

Sex-related Expressions in Tjuabar Paiwan*

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Abstract

Taboo is a ubiquitous phenomenon in language, encompassing various themes. Compared to topics such as life, death, rituals, and politics, sex is considered much more taboo due to its high arousal potential and emotional intensity. Consequently, discussing sex openly is often deemed highly inappropriate. This study primarily examines sex-related expressions and sayings in Paiwan through fieldwork, including terms for organs, gender, intimacy, fertility, and lust. It has been observed that these expressions are predominantly conveyed through a combination of euphemism and figurative language, such as metaphor, metonymy, and simile. This observation aligns with findings from previous studies. Euphemism plays a crucial role in articulating these concepts, driven by considerations of politeness and face-saving. Finally, it is noted that certain sex-related terms from earlier times have evolved and no longer carry the same meanings today.

Keywords: taboo, sex, euphemism, figurative speech, politeness

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1. Introduction

Language and taboos are intricately linked, as language serves as the concrete manifestation of thought, culture, and history, while taboos reflect subjective judgments of cultural values, moral standards, and social boundaries. The term “taboo” is a loanword from the Tongan language, *tabu*, meaning an object that is prohibited from being touched or discussed (Allan & Burridge, 2006: 2; Keller, Striedl, Biro, Holzer & Burridge, 2021: 7). According to Kleparski (2023), taboo spans various levels of the Great Chain of Being. At the suprahuman layer, gods have universally been subjects of taboo. In the animal world, taboos such as hunting restrictions often serve as verbal strategies to conceal the hunter’s intentions. Previous research also indicates a similar idea. Words that are relevant to taboo cover a range of topics, including sex, death, excrement, bodily functions, religious matters, politics, obscenity, pornography, animal, naming, and other subjects that depend on cultural standards (Wardhaugh, 2006: 239; Allan & Burridge, 2006: 1; Hughes, 2006: 182; Wang, 2009: 11). Therefore, any word can become a taboo word when the concept of taboo is associated with it.

The above-mentioned studies also consider sex as a part of taboo subject. Sex and expressions related to sex have high offensiveness, valence, and arousal. According to Beers Fägersten (2007: 19), the rating average of offensiveness for the word *fuck* is 5.0, which is higher than other taboo words like *dick* (4.1) and *ass* (3.2). Referring to affective norms for English words (ANEW) (Bradley & Lang, 1999: 14), the word *sex* has a higher valence mean (8.05) and arousal mean (7.36) than *penis* (valence: 5.90; arousal: 5.54) and *vagina* (valence: 6.14; arousal: 5.55). These studies explain why sex is a sensitive topic in conversation.

Since the words *sex* and *fuck* are highly sensitive, discussing sex and sex-related concepts in public is considered embarrassing or improper. This is especially true in conservative and traditional indigenous societies. However, if certain themes or words are prohibited in a language, such as sex or body parts, there must be alternatives for expressing these words or relevant ideas. At this point, euphemism is the best solution to these taboo words. Euphemism is a creative process and a way of saying something that avoids using words or topics considered taboo (Fakaj, Fakaj & Fakaj, 2015: 124). Burridge (2012: 67) suggests that, communicatively, euphemism serves as a substitute for terms that might cause disgrace or lead to a loss of face for the listener. It is frequently used when discussing taboo topics, such as

private parts, bodily functions, sex, and disease. Mocanu (2017: 6) also proposes that the euphemism created from the need to manipulate reality for people has sought ways to name a dangerous reality without violating prohibitions. This substitution suggests that euphemism is inextricable from taboo.

However, euphemisms alone cannot fully replace taboo language. They are often used with figurative language, including metaphor, metonymy, and simile. A metaphor is a linguistic device in which a comparison is drawn between two entities by stating that one is the other, or it is a figure of speech implying a connection between two dissimilar entities (Kövecses, 2010: ii). According to the theory by Lakoff and Johnson (2003: 265), metaphors represent conceptual mappings and are integral components of the conceptual system, extending beyond mere linguistic expressions. They are typically across conceptual domains from one source domain to the other target domain, for example, *The personnel is a hunter* in Figure 1.

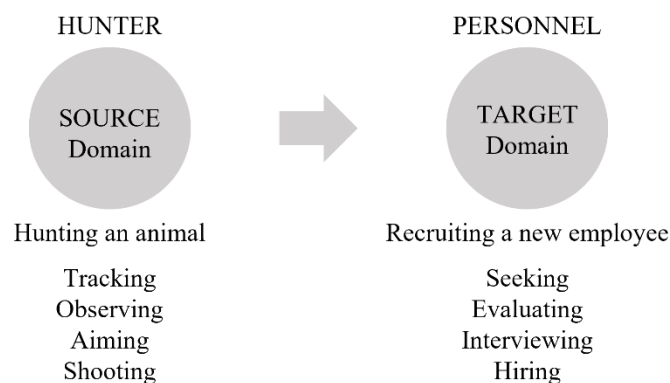


Figure 1. Metaphor Process of *The Personnel is a Hunter*

A metonymy is a rhetorical device that involves using the name of one thing to represent another with which it is connected. These explanations suggest that metonymy functions by employing the names of objects entails substituting the name of one thing for another, and presupposes a meaningful association between the two entities (Radden & Kövecses, 1999: 17). Under this framework, X can be a small part, a component, a product or result, or an action of Y as in Figure 2. Metonymy is prevalent in language, as examples (1) and (2).

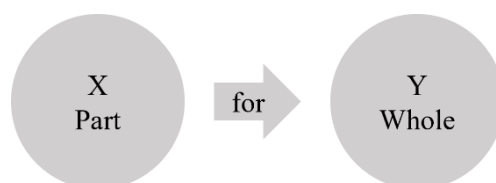


Figure 2. The Framework of Metonymy

- (1) Wall Street is influential in the financial market.

Wall Street (big part)→refers to the whole financial institutions and markets in New York City (whole).

- (2) I had Golden Arch for lunch today.

