

Research Article

The Use of Euphemisms as One of Face Saving Tactics in Haya Language

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Abstract

The study aimed at investigating the applicability of euphemisms in daily conversation among the Haya Speech community. This was a study undertaken in the qualitative research paradigm, whereby qualitative research approach was employed and data were analysed and presented in terms of words/ narratives. The study was conducted at Bukoba district in Kagera region – Tanzania. Bukoba district council is made by several wards, but this study included seven wards which are; Kateelero, Kemondo, Karabagaine, Maruku, Ibweera, Bujugo and Kashaaru. The study was guided by Semiotics theory. The theory was propounded by Ferdinand de Saussure. It deals with the study of signs and sign-using behaviour. During data collection, interview and observation techniques were employed whereby, face to face interview was employed and a total of 30 respondents were involved during interview process. The total of 20 respondents were involved during observation, and both interview and observation made the total of 50 respondents who were included in this study. The respondents were chosen from two groups: elders and youths Haya language speakers. Snowball sampling was used to get the respondents. Through snowball sampling, the researcher managed to interview thirty respondents, where after interviewing one respondent, then he was directed to the next respondent believed to possess knowledge about *akafubo* or *akashweeko* meaning euphemism. The total of 10 categories of euphemisms used among the Haya were found. They include: Euphemisms connected with: physiological disabilities, improper behaviour, tools and instruments, abstract/nontangible things and euphemisms connected with sexing and sex organs. Other euphemisms revealed are connected with: food and drinks, body functions, and euphemisms connected with beliefs. Also, the total of 4 factors for why euphemisms are not much used nowadays among the Haya were found. The factors include: economic factors, psychological factors, moral decay and carelessness among the people. The researcher concludes that, being conversant in a given language as well as complying with the norms of a given society is determined through euphemism use during conversation.

Keywords

Community, Conformity, Euphemisms, Haya Language, Taboo Words

1. Introduction

This paper deals with the use and applicability of euphemisms in language use. The focus was among the Haya speech community. As in other world languages, Haya

speakers avoid the use of taboo words or unpleasant words in their conversation. This depends on the given context, as well as the current situation. The function of euphemism is to

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Received: 18 September 2025; **Accepted:** 4 October 2025; **Published:** 30 October 2025



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protect the speaker/writer, hearer/reader, or all of the above from possible effrontery and offence.

The euphemism serves to avoid naming negative reality, to mitigate the negative impact of such reality, to reduce the negative impact of circumstances that affect human dignity, harm him, express disrespect, contradict moral norms or hidden realities that cannot be directly stated, and hidden. All are done in order to convey, express unpleasant message in a more leisurely, gentle form. The euphemisms among other functions, in the Haya language users, they are used to save personal face, reveal the civilization of the speaker, indicate that the language user conforms to the norms of the language use. The findings of this study show that among other factors, one can use euphemism when he/she wants to discuss issues related to death, sex organs, cognitive disability, physiological problems and the like.

2. Background and Literature Review

The major function of language is to facilitate communication. Sometimes communication cannot be effectively achieved, if the language users fail to conform with the norms guiding the language use. One of the norms guiding language use is the application of euphemisms when talking about sensitive or taboo words. According to James, P. ([6], p. 2), the expression “euphemism” originates from Greek, where the prefix “eu” refers to “good” or “well,” the stem “pheme” refers to “speak,” and the suffix “-ism” refers to “action or result.” “Euphemism,” also known as “speaking well” or “good speech,” is a phrase that replaces a harsh or unpleasant term with a more pleasant one in order to reduce the severity of the harshness of the original word.

Xue, H. et al. [8], is of the view that the literal meaning of euphemism is with nice words or a delightful way to express more indirectly. This implies that in order to use polite and acceptable language in the given context, the speaker instead of using awkward word(s) (taboo words), he/she decides to use another word instead of the one which does not sound good when it is used in public.

In linguistics the word that substitutes a taboo word is known as euphemism. Mehran, P. ([12], p. 8) views euphemism as the replacement of a phrase that could offend or imply anything disagreeable with something pleasing or inoffensive. In the view of Kováčova, D. [10], euphemism is a polite word or expression that you use instead of a more direct one to avoid shocking or upsetting someone. Additionally, Bob, H. [2] is of the view that euphemism is a milder or uncertain term, which is used to replace an unsuitable or impertinent. Furthermore, Dominique, E. [3] adds that euphemisms is dishonest expressions.

