

Doctoral (PhD) dissertation

**Ghana in Cartoons:
Thematic Analysis of Cognitive Devices in Political
Cartoons**

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Ghana in Cartoons: Thematic Analysis of Cognitive Devices in Political Cartoons

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DECLARATION

“The undersigned **George Boakye-Yiadom**, in full awareness of my liability, I declare that the dissertation submitted is my original academic work, which was prepared with attention to the international norms of copyright, and the references included in it are clear and complete. I further declare that I am not currently subject to a procedure aimed at the revocation of a doctoral degree, and that a doctoral degree already awarded has not been revoked from me in the past 5 years. I have not submitted the present dissertation at another institute before, and it has not been rejected.”



.....
George Boakye-Yiadom

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS	III
LIST OF TABLES	VI
LIST OF FIGURES	VII
ABSTRACT	X
CHAPTER ONE	1
GENERAL INTRODUCTION	1
1. Introduction	1
1.2. Background to the Study	1
1.2.1 The Political Cartoon Genre.....	3
1.2.2. History of Ghanaian Political Cartoons	5
1.3. Statement of the Problem/Rationale	8
1.4. Aims/Objectives	10
1.5. Research Questions	11
1.6. Significance of the Study	11
1.7. Scope and Limitations	12
CHAPTER TWO	14
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND RELEVANT LITERATURE	14
2.1.1 Metaphor as comparison and embellishment: Aristotle	15
2.1.2 Classical View of Metaphor to Modern Theory	16
2.1.3 The Interaction View of Metaphor	17
2.1.4 Conventional, Novel, and Creative Metaphors	18
2.2.0 Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT)	21
2.2.2 Novel Metaphors Embedded in Conceptual Metaphor Theory	24
2.2.3. The Multimodal Approach to Conceptual Metaphor.....	25
2.2.4 Representation of Concepts in Visual Metaphors: Monomodal and multimodal metaphors	30
2.2.5 Source and Target identification in Visual metaphor	32
2.3.0 Extended Conceptual Metaphor Theory (ECMT).....	34
2.3.1 Previous studies that have employed CMT and Multimodal Metaphor in their work.	35
2.3.0. Conceptual Blending Theory	37
2.3.1. Composition of Metaphor in Conceptual Blending Theory	40
2.3.2. Mental Spaces	41
2.3.3. Blending Networks	42
2.3.4. The structure of the Blending Process.....	44
2.3.5. Optimality Principles	44

2.3.6. Basic Types of Conceptual Integration Network.....	45
2.3.7. Simplex Network	45
2.3.8. Mirror Network.....	46
2.3.9. Single-Scope Network	47
2.3.10. Double-Scope Network.....	48
2.4.0. Previous Studies on Conceptual Blending Theory in Political Cartoons	50
2.5.0 Conceptual Metonymy.....	52
2.5.1 Types of Metonymies.....	56
2.5.2 Metonymy in Visual and Multimodal Discourse	60
2.6.0 Interrelations	60
2.6.1 Metaphor and Metonymy's Interaction	61
2.7.0 Chapter Summary	64
CHAPTER THREE	66
METHODOLOGY.....	66
3.1.0. Introduction.....	66
3.1.1 Research Approaches	66
3.1.2 The Qualitative Approach	66
3.2.1 Sample/Data/Corpus	68
3.2.2 The Sample Size	70
3.2.3 Sampling Technique and Data Collection Procedure.....	71
3.2.4 Data Analytical Framework	72
3.2.5 Procedure: Identifying Visual Metaphors in Ghanaian Political Cartoons.....	73
3.2.7 Procedure: Identifying Visual and Conceptual Blends in Ghanaian Political Cartoons.....	81
2.2.8 Procedure for Identifying and Analysing Visual Metonymy in Political Cartoons	85
3.2.8 Analysing the Verbal/Linguistic Components of the Cartoons	87
3.3.0 Chapter Summary	87
CHAPTER FOUR.....	89
DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS.....	89
4.1 Introduction.....	89
4.2 Metaphors in Political Cartoons.....	89
4.2.1 Theme of Economy/Conceptualisation of Economic Issues	89
4.2.1.1 The Economy as a Living Organism.....	90
4.2.1.2 The Economy as a Non-Living Organism.....	111
4.2.1.1 Conclusion on the theme of the Economy	125
4.2.2 Theme of Health and Illness	125
4.2.2.1 Conclusion on the Health theme	134
4.2.3 Theme of Sports and Games	134
4.2.3.1 Boxing Scenario.....	135
4.2.3.2 Wrestling Scenario.....	139

4.2.3.3 Race Scenario.....	141
4.2.3.4 Hurdle/High Jump Scenario.....	150
4.2.3.5 Soccer/Football Scenario	153
4.2.3.6 Conclusion on the cartoonists' use of Sports metaphors.....	156
4.2.4 The Theme of Journey/Travel	157
4.2.4.1 Conclusion on the cartoonists' use of the Journey or Travel metaphor.....	161
4.2.5 Theme of Religion/Biblical Allusion	162
4.2.5.1 Conclusion on the cartoonists' use of Religious and Biblical allusions.....	176
CHAPTER FIVE	178
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS	178
5.1 SUMMARY	178
5.2 CONCLUSION FROM THE STUDY	179
5.3 THE IMPLICATION OF THE STUDY ON CARTOON DISCOURSE.....	187
5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH	188
5.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY	189
References.....	191
APPENDIX	202

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 Integration networks (based on Fauconnier and Turner 2002).....	49
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LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 Smoking Kills.....	26
Figure 2 Mono-modal visual metaphor	31
Figure 3 Multimodal metaphor	32
Figure 4 Displaying a hospital scene.....	77
Figure 5 Hospital's Intensive Care Unit	82
Figure 6 Choice for Vote.....	86
Figure 7 The Economy is a Plant	90
Figure 8 The Economy on Steroids.....	93
Figure 9 Cedis on Drip.....	96
Figure 10 Caring for the ailing Economy	99
Figure 11 Feeding the economy	101
Figure 12 Cedi recovery ward.....	104
Figure 13 Economic Recovery.....	107
Figure 14 Economy at Physio	108
Figure 15 Economic Crime Scene.....	109
Figure 16 The Economy is a Broken Vehicle	111
Figure 17 Economic War	115
Figure 18 Economy in the Science Lab.....	118
Figure 19 Fixing the Economy is Children's Playing Ground	120
Figure 20 The Dilemma of the Cause of the Broken Vehicle	123
Figure 21 Obstetrics and Gynaecology of the Hospital Unit.....	126
Figure 22 Administering Intravenous Injection.....	128
Figure 23 Economy under ICU.....	131
Figure 24 Government Policies under Review.....	133
Figure 25 Presidential Boxing Match.....	135
Figure 26 Dome Kwabenya Parliamentary Bout.....	137
Figure 27 Parliamentary Intense Debate	139
Figure 28 Presidential Race	141
Figure 29 NPP Presidential Race	144
Figure 30 Finishing First in a Race	146
Figure 31 Utility Tariff Race.....	148
Figure 32 Commodities Hurdle Race.....	150
Figure 33 NDC Presidential Fees Jump	152
Figure 34 Injured players on the team.....	154
Figure 35 An Overburdened Bus.....	157
Figure 36 Deadly Voyage.....	159
Figure 37 Building National Cathedral	162

Figure 38 Visual representation depicting the building of the Cathedral.....	165
Figure 39 Baptism of Induction	167
Figure 40 Crucifixion.....	170
Figure 41 David and Goliath war (Customs War)	172
Figure 42 Economic Resurrection.....	174

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<u>AFCON</u>	<u>Africa Cup of Nations</u>
<u>AMDI</u>	<u>African Media Development Initiative</u>
<u>BoG</u>	<u>Bank of Ghana</u>
<u>CBT</u>	<u>Conceptual Blending Theory</u>
<u>CL</u>	<u>Cognitive Linguistics</u>
<u>CMT</u>	<u>Conceptual Metaphor Theory</u>
<u>CPP</u>	<u>Convention People's Party</u>
<u>CPR</u>	<u>Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation</u>
<u>FIFA</u>	<u>Federation Internationale de Football Association</u>
<u>GNA</u>	<u>Ghana News Agency</u>
<u>GUM</u>	<u>Ghana Union Movement</u>
<u>HIPC</u>	<u>Highly Indebted Poor Countries</u>
<u>ICU</u>	<u>Intensive Care Unit</u>
<u>IMF</u>	<u>International Monetary Fund</u>
<u>JDM</u>	<u>John Dramani Mahama</u>
<u>MIP</u>	<u>Metaphor Identification Procedure</u>
<u>MM</u>	<u>Multimodal Metaphor</u>
<u>MP</u>	<u>Member of Parliament</u>
<u>NADAA</u>	<u>Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo</u>
<u>NDC</u>	<u>National Democratic Congress</u>
<u>NPP</u>	<u>New Patriotic Party</u>
<u>PC</u>	<u>Political Cartoon</u>
<u>SHS</u>	<u>Senior High School</u>
<u>VISMIP</u>	<u>Visual Metaphor Identification Procedure</u>

ABSTRACT

A cognitive linguistic approach is employed here to examine how cartoonists utilise metaphors, metonymy, and conceptual blends to create meanings from Ghanaian political, economic, and social issues through visuals. Studies of Ghanaian political cartoons (Rockson, 2024; Boakye-Yiadom, 2020; Ohemeng, 2020; de-Graft Aikins & Akoi-Jackson, 2020; Oduro-Frimpong, 2021; Amankwah & Asuamah, 2016; Oduro-Frimpong, 2013) have primarily focused on specific events. The cognitive processes underlying the creative use of various conceptual devices in Ghanaian political cartoons have not been closely examined by Ghanaian researchers. This research examines how Ghanaian cartoonists employ conceptual elements to frame and critique socio-political and socio-economic issues in Ghana, with a particular focus on recurring thematic domains such as economy, health, sports, trade/journey, and religion. One hundred and twenty (120) political cartoons were retrieved from two media outlets: Tilapia of 3 News and Akosua of the Daily Guide. Tilapia disseminates its publications on social media platforms, specifically Facebook and Twitter, whereas Akosua disseminates her publications in print through newspapers and online. Moreover, the paper emphasises the persuasive and evaluative role of such visual strategies, allowing cartoonists to criticise governance, reveal societal contradictions, and shape people's opinions. Cartoons have become one of the most useful political communication tools, overcoming linguistic and literacy barriers by combining various semiotic means: visual imagery, textual means, symbolism, and references to cultures. This dissertation contributes greatly to the study of cognitive linguistics and visual communication. It offers a subtle description of meaning creation in multimodal political discourse in the Ghanaian context. The current research adds to the existing body of knowledge by looking into the future concerning the cognitive and cultural aspects of cartoon interpretation. Moreover, it shows how the use of well-known experiential domains contributes to better engagement and understanding of the cartoonists' intended message by the audience. Notwithstanding the efficiency and potency of political cartoons in communicating complex messages in simple terms, it is sometimes challenging to interpret and understand the intended message when one is not abreast of the issues surrounding the publication, the settings and the used characters. This has been known to impede the process of actualising the real message behind the selected cartoons

CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1. Introduction

This chapter presents an overview of the study. It outlines the background and rationale underpinning this research, the objectives and research questions guiding the investigation, and the significance of the study. Furthermore, it justifies the adoption of visual approaches as a framework for analysing political cartoons. The chapter also discusses and delineates the scope of the study, concluding with an outline of the dissertation's overall structure.

1.2. Background to the Study

There has been a shift in communication over the years, as visual communication has become increasingly common. The change occurred because journalists began to enjoy creating multimedia content. The increased use of new technology and the internet is why journalists now use this approach. Politics, sports, economics, social life, religion, and health issues are often discussed using multimodal and visual methods. Ademilokun and Olateju (2016) argue that text producers require a range of semiotic resources to generate meaning. With increased globalisation and digital expansion, digital communication is shaping how we interact with one another. Visual communication requires us to use various related items to convey information, while its interpretation equally demands rigorous and reliable approaches. Ghana is not an exception to this paradigm shift in visualising issues. The public's focus is gradually shifting from traditional media to internet-based journalism.

Many social issues, such as corruption and questionable leadership, have been explored by visual journalists using the power of their creativity. Visual journalists rely on a range of techniques, including cartoons, placards, photography, sculpture, painting, and creating short- animated films, to convey their messages. Experts have found cartoons helpful because they can inform viewers and convey messages effectively. Cartoons can convey complicated messages through simple illustrations. Cartoons come in various types, including political, comic strips, and educational cartoons. This study focuses on political

cartoons, which discuss political personalities and issues. According to El Refaie (2009, pp. 184-185), in her work on multimodal metaphor, explains “political cartoons an illustration, usually in a single panel, published in the editorial or comments pages of a newspaper which may refer to a current political development or a popular person, but in a way that takes a stand or presents a particular point of view”. Similarly, Connors (2017) and Kennedy (1993) emphasise that political cartoons function as visual opinion pieces, editorial commentaries in pictorial form. The use of metaphors, exaggeration, caricature, and symbolism enables cartoonists to communicate critique, provoke reflection, and influence political perception.

Political cartooning conveys its message mainly through metaphors and visuals (Kennedy, 1993; El Refaie, 2003). In a similar vein, Johnson (1937) notes that political cartoonists now work like editorial writers, focusing their efforts on producing opinion pieces in the form of pictures. As demonstrated on page 44 of Johnson’s work, an artist possesses the ability to rapidly assimilate a plethora of concepts, subsequently transforming them into a format that is readily transferable to the reader. Furthermore, Saraceni (2003, p.36) mentions that “cartoons are like single sentences; to understand them you need to have extra-textual information”. To contribute to the discussion, Carl (1970) asserts that the primary purpose of a political cartoon is to communicate a message visually in a manner that the general audience can easily comprehend, owing to their familiarity with the depicted themes and symbols. Scholarly studies have demonstrated that political metaphors are multimodal in nature, finding expression in both language and images (Lakoff and Johnson on linguistic metaphor, Forceville on multimodal metaphor).

The concept of metaphor, central to this study, has evolved from Aristotle’s rhetorical conception to the modern cognitive perspective formulated by Lakoff and Johnson (1980). While Aristotle regarded metaphor as a stylistic device that illuminates abstract ideas through analogy, Lakoff and Johnson reconceptualised it as a fundamental mechanism of thought: humans understand and experience one conceptual domain in terms of another. This cognitive approach has since expanded into multimodal discourse, recognising that metaphors operate not only linguistically but also visually (Forceville, 2004, 2006, 2008). Political cartoons exemplify this multimodal potential, as they combine linguistic and visual signs to produce layered meanings. Lakoff and Johnson’s groundbreaking book, “*Metaphors We Live By*,” published in 1980, shifted the study of metaphors away from language toward

conceptual analysis. According to proponents, our daily lives are shaped by metaphoric thinking, and diverse evidence-based methods underpin their positions. The approaches demonstrated above encompass cartoons, advertisements, images, and artefacts. Concerning this study's focus, it is established that cartoonists heavily utilise metaphors as their primary method to convey their key messages through visual imagery.

1.2.1 The Political Cartoon Genre

During the 18th century, James Gillray (1756-1815), one of the pioneers, earned a reputation for creating political cartoons that exposed certain negative societal behaviours. In this century, political cartoonists have significantly influenced people's opinions on democracy, economics, and social and ethnic issues (Kirkwood, 2016). Most political cartoons offer information on matters within a region and sometimes provide insight into events occurring in other parts of the world. By doing this, they rephrase ongoing events in ways that are easy for society to grasp using shared signs and images. These cartoons comment on society by interweaving metaphors, idioms, and allegories that resonate with society. Some symbols used in the designs are well known among residents and may even gain global attention. Hoffman and Howard (2007) state that a cartoon can convey complex ideas through imagery. They claim that presenting public issues in the form of political cartoons makes the issues easier for people to understand. In her study, Conners (1998) highlights that journalists must share only facts and avoid expressing emotions; however, political cartoons allow publishers to convey their views through allegations and accusations.