Golden Arch (small part)→McDonald's (whole)

Unlike metaphor and metonymy, simile uses of the words “like” or “as” mark a simile as a different figure of speech, one that stops short of ascribing category membership and merely draws attention to certain shared properties (Veale & Hao, 2007), as examples (3) and (4).

- (3) Your attitude is as cold as a dead.

- (4) He snored loudly just like a B-52.

Because of the tight relation between euphemism and metaphor, Miller (1986: 129) specifically points out that most people would agree that euphemisms are one of the obvious and common applications of metaphor. Moreover, due to the inextricable relation between euphemism and metaphor, the ideas of “euphemistic metaphor” or “metaphorical euphemism” are proposed and discussed by scholars (Crespo-Fernández, 2013: 103, 2006: 29; Lee, 2011: 351; Adepoju, 2016: 76).

2. Literature Review

Research on taboo themes in Formosan languages is rare and precious. Lee (2011) investigated taboo language about relationships and death across the Paiwan, Seediq, and Kavalan languages. Data collection covers aspects such as marriage, courtship, death, and funeral practices in these three distinct Formosan languages. Lien (2012) completed her thesis

on taboo words and euphemisms in Easter Truku, a dialect of Seediq. Although solely focusing on one language, the content is rich. Her study delves into various topics, including relationships and sexuality, bodily functions and undesirable behaviors, perspectives on life and death, supernatural beliefs, and naming conventions and ethnic titles. Cyuan (2021) completed his dissertation and investigated taboo themes such as hunting, physiological functions, reproductive organs, gender relationships, and death. Another recent research by Lee (2024) focused on tabooed body parts and related activities, naming and hunting, and death-related concepts. This comprehensive research covers different dialects of Amis, Bunun, Kavalan, Paiwan, Rukai, Saisiyat, and Seediq. In their studies, the shared focus of the studies is the mechanism of metaphorical euphemism.

According to Lee (2011: 351), “metaphorical euphemism” refers to a euphemism that adopts metaphorical mapping of both source and target domains to express the notion of a forbidden domain as a result of conscious choices from pragmatic competence. This mechanism is found in some Formosan languages. These examples are stated as follows.

- (5) Paiwan (Lee, 2011: 360)
 Ming-layap=anga ?u=valjaw.
 AF-fly=indeed 1SG.GEN=spouse
 ‘My partner ran away.’
 (Literally: My partner flew away.)
- (6) Central Amis (Lee, 2024: 379)
 Ma-fulad=tu.
 AV-moon=ASP
 (a) ‘(I) have my period.’
 (b) ‘The moon has appeared.’
- (7) Truku Seediq (Lien, 2012: 41)

Wada	mrmux	pipi	ka	utaq	mu.
be.gone	enter	vulva	NOM	filth	1SG.GEN

 ‘I ejaculated inside the vagina.’
 (Literally: I put the filth in it.)

- (8) Truku Seediq (Lien, 2012: 41)
 t-mr-cir
 'Ejaculate'
 (Literally: Pee.)
- (9) Isbukun Bunun (Lee, 2024: 380)
 Ma-pas'ah saikin
 AV-wash.clothes 1SG.NOM
 'I have my period.'
 (Literally: I need to wash (my) clothes.)
- (10) Takibakha Bunun (Cyuan, 2021: 163)
 Ni xhaip maqtu dusa'-an opa qe-daza' hata'
 NEG today be.able two-LV because hang-upper national.flag
 'I can't have sex today because of my period.'
 (Literally: These two cannot be together today, because of the national flag.)

In the examples (5) to (8), metaphorical euphemisms are found in various taboo themes. These examples reveal clear similarities and conceptual connections between the original event and its metaphorical representation to some extent. In examples (9) and (10), the use of metaphorical euphemisms is much more pronounced. The menstruation period is metaphorically conveyed through the act of washing clothes and the national flag.

Unlike previous research on various taboo themes (Lee, 2011, 2024; Lien, 2012; Cyuan, 2021), this study focuses exclusively on sex-related expressions in Tjuabar Paiwan, a dialect of the Paiwan language. Paiwan is the second-largest indigenous group in Taiwan. The distribution of Paiwan is relatively wide, primarily including the eastern and western sides of the southern foothills of the Central Mountain Range, which are Pingtung and Taitung counties. The population of Paiwan is about 110,306, constituting 18% of the total indigenous population (Department of Household Registration, 2024).

3. Goal of the Paper

Taboo language includes a variety of topics, but studies that primarily focus on sex and

sex-related expressions in Formosan languages are quite rare. Therefore, the main research question is: How does Tjuabar Paiwan realize sex and sex-related expressions?

Based on the preliminary but incomplete discussion by Sung (2013), the scope of data collection was reorganized to include sex and sex-related expressions such as organ, gender, intimacy, fertility, and lust. The categories were devised by the author, with additional data drawn from the Paiwan dictionary by Ferrell (1982) to supplement the fieldwork. The fieldwork was conducted in Tjuabar, a settlement located in Daren Township, Taitung County, Taiwan. Geographically, Tjuabar is bordered to the east by Daxi Community (Taiki) and Duoliang Village in Taimali Township; to the west by Xinhua Village, Daren Township; to the south by Dazhu Village, Dawu Township; and to the north by Taiban Village (Tjuavanaq) in Daren Township. The data were verified with the informants from time to time to ensure their authenticity and stability.

4. Sex and Sex-related Expressions in Tjuabar Paiwan

The following data is presented based on the core issue—sex, and sex-related expressions including organ, gender, intimacy, fertility, and lust. Though the amount of data for each theme is varied, most of them are expressed through the combinations of euphemisms and figurative speech.

4.1 Organ

Sexual organs are the most direct way to identify biological sex. There are expressions for visible male and female organs in Paiwan. Compared with females, expressions for male organs are more than female ones, for example (11) to (14).

- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------|
| (11) drutju
‘Penis’ | (Ferrell, 1982: 89) |
| (12) qalici
‘Penis’ | |
| (13) qaludru
‘Testes’ | |

- (14) qutji
‘Vagina’

In Tjuabar Paiwan, *drutju* ‘penis’ is more frequently spoken than *qalici* ‘penis’. In addition to *drutju* and *qalici*, which are commonly used, there are other expressions in Paiwan referring to male sexual organs, as documented in Ferrell’s (1982) dictionary. These expressions are often used euphemistically, with a tongue-in-cheek tone, particularly when referencing shape or size as examples (15) to (23). Extended meanings that are no longer in use today are marked with asterisks (**) as examples (22) and (23).

- (15) kaingaw (Ferrell, 1982: 106)
‘Glans’
(Literally: the end of a branch or a vine.)
- (16) ljeput (Ferrell, 1982: 140)
‘Small penis’
(Literally: the glans is covered by the foreskin and appears to be short.)
- (17) tjulja (Ferrell, 1982: 301)
‘Penis’
(Literally: an eel. The penis is as long as an eel.)
- (18) viking (Ferrell, 1982: 349)
‘Penis’
(Literally: the curved penis.)
- (19) drequng (Ferrell, 1982: 85)
‘Penis’
(Literally: to bow or to nod. The droopy penis.)
- (20) Ciqaw maka-tatad (Ferrell, 1982: 274)
fish go.via-RED.dry
‘Penis’
(Literally: A fish struggles and writhes on land)

- (21) Mere-ka-kan-en. (Ferrell, 1982: 109)
 gigantic-Ca-RED~eat-PV
 ‘Big penis or thick vagina.’
 (Literally: gigantic food)
- (22) qudju** (Ferrell, 1982: 301)
 ‘Penis’
 (Literally: the anus but only in reduplication form as *qudju-udju*.)
- (23) mirazek** (Ferrell, 1982: 243)
 ‘Penis’
 (Literally: pubic hair)

Notably, the implicit meaning of example (21) is not understood by every informant. It is possibly because this saying is rarely used and has been forgotten by speakers. *Merekakanen*, is composed of *mere-* ‘huge’ and *kakanen* ‘food’. This expression can be exploited to imply a big penis or a thick vagina. In a way, it is a praise of genitalia. Also, the literal meaning of ‘the gigantic food’ is a very euphemistic allusion to having sex¹.

The decline of sexual function is also a taboo topic. In Paiwan, *supiq* ‘taro stem’ and *metad* ‘dry’ are used to express the decline of sexual function. The former is realized through simile because of *matu* ‘be like’. It means that a man’s penis can no longer be erect, bent and hanging like a taro stem. The latter means that a woman’s vagina has become dry, for example (24) and (25).

- (24) Matu-supiq=anga a nimadju.
 be.like-taro.stem=COS LNK 3SG.GEN
 ‘His (penis) is like taro stalks.’
- (25) Ramaljeng na-metad=anga.
 elderly PFV-dry=COS
 ‘Old and dry.’

¹ According to Ferrell (1982: 109), *mere-ka-kan-en* ‘big edible thing’ can metaphorically refer to a penis eaten by a vagina (implicit meaning of lovemaking). This word is classified here, not in 4.4.2, because its implicit meaning is less familiar to speakers.

4.2 Gender

Humans are biologically classified into males and females. In Paiwan, the common terms for male or man and female or woman are illustrated in examples (26) and (27).

- (26) *uqaljaj*
‘A man or a male’

- (27) *vavayan*
‘A woman or a female’

When the prefix *sa-* ‘be like’ or *matu-* ‘be like’ is attached to *uqaljaj* or *vavayan*, it implies that a person has a habit of cross-dressing or behaves like the opposite gender, as shown in examples (28) and (29).

- (28) *Sa-uqaljaj* *ti* *Muni*.
be.like-man/male NOM Muni
‘Muni behaves (or dresses) like a man.’

- (29) *Matu-vavayan* *ti* *Camak*.
be.like-woman/female NOM Camak
‘Camak behaves (or dresses) like a woman.’

Another possible case is when the gender is changed through a surgical procedure, the prefixes *ki-* ‘to get’ and *sane-* ‘to make’ are attached to the word *uqaljaj* or *vavayan*, as in the example (30).

- (30) *Uqaljaj* *angata* *timadju*,
man indeed 3SG.NOM
ljakua *na-ki-sane-vavayan=anga*.
but PFV-get-make-woman=COS
‘He was indeed a man, but he became a woman.’

When it comes to love, traditional gender lines can be crossed, such as in the case of homosexuality. Unlike the single words ‘gay’ or ‘lesbian’ in English, or the general term ‘*tong*

xing lian (同性戀) in Chinese, Paiwan uses a neutral description to express homosexuality, as exemplified in (31) to (33). Specifically in (33), Paiwan uses a neutral description instead of derogatory terms to portray a man acting as a woman with identical prefixes, *ki-* and *sane-*. In this description, *ki-sane-* means ‘act ...as’, not ‘become’.

- (31) Mareka-tjengelay a uqaljay a mamaw.
 RCPR-like NOM man/male LNK same
 ‘Gay’
 (Literally: Two identical men like each other.)
- (32) Mareka-tjengelay a vavayan a mamaw.
 RCPR-like NOM woman/female LNK same
 ‘Lesbian’
 (Literally: Two identical women like each other.)
- (33) Mareka-tjengelay a uqaljay a mamaw tiamadju.
 RCPR-like NOM man/male LNK same 3PL.NOM
 Na-ki-sane-uqaljay a macidilj.
 PFV-act.as-man/male LNK a.person
 Na-ki-sane-vavayan a macidilj.
 PFV-act.as-woman/female LNK a.person
 ‘These two men like each other. One acts as a man. The other acts as a woman.’

Organs are a straightforward consideration for determining gender, but unexpected situations may occur, though the probability is extremely low. In Paiwan, if a newborn has two sexual organs (hermaphrodite), the expression *paqaquljis* ‘upside down’ is used to describe this situation, as in example (34).

