

I Mean What I Mean, Not What I Say: A Case of Double Entendres in EkeGusii

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Words or phrasal constructions are indicative of the way given communities experience and perceive their environment and exploit it to create meaning. Meanings arise from creative cognitive processing of which polysemisation, which involves in some way mapping of conceptual blends or integration, is one of the means employed. This study investigates cases of double entendre, a form of polysemisation, in EkeGusii with the aim of accounting for the cognitive processes entailed in the conceptualization of the natal process (or the maternity cycle) of human beings using conceptual integration theory. Corpora for this study were elicited from two EkeGusii FM stations and analysed based on the cognitive linguistic theory of Conceptual Blending. The information gathered in this study could enrich EkeGusii semantics and understanding of the conceptual component of the speakers of the language in order to make a contribution to the teaching of the language and its maintenance.

Keywords: *Concepts, Polysemy, Double entendre, Conceptual blending, Cognitive Linguistics*

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1. Introduction

Meaning is without dispute construed as the most important aspect in the communication process. There is no one agreed way of defining meaning in the disciplines of linguistics, cognitive psychology and philosophy which are interested in linguistic meaning. In this paper we assume a cognitivist approach to meaning that holds that it is a form of mental representation, though not in the Fodorian sense as being the language of thought (see Fodor, 1975) but as a form of cognitive conceptual representation. Ortega (1992) as cited in Miyanda (2007) states that each language community gives a mental representation to any terms it uses. Interlocutors in their usage of language infer a particular mental representation. However, inferred representation does not become the meaning of given construction aprioristically but depends on the 'cognitive prompts' that are activated by the communicative situation. One not only needs to clearly understand where, how and when to use the lexemes and in which contexts at the conscious level, but also what the unconscious access to memory which relies on what has been learnt through experience avails to the online creation and processing of meaning.

EkeGusii has various constructions that speakers use to enrich conversation which rely on blends. Polysemous constructions involve purposeful coding and literal meaning and non-literal meaning, that is, they are ambiguated in order to increase conversational prestige in mature discourse. Conceptual integration theory (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002) can be a useful tool in explaining how meaning is constructed in double entendre constructions. The study reported in this paper investigated double entendres in EkeGusii with a focus on the expressions that refer to the natal process of human beings, a rich domain in meaning construction which has so far not received any attention in the study of cognitive processing of language.

2. Literature Review on Double Entendre as Polysemy

Polysemy has been defined in different ways by different scholars

depending on the theoretical bases assumed. It is sometimes referred to as the ability of a linguistic sign or component to bear more than one meaning in a particular context (Hurford and Heasley (1983, p.123); Taylor (1989, p.99); Mojela (1991, p.31); Crystal (1991, p.267); Khan (2013, p.178)). Polysemy has also been defined as a systematic relation of meanings (Lakoff 1987, p.316; Johnson 1987, p.193). In polysemy, we are mainly concerned with how multiple meanings are related in a systematic and natural way and not how constructions elicit multiple meanings. Khan (2013) gives different types of polysemy, they include: Conronymic polysemy, antanaclasis, unidirectional polysemy, janus parallelism, double polysemy, and bilingual polysemy. Given the fact that the literature on Polysemy is too expansive for one to review much of it in this paper but one can refer to the work Cuycens and Zawada (2001) to get an overview of the kind of questions addressed in Cognitive Linguistics.

Double entendre is a type of polysemy in which an idiom or a figure of speech is understood in two ways (ambiguous) (cf. Kiddon & Brun, 2011). The first is straightforward, default-like, and not the primary meaning intended by the user, whereas the second is the intended meaning. Often double entendres serve as euphemisms that are meant to veil the erotic aspect of discourse. Kiddon and Brun (2011) who are more concerned in how to identify double entendres point out that they are quite complex, though they do not show how, and that profound semantic and cultural knowledge is required to isolate them in discourse.

With regard to polysemy and homonymy, Finnegan (2004, p.188) contends that polysemy and homonymy arise partly from the fact that language users often use words metaphorically. Coulson (2001 p. 200) posits that metaphor and analogy are often motivated by rhetorical goals such as the need to suggest correct inferences, elicit affective responses, or elicit a construal that is appropriately motivating. A traditional notion of metaphor sees it as an extension in the use of a word beyond its primary sense to describe referents that bear similarities to the word's primary referent. In cognitive linguistics, it is assumed that concepts are metaphorical by nature. Moreover, metaphor is typically viewed as characteristic of language alone, a matter of words rather than thought or action. Our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally

metaphorical in nature. Metaphors are understood as transfers, where properties from one concept are transferred to another, and in this way, it is how they 'allow us to understand one domain of experience (target) in terms of another (source)' (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 135). The direct study of the meanings of the metaphor should not only focus on the consciously accessed meaning but also the way it is partially projected during the compositional process from given lexemes. In some cases, one can recover the compositional aspects of a given phrase that is considered to be non-compositional such as 'kick the bucket' by considering how the particular lexemes are related to death. There is a possibility that kicking could be got from a distinct domain like the slaughtering process, in which the animal being slaughtered kicks and the bucket in the context of fetching water is lowered into the well as a person is during burial. This could help one to construe the unconscious cognitive associations that are coded into a phrase. This kind of interpretive analysis of blends can be assumed to be too powerful, unless it takes into account other details like the time this phrase came into use. If it predates the time burials were not carried out by lowering bodies into graves, then the analysis will not be a realistic account of the way the mind works to create new meanings. This study focuses on establishing whether EkeGusii speakers use language metaphorically in their descriptions and conversations on the natal processes. This can be fully understood by considering how emergent meanings rely to some extent the process of conceptual blending.

3. Cognitive Approach to Double Entendres

This study was informed by the Conceptual Blending Theory (CBT) initiated by Fauconier and Turner (2002). It is part of a major framework concerning cognition and language.

3.1 Conceptual blending

CBT explains the integration of knowledge coming from distinct sources onto a single, independent and coherent unit, the blend. Through CBT, one makes meaning from differing concepts that superficially have no default

connection. The basic units of cognitive organization in this theory are the mental spaces which are four namely: two input spaces, a generic and a blended space. The spaces contain different information on the same elements but each space contains a representation that is logically organized (Coulson & Oakley, 2002). The input spaces give rise to selective projection and they are linked by means of a generic space. This space provides information that is abstract enough to be common to both the inputs. It facilitates the identification of counterparts in the input spaces by serving as a “template” for shared structure. The blended space on the other hand, contains matched information from the input spaces as well as new pieces of information (emergent structure) that is not contained in either of the inputs.

Conceptual blending is a set of non-compositional processes in which the imaginative capacities of meaning construction are invoked to produce emergent structure (Fauconnier & Turner, 1998). In conceptual blending, frames from established domains (known as inputs) are combined to yield a hybrid frame (a blend or blended model) comprised of structure from each of the inputs, as well as a unique structure of its own (Coulson, 2001, p.115). Metaphors (and by extension double entendres) are seen as avenues on which conceptual blending can be viewed. Cognitive semanticists such as Lakoff and Johnson (1980), Sweetser (1990), and Turner (1991) have in the recent past argued that metaphor is, in fact, a pervasive phenomenon in everyday language and, moreover, that it represents the output of a cognitive process by which we understand one domain in terms of another.