According to Walker (2003, p.16), politicians are often the targets of political humour, especially in the hands of talented cartoonists. In the hands of this talented cartoonist, the editorial cartoon can be a powerful tool because its message can be quickly grasped and passed on to others. One of the most powerful weapons that a cartoon has is its seemingly innocent humour, whose message can be absorbed easily, without much reflection or resistance (p.16). To confirm this assertion about the power of political cartoons, a quote attributed to William Marcy Tweed, a Democratic Party leader of New York City in the late 19th Century bemoaned: "I don't care so much what the papers write about me - my constituents can't read; but damn it, they can see pictures" (Sproule, 1980, p. 348). Similarly, Lamb (1996) espouses "that when political cartoonists are at their best, they are

like switchblades-simple and to the point, they cut deeply and leave an impression”. Cartoonists use exaggeration, caricature, and visual metaphor to distil intricate political critique into a single, easily decoded image, so the cartoon’s punch is felt immediately by readers. Walker’s argument is twofold. Firstly, he asserts that cartoons are rhetorically powerful and that they “pack a punch”. However, he emphasises that a political cartoon is a historically constructed image depicted in a very specific context for a specific audience, as temporal and cultural specificity suggest that meanings can shift as contexts change (Lamb, 1996, p.19). As a result, what may be perceived as biting satire in one moment may be misunderstood later. Secondly, Walker, citing Markiewicz’s (1974) study, espouses that humour does not contribute to persuasion, nor change already-held beliefs (Walker, pp. 18-20).

Furthermore, cartoonists employ this style to articulate their perspectives on contemporary socio-economic and political issues that have emerged as pressing societal concerns (Greenberg, 2002, p. 182). In contributing to the discourse on political cartoons, Göçek (1998) notes that they exert significant cultural influence, as their meanings are shaped through the dynamic interplay between textual and visual elements. Similarly, Brantner and Lobinger (2014) highlight the potential of cartoons to influence behaviour, noting that political images possess a subtle yet powerful influence that can make them appear simultaneously harmless and persuasive (pp. 249-250).

Negro-Alousque (2013, p. 370) summarises the distinctive features of political cartoons as follows: (i) political cartoons are known for their effective descriptive skills and allusion to society, politics, and specific persons, especially those who are prominent, (ii) they provide knowledge of current world events to represent recent events in a critical imaginative light, that’s, cartoons bridge reality, fact, and fiction, (Edwards 1997, p. 8), (iii) cartoons are sarcastic in nature as they represent a humourous caricature, (Negro 2010, p. 80), and (iv) they act as a means of communication by connecting audiences with political figures and facilitating engagement in political discourse. Likewise, Marin -Arrese (2015, p.1) mentions that meaning production in political cartoons is commonly achieved through humorous pictorial representation or a critical stance expressed in the cartoon. Nevertheless, the cartoon’s ability to distil the most complex issues into simple graphic metaphors,

coupled with its availability to the mass audience, makes it a potentially potent political force (Medhurst & De Sousa, p. 182).

In their study, Medhurst and DeSousa (2017, p.90) identify four essential functions that political cartoons perform: entertainment, aggression reduction, agenda-setting framing, and specific policy advocacy. In addition to these functional roles, they delineate four fundamental themes prevalent in political cartoons: political commonplaces, cultural allusions, personal character traits, and situational depictions. Political commonplaces are topics that occur within the cartoonist's jurisdiction, including the state of the economy, national defence, political processes, and electoral events such as campaigns, voting, and the declaration of results. Political commonplace is the most essential aspect of political cartoons, as they focus on getting the attention of the reader. The second theme, cultural allusions, entails any fictive or mythical character, any narrative or form taken from folklore, literature or past electronic media, which are brought into the contemporary happenings, such as the biblical story of Jesus' last supper, Jesus' crucifixion, David and Goliath war, among others. The third theme involves the depiction of notorious personal character traits of a politician, including charisma, age, morality, intelligence, honesty, leadership qualities, etc. Such depictions, accompanied by captions, resonate with the audience, thereby enhancing understanding of the implied message. Finally, the situational theme involves the unexpected happenings in the cartoonists' jurisdiction of work that may inform their publications. For example, the outbreak of COVID-19 and the Russo-Ukrainian War may affect the cartoonist's publications. These thematic elements serve as rhetorical tools that cartoonists employ to engage audiences and convey complex political messages effectively. Given the multifaceted roles and thematic depth of political cartoons, this subject warrants further scholarly examination to fully understand their impact on public discourse and political communication (Medhurst and DeSousa, 1981, pp. 200-202).

1.2.2. History of Ghanaian Political Cartoons

The emergence of political cartoons in Ghana is generally traced to the 1950s, a pivotal era marked by the nationalist struggle against colonial rule. During this period, cartoons became a vibrant medium for socio-political commentary, reflecting the growing public consciousness and political activism that accompanied the decolonisation process. These cartoons served as a vehicle for critique, particularly against colonial policies, while

concurrently advocating for nationalist aspirations. However, it was only after independence that the genre began to enjoy broader popularity as a primary mode of communication in newspapers. This was due to the realisation of political leaders and parties of the power of visual satire as a means of persuasion and mass mobilisation. In the aftermath of independence, the domain of political cartoons became inextricably intertwined with partisan communication. Newspapers such as the *Accra Evening News*, founded by Dr Kwame Nkrumah, were influential in popularising cartoons as instruments of political communication and critique, often using humour and satire to challenge colonial authority and promote nationalist ideals (Ansu-Kyeremeh, 2005). It is evident that these early cartoons fulfilled a dual function, serving both an entertaining purpose for their readership and a mobilising effect on political sentiment, thereby shaping public opinion in the years leading up to and following independence in 1957. Nkrumah. Jallow (2014), in his notes, documents that “Cartoonists at the Accra Evening News had earlier painted cartoons of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, the first prime minister and the president of Ghana, as a Saint in the lead up to the coup d’état ousting him. However, in 1966, these cartoons suddenly took a turn, casting him as a villain. This newspaper employed cartoons as an effective medium for simplifying complex political messages, criticising opponents, and mobilising support among a largely semi-literate populace. According to Karikari (2007), this communicative strategy reinforced the populist agenda of the Convention People’s Party (CPP). Within this context, political cartoons functioned not merely as humorous illustrations but as deliberate instruments of political rhetoric, tools that transcended linguistic and educational boundaries to engage a broad spectrum of the Ghanaian public. Accordingly, Eko (2007) asserts that the machinations of certain authoritarian African leaders to cling to power through practices of transilience and deterritorialization afforded cartoonists the zeal to lampoon them. A typical example is the depiction of Cameroon’s president, Paul Biya, as the lion-man. The prominent cartoonists active during the post-colonial era period included *Ghanatta*, *Sam*, and *Thinks*. Most of their works were distinctly hagiographic, portraying political figures in an idealised manner. In reference to Jallow (2014, p. 80), *Ghanatta*, *Sam*, and *Thinks*, among these cartoonists, became skilled at hagiographic images of Kwame Nkrumah that were beyond mere support to him or his policies.

Over time, however, Ghanaian political cartoons have undergone considerable evolution, reflecting shifts in the nation's political climate, media landscape, and modes of public expression. These cartoons have evolved from their hagiographic beginnings to exhibit a more sophisticated approach to print design, incorporating vibrant colours and intricate compositional techniques (Westin, 1979). This transition can be attributed in part to advances in technology, which have also enabled Ghanaian cartoonists to disseminate their works through social media platforms, complementing their traditional presence in newspapers. A significant number of contemporary Ghanaian cartoonists actively contribute to this vibrant landscape. Notable figures include Daavi (*Daily Graphic*), Akosua (*Daily Guide*), T Spoon (*Chronicle*), Politics and Politricks (*Enquirer*), Pot (*Kotoko Express*), and Makaveli (*Accra Evening News*). Aside from the newspapers' dissemination of cartoons, there are other cartoonists, such as *Tilapia Da Cartoonist* of *3 News*, who utilises social media platforms (Facebook and Twitter) as a primary channel for disseminating his work and engaging the public. At the same time, *Santrofi Anoma* actively shares work on Facebook, reflecting the growing integration of digital media in the circulation of political cartoons (Boakye-Yiadom, 2020). It must be noted that despite the numerous cartoonists, very few are still operating, including Akosua of the *Daily Guide* and *Tilapia Da Cartoonist* of *3 News*. The topics addressed by these cartoonists are diverse, spanning politics, social issues, economics, religion, sports, and popular culture. Of particular interest is the distinctive way in which these cartoons engage with national political matters, combining visual creativity with social commentary to convey complex issues effectively.

A noteworthy feature of cartoons in general and that of Ghanaian political cartoons is the inclusion of accompanying text, commonly referred to as "bubble speeches." This text may appear as a title or caption, or as the dialogue produced by the characters within the speech bubbles, enhancing the cartoon's communicative and interpretive impact. Ghana, as a country, is marked by considerable linguistic diversity, with seventy-three local languages spoken across its regions (Reilly, Scandurra, ResCue, Hermannsson, & Gayton, 2023, p. 808).

Notably, nine of these languages are incorporated into the educational curriculum and are taught at all levels, from primary through tertiary education. This multilingual landscape has implications for political communication, including the production and reception of

political cartoons. Cartoonists in Ghana often navigate this linguistic diversity by combining visual imagery with text, sometimes using local languages in captions or bubble speeches to engage specific audiences. Such strategies enable cartoons to transcend literacy and language barriers, making complex political and social issues accessible to a broader public. Despite this language diversity in Ghana, cartoonists tend to utilise only a limited selection of languages in their bubble speeches, primarily English, Twi, Ghanaian Pidgin English, and occasionally Ga, Hausa, and Ewe. This preference likely reflects the widespread socio-political currency of these languages, enabling cartoonists to maximise audience comprehension and effectively convey their intended messages. By combining visual imagery with strategically chosen language, Ghanaian political cartoons go beyond literacy and language barriers, enabling a wide audience to engage with complex political and social issues.

1.3. Statement of the Problem/Rationale

The field of political cartoons constitutes a rapidly expanding domain of visual communication that is increasingly gaining attention in cognitive and media studies. While numerous studies have explored political cartoons, each tends to approach the subject from a distinct analytical perspective. For instance, López (2019) employs Charteri-Black's (2014) Critical Metaphor Analysis (CMA), Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), and Musolff's (2016) scenario-based approach to investigate how political cartoons were used to convey the messages of five conservative party manifestos in the British press. In addition, Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) has become a frequently applied framework in linguistic and cognitive research, aiding in uncovering the implied meanings in political cartoons (Bounegru & Forceville, 2011; Dălălău & Maior, 2014). In their 2011 study, Bounegru and Forceville demonstrate how cartoonists employed multimodal metaphors and metonymy to represent the 2008 global financial crisis, highlighting the theory's utility in analysing how visual and textual elements work together to convey complex political and social phenomena. According to their research, metaphors help clarify complex economic topics, and visual metaphors provide a valuable tool for studying policies.

Similarly, Dălălău and Maior (2014) employ CMT to investigate metaphors in political cartoons, specifically in relation to the Eurozone crisis. Arrese (2015) examines the

utilisation of economic metaphors by the Spanish press in reporting the Eurozone crisis, while Zhao and Wu (2022) analyse how disease metaphors are employed in cartoons concerning the energy crisis leading up to the COVID-19 pandemic and the Ukraine war. Collectively, these studies demonstrate that many scholars regard metaphor as a potent instrument for political cartoonists, enabling them to communicate complex messages by drawing on concepts and ideas that audiences already understand from familiar source domains.

Despite the growing global interest in political cartoons, relatively few studies have explored this phenomenon within the Ghanaian context. Ohemeng (2020), in his MPhil dissertation, employs multimodal critical discourse analysis to examine the use of political cartoons in presidential and parliamentary elections. Similarly, Oduro-Frimpong (2013) investigates Akosua's political cartoons in contemporary Ghana, while Rockson (2024) analyses the metaphors and metonymies employed in Akosua's cartoons to represent electoral politics. In addition, Fiankor, Dzegblor, and Kwame (2017) utilise political cartoons to illustrate the 2013 presidential election petition in Ghana. These and other studies have employed a range of theoretical frameworks to analyse political cartoons across various topics within Ghana's socio-political landscape. Notably, political cartoon discourses are typically ideological and opinion-based, reflecting both the perspectives of the cartoonists and the broader socio-political contexts in which they are produced.

However, these studies have generally not considered the amalgamation of conceptual metaphors, conceptual blending, and conceptual metonymies in communicating Ghana's socio-economic, socio-political, and contemporary issues. Moreover, while prior research offers valuable insights into the economic and political aspects of Ghanaian cartoons, a scrutiny of the literature reveals a lack of incorporation of cognitive theories to uncover the cartoonists' conceptualisation of these socio-political and economic issues. Addressing this gap, the present study adopts a cognitive approach to examine how Ghanaian cartoonists conceptualise socio-economic and socio-political issues, drawing upon multiple familiar (source) domains. Specifically, the present research utilises both Conceptual Blending Theory (CBT) and Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) to unravel the metaphorical and metonymical underpinnings behind the selected cartoons. It is hypothesised that the deployment of these figurative devices significantly enhances the understanding of the

cartoonists' intended messages, providing deeper insights into how complex societal issues are communicated through political cartoons.

In summary, while both global and Ghanaian studies have highlighted the analytical potential of political cartoons, a critical gap remains in understanding how Ghanaian cartoonists cognitively employ metaphors and metonymies to illustrate socio-economic, socio-political, and current issues. Previous studies have tended to focus on individual cartoonists, specific elections, or singular theoretical perspectives, leaving broader patterns of conceptualisation largely unexplored. By adopting a cognitive approach that uses the concept of both CBT and CMT, the current investigation aims to bridge this gap, providing a comprehensive analysis of how cartoonists employ various visual elements and textual elements to communicate complex societal issues. This investigation is justified by the need to understand not only the rhetorical and aesthetic dimensions of Ghanaian political cartoons but also their role as instruments of public persuasion, ideological discourse, and socio-political engagement and agenda-setting strategy.

1.4. Aims/Objectives

This research intends to further the debate on how metaphors and metonymy affect political cartoons. The specific objectives are:

- (i) To examine how cartoonists in Ghana use images and symbols as semiotic and metaphorical devices to construct messages on economic topics.
- (ii) To analyse how Ghanaian cartoonists employ health and hospital imagery as metaphorical resources for conveying implied socio-political meanings.
- (iii) To examine how cartoonists rely on sports elements to construct socio-political messages.
- (iv) To interpret the role of journey imagery in Ghanaian political cartoons as symbolic strategies that construct socio-political meanings.
- (v) To examine how Ghanaian cartoonists draw on biblical allusions as metaphorical resources for constructing and communicating socio-political messages.

1.5. Research Questions

In summary, this study aims to address the research questions outlined below.

- (i) How do Ghanaian cartoonists use images and symbols as semiotic and metaphorical devices to construct messages on economic issues?
- (ii) How do Ghanaian cartoonists employ health and hospital imagery as metaphorical resources to convey implied socio-political meanings?
- (iii) In what ways do Ghanaian cartoonists draw on sports concepts to construct socio-political commentary?
- (iv) How are journey elements mobilised in Ghanaian political cartoons as symbolic strategies for shaping socio-political messages?
- (v) How do Ghanaian cartoonists make use of biblical allusions as metaphorical devices to communicate socio-political messages?

1.6. Significance of the Study

This dissertation examines the application of conceptual metaphor, specifically visual metaphor, conceptual blending theory, and metonymy in analysing meaning construction in a selection of Ghanaian political cartoons. It examines cartoons produced by two Ghanaian cartoonists between 2016 and January 2025. The research holds relevance for political researchers, Ghanaian politicians, and students of visual communication, as it demonstrates how political cartoons function as powerful instruments of political discourse and agenda setting. By examining how cartoons frame and shape public arguments and criticism, this study provides a clearer understanding of how they serve as vehicles of political communication in Ghana. It offers a distinctive perspective on how cartoonists employ visual devices to assess, depict, and critique of socio-economic and political developments within the country. Furthermore, the dissertation contributes to the field of visual communication by examining how political cartoons evoke lasting memories in viewers' minds through the medium of political themes. In addition, this research aims to enhance existing studies on political cartoons by incorporating novel techniques into their evaluation. Furthermore, the research aims to introduce a unique perspective in the analysis of political cartoons by analysing how visual metaphors and metonyms are employed in Ghanaian

political cartoons. Finally, the research introduces an innovative analytical framework by applying conceptual blending, multimodal, and metonymy to the study of political cartoons. This approach not only deepens theoretical understanding but also expands the methodological tools available for examining visual political communication in African contexts.