- (34) Pa-qa-quljis.
 RCPR²-Ca-RED-upside.down
 ‘A hermaphrodite’

² Li (2024) suggests that a reciprocal action involves at least two participants in a single action, where each participant simultaneously acts as both the agent and the patient in relation to the other. In *Paqaquljis*, both ‘up’ and ‘down’ act as agents and patients when performing ‘upside down’. Therefore, *pa-Ca-* is analyzed as a reciprocal marker.

(Literally: A thing is placed upside down.)

Quljis means ‘reverse’ or ‘upside down’ in Paiwan. The expression *paqaquljis* is constituted of a reciprocal marker *pa-* and a *Ca*-reduplication *qa*. Literally, it means that a thing is placed upside down. Semantically, it expresses hermaphrodites or two-headed snakes, which are extremely rare things in the tribe.

4.3 Intimacy

When men and women mature physically, they will interact with someone and may start an intimate relationship. Intimacy is also part of sex. It expresses a relationship between people and may occur in different situations. Expressions of intimacy in Paiwan are as follows.

4.3.1 Marriage

Marriage is a major event in life as well as in many different cultures all around the world. It represents a promise made by two individuals to live together, support each other, and create a lovely future for both people. In Paiwan, *cekelj*, *valjaw*, *sipamaw*, *qeceng*, *inavangulj*, and *vaday* are expressions of marriage-related concepts. They are illustrated in examples (35) to (42).

- (35) ku=cekelj.
1SG.GEN-spouse
‘My spouse.’

- (36) ku=valjaw.
1SG.GEN-spouse
‘My spouse.’

Though both *cekelj* and *valjaw* signify the spouse, there are dialectal differences between *cekelj* and *valjaw*. This difference has been discussed in Lee’s (2011) research. *Cekelj* is predominantly spoken in Pingtung, whereas *valjaw* is prevalent in Taitung. A further verification with the informant, *valjaw* signifies cohabitation in the Paiwan dialects of Pingtung, without necessarily implying a marital relationship.

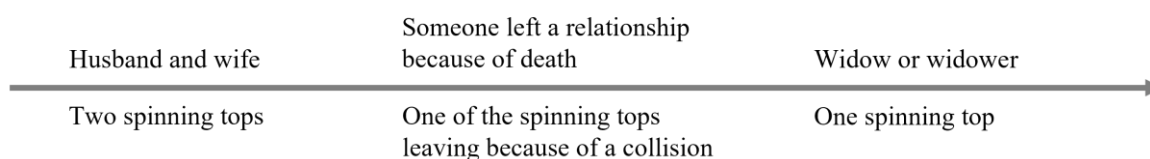
- (37) Ku=sipamaw ti Camak.
 1SG.GEN-dead.spouse NOM Camak
 ‘Camak is my dead spouse.’
- (38) Ku=p<in>uqeceng-an ti Muni.
 1SG.GEN-<PFV>pu-barrier-LF NOM Muni
 ‘Muni is my fiancée.’
 (Literally a: I made a barrier to Muni.)
 (Literally b: I gave Muni a token of love.)
- (39) Ina-vangulj timadju.
 INA-top 3SG.NOM
 ‘He is a widower. / She is a widow.’
- (40) Na-kitjuvaday=anga ti Camak.
 PFV-divorce=COS NOM Camak
 ‘Camak is divorced.’
- (41) Na-ma-vaday=anga ti Camak kati Tjuku.
 PFV-RCPR-divorce=COS NOM Camak and Tjuku
 ‘Camak and Tjuku are divorced.’
- (42) Pa-curucuru ti Camak.
 CAU-RED~splice NOM Camak
 ‘Camak is a remarried person (digamist).’

Notably, when expressing fiancé or fiancée, a simple statement such as *uri ka-ku=cekelj ti Muni* ‘Muni will be my spouse’ can be spoken to express engagement. This relationship can also be conveyed through the word *qeceng*. In example (38), the *qeceng* ‘barrier’ means a token of love. It can be a concrete barrier (a man’s earring) or an abstract barrier (parents’ approval after discussion). *Pu-qeceng* literally means to make a barrier, but semantically means the man gives the woman (fiancée) something to convince her not to marry someone else during his absence (usually during military service).

Also, *inavangulj* in example (39) means a spinning top in Paiwan. The couple is described

as two spinning tops. They spin steadily at a certain distance, symbolizing a comfortable, romantic, and stable relationship. In the event of an accidental collision (representing the death or departure of one partner), one of the tops will be knocked down, leaving only one top spinning alone. This expression is illustrated in Figure 3.

Linguistic meaning (widow/widower)

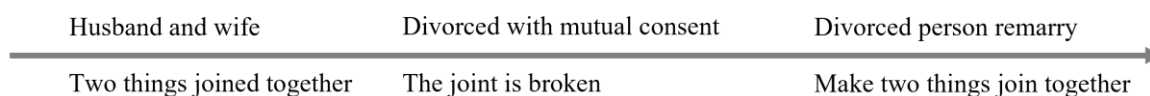


Metaphor + Euphemism (*inavangulj*)

Figure 3. Metaphoric Widow or Widower

Moreover, in example (42), the original meaning of *curu* is to splice or join two pieces together. The relationship between a couple is compared to two spliced objects, such as spliced bamboo or a hilt. When the splice separates or breaks, it signifies divorce. To resplice two separated bamboo pieces represents remarriage. This figurative process is illustrated in Figure 4.

Linguistic meaning (remarried person)



Metaphor + Euphemism (*pacurucuru*)

Figure 4. Metaphorical Remarried Person (Digamist)

4.3.2 Affairs

An affair refers to a romantic relationship outside of marriage. Extramarital affairs, whether physical or emotional, are viewed as a betrayal of trust in the marital relationship. In

Paiwan, *draqa* ‘tree branch’ is used to express the status of extramarital affairs. It is used through the metaphor to express the meaning of splitting or bifurcation of feelings in Paiwan, as shown in examples (43) to (45)

- (43) ki-draqa.
get-branch
‘Have an affair’
- (44) Na-ki-draqa ti Camak.
PFV-get-branch NOM Camak
‘Camak has an affair.’
- (45) Ru-ki-draqa timadju.
Hab-get-branch 3SG.NOM
‘She is someone’s mistress. / He is someone’s lover (homewrecker).’