Cognitive linguists define metaphor as reference to one domain (known as the target, theme, or base domain) with vocabulary more commonly associated with another domain (known as the source domain, phoros, or vehicle). On this construal, metaphoric language is the manifestation of conceptual structure organized by a cross-domain mapping: a systematic set of correspondence between the source and target that result from mapping frames or cognitive models across domains. The transfer of vocabulary from the source domain to the target domain is not arbitrary, but seems to maintain some of the logic of the source domain. It is evident that the correspondence between elements and relations in the domains of a metaphor is systematic rather than random.

Research on cognitive linguistics and especially on metaphor and analogy has shown how conceptual structure in the source domain influences the development and construal of the target domain (see, e.g., Gentner (1983, 1989); Gick & Holyoak (1980, 1983); Holland, Holyoak, Nisbett, & Thagard, (1986); Lakoff & Johnson (1980); Lakoff (1987)). On such accounts mapping involves, first, noticing a shared system of relations that hold in both the source and target domains, and, second, placing objects from the two domains into correspondence based on common roles in the shared relational structure. In this way, speakers can begin with a partial mapping of components that play similar roles and later extend the mapping to import novel inferences from the source domain to the target. Indeed, analogical and metaphorical mapping have been characterized as importing schemas from a well-understood, concrete source domain in order to structure an abstract and less understood target.

Lakoff and Johnson (1980, p. 172) argue that the source domain in a metaphor is properly understood as an input to the conceptual integration network. So, while blending processes certainly can and frequently do capitalize on causal and relational structure in the source domain, they need not. Conceptual integration/ blending reveals how source domain models are often recruited and transformed by blending in order to evoke culturally shared conceptualizations of the target domain known as cultural models.

3.2 Blending Processes

According to Coulson (2001, pp. 122 – 123) blending involves three processes - composition, completion, and elaboration - each of which provides for the possibility of emergent structure. Composition involves attributing a relation from one space to an element or elements from the other input spaces. It actually arises from contextual accommodation of a predicate from one domain to apply to elements from a different domain; for example, attributing a relation of carrying a burden to that of being pregnant.

The second process in conceptual blending is completion. Completion occurs when structures projected from the inputs match information in long term memory. For example, when one talks of pregnancy as a burden or

load that is being carried, carrying a load could be short term but the long term memory could infer pregnancy.

Completion is closely related to elaboration, a process that involves performance and/or mental simulation of the event in the blend and is constrained by the logic (or illogic) of the blended domain itself. For example, one might employ elaboration to understand the concept of carrying a load in respect to being pregnant. Formally, elaboration involves the same sort of conceptual integration as completion, evoking novel structure in the blend in response to the coalescence of information.

3.3 Blending and Integration Networks

The activation of novel structure can either be done by mental simulation or rely extensively on interaction with the environment as construed with existent blended models. For example, in referring to pregnancy as carrying a load, elaboration might proceed as a series of completions that result from consistently integrating concepts from the domain of carrying a load with that of one being pregnant. It is assumed that individuals tend to elaborate the concepts differently according to their cultural orientations and through creative mental simulation. Thus, elaboration, is more of a creative process than completion, and is regarded as being potentially cognitively taxing due to the demands of mental simulation.

Fauconnier and Turner (1998) argue that it is pertinent to recruit the processes of blending to enable accounting of the influence of both the source and target domains. In this respect, the meaning of metaphoric utterances can be represented in a conceptual integration network. In such a network, the generic space represents abstract commonalities in the other spaces, and the blended space inherits structure from its inputs, and contains an emergent structure of its own. In CBT, the nature and extent of accommodation of the source domain in a metaphor are related to the conceptual integration network in which the mapping occurs: one-sided, symmetric two-sided and asymmetric two-sided networks.

The figure below is a basic diagram that can be used to explain how CBT works:

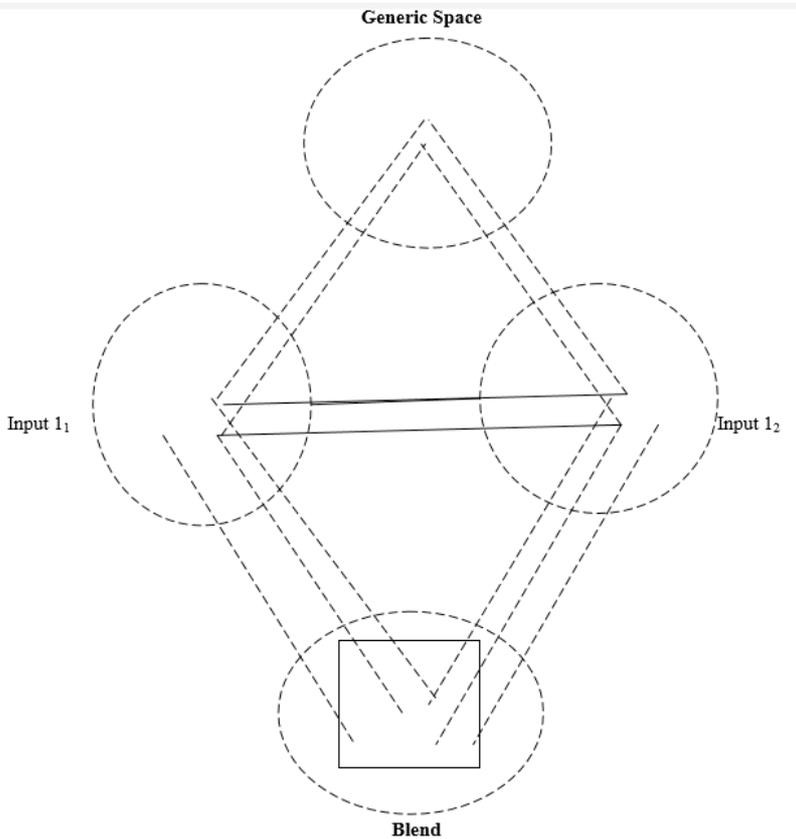


Figure 1. Mental Spaces (Adapted from Fauconnier, 2002)

Figure 1 shows how blending occurs. As Fauconnier and Turner (2002:47) contend, the main aspects of blending are:

- Conceptual integration network. Blends arise in networks of mental spaces. The networks evince that there are four mental spaces: the two inputs, the generic space, and the blend.
- Matching and counterpart connections. In conceptual integration, there is partial matching between input spaces. The solid lines in the Figure 1 represent counterpart connections produced by

matching. Such counterpart connections are of many kinds: connections between frames and roles in frames; connections of identity, transformation or representation; analogical and metaphoric connections, and, more generally, “vital relations”. When matches are created between two spaces, we say that there is a cross-space mapping between them.

- **Generic space.** At any moment in the construction of the network, the structure that inputs seem to share is captured in a generic space, which, in turn, maps onto each of the inputs. A given element in the generic space maps onto paired counterparts in the two input spaces.

In blending, structure from two input mental spaces is projected to a new space, the blend. Generic spaces and blended spaces are related in that blends do not only contain generic structure captured in the generic space but also contain a more specific structure. Blends can also contain a structure that is impossible for the inputs. An emergent structure arises in the blend that is not copied directly from any input. It is generated in three ways: through composition of projections from the inputs, completion based on independently recruited frames and scenarios, and elaboration (“running the blend”) cf Coulson (2001, pp. 122 – 123).

