspective. In understanding this euphemism, the listener has to invoke the cultural perspective for the realization of relevance. The listener narrows down the meaning by bringing in knowledge about the culture of the Kamba community. Among the Kamba, accusations of witchcraft are not uncommon among people involved in the same kind of business. Kamba Benga artistes equally believe that their counterparts can bewitch them so as to reduce competition in the Benga music industry. From this understanding, the listener uses the context to select the meaning of the euphemism ‘messed up’ to mean ‘being bewitched’. This meaning now is able to generate contextual assumptions that are relevant to the listener.

14. *Tembea Mbitini mbali, Kilungya ausisye.* (Kamba)

Visit Mbitini which is far, **Kilungya will look at you.** (Gloss)

The euphemism ‘*ausisye*’ literally means ‘to look at’ in Kamba. The literal meaning does not yield contextual assumptions that matter to the listener. None of the encyclopaedic assumptions that are made readily available by the euphemism itself or in combination with the other parts of the sentence help the listener to derive the intention of the speaker. This form of euphemism cannot be understood if taken away from the cultural reference. Since the parts of the euphemism provide no hints to the intended meaning by the singer, this category of a euphemism has to be learnt like a new concept. Consequently, in the context of the song, the word ‘*kusisya*’ means to ‘protect oneself against evil spells which are cast by rivals.’ This meaning can only be realized if the listener accesses background information already in the mind; that is, among the Kamba, there is a popular belief that one needs protection against imaginary rivals. This protection is gotten from witchdoctors and the one named in the song goes by the name Kilungya. He is the one that the singer advises that they visit so that they can get protection. Green and Mesaki (2005: 374) while studying witchcraft-superstition practices in Tanzania observe that witchcraft gotten from the power of some medicines can be neutralized by means of using other medicines administered by a number of specialists. Some of the specialists have a long history of the work of cleansing bewitched individuals such that they attract clients from a wide area. Kilungya, who is mentioned in the song, is one of those specialists.

Conclusion

This chapter has explained in details how Relevance theory helps the listener derive the meaning of euphemisms used by the singer. The process of comprehension involves metaphorical broadening and selection of the concept encoded in the words of the euphemism. The chapter also found out that the euphemisms in Kamba Benga music include: euphemisms used in connection with death, sex, disease, drug and substance abuse and lastly euphemisms for witchcraft and superstition.

CHAPTER THREE

LINGUISTIC DEVICES USED FOR CREATING EUPHEMISM

3.0 Introduction

This chapter analyses the language used in Kamba Benga music with the intention of laying bare the nature of language in such music and more specifically, the linguistic strategies of creating euphemism. The researcher was able to gather adequate data on euphemisms from Kamba Benga music. The researcher also went ahead to formulate questionnaires which sought to capture the listener's interpretations of the various euphemisms in the songs. The euphemisms in the song were analyzed vis-à-vis the listener's interpretation as contained in the questionnaire. From the comparison, the researcher went ahead and came up with the linguistic device that is used in the creation of the euphemism.

3.1 Linguistic Devices for Creating Euphemism

Euphemisms have both explicit and implicit levels of meaning. This is in line with the concept of explicature and implicature as tenets of Relevance theory. The explicature of the euphemism can be said to be the literal meaning which is gotten on the basis of understanding the dictionary meaning of each of the words in the expression. The implicature of the euphemistic expression is the speaker/implied meaning which is arrived through contextual implications. Though language proficiency is mandatory for the retrieval of the implied meaning, the context in which the euphemism is used cannot be ignored.

The information that was contained in the questionnaires was collected and analyzed so as to reveal the linguistic devices that enabled singers to address taboo topics without losing face. The researcher noted that a number of examples fell at the same time into a number of different linguistic devices. The researcher wrote down all the euphemisms obtained from the ten songs vis-a-vis the listener's interpretation of the same and then each was studied for identification of the strategy used in its formation. The analysis was guided by a research by Burrige (2012). In her research, she identifies linguistic devices that aid in the formation of euphemisms. She states that the linguistic strategies for forming euphemisms belong to three overarching mechanisms namely analogy, distortion and borrowing.

3.2 Analogy

Analogy entails the transfer of meaning from one context to another. It does not lead to creation of new forms but speakers simply take words and phrases from one part of language and incorporate them in another. Under analogy, Burridge places processes such as metaphor formation, whole-for-part substitution, part-for- whole substitution, understatement formation, and overstatement formation. Among the linguistic devices for creating euphemism evident in the data collected, the following were found to fall under analogy:

3.2.1 Metaphor

Metaphor was found to be the most common of all the processes employed in the formation of euphemism in the data studied. The process involves pairing together the offensive topic with a pleasurable notion. Lakoff and Johnson (1980: 5) observe that metaphor is a set of conceptual correspondences from a source domain (the realm of the physical or more concrete reality) to a target domain. Through conceptual metaphor, the source domain which is in our case the euphemistic expression is mapped systematically to the target domain which again in this case is the taboo topic. Neaman and Silver (1983a, b) define metaphor as the creation of a euphemistic concept standing for tabooed topics through comparison. The data collected in this research demonstrated that the unpalatable expression was replaced by a palatable word or phrase by way of comparison. Below are the examples that use metaphor in the formation of euphemisms:

Euphemism (Kamba)	Translation	Intended Interpretation
<i>Nyamu</i>	Animal	Bhang
<i>Yanga</i>	Cassava	Penis
<i>Kukama</i>	Milk	Have sex

Consider the following examples of euphemisms formed by use of metaphors. The process of comprehending the metaphor is also explained.

15. *Mulolongo, Kasina vena pastor wisie uka muno ukuthi aivoka mboka sya aume na moko mena kiko. (Kamba)*

In Mlolongo, Kasina there is a pastor who has come too much **partaking men's dishes with dirty hands**. (Gloss)

The comprehension of a metaphor requires more processing effort than a direct expression. There is also need to activate the context so as to derive the figurative meaning. The literal meaning of this expression is that the pastor is eating other men's meals. From the context, it is highly unlikely that the pastor is being blamed for eating ordinary food. The implied meaning can only be partly implied from the phrase "*mboka sya aume*." What will be gotten from this phrase with little processing effort is that the "food" being talked about belongs to men. The hearer has thus to broaden the meaning of the word "*mboka*" to the expectations of relevance according to the context. He/she will try the literal meaning of the words but will not derive any meaningful contextual implications. In order to fully comprehend the phrase, the hearer will go ahead to access the encyclopaedic assumptions associated with the idea encoded by the words of the metaphor. That is, the food being talked about can only be eaten by men, that if the food is not well guarded, other men and not women will eat, this food is more treasured than ordinary food. The resultant pragmatic adjustment will lead to the formation of ad hoc concepts broader in meaning than the encoded literal meaning. The listener would only access the meaning encoded by the metaphor *mboka sya aume* if only they compare food and sex for sometimes, the act of sex is referred to as "eating each other." This is according to Gathigia and Ndung'u (2011: 35), who observe that eating and food are common sources of naming sexual organs and sex-related activities. Thus, the phrase *mboka sya aume* is a metaphorical extension of other men's wives/lovers and it therefore communicates infidelity on the part of the pastor.

16. *Na nundu naina nzaa ngamiya na itomo, Katombi ngavuniwa muvaka
ngatavika, ngauma kw'o na nzaa na kyua kinene. (Kamba)*

And because I was **hungry**, I ate greedily, Katombi I had stomach upsets

to the point of **vomiting** so I left there **hungry** and very bitter. (Gloss)

The expression *naina nzaa* is metaphorical for the singer is not talking about being hungry for food. The context of the utterance makes this assumption available to the listener. Since the song is about a failed love affair, then it is apparent that 'hunger' here has to be interpreted in terms of sexual matters. Sexual deprivation will be understood to be 'sex hunger' in the context provided in the song. The listener, having knowledge about hunger in the literal sense will transfer this meaning to a love scenario hence conclude that the singer was deprived of sex that said night.

The meaning of the metaphor can easily be derived from the literal meaning of the component parts. This is possible because the metaphor is semantically less complex and therefore easy to

comprehend. This metaphor has a close relationship with the literal meaning of the constituent words with its meaning deriving direct from the meaning of the literal constituents. In interpreting this metaphor correctly, the listener follows a path of least effort since assumptions are made easily accessible by the encoded concepts. The listener takes the encoded concepts as the starting point in the derivation of the speaker's meaning. The listener will then find their search for relevance satisfied upon considering a subset of the encyclopaedic assumptions related to the encoded concepts.

17. *Jej ndungwatisye kilaikuu nambe nichome. (Kamba)*

Jay, light for me a cigar so that I can **burn**. (Gloss)

This kind of a metaphor is difficult in terms of comprehension because none of the encyclopaedic assumptions made accessible by the constituent parts independently or combined assist the listener to understand the intention of the singer from the component parts. This metaphor can not therefore be understood away from the cultural reference. This means that some words in languages have unique usage with a signal attached to the word by the culture. Therefore, speakers of that given language have to learn these metaphors like new concepts. The metaphor encodes the idea of smoking bhang which is difficult to get from literal meaning. Among the Kamba, smoking bhang is unacceptable and thus talking about the same is also disallowed and frowned upon. It is assumed that one who smokes bhang may go mad as a result of having "burned their brains." Thus, smoking bhang is compared to burning one's brains. This is where the relationship between smoking bhang and burning comes in. Apart from the interpretation of this expression being culturally dependent, the listener must also activate the right context. The context helps in the generation of contextual implications which are relevant to the listener. Therefore, the implied meaning of the word "burn" in this context is "smoke bhang."