4.3.3 Adultery

Adultery is the act of having sex with someone other than one’s spouse. It is an unforgivable betrayal of the marital commitment. Also, adultery typically brings a negative consequence to marriage. Like the word ‘affair’, *kidraqa* in Paiwan is also used to imply adultery, as in the example (46).

- (46) Mare-ki-draqa tiamadju.
RCPR-get-branch 3PL.NOM
‘They are in an adulterous relationship.’

In addition to the breach of marriage, another impact of adultery on marriage is the possible illegitimate child, as in the example (47).

- (47) K<in>i-draqa-an timadju.
<PFV>get-branch-LF 3SG.NOM
‘He is an illegitimate child.’

4.4 Sex

The sexual act is considered a crucial part of sex. It refers to any activity that involves physical intimacy and the intention of having sexual pleasure or gratification. It may occur individually or between individuals.

4.4.1 Masturbation

Masturbation is an individual sexual act. Expressions for male and female masturbation in Paiwan are illustrated in examples (48) to (50).

- (48) Drutju timadju.
 <AF>penis 3SG.NOM
 ‘He is masturbating.’
- (49) Ljusalju-saljustua nimadju.
 <AF>RED~rob OBL 3SG.GEN
 ‘He is masturbating.’
 (Literally: he is grating taro into shreds)
- (50) Pa-ljuqiljuq tua niamadju.
 CAU-dig OBL 3PL.GEN
 ‘She is masturbating.’
 (Literally: she is digging in a hole.)

Dremutju in example (48) is composed of *drutju* ‘penis’, and an agent focus infix to imply the action of male masturbation directly. However, male and female masturbation can also be indirectly expressed through metonymy. In terms of male masturbation, *ljemusaljusalju* originally refers to ‘the action of grating something (such as taro or radish) into shreds’. In terms of female masturbation, *ljuqiljuq* is originally referred to as an earpick. In an active voice sentence, *ljemuqiljuq* means picking the ears or nose. However, if the causative marker *pa-* is attached before *ljuqiljuq*, the literal meaning of *paljuqiljuq* is something that was dug, but the implicit meaning is female masturbation. This metonymic mechanism is illustrated in Figure 5.

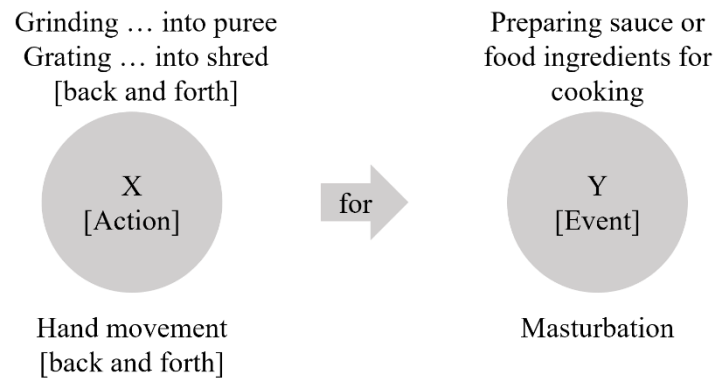


Figure 5. Metonymy of Male Masturbation in Paiwan

4.4.2 Making love

When it comes to sex acts between individuals, there are expressions to describe them in different situations in Paiwan. Generally speaking, *kiudru* is used to express sexual intercourse, and it happens when two people mutually consent, as shown in examples (51) and (52).

- (51) Pa-ka-kiudru-i!
RCPR-Ca-RED~intercourse-IMP
'Let's make love!'
- (52) Maka-kiudru-dru=amen.
RCPR-RED~intercourse=1PL.NOM
'We are making love.'

Except for *kiudru*, *djikdjik* 'copulate' is another expression for having sex with mutual consent. However, *djikdjik* is mostly used when the male takes the initiative to have sex (to penetrate), for example, (53) and (54).

- (53) Djikdjik-an niamadju.
copulate-LF 3PL.GEN
'They are having sex.'
(Literally: They have the action of penetration.)

- (54) Djikdjik-djik-an ti Muni ni Camak.
 RED~copulate-LF NOM Muni GEN Camak
 ‘Camak is having sex with Muni.’

4.4.3 Unwilling sex

As regards non-consensual sex, the word *savuta* means to coerce someone into doing something against his / her will, as in the example (55).

- (55) Savuta-in ni Camak ti Muni.
 to.do.by.force-LF GEN Camak NOM Muni
 ‘Camak raped Muni.’
 (Literally: Camak coerced Muni into having sex with him.)

4.4.4 Orgasm

Orgasm is the physical and psychological gratification and pleasure that two people experience when having sex. In Paiwan, the verb *vaik* ‘to go’ is used to express orgasm. Notably, *pa-vaik* commonly implies ejaculation in many Paiwan dialects and can be used to describe male or female orgasm, as exemplified by (56) and (57).

- (56) Uri vaik=anga ti Camak.
 IRR to.go=COS NOM Camak
 ‘Camak is going to have an orgasm.’
 (Literally: Camak is going to ejaculate.)

- (57) Pa-vaik=anga ti Muni.
 CAU-to.go=COS NOM Muni
 ‘Muni had an orgasm.’
 (Literally: Muni has already ejaculated.)

When it comes to orgasm in Paiwan, the “motion verb” offers a fine illustration. Motion verbs like come and go frame a path with a starting and a destination. The starting point could be any sexual act, and the destination is the mental space in which people enjoy sexual gratification. Motion verbs for orgasm expression are prevalent in languages. Chiang and

Chiang (2016: 138) surveyed expressions of orgasm in 27 languages. They discovered that motion verbs (come and go) are used for expressing orgasm in English, Spanish, Japanese, Dutch, and Turkish, as well as other languages.