1.7. Scope and Limitations

This research focuses on the utilisation of visual metaphors and metonymies in a selection of Ghanaian political cartoons. The cartoons analysed were obtained from two prominent cartoonists: Tilapia, whose works appear on *TV3 News*, and Akosua, featured in the *Daily Guide*. The rationale for selecting these media platforms is detailed in the methodology section. This study aims to examine the creative application of visual metaphor and metonymy in Ghanaian political cartoons, with a particular focus on recurring socio-political themes and issues. This decision aligns with the study's objectives. This study focuses exclusively on themes that have appeared at least ten times within the selected period, as the influence of less frequent themes is considered minimal and therefore excluded from the analysis. The objective is not to provide an exhaustive account of all elements within the cartoons, such as setting, participant involvement, colour usage, posture, gesture, or font size, but rather to focus on the strategic use of visual metaphor and metonymy as key semiotic tools in the construction of political meaning.

However, the analysis is occasionally expanded to include these semiotic elements, as their use is often essential to the conceptualisation of visual metaphors and metonymy, thereby broadening insight into the meanings conveyed by the cartoonists. The study ultimately seeks to critically examine how cartoonists employ visual metaphor and metonymy as cognitive tools for meaning construction, drawing on the theoretical frameworks proposed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) and Barcelona (2000). Furthermore, the present study incorporates Conceptual Blending Theory (CBT), developed by Fauconnier and Turner, to analyse how socio-economic and political issues in Ghana are represented through a variety of source domains.

Despite this, linguistic analysis does not account for the specific sentence structures employed by the cartoonists, such as whether they used simple, compound, or complex constructions. Similarly, it does not quantify or categorise the number of declarative, interrogative, or imperative expressions utilised in speech texts. Instead, the research focuses on how the strategic integration of linguistic and visual elements in Ghanaian political cartoons enhances a deeper comprehension among readers.

1.8 Chapter Organisation

This dissertation is organised into five chapters. Chapter One provides the background and introduction to the study, offering an overview of the political cartoon genre and the historical development of Ghanaian political cartoons. It also outlines the statement of the problem and rationale, research objectives and questions, significance of the study, scope, limitations, and overall organisation of the dissertation. Chapter Two presents the theoretical framework and a review of relevant literature within the field of cognitive linguistics. It discusses key components of conceptual theory, particularly conceptual metaphors and metonymy, and their various types, while also examining metonymy in visual discourse. This includes an exploration of how metaphors and metonymy contribute to meaning-making, the multimodal approach to conceptual metaphor, and the application of conceptual blending theory in visual studies. Chapter Three outlines the research design, specifying the data collection procedures, sources of data, and methods of analysis employed in the study. Chapter Four offers a detailed analysis of the selected Ghanaian political cartoons, illustrating how meaning is constructed through visual metaphor, metonymy, and conceptual blending. Finally, Chapter Five summarises the key findings of the research, draws conclusions, and highlights the study's contributions and avenues for future investigation.

CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND RELEVANT LITERATURE

2.0 Introduction

This chapter presents a detailed discussion of the theoretical frameworks that underpin the present study and examines the scholarly contributions that have informed research in this field. The theoretical foundation is grounded in cognitive linguistics, with a particular focus on the conceptual and cognitive dimensions of metaphor and metonymy. Attention is directed toward conceptual metaphor, visual metaphor, and conceptual blending theory, which together provide the analytical lens for this research. In reviewing previous studies, emphasis is placed on works that have applied conceptual metaphor theory and conceptual blending theory to visual communication, particularly within the genre of political cartoons. It is important to acknowledge that the current research draws inspiration from existing literature.

Langeveld (1981, p. 343) notes that an effective visual representation can succinctly convey a substantial amount of information, as encapsulated in the well-known adage that “a good picture is worth a thousand words.” In light of this, cartoons may be considered primarily visual. However, the implicit quality of visuals and their lack of syntax necessitate the use of verbal text to elucidate the underlying message conveyed by the cartoons. This suggests the need to move beyond mere visual interpretation and consider additional relevant factors to fully explain the messages. The intrinsic complexity of cartoons enables the condensation and simplification of complicated subjects into a single image, which can convey a multitude of underlying meanings. (Abraham, 2009, p. 130). To uncover the concealed messages and ideologies embedded within the cartoons, it is essential to combine a range of conceptual theories for a comprehensive analysis. These include Lakoff and Johnson’s (1980) conceptual metaphor theory, Fauconnier and Turner’s (2002) conceptual blending/integration theory, which will be complemented by Forceville’s (1994) multimodal metaphor approach and conceptual metonymy. The application of the theoretical frameworks for this study will be delved into in Chapter Four.

2.1. Cognitive Linguistics

As indicated on the preceding page, this dissertation adopts a cognitive linguistics framework, drawing on the key concepts of Conceptual Blending Theory (CBT), Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT), and the notions of multimodal metaphor and metonymy. However, there is minimal literature that has explored the integration of conceptual blending theory (CBT) and conceptual metaphor theory (CMT) from an African perspective (especially Ghana), although there is considerable literature that utilises these two theories. This limited engagement highlights the relevance of the present study, which aims to contribute to this underexplored area by applying cognitive theories to the analysis of Ghanaian political cartoons. This gap is particularly significant because even proponents of CMT and CBT acknowledge the intricate interactions that often occur between conceptual metaphor and metonymy in the construction of meaning. The cognitive framework developed by Fauconnier and Turner (2002) offers a valuable analytical lens for examining these interactions, particularly in the context of figurative tropes found in Ghanaian political cartoons. Within this framework, metonymy, metaphor, and other visual elements, such as national monuments, function as cognitive devices that facilitate the understanding of the conceptual domains. These elements serve not only as representational tools but also as cognitive shortcuts through which cartoonists articulate complex socio-political realities in a visually accessible manner.

2.1.1 Metaphor as comparison and embellishment: Aristotle

In Aristotle's *Poetics* (1457), metaphor consists in giving the thing a name that belongs to something else; the transference being either from 'genus to species, or from species to genus, or from species to species, or on grounds of analogy' (1457, p. 6-9). However, there remains some debate regarding Aristotle's precise understanding of the term *metaphor*. Scholars have questioned whether he conceived of metaphor primarily as a linguistic expression, a noun, or as an underlying idea or concept. According to Ricoeur (1987) and Shibbes (1971), Aristotle referred to metaphor as a noun, in other words, as part of speech, rather than as a cognitive or conceptual phenomenon. A closer examination of Aristotle's definition, however, reveals an implied connotative dimension that extends beyond its literal denotative meaning. In Aristotle's account, he outlines several modes through which metaphorical transference may happen. He suggests that metaphorical meaning arises from genus to species, from species to genus, from

one species to another, or through analogy. Second, Aristotle notes that metaphors can also arise through analogy. Analogy, in his view, operates when the relationship between the first and second terms mirrors that between the third and fourth. In such cases, one may interchange the second and fourth terms to produce a metaphorical expression. Aristotle also identifies another way in which metaphor can be employed: by attributing a foreign or unrelated term to something and then denying one of the term's inherent or proper attributes. (1457, p.12-20).

All these were captured in his 1457 exposition on metaphor in his *Poetics*, where he sought to explain the essential features of poetry as understood in his time. His reflections on “word” and “style” laid out the groundwork for subsequent developments in metaphor studies, particularly those that emerged in the 1960s. In all this, he saw metaphors as a rhetorical and poetic device, one that enriches language and evokes vivid imagery. He further asserts that metaphor entails transferring a name or description from one object to another, whether by direct transference or through an inferred resemblance or association (Aristotle, 1457).

Furthermore, Aristotle emphasises the centrality of metaphor in poetic style, arguing that metaphors are distinguished by their capacity to convey meaning with clarity while simultaneously employing aesthetically pleasing language. This dual quality endows metaphors with a rhetorical power that often surpasses that of other stylistic devices, a feature widely acknowledged and commended by scholars. According to Aristotle (1457, p. 22), the effective use of metaphor requires not only technical skill but also a measure of intellectual creativity or “genius.” The capacity to discern and articulate likenesses between disparate entities is essential for crafting compelling metaphors, and he contends that only a select few possess the insight and talent necessary to produce truly effective metaphorical expressions.

2.1.2 Classical View of Metaphor to Modern Theory

Early modern scholars of metaphor theory built upon Aristotle's insights, which suggest that within a metaphor, one noun exerts a conceptual influence over another. According to Ricoeur (1978, 2004), metaphor serves as a crucial function in shaping sentence-level meaning. Metaphor is conventionally recognised as a central figure of speech, alongside other rhetorical devices such as metonymy. However, recognising a single, univocal functioning now goes against the different roles of words and discourse, and fails to work at all language levels (Ricoeur, 2004, p. 17). Traditionally, Aristotle's analysis posits that metaphor is employed in place of another expression, enabling speakers to discuss concepts that might otherwise be

difficult to articulate directly (Martin & Harré, 1982, p.97). Aristotle, on his rhetoric, highlights that metaphor was chosen as a visual or literary aid to highlight what is most important in the argument. While the figurative vehicle of metaphor may capture attention or convey meaning efficiently, its impact often diminishes once the literal interpretation is understood (Frost, 1996, p.141).

Nonetheless, the use of metaphors in everyday language as a quasi-literal device underscores the enduring relevance of the classical approach, offering valuable insights into the functioning of metaphor in ordinary communication. It has been observed that both the abstract conceptual connection between entities and the explicit message of a metaphor play crucial roles in meaning construction, and the perceived similarity often emerges only from contextual cues. In what is known as the comparison view, a conventional statement of comparison is employed rather than substituting a literal equivalent for the metaphorical expression (Black, 1962, p.25). This perspective, referred to as the comparison view, is particularly valuable for analysing metaphor as a discourse phenomenon, as it emphasises the relational and interpretive dimensions of figurative language. Black (1962, p.31) defines the comparison view as “showing the similarity or analogy represented by a metaphor,” highlighting its function in revealing connections between otherwise distinct concepts.

2.1.3 The Interaction View of Metaphor

Black (1979) critiques the notion of substituting one entity for another or focusing solely on their differences, arguing that such approaches reduce metaphorical meaning to a simplistic form of translation. He contends that metaphor achieves unique cognitive and expressive effects that cannot be captured by mere substitution. Instead, Black proposes that metaphor not only anticipates resemblance but actively generates similarity, creating new conceptual connections in the process. (pp. 36-37). His formulation of the interaction view builds upon the initial exposition of the concept by Richards (1936), highlighting the dynamic interplay between the metaphorical vehicle and the topic it represents (Black, 1979, p. 27). This perspective underscores metaphor as a generative and interactive cognitive mechanism rather than a static rhetorical ornament.

In Richards’s view (1936, 2018), metaphor originates from the human instinct to mentally compare ideas, a faculty he sought to develop and investigate systematically. For Richards (1936, p.94), metaphor is not merely a form of exaggeration; rather, it constitutes an

integral mode of conveying meaning in language. Its critical function is explanatory rather than ornamental, aimed at clarifying concepts rather than embellishing them (Ricoeur, 1978, 2004). Departing from the conventional notion that metaphors arise from isolated words linked by comparison, Richards (1936, p.96) introduces the concept of the metaphor as a ‘double unit,’ comprising two interrelated elements: the tenor and the vehicle. The tenor represents the primary subject of the metaphor, also referred to as the figure, original idea, or expressed content. At the same time, the vehicle denotes the secondary subject, encompassing the domain of comparison, borrowed ideas, or imagery invoked by the metaphorical expression (Richards, 2018, p. 53). This framework highlights the structured yet dynamic interplay between the metaphor elements, offering a foundation for understanding how metaphor functions cognitively and linguistically.

The vehicle in a metaphor does more than decorate the tenor; it adds complexity and nuance, enabling both elements to shift and interact in ways that generate new layers of meaning. While the vehicle’s contribution is significant, it is primarily through the dynamic interaction between the tenor and vehicle that the central concept, the tenor, is illuminated. This aligns with Glucksberg’s (2001) perspective on the interactive property view, which posits that metaphor comprehension arises when the vehicle supplies a set of properties, and the tenor provides the context or basis for applying these properties (p. 53). Together, these insights underscore metaphor as a relational and generative phenomenon, highlighting the cognitive processes involved in creating and interpreting figurative meaning.

2.1.4 Conventional, Novel, and Creative Metaphors

Across theoretical traditions, scholars generally agree that metaphors can be classified into two primary categories from both linguistic and cognitive perspectives: novel and conventional metaphors (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, pp. 52-55; Glucksberg, 2001, p. 48; Bowdle & Gentner, 2005, pp. 193-199; Steen, 2010, pp. 44-49). In this framework, novel metaphors stand in contrast to so-called “dead” metaphors, while conventional metaphors occupy an intermediate position along this continuum. Conventional metaphors represent deeply ingrained or culturally established ways of expressing abstract ideas. Although certain conventional metaphors may appear fresh or original, they are often so deeply embedded in everyday language that speakers frequently fail to recognise them as metaphors at all (Kronfeld, 1980). The choice between conventional and novel metaphors is of particular importance in the sphere

of visual and multimodal communication, specifically in the field of political cartoons. Conventional metaphors also serve as cognitive shortcuts, allowing the audience to quickly grasp familiar social or political meanings (Forceville, 2009). These metaphors tend to rely on familiar cultural and ideological tropes, such as politics as war or nation as family, which help establish common ground through culture-based associations (Charteris-Black, 2004).

Novel metaphors, on the other hand, break these patterns by creating new, unforeseen associations that require increased cognitive involvement on the part of the viewer. They are creative and able to invent new conceptual combinations, which reform or defy conventional views (Kövecses, 2010, pp. 43-48; Forceville, 2016). In their groundbreaking research, Bowdle and Gentner (2005) propose that the process of conventionalisation of novel metaphors is gradual, as they become more acceptable and are used more frequently over time. This is achieved through repetition of usage, which results in the formation of these metaphors as a normative expression in specific situations. This suggests that metaphor categorisations are not static, but subject to change over time.

Conventional metaphors facilitate the attachment of meaning to familiar social accounts, making them more accessible and immediate, whereas novel metaphors evoke wonder and critical thinking, which tend to uncover power relations or ideological contradictions in the process (El Refaie, 2009). Therefore, the interaction of conventional and novel metaphors in cartoons not only contributes to the richness of interpretation but also demonstrates how the cartoonist utilises their cognitive and rhetorical abilities to draw on collective cultural imagery to comment on political facts. For instance, “The Politician Is an Animal” metaphor exemplifies the above assertion, where in the Ghanaian context, the elephant represents the New Patriotic Party (NPP). A metaphor can be described as innovative in that it reanimates an inert metaphor, breaks with the existing systems of comparison, or creates an entirely new associative connection between ideas. The most innovative types of metaphors tend to generate broad readings and conjectures, as their meanings are not readily apparent but encourage the audience to employ inferential reasoning. Ricoeur (2004, p. 98) defines “metaphors as a semantic innovation, where two distinct semantic fields collide, generating new meaning through a denominative function”. He proposes, therefore, a semantic approach to the metaphor based not on the semantics of the word but on the semantics of the sentence (Ricoeur 2004, p. 114). In

this regard, novel metaphors are not only stylistic decorations, but active processes of meaning-making that broaden both the expressive and cognitive horizons of language.

According to Lakoff and Johnson (1980, p.140), novel metaphors make sense of our experience in the same way conventional metaphors do: they provide coherent structure, highlighting some things and hiding others. They contain entailments like conventional metaphors. The nature of novel metaphors and the cognitive processing involved in them will be further discussed in the discussion on cognitive theories of metaphors that follows.

Similarly, Kövecses (2010, p.49) remarks that creative metaphors are typically less clear but richer in meaning than either everyday metaphors or metaphors in general. They prefigure the artistic or rhetorical cleverness of the metaphor user. The creativity in this case involves not only novelty, but also the effects of aesthetics, cognition, or communication. Even when a metaphor is based on a recognisable conceptual mapping, it may be creative, especially when it reconstructs or develops it unexpectedly. In accordance with Cameron (2003), being creative in metaphor involves making new use of existing metaphorical resources that appeal to a communicative situation (p. 266). Similarly, as metaphorical creativity implies conceptual variation, so, in line with Kövecses' (2010) arguments, conceptual variation can take the form of new elaborations, extensions, and combinations of familiar metaphors that indicate the speaker's perspective, whether cultural, emotional, or situational (p.73).