In his opinion, the purpose of euphemisms is to conceal true essence of speech. In linguistics, euphemisms are also known as figure of speech, which are used to mask or replace a harsh, unpleasant, or embarrassing idea with a more pleasant one (Radjabkulov, O. R. [16]). The functions of euphe-

misms in Haya language relate to those of world languages. Apart from face saving means the public self-image of a person, euphemisms can also be used to avoid offense or awkwardness in conversations.

3. Research Methodology

3.1. Research Approach and Design

This study was guided by qualitative research approach. The motivation of using this approach was that the nature of data collected by the researcher obtained through structured interview and observation method. In interview method, the researcher used face to face interview to gather data as well as in observation method, the researcher used to see the way people use language in their interaction. The application of this approach enabled the researcher to reach respondents directly, and this helped him to collect intended data that assisted him to present the findings and presented them in terms of words/ narratives.

3.2. Area of the Study

This study was conducted in Tanzania particularly at Bukoba District. This district is one of the famous Haya speech community. In order to gather adequate and enough data that could facilitate the completion of the paper, the study involved seven wards including; Kateelero, Kemondo, Karabagaine, Maruku, Ibweera, Bujugo and Kashaaru. According to Muzale, H. R. T. [13], Haya language is widely spoken in Kagera mostly in four districts including; Bukoba DC, Bukoba municipality, Misenyi, and Muleba. In addition of that, Haya language has eight dialects including; Hamba, Ziba, Ihangiro, Nyakisaka, Yoza, Endangabo, Bum-bire and Mwani.

The motive behind of conducting the study in the mentioned area were; firstly, in the selected wards the medium of communication is Haya language, so the researcher believed that he could gather the required data about the use of euphemisms in their daily communication. Secondly, the researcher conducted the study in this area because there are Haya language experts (elders), who would give the researcher different information about euphemisms use and the current situation about the conformity of norms in language use particularly the use of euphemisms among the new generation (youths).

3.3. Sampling Techniques and Sample Size

This study was guided by snowball sampling technique. Through snowball sampling, the researcher managed to interview thirty respondents, where after interviewing one respondent, then he was directed to the next respondent believed to possess knowledge about *akafubo* or *akashweeko* meaning euphemism. Also, the researcher involved twenty

respondents through observation technique. Here the researcher carefully used to listen to different people especially youths. Through their conversation he noted down the way they conformed with the use and/or not using euphemisms at all in their conversation.

3.4. Methods of Data Collection

This study was undertaken in the qualitative research paradigm. In order to facilitate the availability of required data, the study employed both interview and observation methods, to collect data about the applicability of euphemisms among the Haya. In this process, the researcher used face to face interview to collect primary data. Interview guide questions were used to guide the researcher to involve respondents during data collection process.

Researcher also applied observation technique in data collection. During observation, the researcher visited different places including; market places, recreation places like at the bar, play grounds as well as in the families. The researcher used this method to observe the way people with different ages, use a language in their conversation. The researcher used the notebook to jot down field notes, and a voice recorder to record the information during interview and observation sessions. Data were analysed thematically and narratively. To facilitate the availability of required data, fifty respondents were involved by the researcher during data collection process. Thirty respondents were involved through interview, and twenty respondents were involved through observation method.

4. Findings and Discussion

The findings of this study, revealed the total of ten groups of euphemisms used in Haya speech community. The findings are arranged according to their classification in order to help the reader to understand the circumstances that guide Haya speakers to use euphemisms instead of the common word(s).

4.1. Euphemisms Connected with Physiological Disability

The findings of this study, reveal a total of two biological or physiological disabilities which can influence Haya speakers to use euphemisms when referring to people with such disabilities. For instance, a person with strabismus or a person with squint commonly in Haya is called *owamarali*. So, the person with such disability can be referred by using one of the following words: *ruburulage*, *ow'amaleebage*, *ow'eliisholy'okuendeka*. Therefore, in order to avoid embarrassment to people with such impairment, the given alternative words above can be used.

Additionally, *embariga* is a word used to refer to a person or people with rickets. Therefore, instead of saying

ow'embariga/ow'ebitege an alternative word used as euphemism is *rutambukage*.

After reading the previous literature, this study did not find any study conducted in other languages, which shows that physiological disability can influence interlocutors to use euphemisms when referring to the person with such disability. So, this may be one of the new inputs among the researchers and linguists.