3.2.2 Understatement

An understatement is a way of presenting a tabooed topic as less important than it is in reality (Baldick, 2004). An understatement will be less informative than the taboo topic but the former will still be used to express the meaning of the latter effectively. Thus, an understatement works by deliberately decreasing the severity of the taboo topic to the listeners. The Cambridge dictionary defines an understatement as the act of making statements that describe things in a way that makes them look less important, serious, bad and so on to the listener. If something is described as being smaller, much less important, or much less serious than it really is, then the statement describing

such is said to be an understatement. As a linguistic device used in the formation of euphemism, an understatement works by watering down the reality of taboo topics. From the data collected in this research, the following examples were found to utilize understatements as linguistic strategies of forming euphemism.

Euphemism (Kamba)	Translation	Intended Interpretation
<i>Nika uthela</i>	I would end	I would die
<i>Ngutie</i>	Leave you	Separate/divorce
<i>Too</i>	Sleep	Sex
<i>Kilaiku</i>	Cigar	Bhang

Consider the following examples of understatement in context.

18. *Wakengiwe ni aume ma ngali. Muvea niwe waukuie. (Kamba)*

You were cheated by men of vehicles. Muvea is the one who **carried you**. (Gloss)

The literal meaning of this expression is that Muvea is the one who carried the person being talked about. Interpreted in the context of a marriage that crumbled because the wife deserted her matrimonial home, the literal meaning of the euphemism ‘carried’ considered independently or taken in combination with the other words in the sentence would not yield assumptions that are relevant to the listener. The listener has then to access encyclopaedic assumptions associated with the concepts encoded by the word “carry.” This leads to broadening of the meaning of the word “carry” to include the meaning “elope.” The singer, in the song where the euphemism is used, is communicating that his wife eloped with someone else.

To ‘carry’ is move something from point A to point B while “to elope” is to run away secretly in order to get married. Referring ‘to elope’ as ‘to carry’ is a case of understatement. This is because the act of eloping with someone is far more serious than that of just carrying someone. Eloping with someone would mean that they change their marital status while carrying someone from one point to another merely changes their position and nothing much. The singer says that his wife was “carried” to communicate that she had little control over what was happening to her.

19. *Eka iwa woo Carol, ndyaathi na uthuku. (Kamba)*

Stop being angry, Carol, I did not **leave** for bad reasons. (Gloss)

From the literal perspective, the singer is saying that he did not move away from Carol out of bitterness. The question that comes to the listener's mind is: how far did the singer move? This line of thought does not yield contextual implications that matter to them. In the comprehension of the word 'leave', the listener finds the meaning more than the literal assignment. The hearer then accesses the encyclopaedic assumptions associated with the concepts encoded by the word "leave." The meaning of the word "leave" is broadened to denote a situation in which a partner walks away from a marriage. It means to separate from a partner/wife.

However, upon considering the relationship between the words "leave" and "separate", then we realize that the former is more serious than the latter. To separate from one's wife/lover is not a joke and cannot be said to be the same as a partner moving from where the other partner is. Thus, referring to separation in marriage as just "leaving one another" amounts to an understatement. The seriousness of the separation is lessened as it is being likened to the process of moving from one point to another. Divorce is a depressing topic and is not talked about directly among the Kamba. The singer has to look for a way of masking the reality of divorce. This is where understatements come in handy as they make it look less serious and less ugly.

20. *Nasakuie ulevi umwe na ngatulisa wa kilaiku na ngaleana vyu na*

Kindingi. (Kamba)

I chose one type of intoxication and settled of **cigar** and completely refused liquor. (Gloss)

Literally, it means that the speaker has chosen smoking tobacco that is usually put into a cylinder. However, the context in the song suggests that the kind of potency in this cigar is more than what is found in tobacco. The listener searches for more relevance by considering other substances that are smoked just like tobacco but are more potent. The meaning of cigar is then worked out from a broader perspective. This broad perspective assigns the word "cigar" the broader meaning of "bhang".

Though both tobacco (which makes cigar) and bhang are drugs, the two are at different levels of potency. Bhang has more serious short term effects such as impairing judgement and promoting psychosis while the effects of smoking tobacco are long-term. In addition, smoking bhang is illegal

in most countries while cigarette smoking is liberalized worldwide. In essence, smoking bhang has more serious consequences than smoking tobacco. Thus, downplaying the smoking of bhang and making it look like one is smoking cigarettes is an understatement. Confessing that one is smoking bhang openly in Kenya may attract a prison sentence. This could be the reason as to why the singer opted to talk of cigar which is allowed in Kenya.

3.2.3 Overstatement

Ham (2005) defines overstatement as language that is exaggerated for emotional effect and in which the reality of taboo is destroyed by making it bigger and better. Here are the euphemisms that were found to have been formed through overstatement.

Euphemism	Translation	Intended Interpretation
<i>Ukulutani</i>	Grating	Sex
<i>Niilye maui</i>	Looking like wasps	Very angry
<i>Nuke vu niilye mboo</i>	Come there looking like a buffalo	Angry and dangerous

The examples above are explained below.

21. *Niya nesa na ngatheesya mwa Mumbua, nimosete ni ukulutani mwa Mumbua. (Kamba)*

I eat well and drink well, Mumbua, I am skinny because of **grating**,
Mumbua. (Gloss)

Grating involves rubbing a substance (especially food) on a grater. This process leads to the reduction into shreds of the substance being rubbed on the grater. The process involves a lot of friction between the grater and the substance being rubbed on it. It is the friction that causes the substance to wear out. Sexual contact between people involves penetration, especially the penis penetrating the vagina. The process involves partners rubbing one another gently since their bodies come into contact. However, the contact does not include any friction so the parties can not be said to wear out. Thus, by referring to “having sex” as “grating”, the act of sex is exaggerated and made to look more serious than it really is. Overstating sex makes it look something usual and better than the way people perceive it.

22. *Kavuli umunthi ninooka. Nivite vyu niilye maui.* (Kamba)

Kavuli, today I have come. Burning seriously **looking like wasps.** (Gloss)

A wasp is a narrow-waisted social insect that carries with it a sting. Its sting is known to be very painful and wasps can attack a human being so many times repeatedly to the point of even causing death. They sting indiscriminately and are among the most feared insects for the sting is very painful. Since they are highly feared, it is not unusual to hear one saying that they will go to a particular place (especially where they have been offended) looking like wasps. This communicates that they will inflict the kind of pain that wasps do inflict on human beings. Even though human beings can get angry; reason, most of the time prevails and one is able to control oneself so that they do not cause a lot of harm to fellow human beings. So, comparing the kind of pain that can be inflicted by wasps to that which can be caused by human beings amounts to an overstatement. Wasps cannot reason when disturbed but will go ahead and sting whoever is nearby unlike human beings who reason and may be disturbed but will still do nothing to avenge.

23. *Nekie kwivitha Ken, ndeenda kwaia kuu. Kwitu ninye mukuu,
ngaa nota uthuku.* (Kamba)

I just hid myself Ken for I did not wish to **get lost** in that place.

I am the eldest in our family, it is almost wrong to get lost. (Gloss)

When you lose something, it means you are unable to find it anymore. If a family has lost one of their own, then it means they are unable to trace him/her. That means the family is less by one member. The lost member is physically absent from the family and cannot be assigned any duties or relied upon at any given time. On the other hand, a member who is of little use to a family is physically present but may not help the family much. He or she may be assigned light duties. This implies that though this person is not as useful as an ordinary member ought to be, at least they are there. Consequently, referring to a family member who is physically present as one who already got lost is an overstatement. The member is there in the family and not lost as it is being said. If anyone were to start counting the family members, the one who is deemed to have gotten lost will still be counted.

Among the Kamba, one is deemed as having gotten lost if they do not marry and have families or if they fall in love with or marry old women who are past the child bearing age. This is because they will not be able to sire children of their own with such women. It is through one's children that their lineage is continued. By failing to continue your lineage, the Kambas consider you lost.

3.2.4 Implication

In implication, the tabooed term is implied by the speaker and listener goes through a number of steps in order to retrieve the exact meaning of the implication. The context of the utterance also plays a key role in aiding the interpretation of euphemisms formed through implication. The processing effort required to comprehend an implication is quite substantial. The following euphemisms found in the songs under study were formed through implication.

Euphemism	Translation	Intended Interpretation
<i>Ukamelya mata</i>	You swallow saliva	Get sexually attracted
<i>Wika ung'ethya</i>	You would open your mouth	You would be stunned by my handsomeness
<i>Aka mambonaa makeka kuwaa</i>	Women would see me and fall ill	Women lusted for me

The examples above are explained below:

24. *Nzeng'aa nuwe uiombona ukamelya mata. (Kamba)*

You surprise me you see me you **salivate**. (Gloss)

“Swallowing saliva” should be understood as salivating especially in anticipation for food. In the context of the expression, the singer is singing about a lady who lusts for him. Thus, just like a human being salivates for food, the said lady desires the singer sexually. The listener must relate the two events so as to get the singer's indirect message. The context can not be ignored for the correct interpretation to be realized.

25. *Keka vu itina wambonaa wika ung'ethya. Nai munou na ngatendea nye Mumbua, yila aka mambonaa makeka uwaa. (Kamba).*

If you saw me there before, you would **open your mouth**. I was sturdy and I had smooth skin. When **women would see me and fall ill**. (Gloss)

People open their mouths at times when awestruck. In the song where this euphemism is used, the singer tells his admirer that had she seen him before, she would be awestruck. The implication is that the singer was very handsome and this would be the cause of wonder. The singer does not talk about his handsomeness directly for that would amount to pride which is shunned among the Kamba. Though the listener would still comprehend that what would make the lady awed is the singer's handsomeness, the singer does not mention his good looks directly. The singer just implies that there was a time when he was very handsome.