3.4 Conceptual Metaphor Theory Vs Conceptual Blending Theory

Coulson (2001:178) explicates the difference between conceptual blending theory and the theory of conceptual metaphor on which it builds. He argues that in conceptual metaphor theory, metaphors are seen as instantiations of entrenched mappings between cognitive domains, while in blending, the meaning of a metaphor is constructed online in conceptual integration networks. The two-space explanation is extremely useful in explicating commonalities in mappings over a wide range of entrenched metaphorical expressions. However, to account for the implications of particular metaphoric utterances, it is frequently necessary to point to blending in conceptual integration networks. Further, Coulson argues that the other important difference between conceptual metaphor theory and blending

concerns the direction of projections. Because most cognitive scientists have taken problem solving as the paradigmatic case of cross-domain mapping, there has been an undue emphasis on examples in which we have a better understanding of one domain than another. This, in turn, has led to a focus on how inference schemas from the source are exploited in the target domain.

It is evident that the ability to link counterparts across disparate domains based on shared relational structure is a basic human ability. Moreover, the productive character of the integration that occurs in blending is a similarly basic ability that we actively exploit to suit our needs. In many cases, especially humorous ones, people set up blends where the rhetorical goal is to project inferences from the blend to the input that would traditionally be construed as the source domain.

This study aims at finding out the main reasons as to why EkeGusii speakers would use metaphor and analogy in their descriptions and conversations of the natal processes with the assumption that they are dependent on conceptual blending. The study also delves to analyse how recruitment of the blending processes enable accounting of the influence of both the source and target domains. This is in line with Fauconnier and Turner (1998) who argue that the meaning of metaphoric utterances can be represented in a conceptual integration network. The study also benefits from Coulson & Oakley's assertions on how the input spaces give rise to selective projection and how they are linked by means of a generic space (Coulson & Oakley, 2002).

4. Methodology

Corpora for this study were elicited from discussions obtained from two EkeGusii radio stations namely Minto FM and Egesa FM. Minto FM is a subsidiary station of the state-owned Kenya Broadcasting Co-operation whereas Egesa FM is a subsidiary station of a privately-owned Royal Media Services. These two radio stations are based in Kenya and they do their broadcasts in EkeGusii, a Bantu language spoken in south western part of Kenya. EkeGusii is used as a first language by approximately three million speakers in Kisii and Nyamira counties. Apart from their original home

land, a fairly colossal number of AbaGusii people have also settled in other places in Kenya namely Molo, Kitale, Nakuru among others.

Being qualitative in nature, this study adopted a descriptive design. The sample was arrived at through purposive sampling. Interviews were instrumental in determining inferred meaning from the transcribed double entendres. Two radio programmes from the two FM stations were recorded over a period of three months. The programmes were '*Rimore*'; from Egesa FM (running every Friday between 9 pm and 12 pm) and '*Ogojera kwa abangina*' from Minto FM (running every Thursday from 9:30 pm to 10:30 pm); these were discursive programmes mostly discussing social issues and marital life. The entire programmes were recorded and later transcriptions were done with particular focus on words and phrasal constructions that presented or inferred the natal processes among human beings. Identification of the particular phrasal constructions to be analysed was done using the researchers' intuition. The transcribed data was later presented to four native speakers for grammaticality judgement. A checklist was provided to the grammaticality judges to help in identification of the native constructions and for possible meanings elicited by the constructions.

The data was analysed using CBT which has been introduced in section (3.0) above. Only expressions with double entendres were analysed. The study sought answers to the following questions: What forms the basis of the double entendres? Are there factors that determine proper understanding of the polysemous phrase? How do polysemous constructions elicit meanings? Who are the main users of double entendres? Are there specific reasons for their use and/or are there factors determining the use of double entendres in EkeGusii?

5. Analysis of EkeGusii Double Entendres

This section discusses the process of conceptualization of the EkeGusii phrasal constructions referring to the gestation and the post-natal period of human beings. In EkeGusii pregnancy is sometimes referred to by terms that relate to the act of nursing a child who has already been born. The conceptualised blends anticipate postnatal aspects in a number of cases.

Maternity is construed in a number of ways depending on the

circumstances surrounding the act of conception. Human society has a number of cultural normative attitudes associated with the manner that one gets to be in the maternity state, it is glorified to some extent if got in the circumstances that are prescribed by norms such as in marriage, or at the right age and discouraged in circumstances outside the prescribed norm. Much anxiety and hope is elicited by the maternal state. In scientific literature examining the effects of pregnancy on the gravid (the pregnant individual), it has been noted that there are considerable cognitive changes (see Parsons et. al, 2004). Hence the three domains are freely merged in words that allude directly or indirectly to the final result of pregnancy as being not guaranteed, or involving some degree of risk as will be seen in most examples in section (5.1) below.

5.1 Categorization of Double Entendres in EkeGusii

The categorization of double entendres in this paper is informed by current developments in cognitive approaches to polysemy which gravitate between a view that categories are either conservative or flexible by nature. Double entendres exploit polysemy and ambiguity as per Geeraerts (1985) to 'increase the semantic, cognitive and maybe even the neuropsychological bonds between meanings and concepts'. Geeraerts posits that the structure of categories should be as 'dense as possible and as flexible as possible so as to be conceptually efficient' as opposed to the view posited by Fauconier & Turner (2003: 58) that creative and novel aspect of linguistic structure 'depend on a background of firmly anchored and mastered mental structures. Human culture and human thought are fundamentally conservative'. The cognitive approach to categorization of forms assumed in this section is informed by the particular concepts that form the basis of a given construction's meaning and thus is not driven by assuming a rigid perspective as the basis of categorization but allows for any of the possibilities to be determined empirically.

The conservative approach assumes that blends are a product of conceptual arrays that present themselves in available structured frames that are characteristic of the speaker's capacity for complex conceptual blending which involve compressions and decompressions. The blends span between

double-scope integration, which is assumed to be prevalent in discourse as per Fauconier and Turner (2003), as opposed to single scope blends.

a) Pregnancy as carrying load/luggage

EkeGusii speakers conceptualize pregnancy as a load. The domain of bearing loads is projected to the domain of pre-partum period by use of metaphorical analogies that are related to a load and associated attributes like heaviness, points of carriage and the effects such as getting tired. The examples, 1-4 (presented below), involve the load frame to create phrases and morphological combinations that are used to refer to pregnancy.

(1) Okoimokia omosigo

Construction	Default meaning	Extended meaning
<i>Okoimokia omosigo</i>	To take up a load	To be expectant

A load has weight. One has to suffer the pain of carrying it depending on how heavy it is; they have to endure the weight. Mark that there is a difference between *okobogoria omosigo* (*to carry a load*) and *okoimokia omosigo* (*to take up a load*). The latter insinuates that the carrier of the load picks it by themselves while the former may imply that the carrier could have been burdened by someone else. In this example it is assumed that the carrier of the load does it out of their free will. By extension, the state of being pregnant is seen as a choice by the one who is in the state.

Pregnancy as carrying on one's back.

In EkeGusii pregnancy is also conceptualised as carrying on one's back. This is presented in 2 below:

(2) Okobereka

Construction	Default meaning	Extended meaning
<i>Okobereka</i>	To carry on one's back	To be expectant

Though in EkeGusii the aspect of carrying on one's back is often used in reference to plants e.g. maize and bananas, it is at times used to refer to pregnancy in human beings. The construction *okobereka* tends to show how the natal process and the dangers involved are assumed and focus is put on the ultimate goal of the pregnancy and the taking care of the born child.