4.2. Euphemisms Connected with Cognitive Disability

The cognitive disability among the Haya, also was found to be used as one of the factors that influence Haya speakers to use euphemisms. The findings reveal that commonly, the person who born with cognitive disability is called *enderema/omulenga/empuge/endeesh* means a person with cerebral palsy. Therefore, in order to avoid the use of offensive word, the conversant Haya speakers may use one of the following as alternative words to refer to the person or people with such disability: *ataikwebaasa*, *aikuzoonga*, *ow'akamanywanyina*, *ow'akoruganda*, and *owakamosho*. This finding concurs with the view of Xue, H. et al., [8] who state that, in English the phrase like 'soft in the head' can be used to refer to "a mad man", and "a bit slow for his age" for "children of low intelligence". Additionally, the study by Stollznaw [18] shows that cognitive disability can be used by language users to express people with such impairment. The findings of that study indicated that, phrases like *retarded* and the abbreviation *retard* labeled a person with an IQ of lower than 70 who had limited social and practical skills. Researcher says that,

"*Retarded* and the abbreviation *retard* became strong insults, especially when used to describe people with disabilities. In an effort to convey a more positive image. Today, these older terms are mostly considered to be ableist, and have been superseded by the preferred term *disabled*, while *cognitive disability*, *developmental disability*, *processing disorders* and *learning difficulties* are also considered to be appropriate by stakeholders".

In the study conducted by Yusuf, M. A. ([19], p. 29) shows that also Swahili speakers use euphemisms when referring to a person with cognitive disability. In that study, the researcher used words like *kizondo* and *kilaza* to mean a person with low IQ. This contention shows that cognitive disability is not only used in Haya community but also by other communities as one of the factors influencing interlocutors to use euphemisms when referring to a person or people with cognitive disability.

4.3. Euphemisms Connected with Improper Behaviour

Expressing improper behaviour among the Haya was also found to be considered as one of the circumstances influencing Haya to use euphemisms. Human being is a complicated

creature. This is revealed through his/her behaviour. The findings of this study reveal 11 behaviours that can influence Haya language users to employ euphemisms when referring to a person who possesses one of unacceptable behaviours.

Obushuma/okwiiba are general terms used to mean theft. It is one of bad behaviours that sometimes need the speaker to use euphemisms when referring to a person or people with such kind of behaviour. Therefore, words like *okwetoora*, *akakono*, *okuteera*, *okweha*, *okwaaka*, *okushwaikura* and *okwebaka* can be used in place of the former ones. On the other hand, *omushuma* is a word used to mean thief. Euphemistically, one of the following words can be used to refer to a thief (*omushuma*): *omwetoozi*, *ow'akakono*, *omuteezi*, *omwaaki*, *omunyangi* and *omushwaikuzi*.

Additionally, *embeiyi* is a noun that refers to the person or people who tend to say lies/deceiving others. Consequently, that person can be named either *munwaagura*, *kailangya*, *kanyandimi*, *kanyamashwa*, or *ngushu*. These alternative words can be used in place of *embeiyi* which seems to attack the personal directly.

Endyamabanja is a noun that is used to refer to a person whose behaviour is lacking of honest especially in money issues. Mostly people who borrow money and do not pay back to the owner. So, words like *nkurumbuzi*, *ndyomejanyi*, *nkyyoozi* and *ndyaalya* are used to replace the former one.

In addition of that, *engoby* is another word used to connote a hypocrite person or people. In order to save the person's face, a hypocrite person or people can be either named as *ruteerana*, *katemamaka*, *mukambuzi*, *katitiliza marobo*, *mainokatare mutima sisisi* or *tibendelana*.

Eirogo is another improper behaviour among the Haya that influences speakers to use euphemisms when discussing a person who is believed to engage in sorcery/ superstition/witchcraft. Hence, a person who is believed to engage in such kind of behaviour commonly is referred to as *omurogi*. Thus, euphemistically Haya speaker(s) may use words *omutunsi*, *omuarazi*, and *omupaapuzi* to refer to one who is believed to involve in such kind of behaviour.

Another bad behaviour that influences Haya to use euphemism is *obusiiyani*. This is a Haya word that means adultery. Hence, *ensiiyani* is a noun used to refer to a person whose behaviour is engaging in extramarital sex. Therefore, words *katahwabuto* and *enjanga* are used as euphemisms of a word *ensiiyani*.