26. *Aka mambonaa makeka uwaa.* (Kamba)

Ladies would see me and **fall ill.** (Gloss)

Meaning- Ladies lusted for me.

From the context, the singer is saying that he was so handsome that ladies would fall ill upon seeing him. One can only get sick upon being exposed to disease causing organisms and not by seeing a fellow human being. Psychology explains how ladies get attracted to good-looking men. Following this line of thought, the ladies described by the singer are actually lusting for the singer to the point of being unable to control themselves. This is what the singer describes as sickness. The singer opts to use the expression "sickness" and avoids talking of ladies lusting for a man directly for the latter is considered embarrassing. Instead of directly talking about lusting for someone, the lusting is implied by the expression "sickness."

3.3 Distortion

Distortion involves masking the taboo topic by partially changing the offensive expression in some way. Under distortion, we have processes such as shortening, ellipsis, circumlocution, phonological remodeling, affixation, blending and reduplication.

3.3.1 Circumlocution

Gathigia et al (2015: 30) define circumlocution as the round about way of expressing oneself; a way of speaking or writing to express an idea in which more words than are needed are used. When applied in the formation of euphemism, it involves the re-arranging of the original offensive expression such that the taboo term is unpacked, each of the meaning components is listed and the resultant longer expression acts as a euphemism. The resultant repackaging is an indirect way of saying that which is considered unpleasant in a particular situation. Burrige (2012: 76) states that circumlocution enables us to tiptoe linguistically around sensitive and/or taboo topics under cover

of words. From the euphemisms identified in the songs studied in this research, those that are formed through circumlocution are listed below.

Euphemism	Translation	Intended Interpretation
<i>Keka ni mbui na nding'ewa ndyuma kasuvu</i>	If I were a goat and I were slaughtered I can not make soup	Sexually inactive
<i>Ndiale sula ona ngua</i>	What is left of me is good looks and clothes.	Emaciated
<i>Aume ma ngali</i>	Men of vehicles	Touts

Consider the following examples in of euphemisms which use circumlocution in context:

27. *Keka ni mbui na nding'ewa ndyuma kasuvu.* (Kamba)

If I were a goat and I were slaughtered I cannot make soup. (Gloss)

Meaning - Sexually inactive

In virtually all societies in the world, a man's sexual prowess is highly treasured for it is responsible for siring children as well as satisfying the man's wife sexually. In the event that the man is impotent, such is considered very embarrassing to the man and as a result, talking about impotence directly is considered inappropriate. So, speakers end up beating about the bush while addressing the topic.

The singer in our case chooses to use an analogy about a goat whose meat is stringy to the point that it can not be eaten. Additionally, the meat can not make soup. This is in a way saying that the meat is of no value at all. By comparing himself to such meat, the singer is confessing that he is unable to satisfy a woman's sexual needs. His confession is done so indirectly that without interpreting the circumlocution in the right context, the listener would be unable to arrive at the conclusion that the singer is claiming that he can not meet a woman's sexual needs. Had he not used circumlocution, he would have just said that he is sexually inactive. The use of more words than needed helps to weaken the harsh reality of impotence and at the same time affording the singer an opportunity to comment on his sexual prowess which is frowned upon among the Kamba.

28. *Kula kwai vata nikwathelile tene Mumbua, ndiale sula ona ngua tu Mumbua. (Kamba)*

What was useful got used up long time ago Mumbua, **I am left with the good looks and clothes.** (Gloss)

Meaning - Emaciated.

The singer is talking about his physical appearance to a lady. He tells her that what is left of him is the good looks he has always had plus his smart dressing. This is to say there were more than these two positive attributes before but along the way he lost something to do with his physical appearance. According to the context of the song in which the euphemism is used, this missing attribute would have made him look more handsome than he is at this moment. What the singer is avoiding saying is that he is emaciated. Thus, instead of using a simple expression like “emaciated”, the singer opts to use a number of words which do not contribute to a different meaning but only take the listener through linguistic roundabouts.

29. *Wakengiwe ni aume ma ngali. (Kamba)*

You were cheated by **men of vehicles.** (Gloss)

Meaning - Touts

The circumlocution in these words is better understood if the expression is understood in the context of the utterance. The singer is talking about these “men of vehicles” having eloped with his wife. We deduce from the context of the song that the vehicle that carried the singer’s wife is a matatu. The singer even goes ahead to give the name of the vehicle. From this information, we understand that the singer is not talking about mechanical engineers, taxi operators or any other type of people that deal with vehicles. Instead of the singer going ahead to name “touts” directly, he uses a number of words to disguise the true identity of those involved in the embarrassing act of eloping with the singer’s wife. The listener will take some time processing “men of vehicles” as compared to the single word “tout.” This will in turn shift the listener’s focus from the gravity of the offence committed to understanding who these “men of vehicles” really are. In relevance theoretical terms, “men of vehicles” require more processing effort than ‘touts.’

3.3.2 Metonymy

A metonym is a part of a larger whole; it is a device whereby one representative expression stands in for something else. The listener has to make contextually based inference for the expression to

be meaningful. Indeed, the Cambridge dictionary explains that even though the situation involves leaving a word/words out of a sentence, the sentence can still be understood.

When one word or (more) is left out, this amounts to semantic shift as the meaning of the full expression then transfers to what is left. This is to say that what is communicated by the expression with the missing words is more than what can be linguistically decoded from the literal meaning of the expression. From the data studied, the following examples were found to use metonymy as a device of forming euphemism:

Euphemism	Translation	Intended Interpretation
<i>Ndikunda suva</i>	Drinking a bottle	Drinking bottles of beer
<i>Nakwia tuthi</i>	When I told you we go	When I told you we go our separate ways
<i>Uteaniwa nivu kwaku</i>	Get satisfied with yours	Get satisfied with your husband's sex ability

The metonymy in the examples above is explained below.

30. *Na ngaumanga njaro vuu Kalandini nye ndikunda suva nikwate momentum ya uya kasama kakwa nesa. (Kamba)*

Then I passed time by **drinking a bottle** so that I could get momentum to partake my meat well. (Gloss)

If this line were taken literally, then it would mean a bottle is a liquid which can be drunk. It is illogical to say that a bottle can be sipped. This communicates that if the expression is to be meaningful, then the listener must supply the missing information from the context. The singer is talking of having spent some time “drinking a bottle” so as to create appetite to partake his roast meat. It is a common practice by those Kenyans who take alcohol to drink the alcohol accompanied by roast meat especially when they are in pubs. This is the background information that the listener needs to have so as to combine with the new information in the song. From the combination of the two, the listener is able to decipher that “drinking a bottle” actually means “taking a bottle of beer”. Hence, the word “beer” has been left out. The listener has to use the context to fill the missing information, that is, the context tells us what the singer was drinking.

31. *Ndyaa kwona na vangi ndyaukwatya, niki mama uteaniwa nivu
Kwaku. (Kamba)*

I have never seen you. Neither have I understood you, why don't
you **get satisfied with yours.** (Gloss)

Meaning – get satisfied with your husband's sex ability.

The song (in which the above expression is used), talks of a married lady who wishes to engage in a sexual affair with the singer. The singer is now concerned about why this lady is not satisfied with what is hers. The phrase “what is yours” leaves some information out; the singer fails to spell out clearly what belongs to this lady. From the context, the listener is able to understand that the lady desires the singer sexually; so, she must be in need of sexual satisfaction. The singer is now wondering why the lady is not satisfied with the sexual ability of her husband. Therefore, “do not get satisfied with what is yours” means “do not get satisfied with your husband's sex ability. The singer left out the words since it is embarrassing to talk about cheating in a marriage openly. The topic needs to be discussed with caution which may mean leaving out the taboo words. Talking about a man's sexual prowess among the Kamba is considered taboo and this is the reason why the expression “husband's sex ability” is left out.

32. *Na nakwia tuthi Carol, ukaete utia mwingi. (Kamba).*

When I told you we go, you fooled around with me. (Gloss).

The expression “whenever I told you we go” is incomplete for the singer needs to tell the listener how or where they were to go. This is information found in the context of the utterance. The song (where this expression is used) is talking about a relationship which he considered to be destructive to him. The singer says that he would always suggest to the lady that they go. He fails to tell us where they were to go. From the context (since the relationship was a waste of time for the singer), the listener deduces that singer wished to end this relationship. He meant that they go their separate ways. Hence, “whenever I told you we go” means whenever I told you we go our separate ways”. The singer leaves out the words “our separate ways” most likely because he does not wish to be so forthright in suggesting an end to their relationship. He remains non-committal.

3.4 Borrowing

Burridge (2012: 77) observes that euphemisms can also be formed by the substitution of other terms. From the data studied, it was discovered that borrowing can be internal, external, or from religious stories.

3.4.1 Internal Borrowing

This type of borrowing entails borrowing within the same language and includes aspects such as slang, synonymy and use of vague expressions. The following euphemisms from the data collected were found to be cases of internal borrowing.

<i>Euphemism</i>	Translation	Interpretation
<i>Ukwatwa</i>	Touched	Caressed
<i>Kiumina</i>	Finishing	Killing
<i>Visa sya mapenzi</i>	Love photos	Nude photos

Consider the following cases of borrowing in context.

33. *Nguime* vyu wikale muunda (Kamba).

I **till** you until you look like a garden (Gloss)

The singer in the song where this expression is used talks of tilling someone. To till is to cultivate and prepare land for farming. It is impractical to till someone so the word “till” must have acquired another meaning in the language. The closest meaning of the word “till” as relates to someone would be “to beat them up.” The two expressions “till” and “beat up someone” express an almost similar concept for in both, someone is working on something else and for a particular purpose. Additionally, the two involve some force to get the work done. Battering women is unacceptable among the Kamba so the singer can not directly express his willingness to batter his ex-wife. He results to using a word that “lessens” the crime he wishes to commit. Though the singer meaning is clearly understood, the act looks less offensive and almost acceptable. Otherwise, tilling is an everyday activity but battering is not.