In the context of political cartoons, creative metaphors can also be based on familiar conceptual frames but reconstructed in visually or contextually new forms. An example to illustrate this is the creative extension of the metaphor POLITICS IS A GAME by a cartoonist, having politicians as chess pieces being manoeuvred by the invisible hands. Though the metaphorical schema is traditional, its visual and situational elaboration evidence creativity in the meaning-making process and social commentary. Metaphor at the conceptual level deals with the ability to make abstract concepts understandable through the reliance on tangible elements that readers are familiar with (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). This can be achieved by using two concepts: the familiar one, termed the source domain, and the unfamiliar concept, termed the target domain. The source domain may be culturally and context-bound, as certain elements are peculiar to certain jurisdictions, while other domains are universally bound. For instance, using certain sports elements like race football can be described as a universal source domain because they have a global touch. According to Kövecses (2010), creativity is both in novel

metaphors (new source domain elements) based on conventional metaphors and context-induced new metaphors. Creativity in metaphors can comprise the use of both imaginative and novel metaphors. (p. 665). According to El Refaie (2009, p.176), metaphors in political cartoons are a form of reasoning and argumentation that takes abstract political ideas and images, using them to create easily understandable, emotionally charged graphics.

Overall, although novel metaphors in political cartoons stimulate cognitive processing, as they involve conceptual innovation, creative metaphors focus on rhetorical craft and communicative efficacy, as they involve the reconfiguration of known metaphors. The two of them are the fundamental building blocks of visual communication, serving as meaning-making, power-negotiating, and political discourse.

2.2.0 Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT)

The notion that metaphors serve a crucial cognitive function is rooted in the work of I. A. Richards (1936, p. 94). Thought is metaphoric and experienced in comparison, which produces the metaphor of language. According to Ricoeur (1978), the analysis of metaphor poses a profound theoretical problem that cannot be exhaustively treated within the framework of language theory. Though metaphor seems to be an ordinary aspect of language, Ricoeur (1978), in the translator's introduction (pp. VIII-IX), claims that metaphor requires a more interdisciplinary approach, which captures the delicate aspect of its involvement in the construction of meaning. The central question raised by Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) is whether metaphors are to be construed exclusively as linguistic phenomena or as manifestations of the underlying framework of thought. Although cognitive perspectives on metaphor had been suggested earlier, Lakoff and Johnson's seminal work *Metaphors We Live By* (1980) crystallised and popularised this view, making the cognitive dimension of metaphor both explicit and widely accessible. The conceptual metaphor theory has demonstrated its significance over the past four decades, mainly due to the rapid growth of research on metaphor and related issues in cognitive science.

The recognition that metaphors are fundamentally intertwined with human thought and action has reshaped the study of metaphor. From a cognitive perspective, linguistic metaphors represent only the surface level of deeper conceptual structures that underpin meaning. Because

this conceptual system operates largely beneath conscious awareness, it evolves through the dynamic interplay of thought patterns, cultural experiences, and linguistic practices over time.

As Frye (2006) observes, metaphors serve not only as instruments for shaping thought but also as devices that enhance the aesthetic and expressive qualities of language. In a like manner, Lakoff and Johnson (1980) reiterate the above function of metaphor as something that shapes thought through the link between the *source domain* and the *target domain*, which together enable the transfer of meaning and contribute to the figurative richness that characterises metaphorical expression. In the domain of political cartoons, this dual function of metaphor, both conceptual and aesthetic, operates through the interplay of visual and verbal elements (Khalis & Mustaffa, 2017). Cartoonists often draw upon culturally familiar *source domains* to represent complex *target domains* such as governance, corruption, or leadership. By visually mapping abstract political ideas onto concrete, everyday images, they create accessible yet layered meanings that invite critical reflection (Forceville, 2024). The aesthetic dimension of these metaphors lies in their creativity and visual appeal, which capture attention and evoke emotional responses; their conceptual dimension, on the other hand, facilitates comprehension of the political critique. These terms parallel the distinction that Richards made between *tenor* and *vehicle*.

A metaphor can be interpreted as a network of regular mappings connecting a source domain with a target domain in which selected features from the source are projected onto the target to construct meaning. To illustrate, in the metaphor *THE PRESIDENT IS A DOCTOR*, attributes associated with the medical domain, such as diagnosis, care, and healing, are mapped onto the political domain to conceptualise the president's role as one of remedying national problems or restoring societal well-being. Specific characteristics of the source domain (the doctor), such as treatment and compassion, are transferred to the target domain (the president), evoking our conceptual understanding of leadership as a form of care. Just as a doctor tends to patients, an ideal president is perceived as one who safeguards and nurtures the citizens under their responsibility. Consequently, the metaphor *THE PRESIDENT IS A DOCTOR* encapsulates a conceptual parallel between the roles of a doctor and a president, both of whom are entrusted with the responsibility of caring for and safeguarding the well-being of others (Lakoff & Turner, 2009, p. 81). According to Jindo (2009), an analysis of this map discloses the structured conceptual world of a group of language users. It can assist a reader in recognising that “images

and expressions that appear unrelated on the textual surface but are conceptually interrelated on the deeper level” (Jindo, 2009, p. 228), and a typical example is THE PRESIDENT IS A DOCTOR, where both professions seem unrelated on the surface, but function-wise they are related.

In the perspective of Lakoff and Turner (2009), a “basic metaphor” refers to any conventional, unconscious, and instinctive conceptual metaphor that is usually invisible. CMT is primarily concerned with clarifying the core ideas behind conventional metaphors. Such metaphors have shown effectiveness in clarifying the belief that a conventional set of concepts drives the use of metaphors. Conventional metaphors are derived from *partial mappings* from a domain to a target (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, pp. 52-55). For example, not all features of the doctor domain will exist in the president domain; instead, only those features are used by the conventional use of metaphors.

The effectiveness of a generic structure in shaping everyday conventional metaphor production is closely tied to its grounding in experience. Such experience encompasses our physical interactions with the world, fundamental cognitive processes, and shared, commonplace knowledge. One way to illustrate this connection between experience and metaphor is through the conceptual metaphor *MORE IS UP*. This metaphor is grounded in everyday physical and cognitive experience: as we accumulate objects, such as pouring cups of liquid into a container or storing grain in a silo, their quantity typically increases in height. Conversely, our experiences rarely associate an increase in quantity with a downward movement, which explains why “more” is not conventionally linked with “down” (Lakoff & Turner, 2009, p. 83). Such experiential patterns demonstrate how conventional metaphors are rooted in embodied and culturally shared understandings, shaping how we conceptualise abstract ideas in language. Similarly, metaphors are often constructed from widely shared ideas or fundamental cognitive processes (Lakoff & Turner, 2009, pp. 83-88). While the generic metaphor *MORE IS UP* is grounded in everyday physical experience, most people do not envision a literal vertical increase when using expressions such as “*love has hit a rock.*” This illustrates a key feature of many conventional metaphors: their meaning frequently shifts from a concrete, visual basis to an abstract, cognitive domain.

Metaphors that retain a strong visual component, reflecting experiences we can literally see, are identified by Lakoff and Turner as *image metaphors*. These image metaphors are created

by mapping salient features from a mental image onto a target concept. For example, the phrase “*hourglass figure*” maps the shape of an actual hourglass onto the human body, highlighting key visual characteristics (Lakoff & Turner, 2009, pp. 88-89). Image metaphors can be further categorised into two types: *particular*, where the whole image is mapped directly onto the target, and *schematic*, where only the salient structural features of the image are preserved. Central to this process are *image schemas*, basic spatial and orientational patterns such as up/down, front/back, or in/out, which, according to Lakoff and Turner (2009, p. 97), shape the structure and interpretation of conventional metaphors in visual language.

2.2.2 Novel Metaphors Embedded in Conceptual Metaphor Theory

Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) provides a robust framework for analysing how metaphors, rooted in conventional conceptual systems, employ language to reflect a culture’s experiences, values, and shared cognitive structures. Conventional metaphors rely on familiar relationships linking the source and target domains, allowing audiences to comprehend abstract ideas through well-established conceptual patterns.

Novel metaphors, however, present a greater challenge, as they operate “outside our conventional conceptual system” (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 139). Unlike conventional metaphors, they require readers or viewers to construct meaning through creative cognitive processes rather than depending on familiar or pre-existing mappings. This process often involves recognising unexpected correspondences, making inferences, and reconciling incongruous elements in a way that generates new understanding or insight.

Within the realm of political cartoons, novel metaphors are potent. Cartoonists often juxtapose familiar political figures, events, or institutions with unconventional or imaginative source domains to create striking visual and conceptual effects. By breaking away from conventional metaphorical mappings, novel metaphors in cartoons not only attract attention but also provoke reflection, critique, and provide emotional response. As El Refaie (2003, p. 87) notes, visual metaphors in cartoons often rely on unexpected combinations of familiar and imaginative elements, prompting viewers to construct meaning actively rather than passively receive it. Similarly, Bounegru and Forceville (2011, p. 223) observe that creative visual metaphors in editorial cartoons can stimulate critical engagement by framing complex socio-political issues in visually arresting ways. Forceville (2005, p. 82) further argues that the

interpretive process of novel visual metaphors elicits emotional resonance because viewers must reconcile contrasting conceptual domains. In this way, novel metaphors extend the communicative and persuasive potential of political cartoons, transforming them into instruments of social commentary and cognitive engagement (Forceville & Urios-Aparisi, 2009, pp. 21-23). Building on the various views developed by scholars in the fields of cognitive linguistics and visual communication, the study of novel metaphors in political cartoons has become a fruitful and informative field of academic inquiry.

2.2.3. The Multimodal Approach to Conceptual Metaphor

Charles Forceville, a prominent proponent of Lakoff and Johnson's Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT), which foregrounds the cognitive and conceptual dimensions of metaphor, argues that metaphor is primarily a cognitive process, rather than solely a feature of spoken or written language. CMT, as a mother of metaphor studies from a cognitive perspective, highlights how metaphors manifest across multiple semiotic modes, extending beyond language to include images, gestures, and other representational forms. As Kövecses (2005) notes, CMT constitutes a sophisticated and unified theory of metaphor, capable of illuminating a wide range of metaphorical phenomena across both linguistic and non-linguistic contexts. Forceville (1994) identifies a limitation in Lakoff and Johnson's original framework (CMT), noting that it focuses exclusively on language and does not fully account for other tropes. He argues that examining nonverbal data, such as visual imagery, demonstrates that metaphors are rooted not only in linguistic expression but also in thought itself. Building on these insights, Forceville (1994, 1996) introduces the concept of *multimodal metaphor* to account for metaphorical expressions that occur in non-linguistic forms. Metaphorical meaning is frequently realised multimodally, extending beyond the boundaries of a single representational mode (Cienki & Müller, 2008; Forceville & Urios-Aparisi, 2009). The multimodal approach, as Forceville proposes, encompasses a wide range of non-linguistic manifestations of metaphor, including cartoons, advertisements, graffiti, symbols, pictures, and music, thereby demonstrating the flexibility and breadth of metaphorical representation beyond language alone.

Contributing to the discourse on multimodal metaphor, Koller (2009, p. 46) explains that it involves the integration of domains from disparate modalities. Given that this study employs political cartoons, a genre inherently multimodal, it is imperative to focus on these aspects. El Refaie (2009, p. 175) asserts that political cartoons typically employ verbo-visual

multimodal metaphors to represent social, cultural, or political phenomena, compressing and transforming them in striking ways, often infused with humour. As a predominantly visual medium, political cartoons naturally lend themselves to the discussion of visual or pictorial metaphors, which some scholars use interchangeably with multimodal metaphors. Kennedy (1982) notes that visual metaphors function analogously to verbal metaphors in that they compare two different entities, with the primary distinction lying in their mode of manifestation. Similarly, Grady (1999) refers to the visual counterparts of spoken-language metaphors as resemblance metaphors, also known as pictorial metaphors, emphasising the role of imagery in constructing metaphorical meaning.

Pictorial metaphors are also referred to as visual metaphors. A pictorial/visual metaphor is a visual form of conceptual metaphor in which at least one of the source or target domains is presented in the form of a picture/image. A relevant question that we need to address is “How to identify a visual metaphor?” In referring to something as a visual metaphor, Charles Forceville (1996) outlines three conditions for something to be labelled as a ‘metaphor’. First, the identification of two domains. Second, the identification of one of the domains as the target, and third, the other as the source. In essence, visual metaphors juxtapose unfamiliar or complex ideas with more tangible, familiar, and easily comprehensible ones (Ouf, 2019, pp. 44-45). By employing relatable and memorable imagery, visual metaphors simplify abstract or challenging concepts for audiences, making them more accessible. Ouf further argues that such metaphors enhance the effectiveness and persuasiveness of communication by actively engaging individuals’ cognitive processes.

Let us consider this example. **Error! Reference source not found.** below is an example of a visual metaphor.



Figure 1 Smoking Kills

The above image contains a message that smoking kills, and a cigarette is illustrated with some bullets. The question is: how to make sense of this image? Probably, the use of the cigarette and bullets makes a certain point that a cigarette is a bullet: both their purpose are similar, that is, both kill. In that way, one can interpret the above picture as a metaphor that a bullet is a cigarette.

Can we call this image a visual metaphor? According to the answer, it appears to be yes, since the picture fits all three criteria: Two different concepts belong to different domains represented as images. One of them is the object of the target (cigarette), against which the picture appears to be making a statement, and the other sphere (bullet) is the source. One aspect, at least, in the interpretation of the picture of the source, that is, deadliness, is projected onto the target.

Extending this discussion, El Refaie (2003, p. 75) defines a visual metaphor as a representation of an image or concept through a visual image that bears a striking resemblance or similarity, which may be either cognitive or physical. Carroll (1994, p. 96) equally argues that a pictorial or visual metaphor must involve two tangibly incompatible aspects that are presented as distinct entities. In the case of pictorial metaphors, the elements being mapped must be visually conspicuous and perceptually identifiable (Carroll, 1994, p. 208). These criteria emphasise the importance of visual clarity and perceptual salience in creating compelling visual metaphors, particularly in media such as political cartoons, where rapid comprehension and immediate impact are crucial.

Building on the above points, Forceville (2008, p. 470) notes that salient elements play a crucial role in facilitating the interpretation of visual metaphors. These salient elements include identifiable semiotic tools such as colour effects, font sizes, character projection, and other design features. During the analytical process, these elements are integrated with other forms of knowledge to enrich the interpretation, ensuring that both perceptual prominence and conceptual mapping are considered when analysing the meaning of visual metaphors in multimodal contexts, such as political cartoons.

While the terms *visual metaphor* and *multimodal metaphor* are sometimes used interchangeably, it is essential to distinguish between them. Given this, visual metaphors convey meaning exclusively through imagery, whereas multimodal metaphors integrate two or more semiotic modes, such as visual and verbal elements, to construct meaning (Forceville, 2006,

2009). Emphasising this claim, visual metaphors can function as a subset of multimodal metaphors when combined with text; not all multimodal metaphors are purely visual. In political cartoons, cartoonists often combine visual imagery with captions, labels, or speech balloons to create verbo-visual multimodal metaphors, producing richer, layered, and more persuasive representations of social, cultural, or political phenomena (El Refaie, 2009; Koller, 2009). Understanding the boundaries between visual and multimodal metaphors enables researchers to analyse more precisely how cartoons convey complex ideas through integrated modes of meaning.

This dissertation also highlights the four categories of visual metaphors proposed by Forceville (1996, p. 6). These include:

- (i) Contextual metaphor is a type whereby an object is imbued with metaphorical attributes contingent on the visual context in which it is situated.
- (ii) A hybrid metaphor is a visual metaphor in which two objects are joined physically into a single gestalt.
- (iii) A pictorial simile is a visual metaphor in which two objects are presented in their entirety and made to look similar based on their features.
- (iv) Integrated metaphor is a type in which two objects are presented in a manner that resembles one another, without recourse to any contextual cues.

In their typology of visual metaphor, McQuarrie and Phillips (2004) build upon Forceville's classification of visual metaphor, identifying three types: juxtaposition, fusion, and replacement.

- (i) In juxtaposition, the source and target elements are discernible.
- (ii) In the fusion type, both domains (source and target) are merged into a unified entity.
- (iii) Replacement is regarded as a composite of all three types, in which one element is discernible while the second is inferred through pictorial cues.