Entamiizi is a common word used to refer to a drunkard or alcoholic person. This is another bad behaviour that can influence Haya speakers to use euphemisms. Consequently, *akaziizi* means the small insect looks like domestic fly that tends to visit areas where traditional alcohol is made, can be used as euphemism to refer to a person or people with such kind of behaviour.

Moreover, *omururu* means greedy is one of the bad behaviour in Haya speech community. The findings found that, in order to refer to such kind of people euphemistically, words like *akooyo*, *tindirwakange*, and *omuhaika* can be

used instead of the previous one.

Similarly, *obumaraaya* means prostitution is also one of forbidden behaviour among the Haya speech community. The word *maraaya* generally is used to refer to a prostitute and/or a person who shifts from one political party to another. Therefore, the word *omusaabazi* is used as a euphemism used to refer to a woman or girl who sells her body. Additionally, *kyaabona* is a word euphemistically, used to refer to either a woman or a girl whose behaviour is to serve men when need sex. Unlike *maraaya* that woman or girl is not money oriented is service oriented.

Furthermore, *obunafu* means laziness was found to be one of bad behaviours that can influence Haya speakers to use euphemisms. In order to soften words when referring to a person whose behaviour is laziness, words like *okweganyilira*, *okwetema*, *okwelemwa*, and *okwenaga* can be used in place of *obunafu* which sounds stronger and insults people.

With relation to the previous studies, this study concurs with one done by Jewad H. G. [7]. In that study the researcher quoted Macbeth in Act 1, Scene 3 who used the sentence "What, can the devil speak true?" In this scene, Banquo uses spin euphemism to express his skepticism about the witches' prophecies. By referring to the witches as the "devil". Therefore, by realizing that witchcraft is one of bad behaviour, the author decided to use the term 'devil' instead of 'witch' a term that may attack the person direct. So, the findings of this study and other studies conducted in other languages show that behaviour of a person can influence interlocutors to use euphemisms when referring to the person with a certain bad behaviour.

4.4. Euphemisms Connected with Tools and Instruments

The findings reveal that the famous instrument particularly in some African countries used by parents or the community to punish wrong doers is known as *enkoni*, *ekishanju*, *orubooko* means cane/stick. Thus, euphemistically words like *omukuzanyana*, *banyiakara* and *kalerabaana* can be used to reduce the pain or strong punishment because the speaker speaks in simple and moderate words.

In relation to the previous studies conducted by some researchers, this study did not find any study conducted which shows that instruments can be named euphemistically. So, this may be one of new input among the researchers and linguists.

4.5. Euphemisms Connected with Abstract/Intangible Things

The findings reveal that intangible things can also be referred by using euphemism in Haya speech community. This is shown through the word *enjara* means hunger.

Haya speakers can use word like *mutatiina ba bilaatwa*

which sounds like a joke than the use of the former one.

In relation to the previous studies conducted by some researchers, this study did not find any study conducted which shows that abstract things can be named euphemistically. So, this may be one of new input among the researchers and linguists.

4.6. Euphemisms Connected with Death

Death is one of the sensitive topics to discuss. In several societies discussing death demands the use of tactic to deliver message to people. This is supported by Hänggi, P. and Diederich, C. F. ([4], p. 280) who state that:

“...the use of instantiated euphemisms is grounded in the language users’ pragmatic knowledge and competence. Specifically, an appropriate reference to the sensitive topic of death depends on speakers’ knowledge of the “sociocultural setting”, the implied knowledge of culture-specific values, tacit norms, “emotional or attitudinal stance[s]” as well as the appropriateness of linguistic choices in obituary discourse”.

Likewise, Haya speakers use euphemisms when referring to death. *Orufu* is a noun used to refer to death. *Okufa* is a verb means to die. So, instead of using the word *okufa* means to die, words like *okutahya*, *okwiikya*, *okulugao* can be used to mean someone has died. The findings show that a word *okutahya* is euphemism referring to an elderly person who has died. Also, *okwiikya* is euphemisms that both used when referring to a person lived in miserable life before his/her death, and also can be used to refer to an elderly person who has died.

Furthermore, the findings reveal that the words *enyanga* and *ekaburi* are used when referring to the cemetery. But, these words are not used by their common names instead words like *amalaaro* or *ekituuro* are used in place of the former one.