Pregnancy as being heavy

The morph {-rito} 'heavy' is prototypically used as an adjective in the EkeGusii language to refer to something heavy, for example *ekerito*_{Adj} (something heavy). The basic term for referring to pregnancy is *oborito*_N.

(3) *Okoba morito* <*ogotwara oborito*>

Construction	Default meaning	Extended meaning
<i>Okoba morito</i>	To be heavy	To be expectant

A pregnant woman is seen as being heavy as a result of the pregnancy she is carrying in her womb.

Pregnancy as getting /being tired

(4) *Okorosa*

Construction	Default meaning	Extended meaning
<i>Okorosa</i>	To get tired	To be expectant

One gets tired if they are carrying a load or performing some weighty task. A pregnant woman is considered to be tired due to the load that she is carrying. The burden is heavy hence one is likely to get tired. This study found out that 'okorosa' is mainly used especially in reference to the state of a pregnant woman especially when she is about to deliver. Being tired is also associated with the complications that come with pregnancy; such complications it is assumed do tire the pregnant woman.

The conceptualisations presented above in examples 1 - 4 can be illustrated using the figure below:

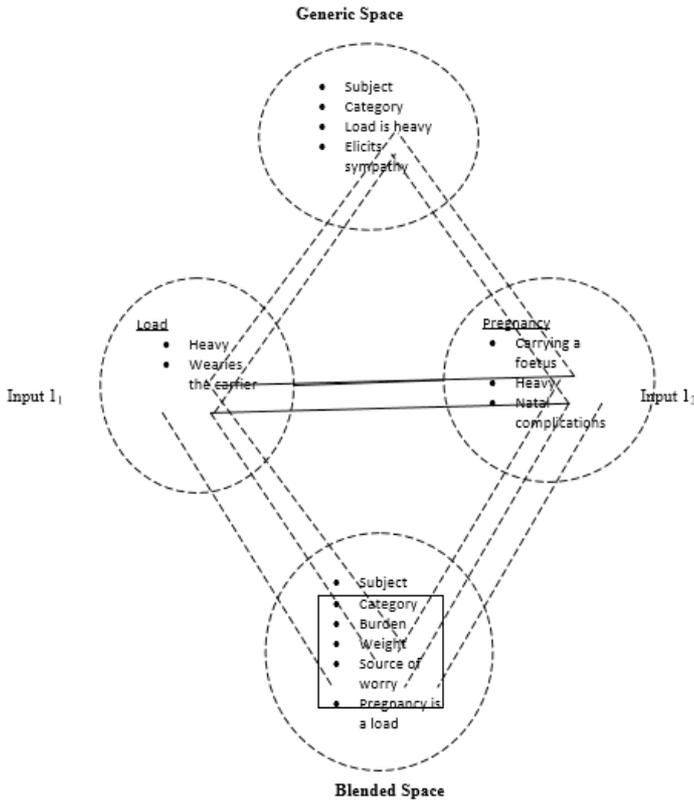


Figure 2. Mental Spaces for Pregnancy as Bearing a Burden

Figure 2 above illustrates the emergence of a blend in which pregnancy is conceptualised as a load or burden. This blend emerges as a result of the processes of composition, completion and elaboration presented below.

Composition

There is specific projection of the carrying frame in both the carrying of the load and the state of being pregnant. Loads are assumed to be heavy. They weary the carriers, and people tend to sympathise with those carrying heavy loads since they are seen to be suffering. The mental spaces that are exploited in this frame are

those of the pre-partum maternity state and the carriage of loads which do not entail any conflict, the resemblances projected to the emergent meaning in the blend are similar, hence the lexemes like *'okoimokia oborito'*, *'okoba morito'* involve double-scope organizing frame in which the process of carrying weight is the source.

Completion

Pregnancy is construed as a load and is dependent on the interlocutors' encyclopaedic knowledge of the process. Among the AbaGusii, this entails things like bearing something either on the head or the back, the understanding that it has some considerable amount of mass and causes fatigue. One has to carry the load for some period of time before delivering. The expression *'okorosa'* (to be tired) as is in construction **4** mainly is indicative of the aspect of getting tired that is as a result of carrying the load.

Elaboration

Pregnancy is a load that one cannot be helped carry. An expectant woman will always be seen to suffer the pain of carrying the load until she delivers. In constructions **1**, **2**, **3** and **4**, there is witnessed compression of the vital relation of analogy. The mental simulation that emerges here presents a comparison in which the state of being pregnant is likened to that of one carrying a load.

The constructions **1**, **2**, **3** and **4** elicit implications of weight and thus infer to the 'load' of pregnancy one carries in their expectancy. In construction **4**, the vital relation of time is vividly brought out; the carrier of the load (the expectant woman) becomes more wearied as they move nearer their destination (parturition). Compression of time is also evinced in **2** where the pregnancy itself is not considered but the borne child is seen as being carried on the back. Construction **2** also evinces compression of the vital relation intentionality. It is hoped that the expectant woman is already with child and that they are already carrying the baby on their back. This finding agrees with Coulson (2001); it assumes that the use of the double entendre 'to

carry a load' achieves to euphemise 'pregnancy' which could seem impolite if it were to be salient in EkeGusii discourse.

b) Pregnancy as climbing a tree

EkeGusii speakers use the construction climbing a tree or being up on a tree to refer to the state of pregnancy.

(5) Okorina omote

Construction	Literal meaning	Intended meaning
<i>Okorina omote</i>	To climb a tree	To be expectant

(6) Okoba omote igoro

Construction	Literal meaning	Intended meaning
<i>Okoba omote igoro</i>	To be up on a tree	To be expectant

There could be many reasons for one to climb up a tree. One of such reasons could be to get fruits from it. The act of climbing a tree is dangerous because one can fall and get hurt. A pregnant woman is seen as climbing up a tree and the fruit she expects from the tree is a baby. There, however, are challenges she might face as she climbs up the tree. Similarly, a pregnant woman, it is feared, may get complications during the pregnancy some of which may be fatal but if she overcomes such complications she will have the joy having a baby.

c) Pregnancy as breaking one's limb

This study also found out that a pregnant woman is referred to as one who has broken a limb.

(7) Okobuneka okogoro

Construction	Default meaning	Extended meaning
<i>Okobuneka okogoro</i>	To break one's limb	To be expectant

This construction is used to refer to the state of a woman getting pregnant for the first time. It is assumed that before a woman gets pregnant she is jumpy and is likely to get married wherever she chooses. However, after she has got pregnant she gets it difficult to ‘move around’ in the sense that she may not readily get married at least for the time she is pregnant.