In his 1996 study, Forceville presents a list of established parameters that must be met for any element to be recognised as a multimodal metaphor. The aforementioned parameters are as follows:

- (i) Based on the contextual circumstances under which they manifest
- (ii) The two phenomena can be classified as belonging to disparate categories

- (iii) The source and target domains can be used to classify the two phenomena, represented in an A is B format, which encourages the receiver to link one or more salient characters from the physical domain to the abstract domain. These links are indicated in disparate sensory modalities, individually or in combination.

In contrast to the aforementioned approaches, Forceville (2009a, pp. 31-32) has adopted a somewhat distinct methodology. He identifies three multimodal cues that can be employed to interpret metaphor-based images. These are: perceptual resemblance, filling a schematic slot unexpectedly, and simultaneous cueing. According to Forceville's (2009a, p. 31) classification, perceptual resemblance involves the similarity between the related element and the out-of-place element, particularly in terms of colour, form, and shape. To illustrate, the dominant colour of a political party's flag may be employed as a replacement for the party itself. Similarly, a nation can be represented by the colours of its flag. Secondly, filling a schematic slot unexpectedly results in placing an item in a particular setting that could significantly, and perhaps inescapably, evoke the image of a different kind of object. Lastly, their simultaneous presentation in distinct forms emphasises the significance of creating a relationship between the two parts.

Forceville makes a strong case for the legitimacy of multimodal metaphors as a worthwhile field of study, particularly in light of the attention accorded to their verbal counterparts. The following reasons are presented for consideration:

- (i) Using multimodal metaphor engenders a profound sense of presence in viewers that eludes verbal expression.
- (ii) Multimodal metaphors will have a long-lasting impact on the reader's consciousness that is greater than that of verbal metaphors.
- (iii) The use of multimodal metaphors demonstrates a greater degree of international appeal.
- (iv) Facilitates greater intercultural access than verbal language alone (Forceville, 1996, p. 109).

Reflecting ongoing scholarly discussions on visual metaphors in visual communication, El-Refaie (2003) postulates that visual metaphors can convey a complex message in a more immediate and condensed manner than language. Building on this, Wekesa (2012) posits that visual metaphors can argue more straightforwardly and compellingly than their verbal

counterparts. Complementing this, El Refaie (2003) suggests that multimodality offers opportunities to explore the novelty and creativity of metaphor use across different semiotic modalities.

In their 2009 study, Forceville and Urios-Aparisi presented a series of propositions regarding the significance of multimodal metaphors in a political discourse context. These propositions are as follows:

- (i) A multimodal metaphor utilises an imaginary scenario to elucidate the significance of actual occurrences and individuals.
- (ii) Using a multimodal metaphor represents a highly efficacious persuasive strategy.
- (iii) A multimodal metaphor represents a valuable instrument for adopting a critical stance towards a specific individual or entity.
- (iv) The multimodal metaphor offers insights into political matters, occurrences and individuals that would otherwise be inaccessible through other media.

2.2.4 Representation of Concepts in Visual Metaphors: Monomodal and multimodal metaphors

In the case of a visual metaphor (**Error! Reference source not found.**the two concepts of the metaphor (cigarette and bullets) were pictorially depicted. Such instances are referred to as monomodal visual metaphors. However, there is a possibility that in certain visual metaphors, only one concept may be depicted in an image, and the other concept may be depicted in another modality (mostly in text). These visual metaphors are referred to as multi-modal visual metaphors. The distinction between mono-modal and multimodal stems from the seminal study by Forceville (2006). In his view, mono-modal metaphors are characterised by the exclusive use of a single mode to link the target and the source (Forceville, 2006, p. 383). Conversely, multi-modal metaphors employ different modes to represent the target and the source, a distinction that sets them apart from mono-modal metaphors (Forceville, 2006, p. 384).

Figure 2 Mono-modal visual metaphor



Error! Reference source not found. is an example of a mono-modal visual metaphor (both concepts are pictorially represented)

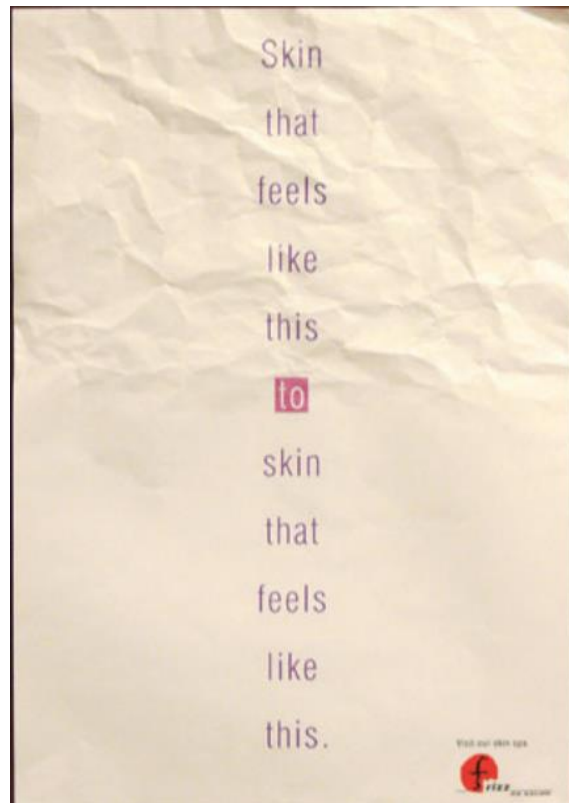
An example of a mono-modal visual metaphor is presented in **Error! Reference source not found.** This advertisement promotes skin cream. The wrinkled skin is likened to the paper which is crushed in the advertisement. The white patch on the right side of the picture is not the cream itself, but instead crushed paper. However, it claims to be an anti-wrinkle treatment. It is also necessary to mention that both concepts, the target, herein referred to as the skin and the source, herein referred to as paper, are represented in images. The picture of the skin cream logo can be interpreted by the viewer, who is welcome to perceive it figuratively. The texture of the source image indicates the mappable feature.

The subsequent discussion will pertain to **Error! Reference source not found.** This phenomenon can be considered an example of multimodal visual metaphor.

In this advertisement, the metaphorical representation of skin is employed, with wrinkled skin being likened to crushed paper and smooth skin being compared to smooth paper. This is a

technique commonly used in advertising to convey a sense of metaphor. The notion has been disproved. The concept of skin is represented in text, whereas paper and smooth paper are represented in an image.

Figure 3 Multimodal metaphor



An example of multimodal metaphor

2.2.5 Source and Target identification in Visual metaphor

Generally, when an image contains only two concepts, identifying the corresponding elements of a metaphor poses little difficulty. However, the challenge emerges when more than two concepts are represented, raising the question of how to determine which serve as the source and which as the target of the metaphor. The main difficulty lies in the fact that images differ fundamentally from text, as they lack a fixed or linear reading order. Understanding an image depends on the viewer's interpretation of the interaction among its various elements, making it challenging to determine which element functions as the source and which as the target in a metaphorical relationship, if a metaphor is present at all. In contrast, identifying the conceptual domains in verbal metaphors, particularly those following the "X is Y" construction, is

relatively straightforward due to the explicit presence of the copula *is*. Although not all metaphors include this copular form, and many novel or even conventional ones do not, the structural organisation of images remains distinct from that of linguistic expressions. Visual representations often lack a copula to explicitly connect two concepts, which complicates the process of identifying metaphorical mappings within them.

Even when two conceptual elements can be identified within a visual image, determining which serves as the target and which as the source presents a significant challenge for any theory of visual metaphor. In verbal metaphors, this distinction is often guided by syntactic structure. In the “X is Y” construction, the element preceding the copula typically functions as the target. In contrast, the element following it serves as the source, though this is not always the case. In visual metaphors, however, the absence of a copula eliminates this structural cue, making it considerably more difficult to distinguish between source and target domains. As a result, contextual factors become crucial in interpreting metaphorical relationships within images.

Below are some clues that help readers identify the presence of metaphors. A frequently employed technique by creators of visual metaphors involves juxtaposing two concepts within a single image, a phenomenon referred to as *homospatiality*. This technique involves integrating two concepts that are inherently incompatible into a unified composite image (Carroll, 1994). The unified image produces visual incongruity, prompting viewers to interpret it metaphorically. Also, features of the source and target domains are selectively represented and visually blended into a unified image. In some cases, one concept is explicitly portrayed, while the other is conveyed implicitly based on the context.

A further challenge in analysing visual metaphors is determining which features are transferred from the source domain to the target. In verbal metaphors, context frequently functions as a pivotal factor in guiding this process. In the context of visual metaphors, contextual cues have been shown to play a crucial role in identifying which attributes are mapped between domains. However, in visual representations, context extends beyond situational or linguistic factors to include visual properties such as colour, shape, texture, and orientation. These features collectively help to define the source concept and its metaphorical relation to the target.

To establish the kind of metaphorical domains at play, the multimodal analyst must consider the pre- and extralinguistic context. This entails defining the metaphorical source and destination domains and mapping the relevant parts. The source domains of multimodal metaphors are therefore rooted in our cultural background and physical experiences. Nevertheless, the ability to analyse such metaphors is highly reliant on the previous knowledge of the social and political situation in which the cartoons were issued.

2.3.0 Extended Conceptual Metaphor Theory (ECMT)

In 2020, Zoltán Kövecses expanded Lakoff and Johnson's 1980 conceptual metaphor theory by exploring the role context plays in metaphor comprehension. Kövecses developed this framework to account for contextual variation, embodiment, and creativity in metaphor use, areas where classical CMT was often critiqued for being too static or universal. Extended Conceptual Metaphor Theory (ECMT) is a theoretical framework that builds upon the foundations laid out by traditional Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT). The latter posits that metaphors are instrumental in the structuring of thought and language by mapping elements from a source domain (concrete, familiar) to a target domain (abstract, complex). Kövecses (2019) extends this framework to emphasise context, dynamic conceptualisation, and cultural-situational variability, arguing that metaphors are not fixed but are flexibly shaped by usage and context (Kövecses, 2019, p. 123). In light of this, Kövecses outlines five types of contexts that shape our understanding of metaphor. These are: situational context, discourse context, conceptual-cognitive context, and bodily context.

Situational context encompasses a range of contextual factors, including the physical environment, social situation, and cultural context. Discourse context, on the other hand, refers to the surrounding discourse knowledge about the main elements of a discourse: the speaker, the hearer, and the topic. Additionally, bodily context refers to the state of the body that can produce particular metaphorical conceptualisations in specific cases. Lastly, the conceptual-cognitive context involves a metaphorical conceptual system, ideology, knowledge about past events, interests and concerns. Kövecses proposes a multi-level structure, distinguishing between generic metaphors, specific metaphors, and discourse-level realisations, thus allowing for systematic explanation of variation across genres and communicative modes. The present framework is based on the premise that creative or novel metaphors emerge through the context-driven extension of conventional patterns, rather than radical conceptual invention. The theory

thus establishes a linkage between conventionality and creativity. ECMT acknowledges that metaphors are frequently realised multimodally, extending beyond language to visual and embodied forms. This renders the framework particularly useful for analysing political cartoons, where contextual cues and multimodal resources collectively influence the construction and interpretation of metaphor.

2.3.1 Previous studies that have employed CMT and Multimodal Metaphor in their work.

This section summarises and evaluates articles related to the topic under discussion, “metaphor in political cartoons from Ghanaian cartoonists. It would be valuable in terms of theory and data underpinning the current study. Specifically, Zhang and Forceville (2020) analyse the conceptualisation of Sino-US trade tensions in terms of political cartoons and demonstrate that the economic reality is interpreted differently in relation to the socio-political context. Their analysis reveals the prevalence of war/fight, game/sport/play, and journey as source domains overlaid onto the target domain of trade conflict, where the metonymy operates in parallel with metaphor. They also find complementary sources of meaning-making, including intertextuality, themes, topoi, and pictorial runes, and assert that the complexity of political cartoons requires the use of analytical methods that are not limited to metaphor and metonymy. Their results justify the adoption of a variety of theoretical perspectives by the present study to explain the multidimensionality of cartoon interpretation.

In a related vein, Alousque (2014) examines Spanish political cartoons to illustrate the functioning of metaphor and metonymy, as well as their interplay in monomodal (visual) and multimodal (verbo-pictorial) contexts. Based on multimodal metaphor theory, the paper confirms previous arguments that metaphor is widespread in political cartoons and that frequent domains of source include hospitals, cooking, marriage, funerals, and sports/boxing. By examining visual and verbal clues, such as cross-domain mapping, the study illustrates that a reasonable interpretation involves considering both metaphor and metonymy, as the source and target domains can be expressed through various modes of semiotic means.

Following this line of inquiry, Ozdemir and Ozdemir (2017) focus their attention on the use of visual and verbal metaphors in Syrian political cartoons to describe the perilous process that refugees must pass through and the broader socio-political crisis. They apply thematic

categorisation and a semiotic strategy to create a deviation that points to such recurrent source domains as natural disasters (e.g., floods, waves) to represent danger and destruction. Meaning-making is also facilitated by visual cues, such as colour, where black signifies hopelessness; national symbols, including flags and monuments. It is concluded that the analysis of political cartoons needs to focus not only on the metaphor but also on other, more general semiotic tools such as language, symbols, gesture, and colour.

Similarly, Bounegru and Forceville (2011) demonstrate how visual metaphor is used in political cartoons to capture the 2008 global financial crisis. They categorise the data into major source areas, including natural disasters, illness/death, and begging, superimposed on the focal area, the financial crisis. The discussion reveals that the construction of meaning relies on the exchange between imagery and captions, as well as the culture. Metonymy is also important, particularly in the use of national flags to represent government officials. Their work indicates that to interpret political cartoons, it is necessary to consider not only surface descriptions but also the broader context of socio-cultural and socio-political phenomena.

Silaški and Đurović (2019) illustrate the application of metaphor in political cartoons to express the Brexit relationship with the EU, with specific reference to the journey metaphor, especially transportation, as a means of simplifying complex issues. Although the journey metaphor is a well-established concept in Conceptual Metaphor Theory, the researchers further classified the data into sub-scenarios (ship, double-decker bus, aeroplane, and crossroads) to facilitate analysis. They found that cartoonists' selection of source domains depends on the broadly distributed cultural knowledge, allowing the audience to understand complex politics through familiar imagery. Another important point made in the study is that to interpret political cartoons successfully, it is essential to consider other sources of meaning-making, such as verbal/visual metonymy, colour, gaze, and verbal text. In addition, Padilla (2018) discusses the communication between artists and readers through political cartoons on the Greek debt crisis, examining how cartoonists construct meaning through artistic means, including colour, font, perspective, and kinesics. It distinguishes between two levels of interpretation, superficial and deeper interpretations that need cultural or contextual information. The results indicate that variables such as age, education, culture, political ideology, and emotional condition have a strong influence on the audience's understanding. The paper finds that the process of successful interpretation extends beyond surface indicators and should include attention to colours,

symbols (such as flags), pragmatic context, and character peculiarities, all of which contribute to a better understanding of the message conveyed by the cartoonist.

Likewise, Lin and Chiang (2015) investigate the aspect of political cartoons that reflect the controversies of the US beef imports in Taiwan. Using their suggested multimodal fusion theory, which combines metaphor and metonymy, they examine how these two cognitive processes work together to create meaning. The research mentions the sources which are the most common, namely: Politics Is a Game and Politics Is War. Their results indicate that multimodal fusion is a common and efficient tactic for communicating complex political matters, and the evidence suggests that metaphor and metonymy are closely tied, enabling the audience to grasp them.

Furthermore, El Refaie (2003) investigates how metaphors are visually constructed in newspaper cartoons, arguing that Forceville's definition of visual metaphor requires expansion when applied to political cartoons. She contends that analysing visual metaphor demands attention to underlying cognitive processes and should extend beyond surface interpretation. The study emphasises the importance of socio-political context for accurate meaning construction. El Refaie concludes that personification is pervasive in political cartoons, as it offers a simplified yet powerful means of representing complex issues and relationships.

This set of studies provides a solid foundation for the current work. In addition to sharing common interests in political cartoons, the majority of the literature utilises theoretical frameworks of the major concept of this research, such as Conceptual Metaphor Theory, multimodal metaphor, and multimodal fusion. Their analytical practices also provide methodological direction. It is interesting to note that all observe the importance of considering various meaning-making resources, including gaze, colour, size, symbols, verbal cues, and visual/verbal metonymy, to fully interpret the metaphorical constructions and communicative intentions involved in cartoons. The combination of these insights helps to inform and strengthen the methodological and theoretical orientation of the present study.