The findings reveal that in almost all societies in the world, people use euphemisms when discuss about death topics. This is shown through the study conducted by Rakhmatova, M. M. [17]. In this study researcher used the sentence ‘We no longer have’ to mean ‘dead, or deceased’. Swahili speakers also use euphemisms when discussing the topics about death. This is revealed in the study done by Mary, N. ([11], p. 30) who provides two alternative words that can be used when someone wants to say ‘someone has died’. Sentences like *amepumzika* and *ametuaga* are used to mean ‘he/she has died, or deceased’. Yussuf, M. A. [19] is of the view that there are some euphemisms used to refer to death as well as cemetery. Researcher provides a word like *faradhi* which is a euphemism used in Swahili referring to death instead of saying *kifo* which sounds stronger. The researcher adds that sentence like *ametangulia mbele ya haki* is used to mean *amefariki* means he/she has died. The word *mavani* is used to mean graveyard instead of using common Swahili word *makaburini*.

The study conducted by Hänggi, P. and Diederich, C. F. ([4], p. 285) indicates that no surprise that euphemistic expressions occur in obituaries. Death notices apparently constitute a major source for euphemistic references to mortality given that the tabooed topic of death inevitably underlies the communicative situation of death notices and thus stimulates the need for euphemisms. Abdessamad, L. [1] supports the view by stating that, the use of euphemisms arises from language taboos, with “death” being the taboo word since ancient times. It is customary for individuals to avoid discussions surrounding death and view it as the ultimate misfortune. As a result, substitutes for the word “death” are commonly utilized in communication. The study by Pitt, M. B. et al. [14] revealed that although death was a frequent topic during family meetings about critically ill infants, the word death was rarely spoken. In an analysis of 33 clinician-family meetings that took place in a neonatal, pediatric, or pediatric cardiac intensive care unit setting, among the 406 identified references to death, die, death, dying, or stillborn were used only 8% of the time.

4.7. Euphemisms Connected with Sexing and Sex Organs

The findings expose that politeness is needed when referring to issues related to sexing and sex organs. This is universal since in other languages like Swahili, sex organs and sexing are not mentioned by their real names, instead the euphemisms are used. So, when referring to a man’s sex organ (penis), in Haya the common word used is *emboro*. Since this word seems to be awkward to be used in public among the Haya speech community, the speaker(s) may use one of the following words; *obushaija*, *ekyaataba* and *omuguma* in place of the former one. Likewise, *emana* is the common word used to refer to a woman’s sex organ (vagina). So, words like *obukazi*, *ekyaataba*, *kanyabwooya*, and *endanke* are used in place of the former one. In addition to that, in Haya speech community there are some general words used as euphemisms which are used when referring to penis or vagina in general. Words like *rugumisamaka*, *rugumisa makwatane*, and *enzarabantu* can be used instead of mentioning the sex organ by its name.

Also *okushweera* is a term used both to mean sexing and marring. But, in this context *okushweera* means sexing. Thus, in order to avoid the use of word *okushweera* in public, words like *okushaba* can be used when expressing the act of sexing and *okusiiyana* when referring to people engaging in sexing with partner who is not belongs to him or her.

Also, the findings of this study reveal that in the context of marriage as one of the socio-cultural topics, need the use of euphemisms when are discussed. *Okushweera* for example, is also a word used to express the act of marring. But euphemistically the word *okutahya* is used as euphemism of marring. Note, in the context of marriage, the word *okutahya* means to marry while in the context of death, *okutahya* is

used to refer to the death of an elderly person.

This finding relates to other study conducted by Yusuf, M. A. ([19], p. 26). The study dealt with the analysis of the use of euphemisms in Pemba dialect. Pemba is one of Swahili dialects spoken in Zanzibar, East Africa. The findings indicated that, marriage among the Pemba plays a big role as one of factors that influence speakers to use euphemisms when discussing the topic related to it. Examples of euphemisms provided by author that relate to marriage in Swahili are *kuchukua jiko*, *kuasi ukapera*, *kujitwika* and *kuchukua mzigo* all are used when referring to the act of marrying.

Using euphemisms when expressing sex organs among the Haya relates to other societies in Africa as well as in other countries away from Africa. This is revealed in the study by Rabab'ah, G., and Al-Qarni, A. M. ([15], p. 732) in their study about the comparison of euphemism strategies used in Saudi Arabic and English. According to their findings, in order to euphemize a tabooed word, a loan word is used. English, for example, borrowed the French "mot" to euphemize the female genital organ. This indicates that almost in all societies employ euphemisms when referring to issues related to sexing and sex organs. In African culture, also euphemisms are used when referring to sex and all issues related to sex and sexing.