4.5 Fertility

Sex has considerable benefits for a person's body and mind. It is also a natural way for human reproduction. The expression *pualjak* is composed of the prefix *pu-* 'to make or to produce' and the root *aljak* 'child', which means to give birth to a child. The other expression *papualjak* is composed of *pualjak* and another prefix *pa-* 'let or make', which means to make someone give birth to a child, as illustrated in (58) and (59).

- (58) Maqati a pa-pu-aljak ti Camak.
 be.able.to LNK CAU-make.birth-child NOM Camak
 'Camak is able to make someone pregnant.'
 (Literally: Camak is capable of making a woman have a child.)

- (59) Maqati a pu-aljak ti Muni.
 be.able.to LNK make.birth-child NOM Muni
 'Muni is able to be pregnant.'
 (Literally: Muni is capable of having a child.)

4.6 Lust

Lust is an intense craving that includes physical or non-physical items. Sexual desire is one of the non-physical desires. Strong sexual desire could induce feelings of attraction and motivation to engage in sexual activity or unconventional behavior. Expressions for describing lust in Paiwan are exemplified by (60) to (63).

- (60) Ru-saljinga timadju.
 Hab-want3 SG.NOM
 'He wants (sex) quite often.'
- (61) Ma-pudru=sun.
 AF-swell=2SG.NOM

‘You are coquettish.’

- (62) Ca su=paralj.
 this 2SG.GEN=lecherous
 ‘You are so lecherous.’

- (63) Ma-kadju angata=sun, namaya tua valjas.
 AF-flatter indeed=2SG.NOM be.like OBL breeding.pig
 ‘You’re indeed as horny as a breeding pig.’

Saljinga means ‘want’ or ‘expect’. A realis marker *ru-*, meaning habitually, is attached before the word. This expression implies someone ‘wants to have sex very often’ or ‘looks forward to having sex very often’. Moreover, *mapudru* means ‘swelling’. When a sow is in heat, her vulva becomes swollen. This characteristic is metaphorically manipulated in Paiwan to describe a person who is horny or in strong lust. Compared to *saljinga* and *mapudru*, *maparalj* and *makadju* are a more straightforward way of saying it, especially in the example (63). It is because in example (63), the lust was expressed through a simile with the word *namaya* ‘to be like’.

4.7 Classification of Sex-related Euphemisms in Paiwan

The previous discussion approaches sex-related expressions in Paiwan from the perspective of euphemism, combining metaphor, metonymy, and simile. As for euphemisms themselves, Chamizo and Sánchez (as cited in Crespo-Fernández, 2006: 31) divided them into three types based on their definition and degree of lexicalization. These types are also seen in Paiwan, which is explicated with examples and summed up in Figure 6 as follows.

4.7.1 Lexicalized euphemisms

According to Chamizo and Sánchez (as cited in Crespo-Fernández, 2006: 31), lexicalized euphemisms refer to the substitution used as normal expressions, such as further study for prison and senior for old people. Similar examples are seen in Paiwan, for instance, *sa-uqaljay* and *matu-vavayan*. They describe a cross-dressing fetish or a person whose behavior or temperament is similar to that of the opposite sex by adding *sa-* or *matu-* before the words man and woman. This usage reduces offensiveness and derogatory connotations. Kindly refer to

examples (28) and (29) again.

- (28) Sa-uqaljay ti Muni.
 be.like-man/male NOM Muni
 ‘Muni behaves (or dresses) like a man.’

- (29) Matu-vavayan ti Camak.
 be.like-woman/female NOM Camak
 ‘Camak behaves (or dresses) like a woman.’

4.7.2 Semilexicalized euphemisms

Semilexicalized euphemisms refer to the substitution that is related to the taboo because the substitution is still the forbidden concept (as cited in Crespo-Fernández, 2006: 31), for instance, pass away for die and make love for fuck. Similar examples in Paiwan are *paqaquljis* for hermaphrodite and *pa-vaik* for ejaculation. Although they are euphemistic expressions for reproductive abnormalities (ominous) and sexual acts, these two expressions still carry forbidden concepts to some extent. Revisit the examples (34) and (57).

- (34) Pa-qa-quljis.
 RCPR-Ca.RED-upside.down
 ‘A hermaphrodite’
 (Literally: A thing is placed upside down.)

- (57) Pa-vaik=anga ti Muni.
 CAU-to.go=COS NOM Muni
 ‘Muni had an orgasm.’

4.7.3 Creative euphemisms

Creative euphemisms refer to the substitution as the product of a new association with the taboo (as cited in Crespo-Fernández, 2006: 31). It is understood with its phraseological context, e.g., bulge (in the crotch) for big penis, a daisy for anus. This type of euphemism is considerable in Paiwan, for example, *merikahanen* for having sex, *ljemusajjusajjus* for male masturbation, and *paljuqiljuq* for female masturbation. These sexual expressions are realized through daily

acts and food. Review the examples of (21), (49), and (50).

(21) Mere-ka-kan-en. (Ferrell, 1982: 109)

gigantic-Ca.RED~eat-PF

‘Big penis or thick vagina.’

(Literally: gigantic food)

(49) Ljusalju-saljus tua nimadju.

<AF>RED~rob OBL 3SG.GEN

‘He is masturbating.’

(Literally: he is grating taro into shreds)

(50) Pa-ljuqiljuq tua niamadju.

CAU-dig OBL 3PL.GEN

‘She is masturbating.’