2.3.0. Conceptual Blending Theory

Conceptual Blending Theory (CBT), developed by Fauconnier and Turner (2002), provides a robust cognitive framework for explaining how novel meanings emerge through the dynamic integration of multiple mental spaces. The theory also explains the complex way

people integrate specific experiences, such as emotions, culture, or the body, into language. Unlike Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT), which focuses on relatively stable mappings between a source and a target domain, CBT proposes that meaning construction frequently involves the simultaneous activation of several distinct mental input spaces, which may include linguistic expressions, visual cues, cultural knowledge, and contextual information. Elements from these inputs are selectively projected into a new, integrated mental space known as the *blend*. Within this blended space, the projected elements interact in ways that produce emergent structures, features, relations, or interpretations that are not present in any of the original input spaces when considered independently. This new meaning is a strength of CBT, as it demonstrates how human beings can develop interpretations that transcend the constraints of traditional source-target mappings. Instead of using the existing relationships between two spaces of concepts, CBT demonstrates that the dynamic interplay of various inputs generates meaning; thus, it is possible to develop new conceptual structures that cannot be predicted by the original spaces alone. Through this, the theory explains spontaneous and creative jumps people make when faced with unfamiliar or hybrid representations. These emergent meanings demonstrate how thought can bring together the elements of language, visual, cultural, and experiential aspects into single, innovative interpretations that go well beyond the ability of conventional metaphor theory to articulate. This is what renders CBT especially helpful in the analysis of more complex and creative phenomena, such as political cartoons, where the interplay of various conceptual factors frequently generates new insights, humour, or criticism that cannot be traced to any single conceptual domain on its own.

Conceptual blending focuses on the creation of meaning in single, often highly context-specific instances (Schnell, 2007, p. 85). In this respect, conceptual blending is a more dynamic and fine-grained process than CMT, enabling analysts to describe how innovative or idiosyncratic metaphors are generated as a result of interactions between multiple mental spaces. The two theories thus complement each other: CMT can explain the stable patterns that organise metaphorical thought within a community; conceptual blending can provide the means to examine how unique, emerging meanings are created in particular communicative situations.

Considering the above-mentioned, the followers of the blending theory describe it as the most classic cognitive process of compression, whereby various, and sometimes unrelated but contextually specific input spaces are selectively incorporated to create the coherent mental

entity (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002, p. 114). It breaks down more complex conceptual structures into simpler and more meaningful forms, enabling people to understand relationships that would otherwise be too complex or diffuse to represent directly. The compression of large systems of semantic, cultural, or experiential information allows blending to emerge, not just a combination of the input spaces, but also new conceptual structures. Conceptual blending through this integrative ability provides an adequate explanation of how human cognition generates concise, informative representations from extremely diverse bases of knowledge, particularly in communicative situations that require making interpretative economies, such as humour, artistic expression, and political commentary.

Fauconnier and Turner (2008) assert that blending theory provides the most detailed explanation of the process of new metaphor creation, particularly in its ability to establish new meanings through the incorporation of multiple mental inputs, rather than relying on predetermined source-target relations. By emphasising the creation of hybrid spaces and the emergence of conceptual structures that do not exist in the sources of the inputs, the blending theory provides the analytical tools necessary to understand how the formation and interpretation of complex figurative manifestations occur. This theoretical richness renders blending very relevant to the political cartoons, in which the construction of meanings is often carried out through visual clues, rather than relying solely on spoken words. In this case, the blending is usually based on image-related structures, with the foregrounded visual objects as the primary sources of meaning-making. Political cartoonists often juxtapose political personalities, cultural elements, and situational backgrounds in a single visual frame, mixing spaces that require viewers to actively synthesise information across different fields.

Evans and Green (2006, p. 400) argue that the primary assumption of the blending theory is that different conceptual aspects can interact to create a greater outcome than the aggregate of their components. It is to say that, in the case of selective projection of inputs in different mental spaces into a blended space, these inputs interact to produce emergent structures, new meanings, associations, or conceptual relations, which would not be present in any of the inputs when they are looked at separately. It is this emergent meaning that gives blending its explanatory power, as it accounts for the imaginative leaps and creative interpretations that occur during the construction of meaning.

Grady, Oakley, and Coulson (1999, p. 101) provide a concise overview of the distinctions between CBT and CMT. CMT posits the relationship among pairs of cognitive representations, whilst the blending theory allows for more than two such pairs to be considered. CMT has defined metaphor as a phenomenon that occurs in a single direction; in contrast, BT has not. Once more, CMT analyses are ordinarily concerned with entrenched conceptual relationships and how they may be elaborated, whilst BT research frequently focuses on novel conceptualisations, which may be ephemeral. In conclusion, although both theories have their merits and demerits, CMT is good in explaining how familiar and stable metaphorical mappings organise thought and language. In contrast, CBT is more suited to explain novel and creative metaphors and blended meaning complexity, particularly in multimodal settings. Based on this, the two approaches will be integrated into the study and used for the analysis.

2.3.1. Composition of Metaphor in Conceptual Blending Theory

Conceptual integration, or conceptual blending, has become a dominant approach in cognitive science to explain the powerful yet largely invisible mental processes that underlie complex human thought and behaviour. Fauconnier and Turner (2002) define blending as a core cognitive mechanism whereby people selectively merge objects across more than one mental space to create new structures of meaning. These include activities as diverse as comprehending a sentence, a photograph or a video clip, and forming novel metaphors (Fauconnier & Turner, 2008, p. 17). At its most basic, Conceptual blending is defined as the cognitive process of accessing conceptual spaces of information or experience and subsequently blending them into new spaces that satisfactorily express the creator's intent for their audience. Blending theory is a universal theory of the human mind that describes the cognitive process by which all humans make and comprehend the meaning of languages, cultures, and times. Conceptual blending is a process that humans engage in, as it provides them with insight into the world, an understanding of the human scale, and a sense of meaning that would otherwise be unavailable. Blending enables people to understand complex concepts in ways that are cognitively possible by reducing the complex relationships they have with numerous input spaces into a single, intelligible mental state.

This mechanism helps individuals orient themselves in abstract or unfamiliar realms by contextualising them in terms of concrete and relatable frameworks, thereby improving interpretive clarity and mnemonic effectiveness. As a result, conceptual blending not only

facilitates smooth reasoning but also imaginative extension, which contributes to the generation of new ideas, associations, and creative solutions to problems. In this respect, the ability to integrate different conceptual contents is considered a primary process through which humans attain cognitive economy and generative creativity (Fauconnier & Turner, 2008, p. 92).

2.3.2. Mental Spaces

An important element of conceptual blending is mental space. Mental spaces are temporary and partial representational forms that speakers develop when they think about or verbalise a perceived or imagined past, present, or future situation (Grady, Oakley, and Coulson, 2011; Coulson, 2006, p. 35) (Grady, Oakley, & Coulson, 2011; Coulson, 2006, p. 35). They function as small, provisional packets of conceptual structure that are created dynamically in response to ongoing discourse or perception. Rather than representing fully elaborated world models, mental spaces provide flexible cognitive workspaces in which elements relevant to a particular thought, event, or scenario can be organised. Mental spaces consist of collections of objects and the associations that exist between them. These relations are underpinned by culturally shared or experience-based frames, scripts, and schemas, or background knowledge that enables individuals to build coherent interpretations. To illustrate, a recognition of a political situation in a cartoon can invoke a frame of governance, which systematises the well-known roles, behaviours, and expectations of political leadership. The construction of any mental spaces, therefore, requires the excitation of contextual knowledge, narrative forms and other cognitive resources that influence the interpretation of entities in a given scenario. Mental spaces are not fixed or rigid entities; instead, they can be recruited or built on demand as part of cognitive activity. Current mental spaces can also be accessed in the long-term memory when people rely on familiar knowledge, experience, or a conceptual frame to interpret a situation. As Fauconnier (1994, p. 16) elaborates, new mental spaces can also be created ad hoc to facilitate local cognitive processing, meaning that people can make sense of new situations or hypothetical situations that are not directly represented in memory.

Each mental space contains only a selectively activated subset of the conceptual knowledge associated with its domain, meaning that it represents a simplified or “abridged” version of potential information. For this reason, mental spaces are considered *partial* representations: they include only the elements and relations necessary for the immediate interpretive task. This selective structure allows them to function efficiently without replicating

the full complexity of long-term semantic memory. The transient nature of mental space enables humans to construct, manipulate, and dissolve multiple conceptual scenarios rapidly and effortlessly, an ability crucial to processes such as metaphor comprehension, narrative interpretation, counterfactual reasoning, and the reading of multimodal texts like political cartoons.

2.3.3. Blending Networks

Unlike CMT, which assumes the existence of somewhat fixed mappings between two conceptual domains, Conceptual Blending Theory assumes a more flexible architecture of meaning construction. Blending typically refers to two or more input spaces, including a generic space and a blended space. The input spaces have a generic space with an abstract structure, which serves as a skeletal template, allowing for integration. The blended space, on the contrary, is a relatively new mental space with selectively projected features of the inputs, as well as newly created features that are not easily predictable based on the original domains. This simple structure is an example of how conceptual blending is no longer linear, a domain-to-domain mapping as CMT assumes. More importantly, Fauconnier and Turner (2008, p. 47) claim that there is no limit on the number of input spaces that one should blend; it may be the combination of many mental spaces simultaneously. In more complicated situations, multiple blends can feed into each other, intertwining and reinterweaving already blended spaces into more complex conceptual networks.

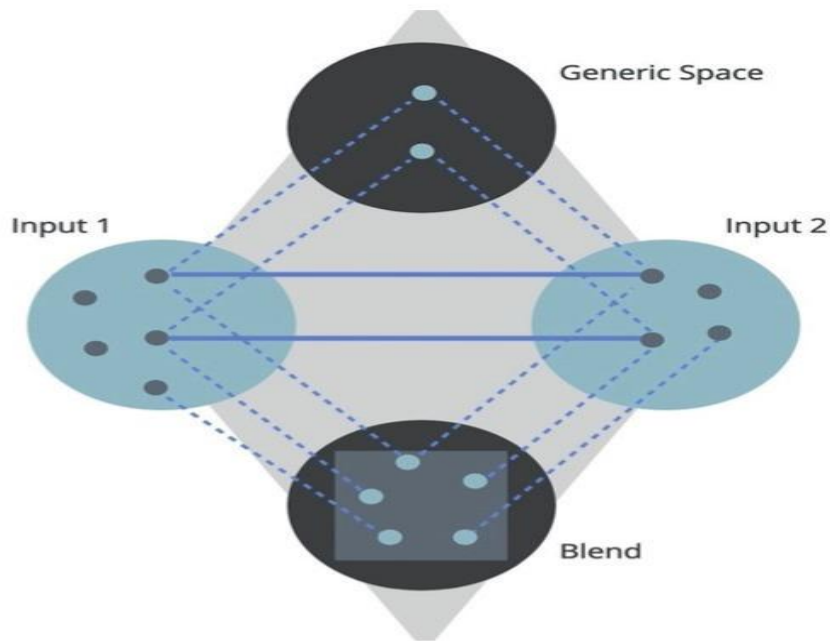


Diagram 1 The basic concept of conceptual integration

A simple blending network comprises four interconnected mental spaces that play distinct roles in the interpretive process. These are two input spaces, a generic space and a blended space. Elements or structures that are similar to each other but differ in some ways are found in the input spaces. The generic space is the intangible arrangement of inputs, providing a schematic view that illustrates areas of correspondence or agreement.

Each space contains salient features contained as dots in Diagram 1 The basic concept of conceptual integration. The solid lines represent the cross-space correspondences between the two input spaces, which are based on the structural similarities in the generic space. These lines represent a matching of specific components in one input with components in the other, thereby preparing the ground for integration. The projection of the choice of elements from the generic and input spaces into the blended space is marked by dotted lines, and the elements are joined together to form a new configuration that exhibits emergent structure, which was not present in the original inputs. The diagram is adopted from Fauconnier and Turner, ‘The Way We Think’ (p. 46).

2.3.4. The structure of the Blending Process

According to Fauconnier and Turner, conceptual integration lies at the core of human imagination (2002, p. 57). It is the cognitive operation that links multiple input spaces, selectively projecting elements from these spaces into a newly constructed blended space. Within this blended space, a novel emergent structure develops through three key processes: composition, completion, and elaboration. Grady, Oakley, and Coulson (2011) define composition as the most straightforward process, referring to the projection of the content of each input into the blended space. The second blending process, which is labelled as completion, is described as the filling in of a pattern, a pattern in the blend, and which is triggered by the matching of structure projected by the input spaces with information stored in long-term memory.” (Grady, Oakley and Coulson, 2011, p. 4). Lastly, elaboration has been conceptualised as the virtual enactment of the event in the blend, which we can now proceed to do endlessly. After the linkages to the long-term information concerning the concept have been activated, the mind can conjure up other situations where the inputs are envisioned to be projected into other spaces (Grady, Oakley, and Coulson, 2011, p. 4).

The described mechanisms enable the integration of concepts, allowing for the creation of meanings that extend beyond the inputs. This helps with creative thinking, problem-solving, humour, counterfactual thinking, and creativity. The very existence of how people build rich and creative interpretations is therefore inherent in situations where synthesising various conceptual resources is needed, including visual satire and political cartoons.

2.3.5. Optimality Principles

As the various possible elements influencing individual meaning seem almost endless, Fauconnier and Turner (2008) believe that these potential spaces could always lead to further speculation. However, they conclude that “conceptual integration does not merely work on a set of constitutive principles that are clear but also works on a set of governing principles that are interactive” (Fauconnier & Turner, 2008, p. 72). According to Fauconnier and Turner, they refer to these ideas as “optimality principles.” It is clear that these principles do not successfully predict metaphors; instead, they indicate the various ways in which the mind organises ideas to facilitate communication. The ultimate goal of the optimality principles, as explained by Fauconnier and Turner, is to elucidate the theme of conceptual integration in a manner consistent

with the natural operation of the human mind. These principles are intended to represent the cognitive pressures that control blending in a way that the resultant emergent structure is coherent, meaningful, cognitively economical, and relevant to a particular context. This intention might explain why metaphors are so central. Metaphors help people communicate complex subjects, making them more accessible to most readers. The authors address the issue of selective projection, which involves the careful selection of all elements requiring mapping in the input spaces. This includes identifying a limited number of relevant elements that influence the blending and mapping processes. Following other governing principles, the metaphor relates an impersonal relationship to a personal one through a compression of relational distance. This results in the comparison being scaled to human terms, which, in turn, generates the flashes of insight that characterise an effective metaphor (Fauconnier & Turner, 2008, p. 299).

2.3.6. Basic Types of Conceptual Integration Network

Fauconnier and Turner (2002) espouse that conceptual blends are made possible through many integration networks. Four of these integration networks are particularly noteworthy for their recurrence. (*Simplex, Mirror, Single-scope, and Double-scope networks*).

2.3.7. Simplex Network

The Simplex integration network comprises input spaces 1 and 2: one should have a frame of roles, and the other with some associated values. Simplex networks are fundamental to the formation of compositional and truth-functional statements. A readily available example is the kinship model, which encompasses many roles, including mother, father, sister, brother, uncle, aunt, and numerous others. Consider the statement: *Esther is the mother of George*. This statement requires the input space to contain the frame “FAMILY” with the roles “MOTHER” and “SON”. In contrast, input space 2 comprises the values “ESTHER” and “GEORGE”. The simplex integration network reduces the ROLE-VALUE outer space relation to a single concept in the blend. Therefore, the conclusion may be drawn that GEORGE is the son of ESTHER. The hypothesis that emerges from the analysis is that GEORGE is ESTHER’S son. The simplex network is characterised by the fact that there are no conflicting inputs between the organising frames. The term “organising frame of mental space” is defined by Fauconnier and Turner (2002, p. 104, 2006, p. 341) as “a frame that deals with the nature of the relevance of acts that

pertain to events and participants.” To illustrate, in the simplex network (see **Error! Reference source not found.**), there is no competition between the input value, which contains ESTHER and GEORGE, and the frame input, which contains MOTHER and SON.