The study by Khedir, A. A. ([9], p. 3) concurs with the findings of this study by presenting two Arabic terms that are used when referring to female sex organs. The first one is the word *harṭ* which means "fertile land" or tilth which refers to the place where a man should have sex in "the vagina", the second one is the word *fa'to* which means "come" which is used to refer to the act of sexual intercourse between a man and his wife.

In the study conducted by Mary, N. ([11], p. 24), about comparative use of euphemisms in Kamba and Swahili languages, the researcher presents two Kamba words which are *Katūmbūlū* and *mbaki* which are used as euphemisms referring to woman's sex organ (vagina), while words like *kijiti* and *shoka* in Swahili, *kijiti* means stick and *shoka* means an axe, are used euphemistically to refer to a man's sex organ (penis) (p. 28). Likewise, Yusuf, M. A. [19], p. 26) supports that sex organs in Swahili can be referred by using euphemism. Researcher provides the phrase like *kigozi manyonya* to mean vagina and *mtaimbo* to mean penis.

Jackova, M. ([5], p. 21) states that taboo words concerning sex are often used for swearing or abusing because of their dysphemistic nature.

Generally, expressing sex organs, sexing and all issues related to marriage, need the use of euphemisms in order to conform with the norms of the given society.

4.8. Euphemisms Connected with Food and Drinks

Eating and drinking as one of human needs were found to be one of topics need the use of euphemisms when are dis-

cussed. Every food and drink has got its common name, but some people tend to substitute by using other names depending on the given context or their reasons. A good example in Haya is *empunu*. This word is used to mean pig. Its carcass commonly is known as *enyamay'* *empunu* means pork. So, in order to hide or to speak in secret especially Muslims and other people who are prohibited by their religion to take it, may use words like *kyerunga* or *binwaanwa* to refer to pork.

Additionally, sometimes Haya speakers tend to hide or speak in euphemisms when referring to some drinks, especially those which are locally made and prohibited by laws especially in Tanzania, or in a certain religion. Words like *kaliinya*, *akarandalugo*, *akabazik'otulo*, *omuzinga*, *akato* etc. are used by Haya speakers to refer to traditional drink *kon-yagi* which is locally made and sold in cheap price. The reason of using these alternatives is that, the United Republic of Tanzania, and some religions prohibit the use of such kind of drink/alcohol. So, the consumers do not refer to it by its name, instead they use one of the given words to hide its identity.

Amaatanaama is a phrase used to refer to the alcohol in general. The word *kwaata* means to break or to expose and the word *naama* means secret. So, when someone consumes alcohol, exposes out his or her secrets in the public. That is why alcohol is referred to as *amaatanaama* means a thing that makes people to expose their secrets to the public after taking them.

Through the previous written literature, the researcher did not achieve to find any study conducted which shows that in a certain speech community people can use euphemisms when referring to some food and drinks. Undoubtedly, this study would provide new input in terms of euphemism use among the societies.

4.9. Euphemisms Connected with Body Functions

The waste products produced from the body of human being or other creatures were found to be one of the topics that need the use of euphemisms when are discussed in public. Obviously men differ from women in terms of their biological/physiological aspects. The findings reveal that *okuzira* is a common word used to mean menstruation period. Hence, when referring to a girl who gets her first menstruation, euphemistically words like *kuendek'omugongo*, *kukula*, and *kwat'obwaato* are used in place of the former one, since it sounds obdurate when is used in public. This finding relates to other studies conducted by different researchers. The study by Mary, N. [11] and Yusuf, M. A. [19], show that people use euphemisms when talking about menstruation period. This is revealed in the study of Mary, N. [11] about the use of euphemisms among the Kamba language in Kenya East Africa. The researcher presents Kamba word *matūkū make* as euphemism used to refer to menstruation period in Kamba lan-

guage. Likewise, Yusuf, M. A. ([19], p. 27) provided Swahili sentence *ana wageni* which means she is in menstruation period. The same applies in Arabic language. People especially women use euphemisms to talk about menstruation period. This fact is revealed by Khedir, A. A. ([9], p. 4) who said that “female speakers tend to use *xalahalemah* [aunt Halemah], *dawrah* [turn], and *isharahhamra* [red sign] to refer to “menstruation”.