The blends of pregnancy as climbing a tree (5 & 6) and breaking one’s limb (7) are illustrated in figures 3 and 4 below:

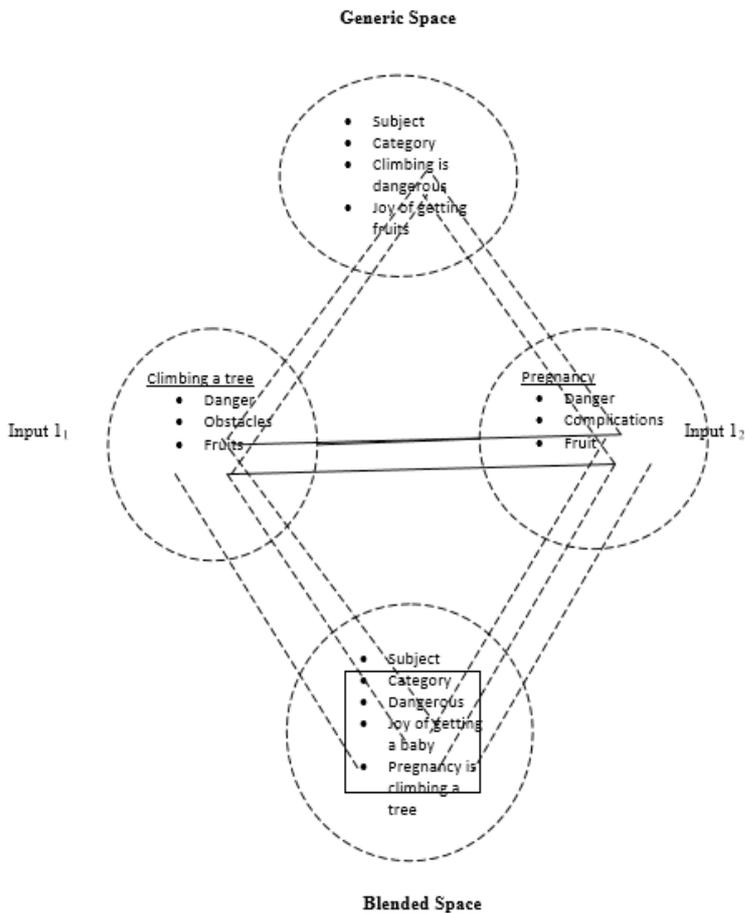


Figure 3. Mental Spaces for Pregnancy as Climbing a Tree

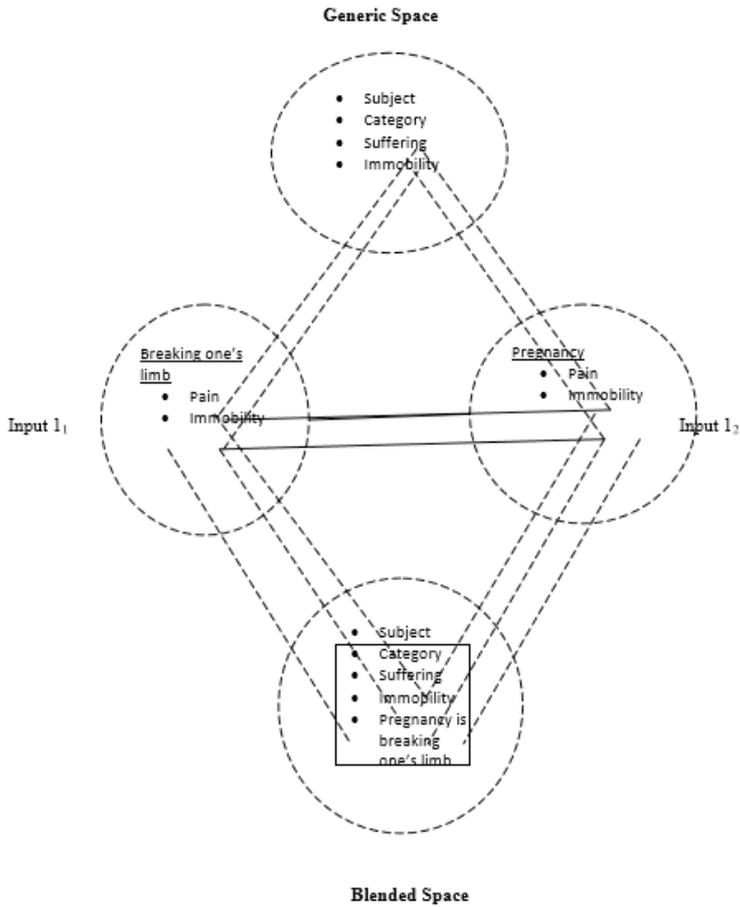


Figure 4. Pregnancy as Breaking a Limb

Pregnancy is conceptualised as climbing a tree (5&6) and also as breaking one’s limb (7) as a result of the blending processes presented below:

Composition

Climbing a tree and being up on the tree is construed as being good and dangerous at the same time. It is good because one will profit by getting fruits from the tree. It is also dangerous as it is felt that if by accident one falls, they will hurt themselves.

Completion

Being expectant is likened to climbing a tree or being up on a tree. It is regarded as being good and dangerous at the same time. One may deliver a baby, this is likened to getting fruits, and it is dangerous because if any bad thing happens then the pregnancy may be lost (miscarriage) or the bearer may lose her life.

Elaboration

Pregnancy is a dangerous state. It is a state in which there are complications e.g. hormonal imbalances and others. If one succumbs to the effects of such complications then it is a loss. However, if one overcomes, she will enjoy the fruits of getting a baby. Pregnancy thus is likened to climbing a tree or being up the tree as may be indicated in constructions **5** and **6**. Construction **7** shows how pregnancy is likened to breaking one's limb. The breaking of a limb could be taken to imply the hurting one could suffer when they fall from the tree. In this regard the breaking of one's limb signifies the immobility a pregnant woman suffers and the restrictions she has to live by as she nurtures her pregnancy.

Constructions **5** and **6** mirror the compression of the vital relation of change. The state of the expectant woman is seen to change from that of one being in a stable state to that of being in an unstable state – up a tree. Construction **7** also mirrors compression of the vital relation of change; a normal woman who is not hurt to that of one who has broken a limb and thus unable to move freely due to her condition. Constructions **5** and **6** are also seen to evince the compression of the vital relation of intentionality. The climber of the tree and the one up the tree anticipate fruits from the tree. Similarly, the expectant woman is anticipating a baby which is likened to a fruit.

The Constructions **5** through **7** are evident of the way double entendre arises due to the metaphorical use of language (cf Finnegan (2004). The blending processes for constructions **5**, **6** and **7** (see figures 3 and 4) also agree with postulations by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), Sweetser (1990), and Turner (1991) that metaphor represents the output of a cognitive process by

which we understand one domain in terms of another. In constructions **5** and **6** being expectant is understood as climbing a tree or being up on a tree where as in construction **7** it is understood as breaking one’s limb.

d) Pregnancy as self-inflicted/Pregnancy as putting one’s self in a fix

“*Okwebwaterania*” in construction (**8**) below is a verbal stem derived from the complex stem which indicates the reflexive act of squeezing oneself in order to relieve oneself of something in some form of swelling as one does to get rid of putrescence from some kind of boil. The blend is created by a word play of getting stuck in some narrow pass and also the act of holding something together and squeezing it till it bulges. If you held together your sides and squeezed, one can create an impression of being pregnant. The comical twist on the word is that you are the one who does it to yourself. The blend is a product of native humour on the act of being ridiculously “ballooned up” which is likened to being fooled to getting yourself in a fix.

(8) *Okwebwaterania*

Construction	Default meaning	Extended meaning
<i>Okwebwaterania</i>	To put one’s self in a fix	To be expectant

When someone puts themselves in a fix they should not blame themselves. An expectant woman is seen have been the cause of her state. She therefore is supposed to bear whatever befalls her in the pregnancy. Figure 5 below illustrates how the blend in example 8 above is constructed.

The blend pregnancy as self-inflicted/fixing (illustrated in figure 5 below) is as a result of the processes of composition, completion and elaboration that are presented below:

Composition

One may put themselves in a fix and may end up suffering trouble they have inflicted on themselves. A pregnant woman is seen to have contributed to her state and therefore suffers a result of her own doing.