34. *Indi kindingi noky'o kiumina andu ukamba. (Kamba)*

But liquor is **finishing** people in Ukambani (Gloss).

This is a case of internal borrowing for the word *kumina* still exists in Kamba but with a different meaning from the one conveyed in this context. In this context, the gravity of death is watered down when it is reduced to “just” finishing. Death is a sad topic and is not discussed directly among the Kamba. Words and expressions have to be found to mask the reality of death. In this case, the word “finishing” is almost identical in meaning to “killing” but “finishing” is more palatable.

35. *Iso mama watumie visa kwakwa, sya mapenzi ukandavya wienda ukwatwa. (Kamba)*

The day before yesterday you sent me **love photos** and then told me you want to be touched. (Gloss)

In this utterance, the singer uses the euphemistic expression ‘love photos’ to imply ‘nude photos.’ The literal meaning of the euphemism does not yield relevant contextual assumptions to the listener. In order to derive the intended interpretation by the singer, the listener then accesses the encyclopaedic assumptions related to the phrase ‘love photos’. He/she also goes ahead and activates the context in which the words were uttered. From the song in which this utterance is gotten from, we learn that the song is about a lady who desires the singer. From the encyclopaedic assumptions about the world existing in the mind of the singer, he/she concludes that there is a likelihood of a person who is smitten sending their nude photos to the person they so desire. This conclusion is worth having as it completes the listener’s search for relevance.

The reference of ‘nude photos’ as ‘love photos’ involves internal borrowing. There is transference of meaning from a less preferred phrase ‘nude photos’ to a more preferred phrase ‘love photos.’ The singer uses the euphemistic phrase ‘love photos’ so as to hide the immoral nature of the lady who desires him. If he had talked of ‘nude photos’ being sent to him, he would have been perceived by the listener to be just as immoral as the lady sending the nude photos. By euphemizing his language, he protects his own image as well as that of the lady in the song.

3.4.2 External Borrowing

These are euphemisms based on words or morphs that have been incorporated into one language from another. The loan word or morph is used to euphemize a tabooed word. The singers (using Kamba) as their language of expression at times use English or Kiswahili words to replace tabooed

words in Kamba. The foreign words and the native ones have the same meaning. Since the loan words are unfamiliar to native Kamba speakers, such foreign words bring about a sense of mildness and implicitness thereby enabling the speaker to avoid embarrassment. The following examples from the data collected were found to be borrowed items:

Euphemism	Translation	Intended Interpretation
Matatu	Matatu	Female sex organ
Momentum	Momentum	Sexual arousal
<i>Kuteswa</i>	Mess up	Bewitch

36. *Wandiie na syana inthinie. **Matatu** yakwa niwakuie. (Kamba)*

You left me with children to bother me. You carried my
matatu. (Gloss)

The word “matatu” is Swahili word for a public service vehicle. It has been borrowed into the English vocabulary. In this particular context, the singer has borrowed the word from Kiswahili into Kamba then he has given it a completely different meaning from what the dictionary meaning is in the original language. Instead of referring to a vehicle used to transport the public, the word has been assigned the meaning, “the female sex organs.”

37. *Na ngaumanga njaro vuu Kalandini nye ndikunda suva **nikwate momentum** ya uya kasama kakwa nesa. (Kamba)*

Then I passed time by drinking a bottle so that I could **get momentum** to partake my meat well. (Gloss)

Though the song is in Kamba, the singer has incorporated the word “momentum” from English. In Physics, ‘momentum’ is described as the force gained by the development of a process. The singer has used the word “momentum” to mean “sexual arousal.” He feels embarrassed to use the Kamba equivalent for sexual arousal and opts to use momentum whose meaning is not sexual arousal but is close in meaning to the same. The loan word “momentum” is unfamiliar amongst Kambas and thus though the meaning will be understood, it is less offensive and affords the singer an opportunity to talk of sexual arousal without a feeling of guilt.

38. *Wamesya nguma niuteswa, ndukese ufaulu. (Kamba)*

When you become famous, **you can be messed up**

so that you don't succeed. (Gloss)

The word ‘*kuteswa*’ is borrowed from the Swahili verb ‘*tesa*’ which means ‘to trouble’. In the song where the expression has been extracted from, it is used euphemistically to mean ‘to bewitch’. Some Kambas believe that some occurrences cannot be explained by science and that the only possible cause is witchcraft. It is not uncommon to hear that so and so has been bewitched. The witch and his/her activities are in most cases talked about euphemistically for it is impossible to substantiate accusations of witchcraft. The singer of this song chose to refer to witchcraft euphemistically because if he had directly confessed that he believes in witchcraft, then his listeners would consider him superstitious.

3.4.3 Using Stories from Religion

Some euphemisms in the songs studied have a religious origin or inclination. They can be related to events in the Bible. Just like in the other devices, context plays a key role in the interpretation of the euphemisms. They include:

Euphemism	Translation	Intended Interpretation
<i>Ndweesi nai</i>	You did not know sin	You were a virgin
<i>Nthi isu ya Eden</i>	Garden of Eden	Genitals/Vagina
<i>Kuya matunda</i>	Eat fruits	Have sex
<i>Muti wa kati</i>	Centre tree	Genitals

39. *Nyie mwa ndikwona wai kakethe kathambuku ona nai ndwesi ona ika*

misa na nye ngauvundisya na vitii ta ing'ala. (Kamba)

Me when I saw you, you were a clean girl and **you did not know sin**

even you did not know how to conduct mass but I taught you with great effort like that of a lizard. (Gloss)

The concept of sin here is borrowed from the Bible. Genesis 19: 8:

“Behold now, I have two daughters which have not known man; let me, I pray you, bring ...”.

The idea of ‘knowing a man’ from this verse is likened to the issue of ‘knowing sin’ and the intended interpretation is that the lady the singer talks about was a virgin. The context helps the

listener to derive this contextual assumption for the singer (who is a man) says in the song that he taught the lady how to commit sin. The interpretation that is relevant to the listener is that the singer deflowered the lady.

40. *Nokandwaa nthi isu Eden kuya matunda. Nthi isu yai mbailu
naisaa ona manyanya ndeuikia kindu nundu kundu kunikuathime.* (Kamba)

You took me to the Garden of Eden to eat fruits. That **garden** was so fine I would eat tomatoes fearlessly for that place is blessed. (Gloss)

This euphemism is borrowed from the Bible in the book of Genesis chapter 2: 15,

“And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the Garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.”

The literal meaning of the euphemism ‘Garden of Eden’ does not satisfy the listener’s expectation of relevance and so the listener searches for the implied meaning. The implied meaning is realized only when the words and phrases in bold are understood as euphemisms and interpreted in the right context, that is, sex. Upon getting the right context, “Garden of Eden” would be interpreted to mean the woman’s sex organs. Similarly, “eating tomatoes” would be understood to mean having sexual intercourse. Here, eating, which provides satisfaction and pleasure is understood as sexual intercourse which is also a source of pleasure. “Taking one to the Garden of Eden” is interpreted as the act of a woman consenting to have sex with a man. Consequently, the implied meaning of this line is that the lady consented to sex with the singer and that they made love severally which was very enjoyable.

Conclusion

Chapter three has described the linguistic devices employed in the formation of euphemisms identified in the selected songs. A number of linguistic devices have been identified and described in details. In all the linguistic devices identified, context played a very important role in the interpretation of the euphemism. The chapter has also demonstrated that the linguistic device used in the formation of a euphemism will determine the processing effort required to uncover the meaning of the euphemism. Some euphemisms will require little processing effort while others demand for more and all this has a bearing on the strategy used in the formation of the euphemism.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE SPECIFIC FUNCTIONS OF EUPHEMISM IN KAMBA BENGA MUSIC

4.0 Introduction

This section identifies and discusses the communicative functions that speakers of Kamba language seek to accomplish through the use of euphemism. From the analysis and interpretation of euphemisms, the researcher established that euphemisms were used for a number of different functions depending on the context. It was also observed that the different functions overlap quite often. The role that a euphemistic expression performs has a bearing on the linguistic strategy drawn on to create the euphemism. Burridge (2012) observes that the function a euphemism performs also has a bearing on its career span (their semantic stability and durability).

The function of the euphemism is laid bare after considering both the explicature and the implicature of the euphemistic expression. It was only after discovering the implicature in the expression that the researcher was able to discern the specific function of the euphemism.

4.1 The Functions of Euphemism in Kamba Benga music

From the euphemisms collected in the ten Kamba Benga songs, the researcher was able to come up with the following functions of euphemisms in Kamba Benga music:

4.1.1 To Shield Offence

These are euphemisms we create when we are faced with the difficult situation of how to talk about things that for one reason or another we would opt not to speak of unrestrainedly in the prevailing context. This research established that such euphemisms arise when referring to tabooed topics. The tabooed topics identified in this research include body parts such as genitals and buttocks, the act of sex and related activities, erection, prostitution, matters related to ejaculation, death, anger, unfaithfulness in marriage, drug abuse, sexual attraction, lust, wife battering, sex enhancing substances, separation, impotence, witchcraft and nudity.