In addition, *obwegimbe* is a euphemism word used to refer to a woman who bleeds after delivering (postpartum bleeding). Haya speakers use that word in order to serve someone's face. This finding also relates to ones found in Yusuf's study. The word *ujusi* is a Swahili word euphemistically used to refer to a woman who bleeds after delivering (Yusuf, M. A. [19], p. 27).

Furthermore, *omukojo* is a word used to mean urine. Euphemistically that word is known as *enkali*. Likewise, the act of urinating commonly is called *okukojora/ okunyaara*, but in order to conform with the given norms guiding Haya language, those words are not mostly spoken in public instead words like, *okwekoboora*, *kusheshekara*, *kweyamba*, *kweebera*, *kujun'omunyaruganda* are used to reduce the awkwardness of the former ones when are used in public.

Amazi is a word used to mean human feces or stool. The findings reveal that Haya do not mention that word by its name, instead words like *amanyeebwa* or *omwejuno* are used. Words like *amanyeebwa* and *omwejuno* are used to refer to human feces or stool. *Amasokorindo* is used to refer to the dung produced by birds like hen and chicken. *Obusha* is used to refer to dung produced by cattle whereas, *amaniini* is used to refer to dung produced by sheep and goat. The use of these alternative words when referring to *amazi* reduces the negative mental picture that can appeals to the hearer's sense.

Okunyia is a common word used when someone expresses the act of removing human feces/stool from the body. But the civilized and the person who conforms with the norms of Haya language, when is in that need can use words like *okwejuna*, *okweebera* and *okweyamba* as euphemism instead of the former one which sounds badly when it is used in public.

In additional to the waste products produced by human beings, animals and birds, the findings reveal that euphemisms are used when someone referring to a place where he/she wants to reserve those waste products. For example, word like *ekyoroni* is a common word used to mean toilet. But, euphemistically when someone wants to urinate or to remove feces from the body, can use words like *akeeku-bo/obweekubo* to mean the toilet. Additionally, *ekibungo* is a word used to refer to the place where feces produced by a child is kept. Haya speakers do not refer that place as *ekyooroni* instead *ekibungo* is used.

In some extent, these findings relate to some studies conducted by Mary, N. [11], Rakhmatova, M. M. [17], Yusuf, M. A. [19] and Xue, H. et al., [8]. Xue, H. et al., [8] state that, in English for example, when it comes to some physiological

needs, people will use a variety of euphemisms to express, such as “pee” for “piss” and “BM” for “bowel movement”. Furthermore, Rakhmatova, M. M. [17] states that in English for example, sentences like ‘*use the powder room and visit a room for little girls or boys*’ can be used by a person when s/he wants to go to toilet. *Kwenda msalani* is a Swahili sentence which found in Mary's study which means *to go to the toilet* (Mary, N. [11], p. 27). Likewise, the word *msalani* also used in the study by Yusuf, M. A. ([19], p. 28) which means toilet. On the other hand, these findings in some extent differ from the previous studies conducted by Mary, N. [11], Rakhmatova, M. M. [17], Yusuf, M. A. [19] and Xue, H. et al., [8]. In these studies, no any researcher indicated that euphemisms can be used when expressing dung produced by animals as well as birds. The findings of this study possibly have provided new knowledge in the existing literature.

This contention shows that, using of euphemisms when talking about waste products produced by human being, animals, birds and the places where are kept it is not only used in Haya community but also by other communities in the World as shown in this discussion.

4.10. Euphemisms Connected with Beliefs

The findings found that in Haya speech community, there are some people who are still preserving their traditional beliefs. For instance, there are some clans *enganda* which respect animals like dogs, cattle, rats and leopards that are connected to their ancestors. Thus, when referring to them do not use common names, instead they use euphemisms in order to show the respects to those animals which stand for their ancestors. For example, *embwa* is a common word used to refer to a *dog*. But the clan that believes dogs are connected to their ancestors, do not use the common name, instead the word *omusimba* is used as euphemism referring to *embwa*. Likewise, *empisi* is a word used to refer to a leopard. So, the word *omutundu* is used as euphemism of the former one.