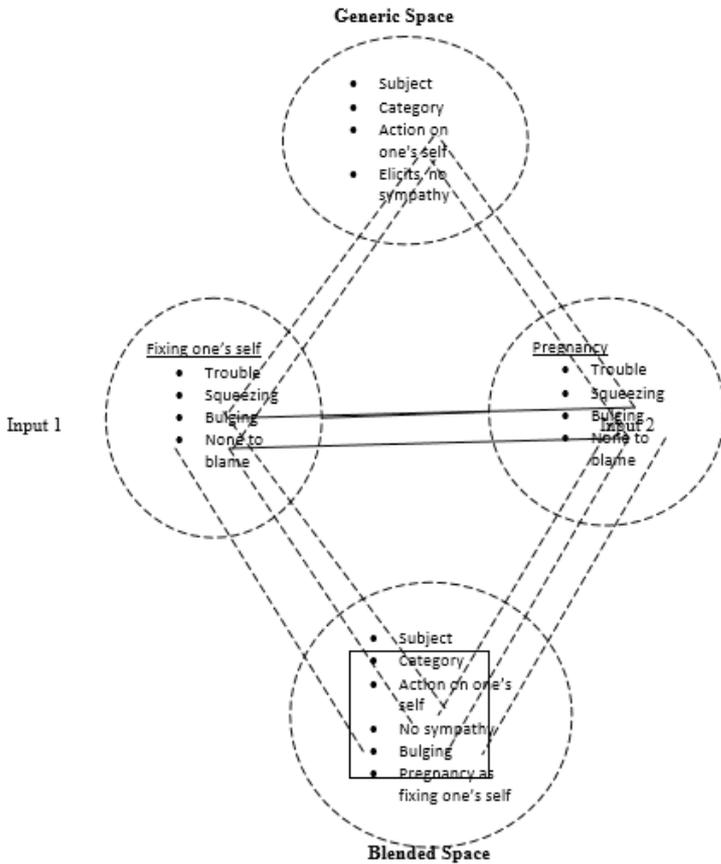


Figure 5. Mental Spaces for “Pregnancy as Self-fixing”

Completion

The expectant woman is similar to someone who is in a fix or in a bad state. They are not free; they are seen to be suffering. Their bodies are seen to be ‘held’ in bad states and they need help to release themselves from the states. One who puts themselves in a fix expects no sympathy. They are in a state of instability and torture. This is also similar to the state of one being expectant.

Elaboration

Being pregnant is seen as being self-inflicted. The expectant woman is seen to have contributed to her state.

In construction **8** there is compression of the vital relation of cause and effect (see: Fauconnier & Turner, 2002:96) the pregnant woman is seen to have fixed herself in the pregnancy and therefore suffers the effects of her own doing. It is felt that whatever she goes through is her pregnancy should not be blamed on anyone else apart from her very self.

Double entendre for Miscarrying**a) Miscarrying as falling:**

Miscarrying is conceptualised as falling of a load that one could be carrying. This is illustrated in construction **9**. The phrase, *ogochia inse* ‘to go down’ can be read as going down by reducing of weight and to fall down in equal sense. The double entendre in this case arises from the ambiguity that arises from the predicate.

(9) *Oborito bwachire inse*

Construction	Default meaning	Extended meaning
<i>Oborito bwachire inse</i>	The heaviness has fallen	Miscarrying

In examples 1 – 4 pregnancy was conceptualised as a load. This being the case, when one miscarries, it is deemed that the load has fallen (example **9**). This conceptualisation of miscarrying as the falling of a load is presented in figure 6 presented below:

The blend miscarrying as falling of a load is constructed through the blending processes discussed below:

Composition

Falling of a load results to losses as the load would be spoilt. Similarly, when one miscarries, they suffer loss of the expected baby.

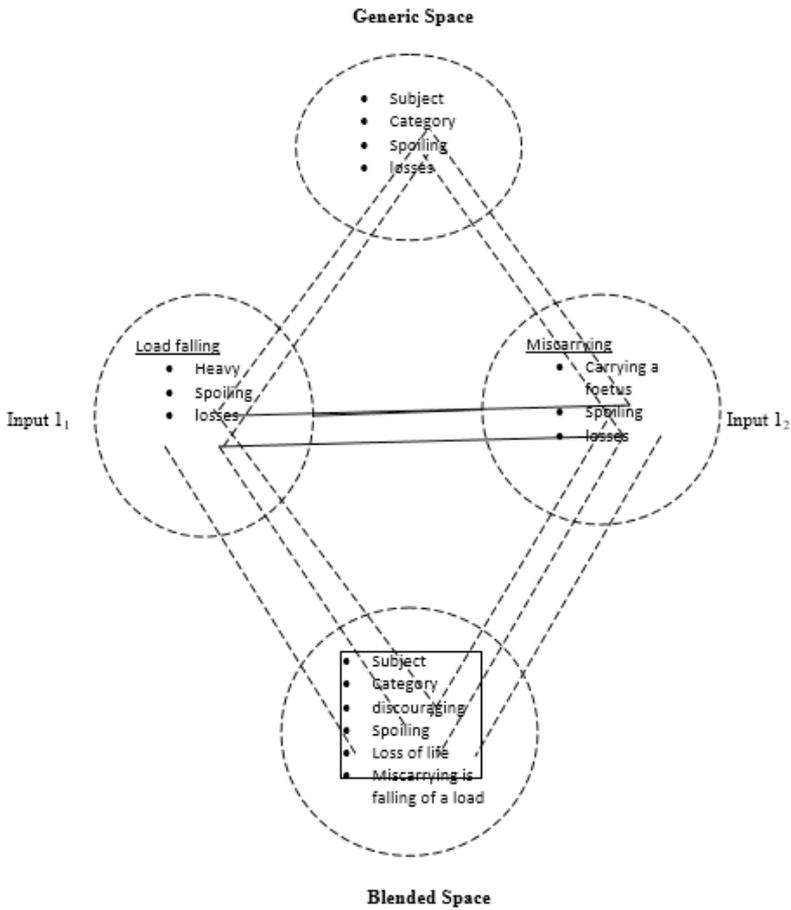


Figure 6. Network on Miscarriage as Offloading

Completion

A carried load is assumed to have value and has to be taken care of in order not to be spoilt. If such a load falls, losses are realised. Children have a lot of value attached to them and if one loses a child, it is seen to be a very big loss.

Elaboration

Miscarrying is likened to the falling of an invaluable load. In construction 9 the vital relation of analogy is compressed. The load is analogous to the foetus. With falling, both the load and the foetus get spoilt and losses are suffered. The similarity relation is also evident in this construction. The load is likened to the foetus in the sense that each has value to the bearer and their falling results to suffering of the losses by the bearers.

Double Entendres on Giving Birth

The actual giving of birth is a subject of a number of double entendres which can only be interpreted by extending the sense of activities which occur in the post-partum period such as suckling, carrying of the baby in any manner, and return to normal body state. Such references are considered metaphorical in a sense in that they transfer terms used to refer to the post-partum events to the actual giving birth, this renders the idea of accessing the mental spaces of both periods to comprehend how the meaning is constructed necessary.

a) Giving birth as Lactating/Suckling

The sense of conceiving and the actual process of suckling and, in modern contexts, of giving the child the bottle are all conflated in this term. It is applied to the condition right from the point the signs of being in the condition of being pregnant are detected.