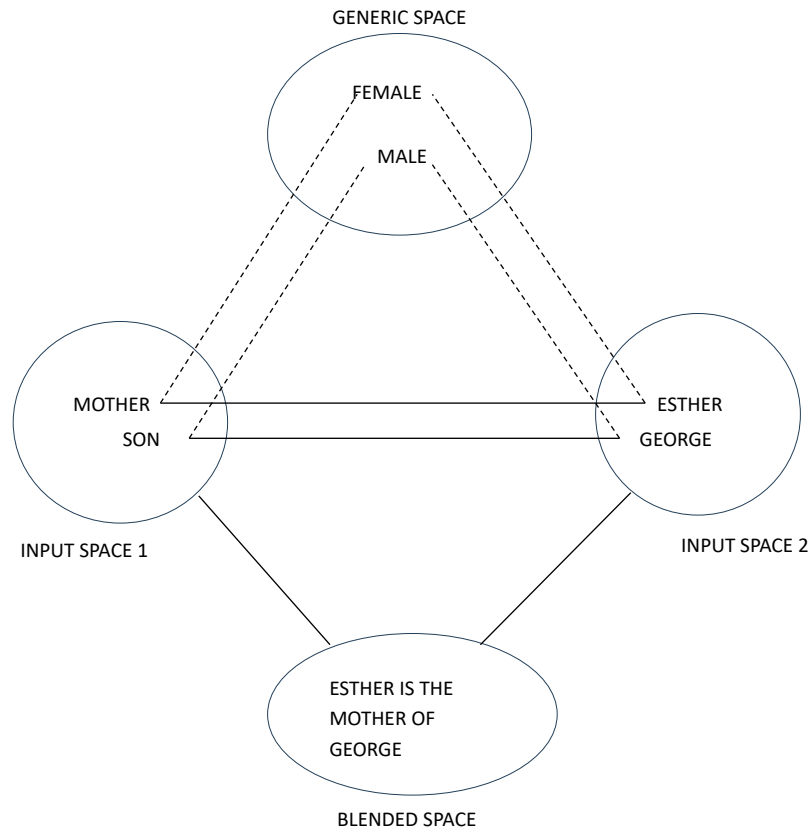
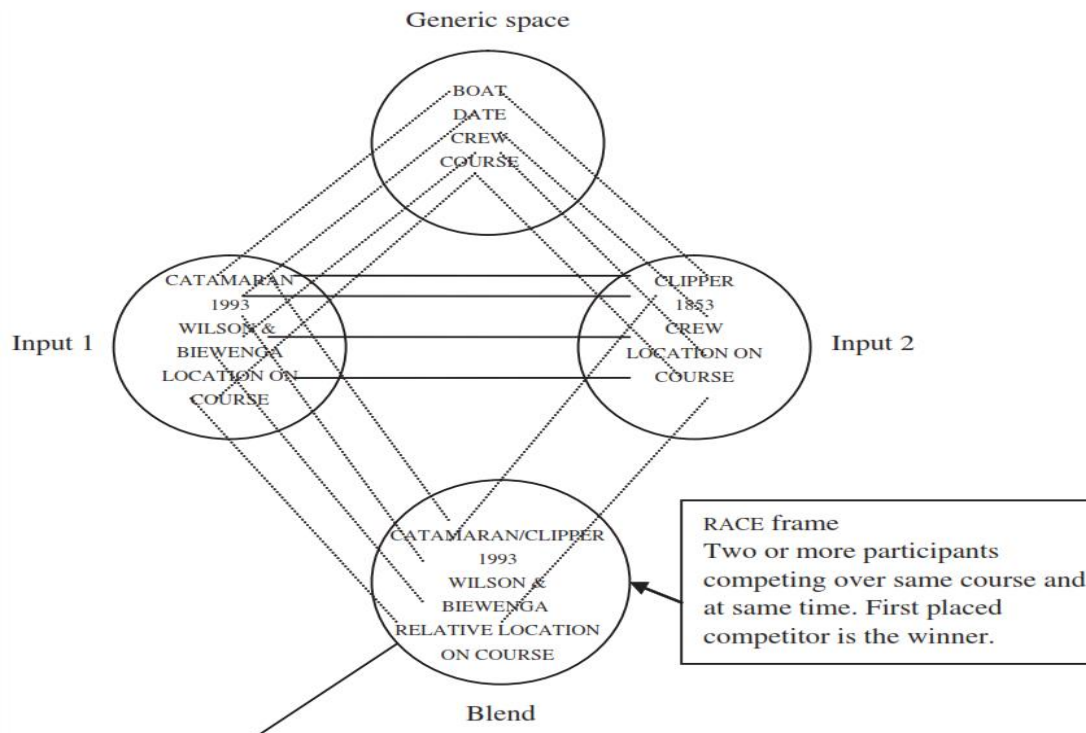


Diagram 2 A simple integration network

2.3.8. Mirror Network

A mirror integration network, as noted by Fauconnier and Turner (2002), is a conceptual integration network that includes input spaces, generic spaces, and blends with an organising integrating theme. The input spaces are analogous in that they exhibit some correspondence in their fundamental organisational structures, as with the generic and blended space. The BOAT RACE blend is an illustration of a mirror network. Let us consider the following statement: “At this point, with only the race boat Kinox still in the race, Rich Wilson and Bill Biewenga had only a 4.5-day difference for them to cross the start/finish line first, a distance equivalent to chasing the spectra of the clipper Northern Light.” (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002, p.64). Below is a representation of this BOAT RACE blend.



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This utterance establishes a Mirror integration network in which each of the spaces in the blend contains both the frame depicting a boat navigating a course or journey and the schema associated with the RACING frame. Similarly, as with the Simplex integration network, no conflicts arise between the inputs in a Mirror integration network, since the frames are identical (see Error! Reference source not found.

2.3.9. Single-Scope Network

The classification of single-scope networks is known in the conceptual metaphor SOURCE-TARGET. Consequently, there are two mental input spaces with two distinct organising frames, which are subsequently incorporated into the blend. In a single-scope network, inputs are organised according to different frames, yet the blend only projects one of these frames. The projection of inputs into the blend in a single-scope network is characterised by a high degree of asymmetry (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002). Therefore, it can be stated that the blend's organising frame reflects one input but not the other.

2.3.10. Double-Scope Network

As defined by Fauconnier and Turner (2002, p. 131), double-space networks, also known as multi-scope networks, are a specific type of network comprising two or more inputs with disparate organising frames. These networks possess an intrinsic emergent structure. Furthermore, double-scope networks may also be asymmetrical, comprising frames that do not clash with one another. The COMPUTER DESKTOP BLEND is a classic example of this kind. Fauconnier and Turner describe this combination as follows in their 2002 study:

The desktop computer interface is a network with two functions. The two principal inputs are organised according to different frames of reference. From one viewpoint, office work is characterised by the use of trash cans, files, and folders. Nevertheless, the use of commands like ‘find,’ ‘replace,’ ‘save,’ and ‘print’ demonstrates the structure of conventional computer operations. The blend's frame is derived from both the frame of standard computer instructions and the frame of office labour, which includes tasks such as opening files and disposing of trash, encompassing actions such as “find,” “replace,” “save,” and “print.” It is one of the creative ways to find frames that can cover the blended activity in a way that is complementary to each other, given that they are inherently different. Despite not falling under the same category, the acts of working at a computer and typing can be described as not being in conflict with “throwing things in the trash” and “printing” (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002, p. 131).

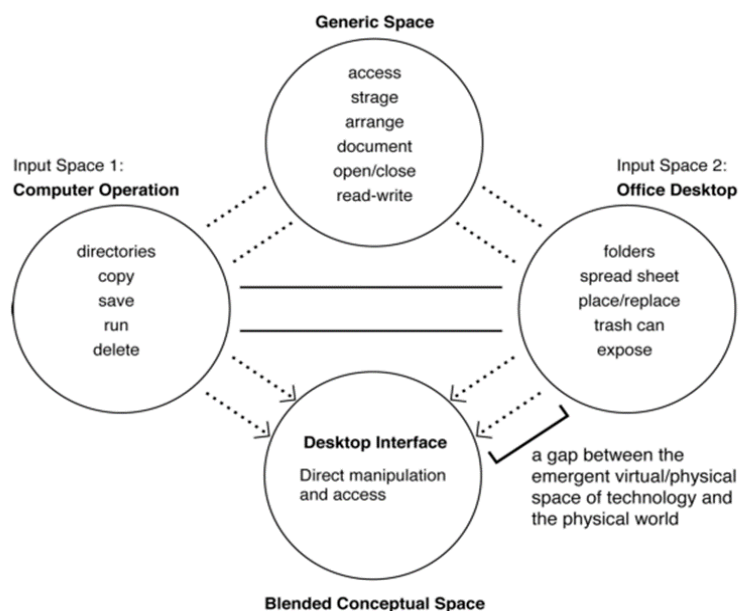


Table 1 Integration networks (based on Fauconnier and Turner 2002)

Network	Inputs	Blend
Simplex	A single input is encased in a frame	Blend is operated within this frame
Mirror	Each of the inputs contains the same frame	Inputs are placed in the same frame as the blend
Single-scope	Concerning the two inputs, they consist of various frames	Blend is only defined by one of the input frames
Double-scope	They both have distinct frames.	The Blend mode is organised according to the characteristics of input frames.

In essence, conceptual blending offers a global perspective, providing a platform for constructing and developing scenarios that can be used to explore various facets of the world (Evans & Green, 2006). The emergence of meaning in the blended integration model is the imaginative product of blending two different concepts, regardless of whether they are complex or straightforward. The argument is that this conceptual blending or integration process represents a fundamental cognitive process that is a pivotal element in our cognitive processes. The integration of prompts for conceptual blending, typically within original constructions, necessitates accessing and integrating extensive conceptual structures, which the hearer must imaginatively discover and link to a relevant scenario (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002, p. 6). This perspective on constructing meaning underscores the legitimacy of the conceptual processes involved in studying political cartoons. In line with the aforementioned cognitive linguistic assumption, this study employs Fauconnier and Turner's (2002) approach to analysing political cartoons from a cognitive linguistics perspective from a Ghanaian context.

2.4.0. Previous Studies on Conceptual Blending Theory in Political Cartoons

This section provides a comprehensive review of the existing literature on conceptual blending, aiming to clarify how the present study contributes to advancing research in this field. As can be seen in the rich body of literature that has been steadily growing both in recent years and in the years preceding it, much focus has been given to the analysis of conceptual blending as a phenomenon related to visual communication, with a particular emphasis on its rise in the sphere of political cartoons. The growing consensus among academics is that political cartoons are complex, multimodal artworks, where meaning is achieved through a dynamic combination of imagery, text, and culturally based knowledge. The conceptual blending theory has been beneficial in this strand of investigation for explaining the selectivity of projection and integration of disparate input spaces, including political actors, socio-economic conditions, and symbolic imagery, into integrated, frequently compelling visual discourses. This growing body of scholarship emphasises the role played by political cartoons as both reflections of political reality and active participants in the process of forming popular interpretation through the reduction of complex political processes into accessible, creative, and often humorous composite spaces. CBT has been extensively applied to visual and multimodal texts, such as political cartoons, due to its capacity to account for complex visual phenomena that earlier frameworks, including Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Lakoff, 1993; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980), struggled to address adequately.” Abdel Raheem (2021) employs blending theory in conjunction with context models (van Dijk, 2014) to examine impoliteness in Arabic political cartoons. The analysis demonstrates that conceptual integration, when situated within broader socio-cognitive contexts, illuminates how cartoonists strategically blend visual and linguistic inputs to construct impolite meanings in subtle, indirect, or symbolically charged ways. The findings further suggest that multimodality substantially enhances the potential for creativity within the representation domain by capitalising on the unique affordances and interpretive possibilities offered by various semiotic modes and their combinations. The integration of imagery, text, symbolism, and cultural knowledge in political cartoons has been demonstrated to yield intricate and frequently layered semantic structures that would be challenging to attain solely through verbal expression. This underscores not only the expressive potential of multimodal blending,

but also its relevance as an analytical tool for understanding how impoliteness is encoded, negotiated, and interpreted in visual-political discourse.”

In a similar vein, Pavlović (2014) argues that conceptual blending theory holds considerable promise for examining the novelty, impermanence, uniqueness, and high context-dependency of meaning construction in political cartoons, conceptualised as dynamic and continually evolving meaning-making practices. He further contends that a systematic and rigorous analysis of political cartoons can productively be anchored in conceptual blending theory, given its capacity to account for the creative integration of disparate inputs and its sensitivity to contextual and cultural contingencies. Together, these studies reinforce the view that conceptual blending provides a robust theoretical framework for exploring how political cartoons compress complex sociopolitical issues into vivid, interpretively rich visual-discursive representations.” Similarly, Marín-Arrese’s (2008) study highlights the efficacy of blending techniques in political cartoons. She explains that this process frequently involves integrating a salient scenario, marked by its conspicuousness and pragmatic significance, with an alternative, less salient scenario. Such integrations produce novel interpretive spaces that enhance communicative efficiency and rhetorical force, enabling cartoonists to frame political events in ways that are both accessible and conceptually rich.

More recently, Osman (2024) examines how blending theory can be applied to English multimodal cartoons around the topic of the global pandemic, with a specific focus on the socio-cognitive aspect. Osman’s work demonstrates that the exploitation of blending in the practice of analysis can help elucidate the significance of knowledge in constructing meaning related to the novel coronavirus. The study highlights the critical importance of combining visual and verbal elements with background knowledge specific to the audience in creating coherent and convincing interpretations of messages related to the pandemic.

Similarly, Lakshmi Prabha and Das (2023) examine the utilisation of conceptual blending in Indian political cartoons to convey socio-political issues. Their analysis suggests that the use of CBT facilitates deeper engagement with and comprehension of the issues under discussion. They further conclude that novel metaphorical blends emerge in the cartoon discourse depending on the thematic nature of the topics addressed, demonstrating the adaptive and creative potential of blending in shaping socio-political commentary. Moreover, their

findings affirm that metaphoric blends are shaped by background knowledge concerning the matters being portrayed, reinforcing the centrality of context in the construction of meaning.

Relatedly, Delibegović-Džanić (2013) shows that the theory of blend is a robust framework that explains the process of humour creation in political cartoons. A viewer interpreting political humour needs to decode the input and blend domains in a way that is driven by both visual and linguistic traces. This means that humour is a product of a process of interpretation where a viewer uses their contextual as well as inferential abilities to create mappings that lead to the discovery of discrepancies that underlie a political cartoon.

Taken together, these studies emphasise the importance of conceptual blending as a beneficial framework approach in politically engaged cartoons. This framework describes the process of how these kinds of texts condense the realities of things into fascinating interpretations of visual discourses. This choice of approach in conducting this particular study is grounded in the assertion by advocates of this approach that conceptual blends are a powerful form of cognitive activity that is capable of achieving “global insight, human-scale understanding, and new meaning” (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002, p. 92). Above, the previous studies conducted that surveyed the relevant issues under this discussion highlight the usefulness of employing CBT as a means of interpreting the messages embedded in political cartoons.

2.5.0 Conceptual Metonymy

Cognitive linguists consider metonymy a basic conceptual operation rather than a literary device. It is analysed as a ubiquitous process whereby people organise their conceptually linked knowledge by making one thing in a conceptual field represent another thing in the same conceptual field. Most importantly, metonymy is not a phenomenon limited to verbal communication; instead, metonymy occurs in a variety of sign forms, independent of language, such as pictorial representation, gesturing, and music, among others. The ubiquity of metonymy in various sign forms signifies that metonymy is a central process involved in directing people’s interpretations during both linguistic and extra-linguistic communication. Barcelona (2010) and Denroche’s (2011) findings propose that metonymy is not only pervasive in human cognition, as previously noted, but that it is actually a phenomenon even more pervasive than metaphor. Since metonymy is a phenomenon conceptualised within a specific domain, as opposed to

metaphorical conceptualisation that spans multiple domains, metonymy can utilise a range of conceptually linked meanings to reference.

In discussing cognitive models of meaning construction, Lakoff (1987, p. 113) highlights the crucial role played by both metonymy and conceptual metaphor. Building on this conceptual foundation, Lakoff and Turner (1989, p. 103) propose a conceptual understanding of both metaphor and metonymy as modes of conceptual mapping. A metaphor is a conceptual form of inter-domain mapping. In contrast, metonymy is a conceptual form of intra-domain mapping that enables a conceptual feature to represent another conceptual feature within a given conceptual space.