When speakers come across such topics in their speech, they are likely to falter. This is where euphemisms which help one avoid offence come in and make conversations flow without interruptions. Such euphemisms have enabled singers address sensitive topics without sounding entirely offensive. If the singer had sung of the afore-mentioned topics directly, the listeners would brand them ill-mannered and foul-mouthed and would consequently not listen to such music. The

questionnaire supported this argument whereby listeners confessed that they would not have listened to the songs had the issues been addressed directly. Some of the euphemisms that perform this function include the following:

Euphemism	Translation	Intended Interpretation
<i>Ngutie</i>	Leave you	Divorce/separate
<i>Naina nzaa</i>	I was hungry	I was sexually starved
<i>Kwiwa muzuri</i>	Feel nice	Get sexually satisfied
<i>Visa sya mapenzi</i>	Love photos	Nude photos
<i>Ukwatwa</i>	Touch	Caress

Consider the following examples of euphemisms which are used to shield offence:

41. *Nguime vyu wikale muunda. (Kamba)*

I **till** you until you look like a garden. (Gloss)

The literal meaning is that the singer intends to cultivate his wife who has deserted their matrimonial home. The implied meaning is that the singer wants to batter his wife for deserting her duties as a wife. Wife battering is frowned upon in most communities and is also criminalized in some countries. It is for this reason that the singer chooses to refer to the offense of battering his wife euphemistically. If the singer had talked about battering his wife directly, most female fans and even some male ones would have felt offended.

42. *Manga na nduma ikausua kiw'u, ukauw'a ikaema ngakoma*

ndaite kindu, ngavew'ia ngaati mbaka ngathi utukuu. (Kamba)

Cassavas and arrow roots were full of water, you cooked but the food still remained raw, I slept hungry, and I was very

bitter until I left at night. (Gloss)

The literal translation is that the lady tried cooking cassavas and arrow roots which were full of water but they still remained raw. This made the singer to sleep hungry which enraged him to the point of leaving at night. The deeper meaning can only be gotten when the line is interpreted in the context of sex. If anyone tries cooking arrow roots and cassavas with a lot of water, they end

up destroying the flavour. Similarly, engaging in sex with multiple partners would make one lose sexual appeal to their lover. This is what happened to the singer on that night he returned. The lady mentioned in the song tried to entice the singer but failed. Consequently, the singer slept without having made love and this made him bitter to the point of leaving at night. Thus, the implied meaning is that the singer's lover tried to entice the singer to make love with her but she did not succeed for she was not sexually appealing and the singer slept still longing for sex. It would be disgusting to talk directly about a lady being so sexually unattractive that she rebuffs a man. Equally, it is offensive to the listener to hear the singer talking about his sexual exploits directly. The listener would be put off and it is for this reason that the Kamba Benga artiste chooses to use euphemism.

43. *Ukambonia muemeu ni fukara, ndaingwa suvu makangari ni vulati.* (Kamba)

You told me your husband **is poor**, he has **no soup**, “**makangari**”
is flat. (Gloss)

The literal meaning of this particular line is that the lady called the singer and disclosed to him that her husband is poor and that he has no soup in addition to his “makangari” being flat. This line can not be interpreted literally by the listener; otherwise, it will not yield contextual implications which satisfy the listener's expectations of relevance. From the context, the song has nothing to do with material possessions and thus “being poor” will be interpreted in the context of sex. That is, the lady's husband is poor in bed. Hence, “he has no soup, his makangari is flat” interpreted in the context of being poor in bed would mean that the husband to this wife is unable to satisfy her sexually. The issue of impotence is too serious an issue to be discussed directly. It has to be addressed with caution to avoid offending your listeners especially those who might be affected by the same.

4.1.2 To Misrepresent and Deceive

Here, the euphemistic expression adds dimensions of intelligent cunningness and secrecy to disguise. The euphemistic expression is not used more so to save the faces of the interlocutors but to deliberately disguise a topic and to deceive. Burrige (2012) observes that there is a sense in which all euphemism is dishonest. Euphemisms in this sense use words that are intended to befuddle and disguise ordinary and inconvenient facts. Interlocutors come up with euphemisms

that even legalize wrong behaviour. Unacceptable behaviour such as adultery, prostitution and wife-battering is made to sound justified and acceptable in society.

Burridge (ibid) states that though public opinion is not easily influenced, researchers show that loaded language (where euphemisms in this key function fall) can effectively work to influence memory and perception. From the data studied, expressions such as “conduct mass” and “eat fruits” both of which mean “to make love” are indeed capable of reducing the feeling of guilt on the part of perpetrators and even make the listener look forward to being involved in the same. This is despite that the sex being talked about here is adultery which is shunned and discouraged in many communities (Kambas included). The following examples were found to be dishonest:

Euphemism	Translation	Intended Interpretation
<i>Akatutethye</i>	To help us	To give us protection against witchcraft
<i>Tusuvie thayu</i>	To protect life	To protect oneself against death resulting from witchcraft
<i>Kuya matunda</i>	Eat fruits	Make love
<i>Ndweesi nai</i>	You did not know sin	You were a virgin

Explanation of some examples

44. *Nyie mwa ndikwona wai kakethe kathambuku ona **nai ndwesi ona** ika misa na nyie ngauvundisya na vitii ta ing'ala. (Kamba)*

Me, when I saw you, you were a clean girl and **you did not know sin** even you did not know how to conduct mass but I taught you with great effort like that of a lizard. (Gloss)

The euphemism “you did not know sin” meaning “you were a virgin” is misrepresenting known facts. It creates the impression that the only sin one can commit is fornication or adultery yet sin is defined as any immoral act that is considered as transgression against divine law. The person the singer is talking about must have committed other sins before. In addition, the lady the singer

is talking about (in the song where the euphemism is used) being an adult, has knowledge of what constitutes sin. Claiming that he/she did not know sin is being dishonest.

45. *Ndwesi ona ika misa.* (Kamba)

You **did not know how to conduct mass.** (Gloss)

The euphemism “conduct mass” meaning “make love” mystifies sex to the point of making the listener think that all sex is “holy”. Mass is a way of worship among Catholics. Referring to making love as ‘conducting mass’ is legalizing sex even when the parties involved are not married to each other.

46. *Philiph Kilungya mwene akatutethye, tukaye ngata ku kwake
tusuvie thayu.* (Kamba)

Philiph Kilungya himself **to help us**, we go eat “*ngata*” at his place
we protect life. (Gloss)

The implied meaning of the euphemism ‘protect life’ is to seek ‘medicine’ from a witchdoctor called kilungya that would make it impossible for any witch to bewitch the singer. By shielding himself against witchcraft, the singer says that he would have protected his life. This is deceptive for there are other natural causes of death that the singer has no control over. It is a misrepresentation of facts to claim that there is an individual who can help others protect their lives.

4.1.3. To Isolate

In this function, euphemisms work as in-group trademarks; they act as a “clique” or in-group recognition device. Burrige (2012) observes that such euphemisms are found among people who have common work related activities or recreational interests and that such euphemisms play an added role of strengthening and displaying group identity. This is more so directed at outsiders who need not understand what the in-group is communicating.

Halliday (1978: 171) comes up with euphemistic synonyms that play the role of concealing the evil nature of whatever they refer to, with the sole purpose of keeping outsiders in the dark. This research has demonstrated that such euphemisms are popular among illegal drug users to refer to drug types and drug related activities. It was observed that the euphemisms used to refer to drugs keep changing. For example, bhang has various euphemistic names such as “wang’u”, “kindetee” and “kilaiku”. The high turnover rate of this vocabulary means that these terms may soon be untenable. The reason for such untenability is that there is need to maintain secrecy; that is, as soon

as a euphemistic term the drug users have been using is known with its meaning, it has to be replaced.

This research agrees with Burridge (ibid) that taboo is dynamic. As soon as the euphemism that was used to refer to a drug is known by the outsiders, it becomes taboo and will be forbidden by the group. A new term will be found but after certain duration, it will also be replaced. Euphemisms serving this function were found to be the most dynamic of all euphemisms. The following euphemisms (from those sampled) were found to be used to establish in-groups:

Euphemism	Translation	Intended Interpretation
<i>Kindetee</i>	<i>Kindetee</i>	Bhang
<i>Kilaiku</i>	Cigar	Bhang
<i>Veve</i>	<i>Veve</i>	Khat
<i>Choma</i>	Burn	Smoke bhang

Consider the following examples in context:

47. *Nundu **kindetee** kithiawa kikiathime. (Kamba)*

Because ‘**kindetee**’ is always blessed. (Gloss)

The singer uses the word *Kindetee* to euphemize bhang. Bhang is an addictive drug that is smoked like cigarettes and it causes hallucinations to most users. The word *Kindetee* does not exist in Kamba language. It is a coinage by bhang users so as to create rapport among themselves. Smoking bhang is illegal in Kenya and by extension among the Kamba. This coded language is a way of masking this illegality as well as acting as an added motivation of secrecy. Therefore, by using euphemisms to talk about unofficial or illegal activities, those involved in the same are able to successfully lock out outsiders.

48. *Kitindo kiu Carol, kyai na ndeto mbingi, kyai too na posi, na sitalehe mbingi kyai nzovi na **veve**, kyai tusimo twingi, twa wang’u. (Kamba)*

That company Carol, had so many words, it had sleep and poses and much fun It had alcohol and ‘**veve**’, it had many butts of ‘*wang’u*. (Gloss)

The word *veve* is used to euphemize khat. Khat refers the leaves of an Arabian shrub which are chewed as a stimulant. It is also an addictive drug and chewing the same is embarrassing and even banned in some countries. Those who chew khat have developed expressions that ordinary Kamba language speakers do not understand. The word *veve* for instance does not exist in the Kamba vocabulary. This would mean that those who do not chew khat or interact with those who chew the shrub leaves may not know what *veve* means. They are outsiders.