(10) *Okogonkia*

Construction	Default meaning	Extended meaning
<i>Okogonkia</i>	To lactate	To give birth

Once one has given birth, it is assumed she has become a mother and she has to start nurturing her baby. Figure 7 below presents the conceptualisation of suckling as delivery.

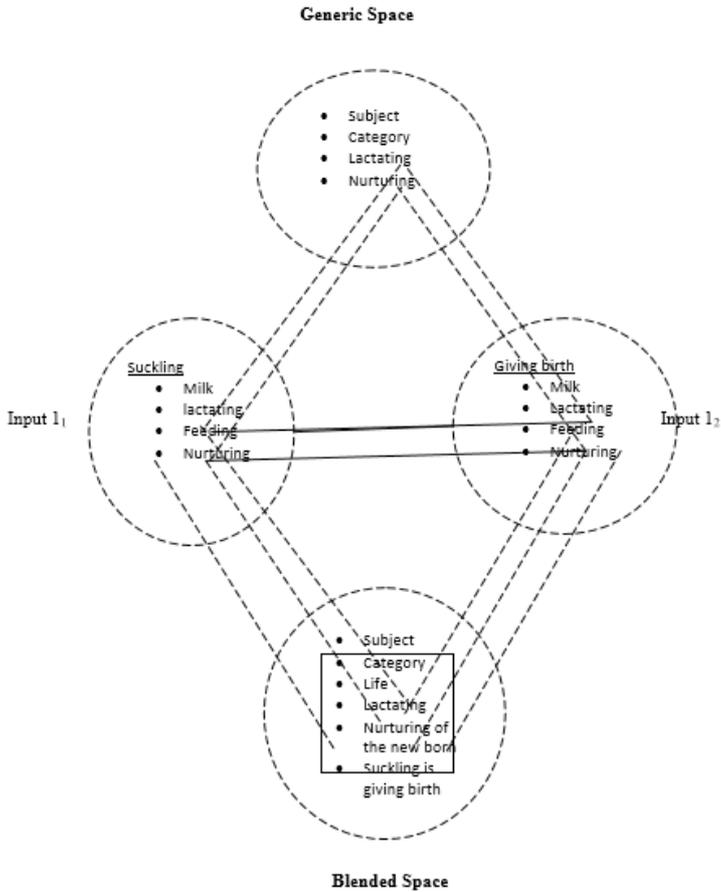


Figure 7. Delivery as Suckling

The mental simulation of suckling and giving birth is enabled by the blending processes of composition, completion and elaboration as are presented below. In this blend there is cross-mapping occasioned by the matching between input 1 and input 2 as is illustrated in figure 7 above.

Composition

One can only lactate if they have a young one. In this regard lactating and suckling is conceptualised as giving birth.

Completion

Lactating is given the equivalence of giving birth. When one gives birth, they lactate and are supposed to suckle the new born. Moreover, they are supposed to nurture the new born.

Elaboration

Giving birth is likened to suckling a baby.

The Blend on *okogonkia* ‘suckling’ (10 above) is a case of single-scope network (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002) organized around the frame of nursing. It entails the reference to a mother having milk, and opting either to directly suckling; however, the activity is not the one referred to when people say “X has suckled Y”. The word is used in the prenatal stage hence involves the clash between getting pregnant and nursing, hence the vital relation of intentionality, that is the desire of a successful birth; time, the reversal of the temporal sequence; and the internal event structure are the basis of the blend.

b) Giving birth as getting out of danger

In EkeGusii giving birth is conceptualised as getting out of danger, which involves projection of some aspects got from the domain of health such as accidents and ill-health that can be equally associated with the dangerous aspects of the maternity state. As evinced in constructions 5, 6 and 7 becoming expectant is conceptualised as getting into danger, giving birth is therefore seen as a relief since one has come out of danger. Examples 11 - 13 are double entendres presenting how giving birth is conceptualised as having gotten out of danger in EkeGusii.

(11) *Ogokonyeka*

Construction	Default meaning	Extended meaning
<i>Ogokonyeka</i>	to be saved	to give birth

In the example (11) above, giving to birth is considered to be akin to having received help. It conflates the process of being assisted to get a child, the entire work done by the midwife, and the result. The actions, the result and times constitute the vital relations that are implicit in the morpheme. The interpreter has to access the mental spaces of the midwifing, the rescuing domain (such as the first aid and saving of a person in danger) and the post-partum aspect of a successful birth to understand the lexeme. Hence, the term involves multiple domains, and hence is a case of a multiple- network blend.

(12) *Okorua omote igoro*

Construction	Default meaning	Intended meaning
<i>Okorua omote igoro</i>	to come down a tree	to give birth

(13) *Okoba buya*

Construction	Literal meaning	Extended meaning
<i>Okoba buya</i>	Being good/okay	to give birth

The blending presented in the constructions 11 - 13 above can be illustrated in the figure below:

Examples 11, 12 and 13 show how giving birth is conceptualised by Abagusii as getting out of trouble. The mental simulation of giving birth as being safe is presented through the blending processes presented below.

Composition

When one is in trouble, they get frightened because they are normally in the verge of losing their lives. At such times one needs help and if the help is given then they get relief. As is evinced in construction 5, 6 and 7, when one is on a tree they are subject to

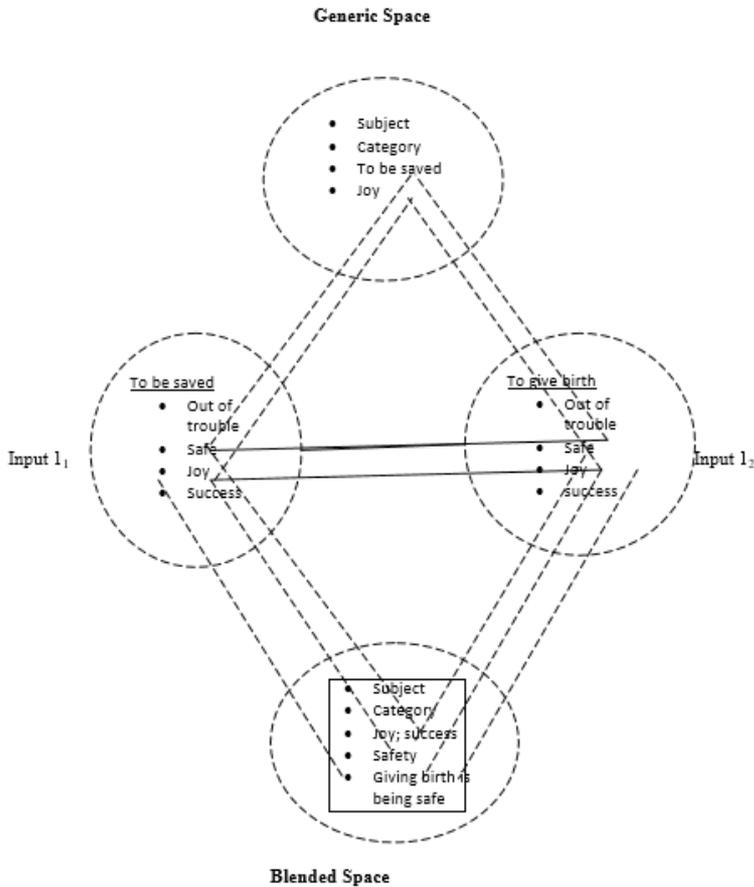


Figure 8. Giving Birth as Getting Well

danger. They are normally unstable and one can easily fall and hurt themselves. In construction 12 giving birth is conceptualised as safely climbing down a tree hence being out of danger. Construction 13 also shows the conceptualisation of giving birth as one being okay and out of trouble.