(Literally: she is picking the ear or reaching into the bag)

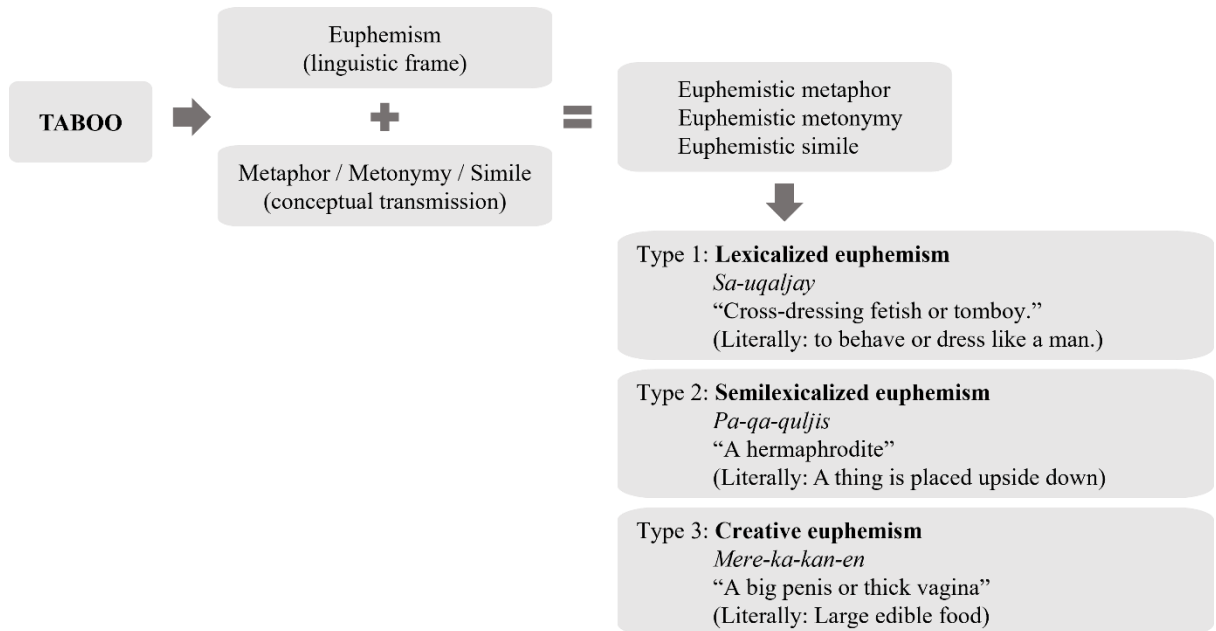


Figure 6. Types of Euphemisms in Paiwan Based on Crespo-Fernández's (2006) Classification

4.8 Social Function in Euphemism

Kleparski (2023) suggests that once community members generally accept a euphemism, the original term that has been subject to replacement tends to become even less acceptable, undergoing the process of accelerated pejoration. This explicates the extreme importance of euphemism in social communication. It is because the euphemism serves as a polite expression that helps avoid embarrassment and saves face for conversation participants. Speakers manipulate this approach overwhelmingly and unconsciously in different topics. Al-Hamad and Salman (2013: 194) suggest that euphemism is one of the key strategies for maintaining politeness, as it helps soften communication between people especially when it comes to sensitive or offensive topics. Additionally, the use of euphemism is determined by politeness (Crespo-Fernández, 2005: 80). Regarding face, it refers to the public self-image that every individual wants to claim for themselves, particularly positive face—a desired image of being appreciated and approved (Brown & Levinson, 1987: 311). This perspective is particularly relevant in conservative indigenous tribes. By substituting words, one can reduce conflict and hostility in interpersonal interactions, avoid crossing ethical boundaries, and ensure harmonious communication. Furthermore, it protects the face of the speaker, the listener, and the person being discussed, especially concerning embarrassing topics. This is because “face”, whether positive or negative, reflects someone’s image and evaluation in the eyes of others.

5. Conclusion

This article aims to explore how Tjuabar Paiwan expresses sex-related concepts, including organ, gender, intimacy, fertility, and lust. The topic is extremely private because of its high arousal and emotional intensity. Data collection was conducted through fieldwork with the valuable assistance of Paiwan informants. Based on authentic data, it was found that euphemism plays a crucial role in conveying sex-related expressions and is intertwined with various forms of figurative language, such as metaphor, metonymy, simile, and neutrality. These findings are consistent with previous studies. Similarly, this approach is commonly employed to discuss other taboo themes, such as death, rituals, hunting, and other living issues. Furthermore, these euphemisms are grounded in principles of politeness, aiming to maintain a harmonious atmosphere in conversation and preserve everyone’s dignity. While speaking on sensitive topics has increased, euphemisms become more and more crucial for word

substitutions. These milder alternatives are a fine way to express their abrupt or offensive opinions.

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Appendix: Sex-related expressions in Tjuabar Paiwan

Classification	Data and Translation	Metaphor	Metonymy	Simile	Original ³
1. Organ	<i>drutju</i> 'Penis'				■
	<i>qalici</i> 'Penis'				■
	<i>qaludru</i> 'Testes'				■
	<i>qutji</i> 'Vagina'				■
	<i>viking</i> 'Curved penis' (Literally: something is curved or bending)	■			
	<i>kaingaw</i> (Ferrell, 1982: 106) 'Glans' (Literally: the end of a branch or a vine)	■			
	<i>ljeput</i> (Ferrell, 1982: 140) 'short penis' (Literally: the glans is covered by the foreskin and appears to be short.)				■
	<i>tjulja</i> (Ferrell, 1982: 301) 'Penis' (Literally: an eel. The penis is as long as an eel.)	■			
	<i>drequen</i> 'The droopy penis.' (Literally: to bow or to nod)	■			
	<i>qudju</i> ** ⁴				■

³ Original lexeme in Paiwan.

⁴ Extended meanings that are no longer in use today are marked with asterisks (**).