4.1.4 To Entertain

This research has established that there are euphemisms created chiefly to amuse. Allan and Burridge (1991) demonstrate that speakers manipulate language and that such manipulation is remarkably inventive at times. This is to say that ordinary speakers pick ordinary expressions and use them in extra-ordinary ways to form euphemisms that form a part of our every day verbal play. From the euphemisms identified in the songs analyzed, it was established that singers used some of them just to create humour. Those euphemisms identified as having humorous intentions include:

Euphemism	Translation	Intended Interpretation
<i>Kula kwai vata nikwathelile</i>	What was useful got used up	Sexually misused
<i>Aka mambonaa makeka kuwaa</i>	Women would see me and fall ill	Women lusted for me
<i>Ukulutani</i>	Grating	Sex
<i>Ndiale ona sula na ngua</i>	I am left with face and clothes	Emaciated
<i>Kuvoka mboka sya aume</i>	Partaking men's dishes	Committing adultery with other men's wives
<i>Kachoma</i>	Roast meat	Sexy/pretty lady
<i>Mukuni</i>	Dairy cow	One's wife/lover

Consider some examples of euphemisms used to entertain in context:

49. *Ngakumbuka mukuni wakwa wakamaa nathi wiani. (Kamba)*

I remember my **dairy cow** he used to **milk** while I was at work. (Gloss)

The singer of the song from which this line is gotten from uses the euphemism ‘dairy cow’ to refer to his wife/lover and the euphemism ‘milk’ to mean ‘to make love.’ That comparison between a woman and a dairy cow is very hilarious. Equally, talking of making love with a lady as ‘milking her’ is laughter provoking.

50. *Kula kwai vata nikwathelile unoa mana. (Kamba)*

What **was useful got used up**, so you tire yourself for nothing. (Gloss)

In the song where this line is extracted from, the singer is telling a certain lady that he is not as virile as he used to be. By using the euphemism ‘what was useful got used up’, he means that he is not as sexually active as he used to be. The euphemism he uses is humorous for it is not possible for one’s strength to get used up while he/she is still alive. When he says such, the listener finds himself/herself laughing at the singer for sexually exploiting himself and the way he puts it across.

Conclusion

This chapter has looked at the functions of euphemisms in Kamba Benga music. Four functions have been identified. They include to shield offence, to misrepresent and deceive, to isolate and lastly to entertain. Examples of the euphemisms used to accomplish each function have been identified and listed under the respective function.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the summary, conclusion and as well provides recommendations for further study.

5.1 Summary of Research Findings

This research has established that Kamba Benga music exploits euphemisms to a great extent. The listeners of this genre of music were able to identify and interpret euphemisms used in the songs correctly. It was discovered that the reasons why singers use euphemisms in their songs quite often include: to shield offence, to misrepresent and deceive, to isolate and lastly to entertain the listeners. Listeners of Kamba Benga music confessed that they would not listen to Benga songs which addressed taboo topics directly instead of using palatable language.

The context in which the euphemism was used was discovered to be playing a key role in its interpretation. Listeners would not give the meaning of euphemisms unless they were given the context. Additionally, it was discovered that all euphemisms do not require the same level of processing effort in their interpretation. Some euphemisms require more processing effort as compared to others; that is, the meaning of some euphemisms can be easily derived from the literal meaning of the component parts while in others, the listener has to activate the context of the utterance then go ahead and access the encyclopaedic assumptions associated with the idea encoded by the words of the euphemism. For other euphemisms, knowledge of the culture of the people using the euphemism was found to be necessary for the correct interpretation of the euphemism.

Kamba Benga music was found to make use of euphemisms for sex and related activities, death, drug and substance abuse, diseases as well as some for witchcraft.

Finally, the research also found that there are different linguistic devices used in the formation of euphemisms in Kamba Benga music. Those linguistic strategies responsible for the formation of the euphemisms studied are metaphor, understatement, overstatement, circumlocution, metonymy, borrowing, implication, use of vague expressions and lastly use of stories from religion.

5.2 Conclusion

The research deduced that a euphemism cannot be divorced from the context in which it is uttered if the speaker's meaning is to be fully derived. Additionally, if the euphemism is interpreted in a situation where the context is not provided, then it becomes an ambiguous expression open to a number of interpretations.

It was also concluded that use of euphemisms in Kamba Benga music afforded the singers an opportunity to communicate more effectively than through direct language or expressions.

5.3 Recommendations

The current research had Kamba Benga music as its scope. In the course of the study, the researcher noted that a lot can be studied about euphemism in Kamba. We would therefore wish to make the following recommendations about future studies among the Kamba as relates to euphemism.

A lexical study should be carried out to establish permanent euphemisms in all areas and temporal euphemisms among the Kamba. This study will provide an insight into the evolution of euphemistic expressions from the pre-colonial period, through the colonial period to the present time.

A study needs to be undertaken among the Kamba to establish the circumstances that lead interlocutors to abandon euphemisms and use direct expressions.

A study on how the concepts of code-switching and code-mixing have helped Kamba speakers euphemize taboo topics would be worth any researcher's time. This type of research will shed light into the languages that Kambas borrow from so as to mask their taboo topics. The research will also tell how frequent the two concepts are as a euphemism formation device.

The researcher also recommends that future studies focus on other figures of speech in other genres of Kamba songs.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: QUESTIONNAIRE

Tick where applicable

1. What is your age bracket?

18-30 years ()

31-50 years ()

51 years and above ()

2. What is your gender?

Male ()

Female ()

3. Do you speak Kamba? Yes [] or No []

4. In which county do you speak Kamba from?

Makueni ()

Kitui ()

Machakos ()

5. Do you listen to Kamba Benga music?

Yes ()

No ()

6. Have you ever listened to the song 'Kavuli' by Musyoki Kikumbi (Kijana)?

Yes ()

No ()

7. Can you identify indirect expressions(s) in the song? Yes () No ()

8. Do you understand the meaning of the indirect expression(s)? Yes () No ()

9. What is the meaning of the following indirect expressions as used in the song?

(i) burning

(ii) looking like wasps

(iii) matatu

(iv) men of vehicles

(v) carried

(vi) kaya

(vii) till

(viii) come there looking like a buffalo

10. If the artiste had addressed the issues in the song directly instead of using indirect expressions, would you still have listened to the song comfortably?

Yes ()

No ()

11. Why do you think the artiste used the above indirect expressions in his song?

NOTE

The different questionnaires had different content for question six and nine because of the different songs with different euphemisms.

APPENDIX 2: SONGS

Data on Euphemisms Collected from Songs

Data for this research was elicited from the following Kamba Benga songs:

1. *Kavuli* by Musyoki Kikumbi (Kijana)

Transcription of the Song and Translation. The euphemisms are in bold for easy identification.

Kavuli umunthi ninooka x2

Kavuli, today I have come x2

Nivite vyu niilye maui x2

Burning seriously **looking like wasps** x2

Wandiie na syana inthinie x2

You left me with children to bother me x2

Matatu yakwa niwakuie x2

You carried my **matatu** x2

Niuwite na mbui na ng'ombe x2

That I bought with cows and goats x2

Wakengiwe ni aume ma ngali x2

You were cheated by **men of vehicles** x2

Muvea niwe waukuie x2

Muvea is the one who **carried** you x2

Mwenzetu niyo yaukuie x2

Mwenzetu is the one that carried you x2

Watwaiwe masaku vu soko x2

You were taken to Masaku in the market x2

Kavuli no wi tei mbaitu x2

Kavuli, don't you have mercy x2

Uitia kana ka nondo x2

Leaving a child of breast x2

Uithi ni kyau kyakwaie x2

When you left what were you lacking x2

Na waina itinga na miunda x2

And you had a tractor and farms x2

Athukumi waina aingi x2

Workers you had many x2

Nakwakie nyumba ya kwiana x2

I had built you a big house x2

Ya lumu ikumi na nyaanya x2

Of eighteen rooms x2

Wakomaa nesa ta nthungu x2

You were sleeping like a white man x2

Kavuli mituki usyoke x2

Kavuli, come back fast x2

Ndikoke vu niilye mboo mwa

So that I don't come there **looking like a**

x2

buffalo x2

Ninywite kyang'aa kya ileve x2

Having drunk liquor of a vat x2

Nandyongela kaya ikuane x2

And I add ' **kaya** ' for more potency x2

Nguime vyu wikale muunda x2

I **till** you until you look like a garden x2

2. Mumbua by Musyoki Kikumbi (Kijana)

Transcription of the Song and the Translation. The euphemisms are in bold

<i>We Mumbua vala nii wendaa kyau? x2</i>	You Mumbua, what do you always want from me? x2
<i>Kula kwai vata nikwathelile unoa mana x2</i>	What was useful got used up , so you tire yourself for nothing x2
<i>Nzeng'aa nuw'e uimbona ukamelya mata x2</i>	You surprise me you see me you swallow saliva x2
<i>Nakwa Kijana nathelile kula kwai vata x2</i>	Yet me Kijana whatever was useful got used up x2
<i>Kula kwai vata nikwathelile tene Mumbua x2</i>	What was useful got used up long time ago x2
<i>Ndiale sula ona ngua tu Mumbua x2</i>	What I am left with is face and clothes x2
<i>Keka ni mbui na nding'ewa ndyuma kasuvu x2</i>	If I were a goat and I was slaughtered I can't make soup x2
<i>Na nyama syakwa iyiika vate yiati x2</i>	If I were a goat and I was slaughtered I can't make soup x2
<i>Unesie umbona nathelile we Mumbua x2</i>	You only saw me after I had been used up , Mumbua x2
<i>Keka vu itina wambonaa wika ung'ethya x2</i>	If you saw me there before you would open your mouth x2
<i>Nai munou na ngatendea nye Mumbua x2</i>	I was sturdy and I had smooth skin x2
<i>Yila aka mambonaa makeka uwaa x2</i>	When women would see me and fall ill x2
<i>Kimosa ukwona ti kya nzaa we Mumbua x2</i>	The emaciation you see is not out of hunger x2
<i>Niya nesa na ngatheesya mwa Mumbua x2</i>	I eat well and drink well, Mumbua x2
<i>Nimosete ni ukulutani mwa Mumbua x2</i>	I am skinny because of grating , Mumbua X2
<i>Ona keka ti kuvuna nika uthela x2</i>	If I were not being well fed, I would end x2

3. *Too Mwingi* by Ken wa Maria

The transcription of the Song and its Translation. The euphemisms are in bold.