Completion

Whereas in construction 11 giving birth is likened to being

delivered from trouble, construction **12** likens delivering to climbing down a tree and construction **13** likens giving birth to a state of being okay or safe.

Elaboration

The process of giving birth is dreaded as some women lose their lives or even their babies. Delivering safely brings a lot of relief to the community. In construction **11** the relief of one giving birth safely is likened to being saved from trouble. A similar conceptualisation is evident in construction **12** where climbing down a tree and landing safely is given a conceptualisation of giving birth. Safe delivery is celebrated because it is assumed that the expectant woman has come out of danger; one who has given birth is considered to be away from the trouble associated with being expectant and child delivery. Construction **13** also explicates this conceptualisation as one who has given birth is considered as being okay. In constructions **11**, **12** and **13**, the vital relations of analogy and similarity have been compressed. The state of safe delivery is likened to being saved from trouble hence being out of danger.

c) Birth as finding

The EkeGusii root ‘-nyora-’ (find) as presented in construction **14** and **15** denotes finding. Its meaning is prototypically associated with cases in which something which is unexpected is found, or is accidentally encountered. If the encyclopaedic understanding of the people is considered, the basic element for creating the blend in the birthing process arises from the act of getting a child being conceptualised as a way of coming into possession of something that one did not have. The idea of possessing another person is not strange among most social settings, only it is not similar to having a thing. The Abagusii pair the root ‘-nyora-’ with the words ‘omwana’ (a baby) and ‘omogeni’ (a visitor).

As is evinced here, the first blend involves the semantic contribution of the act of finding whose schema includes things that one does not get by

way of being given or gifted or by some form of exchange through money or any other acceptable means. The second blend on the other part involves a combination of domains that relate to finding and those that relate to visiting, that comes with a collorary of senses related to temporality and implicitly invoke the severance of ties by temporary separation. The particular elaboration of the construction is discussed below.

(14) *Okonyora omwana*

Construction	Default meaning	Extended meaning
<i>Okonyora omwana</i>	to get a child	to give birth

(15) *Okonyora omogeni*

Construction	Default meaning	Extended meaning
<i>Okonyora omogeni</i>	to get a guest	to give birth

The conceptualisation of giving birth as finding is represented in figure 9 below.

Mental simulation of the blend giving birth as finding is processed as presented below:

Composition

Getting something is celebrated especially if the thing is good. A new born is considered a good possession and therefore is celebrated. The same is conceptualised in construction 15. In most African communities, a visitor is perceived as a blessing. A baby is also seen a blessing.

Completion

Giving birth is likened to getting a good thing. A visitor also is seen as a blessing and as a result is attended with care and respect. A visitor is seen as a temporary inhabitant as they are likely to leave at their pleasure. A baby is also conceptualised as a visitor considering the fact that when the baby is grown and has become an adult they may leave to start their own families.

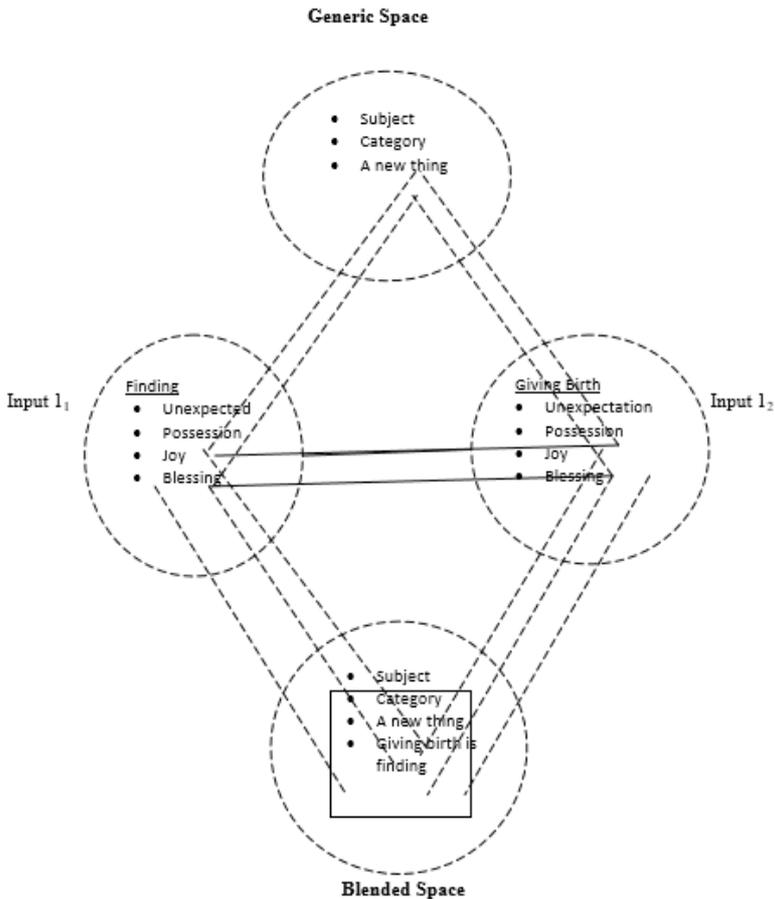


Figure 9. Giving Birth as Receiving a Guest

Elaboration

Giving birth is likened to finding a baby or even getting a visitor. The Blend involves blending the act giving of birth and receiving of visitors under the frame of reception or possession of property. The phrases are therefore realized as single-scope networks (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002: 126) of mental spaces.

Constructions **14** and **15** evince compression of the vital relations of similarity. Giving birth is seen to be similar to finding a baby or a visitor. In construction **15** there is compression of the vital relation of space. The child is taken as a visitor and it is presumed that at the opportune time they may leave.

5. Conclusion

Double entendres in EkeGusii involve considerable blending that feeds from the experiences involving the people's interaction with fauna, e.g. climbing of trees, and by representing different stages of the maternity period by merging the prenatal domain with the post-natal eventualities, hopes and anxieties. Further, double entendres in EkeGusii are seen to mainly involve compression rather than decompression of the vital relations to form blends. The compressed vital relations include time, change, space, analogy and similarity; which form the complex backstage interconnections between the two mental spaces to form, apart from single-scope networks, double-scope and multiple scope networks. Therefore, Conceptual blending should be used as a complementary analysis to show the compositional and non-compositional aspects of double-entendres and other processes of polysemisation.

This study recommends that an extensive study be carried out on double entendre in EkeGusii in order to come up with a comprehensive data base from which a dictionary of EkeGusii euphemisms which will act as a reference material can be drafted. Such material will also help enhance the communicative competence of EkeGusii speakers since they will have a variety of words to choose from. This study is helpful especially to those that are interested in learning EkeGusii as a foreign language in the sense that conceptual metaphors are a very useful tool for learners of foreign languages because they could illuminate networks of associated figurative meanings, giving access to large numbers of frequently used vocabulary items. In this regard, the study recommends that more research be done to show how other constructions and EkeGusii metaphors are conceptualised. Furthermore, it recommends that a thorough analysis on EkeGusii double entendre be done to discover the various conceptualisations and, that such

conceptualisations to be taught to new learners of EkeGusii to build their encyclopaedic meaning on various EkeGusii constructions.

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