The findings also reveal that *embeba* is a common word used to mean rat. Instead, *omukurwa* is used as euphemism referring to *embeba* (rat). Equally, *enkende* is a common word in Haya which is used to refer to monkey. In its place, *omuhyango* is used as euphemism of the former one. The motive behind using euphemisms when referring to these animals is that, African societies including Haya speech community still appreciating their traditions and ancestors. So, they believe that mentioning the names of these creatures by their names is to abuse their descendants and culture.

Apart from using euphemisms when referring to animals, the findings reveal that other creatures can be named by using euphemisms. For example, the word *ekinyira* is a Haya common word used to mean snail. But in order to show the respect to ancestors, some clans like *Abaiyuzi* tend to use the word *omwiyuzi* as euphemism of the term *ekinyira*.

The findings of this study also reveal that euphemisms are

also used when dealing with business issues. In Haya, business men or women and their customers tend to use euphemisms when selling and buying products. The word *omwoonyu* for example, is a commonly used to mean salt. This term is used by sellers and buyers during the day time. But at night the word *omushenye/omushenyi* is used in place of *omwoonyu*. The word *omushenye/omushenyi* in Haya means sand. It is used as euphemism of the former word because some business dealers believe that using the common name *omwoonyu* at night can distract the progress of their business.

In connection to the previous literature, there is no any study conducted by other researcher showing that beliefs can be the one of topics that need the use of euphemisms when discussing them. Therefore, this may be one of the new findings found in this study.

5. The Current Situation in Euphemism Use Among the Haya

As several language experts believe, euphemism use in daily interactions indicates that the language users know and comply with the norms of language use in the given speech community. This is supported by H äggi, P. and Diederich, C. F. ([4], p. 280), who state that “the use of instantiated euphemisms is grounded in the language users’ pragmatic knowledge and competence, specifically, an appropriate reference to the sensitive topics”. The findings of this study indicate that the use of euphemisms among the Haya is not much as it was used in some decades ago. One of the elders told the researcher that, apart from personal habits, moral decay is one of the factors for some new generations fail to use euphemisms when conversing. Haya experts identified some factors for why euphemisms are not much used nowadays among the Haya which commonly known as *akashweko/akafubo*.

Among other factors, economic factors have been identified to be one of the factors that make some new generation Haya speakers from not much using euphemisms. It was found that, in villages people are living in miserable life. So, due to the life hardship facing them, people do not select (diction) proper word to be used in the given context because their mind are not settled. Currently, it is obviously to hear the person speaking unpleasant word or words for instance, mentioning sex organ of man or woman by its name in public without using alternative words as shown in section 4.7.

Additionally, moral decay is also said to be one of the factors that influence youths and some people for not much using euphemisms in their conversation. This was revealed by many respondents who believe that, it is caused by the development of science and technology. The development of science and technology has influenced almost every youth in Haya speech community to have an access of interaction with other communities through the

use of internet by using phones, computers and other electronic devices. This has led to destruction of moral among the majority especially youths in Haya speech community. So, mostly young generations are exposed into culture that do not relate to their own including language use.

Also Psychological problems has been mentioned as one of the factors that influence youths and some people for not much using euphemisms in their conversation. It has been found that due to life challenges facing many people, majority are faced by psychological problems which sometimes can be caused by family instability, stress, unemployment, rent costs, to mention a few. Therefore, when they speak or make conversation either at home in front of their children and/ or in public, do not think that the use of offensive or unpleasant words in public is a shame and is contrary with proper language use.

Another factor identified by respondents is carelessness. It has found that majority especially new generation do not care about proper language use. These new generations do not consider the context in which he/she can use a certain word or words. The findings indicate that sometimes the person may be normal not drunkard or drug abuser, but can produce the word that even devil cannot speak.

6. Conclusion

Being conversant in a given language as well as complying with the norms of a given society among other factors, is determined through the use of euphemism when discussing sensitive topics like death, sex organs and the like. The use of euphemism among the Haya, indicates that the interlocutors conform with the norms of language use. Apart from obeying the rules of language use, euphemisms use plays a vital role including face saving, as well as showing that the language users are civilized. This decreases the conflicts among the people since mentioning the taboo words in public can rise misunderstanding among the people.

Abbreviations

DC	District Council
IQ	Intelligence Quotient

Author Contributions

Osmundus John Mberwa is the sole author. The author read and approved the final manuscript.

Funding

This work is not supported by any external funding.

Data Availability Statement

The data supporting the outcome of this research work has been reported in this manuscript.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

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Biography



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