Classification	Data and Translation	Metaphor	Metonymy	Simile	Original ³
	‘Penis’ (Literally: the anus, in reduplication form as <i>qudju-udju</i>)				
	<i>mirazek</i> ** ‘Penis’ (Literally: Pubic hair)				■
	<i>Ciqaw maka tatad.</i> ‘The wavering penis’ (Literally: A fish struggles and writhes on land.)	■			
	<i>Mere-ka-kan-en.</i> ‘Big penis or thick vagina’ (Literally: gigantic food)	■			
	<i>Matu-supiq=anga a nimadju.</i> ‘His (penis) is like taro stalks.’			■	
	<i>Ramaljeng na-metad=anga.</i> ‘Old and withered.’				■
2. Gender	<i>uqaljay</i> ‘A man or a male’				■
	<i>vavayan</i> ‘A woman or a female’				■
	<i>Sa-uqaljay ti Muni.</i> ‘Muni behaves (or dresses) like a man.’			■	
	<i>Matu-vavayan ti Camak.</i> ‘Camak behaves (or dresses) like a woman.’			■	
	<i>Uqaljay angata timadju, ljakua na-ki-sane-vavayan=anga.</i> ‘He was indeed a man, but then he became a woman.’				■
	<i>Mareka-tjengelay a uqaljay a mamaw.</i>				■

Classification	Data and Translation	Metaphor	Metonymy	Simile	Original ³
	‘Gay’ (Literally: Two identical men like each other.)				
	<i>Mareka-tjengelay a vavayan a mamaw.</i> ‘Lesbian’ (Literally: Two identical women like each other.)				■
	<i>Mareka-tjengelay a uqaljay a mamaw tiamadju.</i> <i>Na-ki-sane-uqaljay a macidilj.</i> <i>Na-ki-sane-vavayan a macidilj.</i> ‘These two men like each other. One acts as a man. The other acts as a woman.’				■
	<i>Pa-qa-quljis.</i> ‘A hermaphrodite’ (Literally: A thing is placed upside down.)	■			
3. Intimacy	<i>ku=cekelj.</i> ‘My spouse.’				■
	<i>ku=valjaw.</i> ‘My spouse.’				■
	<i>Ku=sipamaw ti Camak.</i> ‘Camak is my dead spouse.’				■
	<i>Ku=p<in>uqetseng-an ti Muni.</i> ‘Muni is my fiancée.’	■			
	<i>Ina-vangulj timadju.</i> ‘He is a widower. / She is a widow.’	■			
	<i>Na-kitjuvaday=anga ti Camak.</i> ‘Camak is divorced.’				■
	<i>Na-ma-vaday=anga ti Camak kati Tjuku.</i> ‘Camak and Tjuku are divorced.’				■
	<i>Pa-curucuru ti Camak.</i> ‘Camak is a remarried person (digamist).’	■			

Classification	Data and Translation	Metaphor	Metonymy	Simile	Original ³
	(Literally: Camak is a rejoin.)				
	<i>ki-draqa</i> . 'Have an affair' (Literally: Getting a branch.)	■			
	<i>Na-ki-draqa ti Camak</i> . 'Camak had an affair.'	■			
	<i>Ru-ki-draqa timadju</i> . 'She is someone's mistress. / He is someone's lover (homewrecker).'	■			
	<i>Mare-ki-draqa tiamadju</i> . 'They are in an adulterous relationship.'	■			
	<i>K<in>i-draqa-an</i> . 'An illegitimate child.'	■			
4. Sex	<i>Ljusalju-saljus tua nimadju</i> . 'He is masturbating.' (Literally: He is grating taro into shreds)		■		
	<i>Drutju timadju</i> . 'He is masturbating.'				■
	<i>Pa-ljuqiljuq tua niamadju</i> . 'She is masturbating.' (Literally: She is digging in a hole.)		■		
	<i>Pa-ka-kiudru-i</i> . 'Let's make love.'				■
	<i>Maka-kiudru-dru=amen</i> . 'We are making love.'				■
	<i>Djikdjik-an niamadju</i> . 'They are having sex.' (Literally: They have the action of penetration.)		■		
	<i>Djikdjik-djik-an ti Muni ni Camak</i> .		■		

Classification	Data and Translation	Metaphor	Metonymy	Simile	Original ³
	‘Camak is having sex with Muni.’				
	<i>Savuta-in ni Camak ti Muni.</i> ‘Camak raped Muni.’ (Literally: Camak coerced Muni into having sex with him.)				■
	<i>Uri vaik=anga ti Camak.</i> ‘Camak is going to have an orgasm.’ (Literally: Camak is going to ejaculate.)	■			
5. Fertility	<i>Maqati a pa-pu-aljak ti Camak.</i> ‘Camak can make someone pregnant.’ (Literally: Camak is capable of making a woman have a child.)				■
	<i>Ma-qati a pu-aljak ti Muni.</i> ‘Muni can be pregnant.’ (Literally: Muni is capable of having a child.)				■
6. Lust	<i>Ru-saljinga timadju.</i> ‘He wants (sex) quite often.’				■
	<i>Ma-pudru=sun.</i> ‘You are coquettish.’	■			
	<i>Ca su=paralj.</i> ‘You are so lecherous.’				■
	<i>Ma-kadju angata=sun, namaya tua valjas.</i> ‘You’re indeed as horny as a breeding pig.’	■			

土坂排灣語性相關的詞彙

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摘 要

禁忌是語言中普遍存在的現象，涉及許多主題。與生命、死亡、儀式和政治等話題相比，性因其高度的喚醒潛力和情感強度而被認為是更禁忌的主題。因此，公開討論性通常被視為是非常不合適的。本研究主要透過田野調查，探討排灣語性相關的詞語及說法，包含器官、性別、親密關係、生育及情慾等詞彙。依據觀察結果，這些詞語或說法主要透過委婉語和比喻性語言（如隱喻、轉喻和明喻）的結合來傳達。這項觀察結果與先前研究的結果一致。委婉語在表達這些概念時起著至關重要的作用，其作用源於禮貌和面子的考慮。最後，需要注意的是，某些早期與性有關的詞語如今已不再具有相同的含義。

關鍵字：禁忌、性、委婉語、比喻性語言、禮貌