<i>Eka iwa woo Carol, ndyaathi na uthuku x2</i>	Stop being angry, Carol, I did not leave for bad reasons x2
<i>Kitindo kiu Carol, kyai muyo na uvyuvu x2</i>	That company had sweetness and heat x2
<i>Ateo wai wasyo kwakwa , nikyo Carol nye ai x2</i>	But it was a loss to me, that is why I left, <i>naendie</i> , Carol x2
<i>Kitindo kiu Carol, kyai na ndeto mbingi x2</i>	That company Carol, had so many words x2
<i>Kyai too na posi, na sitalehe mbingi</i>	It had sleep and poses and much fun
<i>Kyai nzovi na veve, kyai tusimo twingi, twa wang'u x2</i>	It had alcohol and ' veve ', it had many butts of ' wang'u x2
<i>Kwitu ndyaendaa Carol, uteenda mwa ngutie x2</i>	I was not going to our home, you didn't want me to leave you x2
<i>Na nakwia tuthi Carol, ukaete utia mwingi x2</i>	When I told you we <u>go</u> , you fooled around with me x2
<i>Twitinda too kwaku, na sitalee mbingi x2</i>	We slept a lot in your home and had a lot of fun x2
<i>Nekie kwivitha Ken, ndeenda kwaia kuu x2</i>	I just hid myself Ken for I did not wish to get lost in that place x2
<i>Kwitu ninye mukuu, ngaa nota uthuku x2</i>	I am the eldest in our family, it is almost wrong to get lost x2
<i>Niilye nesa yu Ken, naku utiwe na useo x2</i>	Now I am living well, you be left well too x2

4. *Pastor Mukola* by Alex Kasau (Katombi)

The Transcription and Translation of the Song. The euphemisms are in bold.

<i>Mashambiki yu nienda twithukianisye na muinenga mwanya nimutavye ngewa ii ya pastor mukola x2</i>	My fans now I want us to listen to one another then you give me permission I tell you a story about a rogue pastor x2
<i>Mulolongo, Kasina vena pastor wisie uka muno ukuthi aivoka mboka sya aume na moko mena kiko_x2</i>	In mlolongo, Kasina there is a pastor who has come too much partaking men's dishes with dirty hands x2

*We pastor ni kyau, uvangie **uvoka mboka**
na moko mena ndaka na niwisi ni
 mufuasi waku x2*
*Ona misa twekaa, kila muthenya vu
 kwaku nyumba na tuikunda ndivai,
 tuekewe mavityo x2*
*Suo umwe utekambulaa Katombi navangie
 niithi ngaye **kachoma** ka kavuli Kalandini
mbucharini yivu x2*
*Ngathi ngauwa **ndania ona ndulu** na
tunyanya tuseo ngatwaia muvisi
 anzeuvisye **kachumbari** kaseo x2*
*Na ngaumanga njaro vuu Kalandini nye
ndikunda suva nikwate **momentum** ya
 uya **kasama** kakwa nesax2*
*Niumite njaro vu, nye ngona muvisi wakwa,
 Nzangu akambonia kavoka nikavie noinye
 ni kavola x2*
*O **ngitava kisiko**, ula pastor akauma naku na
malw'oko me ndaka akovokolya ila choma
 yakwa x2*
*Nyie naumie na woo, ngang'okela Ngwata
 kwakwa nyumba na ngasya ninakola
 kuthaitha na pastor mukola. x2*

5. Miss Katethya by Alex Kasau (Katombi)

The Transcription of the song and its translation. The euphemisms are in bold.

*Miss Katethya K. Wanzila ii mwitu wa
 mwaitu manya ndikesa ulwa nundu
 wambikie ila **tweeka misa twi eli** x2*
*Nyie mwa ndikwona wai kakethe
 kathambuku **ona nai ndwesi ona ika misa***

You pastor, why have decided **to partake my
 dish with soiled hands** yet you know I am
 your follower x2
 We were even conducting mass in your house
 and we took holy wine so that our sins could
 be forgiven x2
 One day that I will never forget, Katombi, I
 planned to go out and eat **roast meat** at a
butchery in Kalandini x2
 I went and bought **coriander, pepper and
 fleshy tomatoes** and I gave to the chef to
 make for me a nice **salad** x2
 Then I passed time by **drinking a bottle** so
 that I could **get momentum** to partake my
meat well x2
 As I waited, I saw my chef, Nzangu, who
 told me that my meat was ready and that
 I was the one who was slow x2
 As **I partook** the first spoon, that pastor came
 from nowhere with his **soiled hands** and dipped
 them inside x2
 I left with bitterness, went to Ngwata in my
 house and I said that I had stopped worshipping
 with a rogue pastor. x2

Miss Katethya K Wanzila, my sister know that
 I will never forget what you did to me when we
 were **conducting mass together** x2
 Me when I saw you, you were a clean girl and
you did not know sin even you did not know

na nye ngauvundisya na vitii ta ing'ala x2

how to **conduct mass** but I taught you with great effort like that of a lizard x2

Nokandwaa nthi isu Eden kuya matunda

You took me to the garden of Eden to eat

nthi isu yai mbailu naisaa ona manyanya kindu nundu kundu ku ni

fruits. That **garden** was so fine I would eat *ndeuiikia* **tomatoes** fearlessly for that place is blessed x2

nikuathimex2

Tukelaa nthi isu ota tumyaka ta twili

We stayed there for two years while eating **fruits**

o tuiya matunda ma muti wa kati_na

and the **centre tree** and I left you and went to **spit** then come back x2

ngautia ngaenda kutwila mata nisyoke x2

Indi nasyokethya nasengie muno ii kwithia

But when I came back I was very surprised to

walekeilye nyunyi syiye matunda,

find that you had let **birds** eat my fruits, and

mithonzwe ikachafua na manywii

some **other birds dirtied and ate my**

makaya ndindi x2

tomatoes_x2

Manga na nduma ikausua kiw'u , ukauw'a

Cassavas and arrow roots were full of water,

ikaema ngakoma ndaite kindu, ngavew'ia

you cooked but the food still **remained raw,**

ngaati mbaka ngathi utukuu x2

I **slept hungry**, and I was very bitter until I left at night x2

Ngang'okela sulutani naku umasaini,

I went through Sultan to Maasai land where I

ngavethia masai iisyima na utukuu

found the Maasai hunting at night. They

ngavowaiwa nzoia na ngaviviw'a niye

killed for me an antelope and roasted it

mbune x2

for me to eat to satisfaction x2

Na nundu naina nzaa ngamiya na itomo,

And because I was **hungry**, I ate greedily,

Katombi ngavuniwa muvaka ngatavika,

Katombi I had stomach upsets to the point

ngauma kw'o na nzaa na kyua kinene x2

of **vomiting** so I left there **hungry** and very

bitter x2

Ngasyoka ngang'okela kwa Vonza Kitui,

Again I went to Kwa Vonza, Kitui at Mutua's

kwa Mutua ngethia ena pati yai nene,

home where I found he had a party, having

owaite ng'ombe kilya wone ndivuna x2

slaughtered a cow, wait you see me eating

to satisfaction x2

6. Ms Nzembi by John Muasa

Transcription and Translation of the Song. The euphemisms are in bold.

*Niki Nzembi simu utuku ndiukoma, inyaa
wa syana aingulya usu nuu x2*

*Tena nzembi wingunia uiite, vaa kwakwa
vai wendo nundu waku x2*

*Ndwina nthoni, ndwi kikio x2
Ndyaa kwona na vangi ndyaukwatya,
niki mama **uteaniwa nivu kwaku** x2*

*Ndwina nthoni uimbonia nduukoma nundu
wakwa wienda **iw'a muzuri** x2*

*Ndwina nthoni, ndwi kikio x2
Iw'a nthoni wimutwae luma **kwaku** x2
Iso mama watumie **visa kwakwa, sya
mapenzi** ukandavya wienda **ukwatwa** x2*

*Ukambonia muemeu **ni fukara, ndaingwa
suvu makangari ni vulati** x2*

*Ndwina nthoni, ndwi kikio, iw'a nthoni
Wimutwae **luma kwaku** x2*

*Nyie ni kwakwa mwa niw'aa ni muzuri,
tuliza mboli usembete muno mama x2
Ma muarabu matonyeka ni arabu vai
nafasi nasakuie niyumitye x2*

*Ndwi na nthoni, ndwi kikio, iw'a nthoni
wimutwae **luma kwaku.** x2*

Why is it that Nzembi, you are phoning me
at night, my children's mother is asking me
who that is x2

Again Nzembi you are phoning me while
crying, here in my home there is no love
because of you x2

You have no shame, you have no fear x2

I have never seen you. Neither have I
understood you, why don't you **get satisfied
with yours** x2

You are not ashamed telling me you can't
sleep because of me, you want **to feel nice**x2

You are not ashamed, you are fearless x2

Be ashamed you are married, **stick to yours**
The day before yesterday you sent **me love
photos** and then told me you want to be
touched x2

You told me your husband **is poor**, he has
no soup, "makangari" is flat x2

You are not ashamed, you are fearless, you
are married, **stick to yours** x2

When I am in my home, I feel okay, slow
down, you are too fast x2

What is Arabic can only be handled by
Arabs, there is no space I chose with all
my being x2

You are not ashamed, you are fearless, be
ashamed, you are married, **stick to yours.**x2

7. *Kindetee* by Alphonse Kioko (Maima)

Transcription and Translation of the Song.

*Jei ndungwatisye kilaikuu nambe **nichome** x2*

***Mbivye** ngitale Maima nii ngasungithye x2*

*Ninamanyiie **ndachomete** nditovoa w'o x2*

Nailwe ni ukolelya solo na ikaema vyu

mbaitu x2

*Indi woona **nakichoma** na namikolya x2*

*Maima matonyawa na vilings sya **nyamu** isu x2*

*Kweli nimutavye nyie **nivite** ndiundu ndeka x2*

*Maima, maima, maima, maima, wona **navya***

nikaa kuamua x2

Nasakuie ulevi umwe na ngatulisa x2

*Wa **kilaiku** na ngaleana vyu na kindingi x2*

*Nundu **kindetee** kithiawa kikiathime x2*

*Indi kindingi noky'o **kiumina** andu ukamba x2*

Tena niw'a aume menywa uketha maisyaa x2

Kweli sitimu sya vangi na uki syi

kivathukany'o x2

Maima, maima, maima, nyie avakwa

nasakuie kii x2

Nundu mundu anywite uki ndaukenga x2

Ethaa ainyunga kila unywite nzovi ndivitha x2

Tena ailua ta murefu anyway kindingi x2

Euphemisms are in bold.

Jay, light me a cigar so that **I can burn** x2

I burn completely so that I go make them dance x2

I am used, **without burning** I can not make it x2

I will hang solo guitar but it won't play, my people x2

But when I **burn** and hang it x2

Holes are dug with feelings of that **animal** X2

Truly, I tell you, there is nothing I can't do **after burning** x2

Maima, maima, maima whenever **I burn** I just decide x2

I chose one type of influence and settled x2

Of **cigar** and completely refused liquor x2

Because '**kindetee**' is always blessed x2

But liquor **is finishing** people in Ukambani X2

Again I hear men take it to the point of being unable to sire children

Truly, the effects of bhang and those of alcohol are different x2

Maima, maima, maima, me on my I chose this one x2

One who has taken alcohol can't lie to you x2

He/she always stinks what they have drunk for alcohol can not be disguised x2

Again they stagger like mrefu while drunk x2

<i>Nakwa maima ona nivite ndumenzea w'o x2</i>	But me even when I have burnt you can not know x2
<i>Labda wambona nikikwete rasta ndikitulya x2</i>	Maybe when you see me holding it, rasta smoking it x2
<i>Nundu ndivithaa ona shambiki nisyamanyie x2</i>	Because I don't hide even fans know x2
<i>Maima, maima, maima, maima ni munywi wa mbongolo, nivisaa vyyu x2</i>	Maima, maima, maima, maima I am a smoker of mbongolo , I burn completely x2
<i>Yu matuku aa ni mitaani rasta nditembea x2</i>	These days rasta when I am moving around in the streets x2
<i>Kuya Ukamba naungamilya ndinga vandux2</i>	There in Ukambani when I park my car somewhere x2
<i>Nonaa mooka mashambiki aa ma mavisi x2</i>	I normally see my youth fans come x2
<i>Na twakethania maimbia menda nimachome x2</i>	After greeting they tell me to burn them x2
<i>Nakwa ndimosea kuru ta ili ngamea chomai x2</i>	I take for them two rolls and I tell them to burn x2
<i>Ti siri nimethaa mesi vangi nditiaa x2</i>	It is not a secret they know I don't leave bhang behind x2
<i>Maima, maima, maima, stimu syakwa kweli nisyo ii x2</i>	Maima, maima, maima, this is what I use to be under influence x2

8. Wakamie Mukuni Wakwa by Dominic Muasya(Vuusya Ungu)

Transcription and Translation of the Song. Euphemisms are in bold.

<i>Muenjoy yila ni mitaa ndyendaa kwona Mutuku x2</i>	Muenjoy when I doing my rounds I don't like seeing Mutuku x2
<i>Ngilsya nona Mutuku, Vuusya Ungu ngathuka kyongo x2</i>	Whenever I see Mutuku, Vuusya Ungu I go mad x2
<i>Ngakumbuka mukuni wakwa wakamaa nathi wiani x2</i>	I remember my dairy cow he used to milk while I was at work x2
<i>Na niw'o wanete ngalama ndiuithya mbaka ukanoa x2</i>	And the way I had spent on it, feeding it until it grew fat x2
<i>Kuutemea kitothy maiu na mbemba _utendee_x2</i>	Cutting nappier grass, bananas and maize to make it smooth x2

*Wikendi ndiutwaa tua outing ndunyu
 kutembea x2
 Twasyokethya ndyosa ngita ngautanithye
 kituuni x2
 Na kumbe nake Mutuku okaa ukama
 naenda x2
 Mutuku, Mutuku, ta wona anywa vangi
 na aiya ngima x2
 Na makolovia aikwatwa ni **filings** x2
 We ndakomaa, we ndakomesya x2
 Ethi na utuku **kukama mikuni yeene** x2

 Mutuku, senzya tavia x2
 Iveti sya aume **ti ngali ya uthi ngwata.** x2*

9. *Kusuvia Thayu* by Ken Wamaria

*Kativui mbithi tukusye, Mbitini kundu
 Kitui Kivuni mbali, ngakwonye kaundu
 Philip Kilungya mwene **akatutethye**
 Tukaye ngata ku kwake **tusuvie thayu**
 Ti siri kana Ukamba, ninthi yi aoi
 Kwanza wiani uyu witu wa ngita mbaitu
 Wamesya nguma **niuteswa**, ndukese
 ufaulu
 Nundu wendi wa andu aingi, meenda
 uthine
 Kativui Mbithi twavuma, mbaka
twisisye
 Mbendi nuona yu ni mbingi kwitu
 Ukamba*

On the weekends, I would take it on outings
 at the market just to roam around x2
 When we were back I always took my guitar
 to entertain it in its **shed** x2
 Little did I know that Mutuku would come
 to milk it while I was away x2
 Mutuku, Mutuku, especially when he had
 smoked bhang and eaten ugali x2
 And avocados he would **get feelings** x2
 He won't sleep, he can't sleep x2
 He goes by the night to **milk other people's
 dairy cattle** x2
 Mutuku, change your behaviour x2
 Men's wives are **not vehicles to take you
 to ngwata.** x2

Kativui Mbithi let us go to Mbitini somewhere
 Kitui, Kivuni far, I show you something
 Philip Kilungya himself **to help us**
 We go eat "ngata" at his place **we protect life**
 It's not a secret that kambaland is a place of witches
 Moreso in this job of ours of playing the guitar
 When you become famous, **you can be messed up**
 so that you don't succeed
 Because the wish of most people is that you suffer

 Kativui Mbithi when we become famous, we must
look at ourselves
 Now you can see that there are many music bands
 in our Kambaland

*Na kila umwe enda avume, nikenda
afaulu*

***Kwikwa nai ti vinya mbaitu, Mbithi
twisisye***

*Wona kwenyu kwetha aoi, ni vinya
ufaulu*

*Ona ngai waku aiutethya mbaka
wisisye*

*Tembea Mbitini mbali, **Kilungya**
ausisye*

*Ukaye ngata vu kawke **usuvie thayu.***

And everyone wants to shine so that they can
succeed

Being messed up is not impossible, Mbithi let us
look at ourselves

When you see that at your place there are witches,
it is hard to succeed

Even when your God is helping you, you must
look at yourself

Visit Mbitini which is far, **Kilungya will look at you**

You eat 'ngata' at his home **to protect life.**

10. Ngavisaa ninau? by Sammy Musyoki (Sanita)

Uui yiia Wa Moni

Niwatutia wa moni

*Sanita **ngavisaa ninau**, ngachongaa
ninau*

*Ndikolwa syai saa inya, syai saa inya
saa inya Waviki ngakwata lipoti **Wamoni**
niwatwaa ndii, ngaseng'a **ngavisaa ninau**,
ngachongaa ninau, ngavisaa ninau oh my!*

Uui Kana ka Viki ngatelema.

*Wavika naku ituni ukuliilye kwa yesu
noikuya muno ku na alaika kiio kana
no kwakwa, mami nye **ngavisaa ninau**,
ngachongaa ninau uui kana ka Viki
nikaendie.*

*Wavika naku ituni ukuliilye kwa mumbi
umutavye nituukia **undu wikwo kwanza**
wa kuthekeva, kuya nesa no ika uthekeva,*

Oh my Wa Moni

Wamoni has left us

Sanita **who will I be burning with**, chewing khat
with

I can't forget it was ten o'clock, ten o'clock when
I got a report that **Wamoni had returned threads**,
I got worried as to **whom I will be burning with**,
Waviki I am shocked.

When you reach there In heaven ask for Jesus'
place and sing with the angels but worry unto me
for I don't know **whom I will be burning with** nor
whom I will be chewing khat with. Oh my! The
child of Moni **went.**

When you reach there in heaven ask for the creator
tell him we fear **this thing of getting skinny even**
when feeding well, getting skinny, it is killing

*kiuwaa o kiitota kwanza, o kimuyo
kwanza uui kana ka viki kuenjoy.
Ndimina Mwaniki asande na Kyalo
Thaana Nzau na nundu wa ungwata vyu
kwoko tukathika mwanaa Monica. kio
kana no kwakwa, mami nye **ngavisaa**
ninau, ngachomaa ninau uui kana
ka moni **nikaendie**.*

as it is hard, even being sweet. Oh My! Child of
Viki as we enjoy.

As I finish thank you Mwaniki and Kyalo from
Thaana Nzau for helping me bury son of Monica.
Worry unto me, **who will I be burning with,**
chewing khat with, child of Moni **went.**