Warren (2022) observes that metaphor involves mappings across distinct conceptual domains, for example, understanding an abstract target (e.g., life) in terms of a more concrete source (e.g., a journey). By contrast, metonymy is characterised by mappings that occur within a single conceptual domain, whereby one element gives mental access to another closely related element. However, the distinction between metaphor and metonymy was further clarified by Lakoff and Turner (1989, pp. 103-104) with the explanation that: “Metonymy can be characterised by an intra-domain mapping, with concept A representing concept B due to their prominent cognitive or experiential connection (as in ‘the White House’ meaning the United States government).” This distinction between metaphor and metonymy emphasises the fact that, although both metaphor and metonymy involve conceptual mappings, they only function in very different ways. Specifically, whereas metaphors involve projections between domains, metonymy involves conceptual mappings within the same domain.

On a similar vein, Kövecses and Radden (1998, p. 39) describe metonymy as a concept that involves a cognitive faculty which, based on one conceptual item (the vehicle), enables mental access to another conceptual item (the target) closely related to the first one, both belonging to the same conceptual domain.’ This approach emphasises the associative, rather than projective, basis of metonymy, according to which the target inference is achieved based on cultural or contextual proximity. While ‘domain’ is frequently adopted to define the conceptual setting in which such projections function, Lakoff and Turner prefer the term ‘frame’ in such cases. By ‘frame’ is meant ‘a structured knowledge configuration including roles, inferences, and conceptual presuppositions, with the effect of achieving more sophisticated explanations concerning the conceptual environment in which the metonymic projection is

supposed to function.’ Thus, the replacement of ‘domain’ with ‘frame’ emphasises the contextual, rather than projectively based, nature of metonymic inference.

According to Panther and Radden (1999, p. 9), metonymy cannot be reduced to a linguistic phenomenon in which one word substitutes another but rather represents “a mental operation in which one concept activates or institutes another related concept.” On one level, metonymy involves the use of one concept in substitution of, or in “access” to, another concept closely related to it, to refer back to, or interpret, the closely related concept. The concept of “access” with reference to metonymy, according to Littlemore (2015, p. 18) and Langacker (1993, p. 30) alike, refers to “a cognitive device whereby one entity offers mental ‘access’ in terms of another related one in the conceptual structure.” These contributions serve to strengthen the position taken throughout this discussion, accentuating metonymy’s status as an important cognitive process driving conceptual structuring and interpretation, one that definitely extends beyond the immediate linguistic usage related to stylistic devices.

The work of Lakoff and Johnson (1980, p. 36), as advanced by proponents of conceptual metaphor theory (CMT), allows for the substitution of one concept for another. On the other hand, the work of Kashanizadeh and Forceville (2022) further enhances the discourse on metonymy, which they define as the “cognitive process in which the prominent or well-known part of something is employed to mean, or to stand in, for the thing in all its complexity.” This view is fundamental in the conceptualisation of political cartoons, in which “picking out one visual feature, such as an emblem, hairdo, or dress, can be taken to signal the whole politician, organisation, or ideology.” Visually based substitutions in political cartoons highlight the resourceful and minimalist approach offered by metonymy in multimodal discourse.

In line with this argument, Dancygier and Sweetser (2014) describe metonymy as the concept of using one thing (A) as a symbol of another (B), which is conceptually or experience-based connected. In political cartooning, this is a multimodal relationship: gestural, spatial, and symbolic signs (e.g., a national flag, a party logo, or a well-known landmark) can be used to represent a complex sociopolitical context. This multimodal setting, therefore, strengthens connections through metonymy and promotes visual and textual cues to trigger quick inference among audiences.

Building on this model, Barcelona (2011) highlights the practical character of metonymy. It states that it allows for the projection of familiar characteristics onto unfamiliar or implicit ones within a standard cognitive reference system, particularly in cases where the target concept is in mind. This process is more closely related to conceptual blending theory, in which case metonymic inputs can frequently act as compression devices, triggering the expansion of interpretive spaces. In political cartoons, there are blended spaces where metonymic cues can be incorporated into the construction of emergent meaning, with the visual and textual components playing their roles in the blending space. With these blends, simplified images, such as a politician or a well-known animal, initiate complex socio-political meanings without necessarily being explained.

Altogether, these hints suggest that metonymy is not just one of the key elements of linguistic representation, but also an integral component of multimodal and conceptual blending, which forms the basis of interpreting political cartoons. Metonymy helps to make cognitively more efficient, interpretatively rich, and engage in the contracting, symbolic realm of political satire by recruiting familiar and contextually charged terms to represent larger, sociopolitical actualities. Accordingly, metonymy is based on an inner associative relationship, such as part-whole, cause-and-effect, producer-product, or object-user, which allows mental access to a target concept through an adjacent or neighbouring element.

Synecdoche is the most widely discussed subtype of metonymy, where a part is used to represent the whole or vice versa. An illustration is the phrase “the man has three mouths to feed,” in which the word “mouth” (a salient feature or body part associated with the action of eating) stands metonymically on behalf of persons (those who are dependent on the man). In this case, the source utterance mouth initiates the cognitive process of the broader target object, which is individual human beings in need of nourishment. This process of thought summarises the economy of expression that forms the core of metonymy: it is with the help of one salient feature that the listener or viewer is directed towards the construction of a greater conceptual frame.

According to Langacker (1987, pp. 385-386), this phenomenon is known as metonymic activation, and the role of metonymy extends beyond representation to include inference. The call to a metonymic vehicle appeals to the target’s mind without necessarily needing elaboration. More importantly, metonymic activation is contextually limited; it only works when

interlocutors have the conceptual frame that connects the vehicle and the target. This renders metonymy an effective tool of communication, as it reduces intricate or large amounts of information into a simplified trigger that can be promptly digested, provided the audience is well-versed in the frame of reference.

This explanatory efficiency is especially acute outside the verbal, such as in multimodal communication, which can include political cartoons, advertising, and visual satire. Political cartoons, for example, may use a single object, such as a broken chain, a ballot box, or a large pen, to metonymically convey more complex sociopolitical narratives, including oppression, electoral corruption, or legislative power. Similarly, the overtreatment of a politician's nose, clothing, or body position can trigger more widespread perceptions of lies, social status, or political beliefs. These visuals carry out the same mental process that Langacker (1993) defines, namely, they invoke a target concept through selective representation, which enables the viewer to derive general meaning from what is expressly presented.

Therefore, metonymy is not only a linguistic device and a stylistic feature of language use, but also a central cognitive device that structures conceptual knowledge in a way that is functional in terms of meaning construction efficiency. This is either in speech communication or in visual communication, where metonymy functions by capitalising on notable highlights in the environment that are embedded in the context in a way that triggers conceptual structures in the mind.

2.5.1 Types of Metonymies

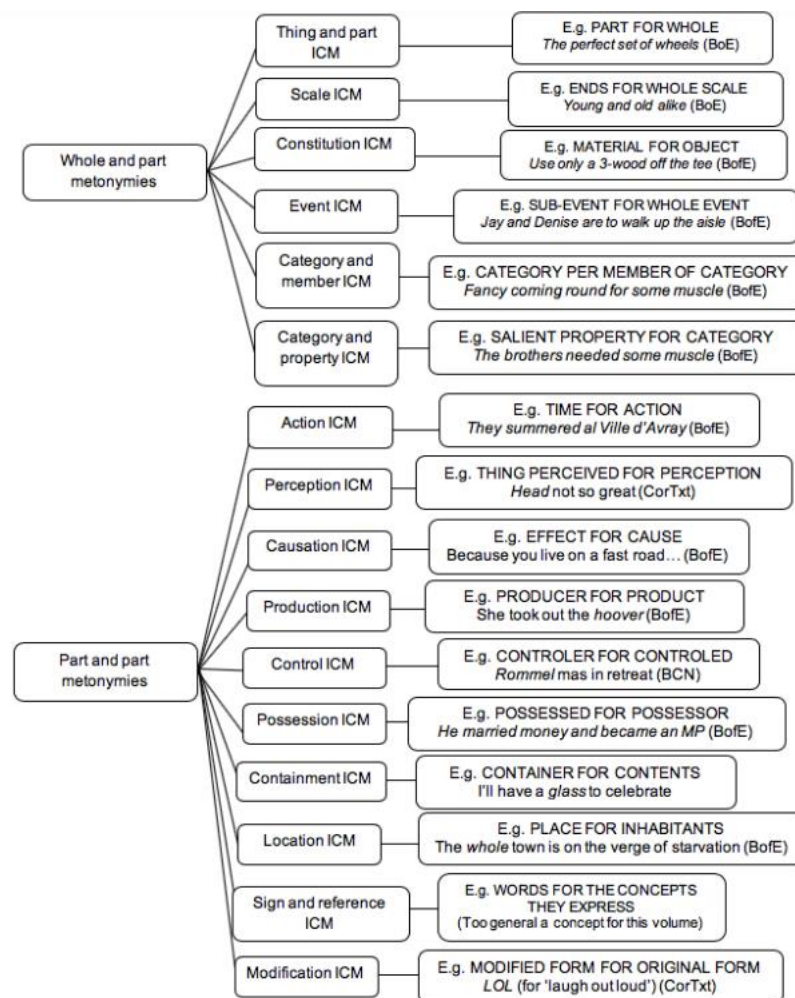
Different typologies have been proposed by scholars in the field of Cognitive Linguistics (CL) to explain the various forms and functions of metonymy. The often-overlooked original early foundational work by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) demonstrated in advance that metonymy is not a rhetorically isolated phenomenon, as it was observed that in everyday reasoning, conceptual contiguity often builds upon part-whole relationships and other conceptual relationships of contiguity. Further developments were made by Radden and Kövecses (1999) and later Ruiz de Mendoza and Mairal, among others, who attempted to formalise the variety of metonymic patterns on which linguistic and multimodal sense-making is based.

Radden and Kövecses (1999) provide one of the first extensive taxonomies of metonymy, with two main organisational patterns, namely, WHOLE FOR PART and PART FOR WHOLE. These

classes represent the two-way interaction between an entity and its constituent parts. The WHOLE FOR PART pattern involves referring to the sub-entity with a total entity, i.e. a country name (e.g. Ghana), metonymically to its national football team. On the other hand, PART FOR WHOLE refers to the usage of a salient part, or feature, in place of a larger one, whereby: a mouth represents a dependent person; wheels represent an entire car.

These core schemas point to the cognitive bias of selecting contextually salient features as a means of accessing a larger conceptual network in the mind, or to shrink the demonstration of various subparts under a general holistic designation. Their taxonomy has been used to provide conceptual content for later elaborations by scholars such as Ruiz de Mendoza and Mairal, who have expanded the typology, added pragmatic functions and explored how metonymy interacts with metaphor and other conceptual processes.

Diagram 4 Ruiz de Mendoza and Mairal Taxonomy on Metonymy



According to Radden and Kövecses (1999), basic types of metonymies. In Littlemore (2015, p. 22)

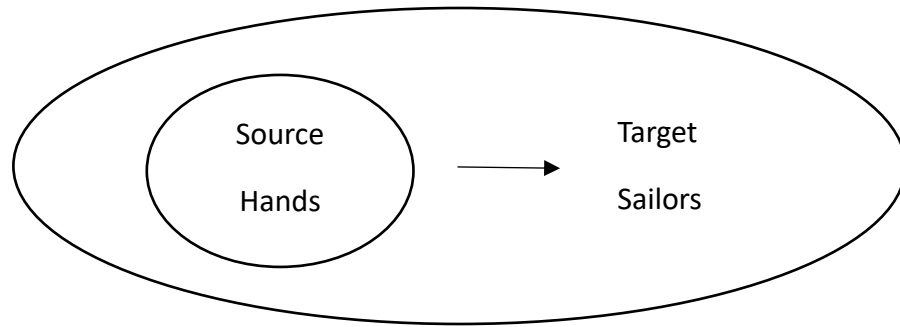
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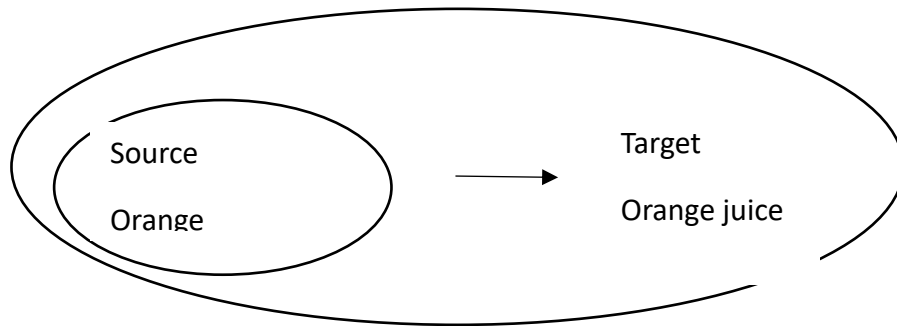
Ruiz de Mendoza (2000) also identifies two metonymic types:

- a) Source-in-target, for example, the expression “all hands on deck” is used to indicate that there are people on a ship, particularly sailors. In the view of numerous academic authorities, this category is akin to the concept of PART-FOR-WHOLE (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Radden & Kövecses, 1999; Kövecses, 2010; Benczes, 2011).



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- b) A target-in-source is explained as a fragment of the source that serves as the target. A category represents either one of its members or a part of the category. For example, “orange” (the source) stands for “orange juice” (the target). Other scholars commonly describe this category as WHOLE-FOR-PART METONYMY.



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As Littlemore (2015, pp. 48-49) observes, this model suggests that most metonymies can be classified as part-to-whole.

2.5.2 Metonymy in Visual and Multimodal Discourse

It would be recalled, however, that metonymy is not solely applicable in the use of language, but rather traverses other tropes. The discussion of visual metonymy has been relatively limited compared to its verbal counterpart (Benczes, 2019). While there is a paucity of studies on visual metonymy, this does not detract from its existence. One area of visual studies that is prevalent in visual metonymy studies is advertisements. Given the nature of this

dissertation, it will be helpful to consider metonymy from a visual perspective as well. The opinions of other scholars about visual metonymies will be considered. According to Forceville (2009, p. 83), metonyms sometimes take on polysemic roles, whose references are often implicit and characterised by vagueness and ambiguity, which affect the precise reference. In light of the above, it is essential to consider the cultural background knowledge that informs this process to identify a particular visual element as a source domain for metonymy. Kashanizadeh and Forceville (2020) employ Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez's (2002) typology in their analysis of Dutch and Iranian advertisements to shed further light on the multimodal and visual interactions between metaphor and metonymy. Forceville proposes several metonymic features that can be applied to nonverbal and multimodal communication.

1. A metonymy's receiver could deduce the target concept or structure by employing a clue in another communicative modality – language, images, music or sound, gesture, etc.
2. Both source and target belong to the same field of meaning in the context.

The selection of a metonymic source makes the target accessible from a particular viewpoint. The source highlights one or more features of the target that would not have been apparent otherwise. The highlighted characteristic frequently has an evaluative component (Forceville, 2009, p. 58).

2.6.0 Interrelations

The simultaneous operation of multiple framing devices in multimodal discourse is far more prevalent than the independent functioning of different conceptual processes (e.g., Kashanizadeh & Forceville, 2020, p. 86). Barcelona (2000) identifies two primary categories of interactions between metonymies and metaphors: interface at the conceptual level and metonymy and metaphor co-instantiation that is solely textual. Moreover, it is quite feasible for the same instances of such conceptual processes to be incorporated to produce metonymy chains or metaphor complexes (Pérez Sobrino, 2017). Pedrazzini and Scheuer (2018) assert that political cartoons encompass a range of semiotic elements, including metaphor, metonymy, humour, irony, and sarcasm. These elements are intricately interwoven with the complex web of interrelationships that characterise the field of political cartoons. However, the concern of this investigation is to understand the extent to which visual metaphor and metonymy are

employed to communicate socio-political issues in Ghana. According to Taylor (2002, pp. 122-141), metonymy is the primary cognitive process underlying the formation of metaphors.

2.6.1 Metaphor and Metonymy's Interaction

From the discourse community of linguistics and related fields, the relationship between metonymy and metaphor is explored in the work of Goossens (1990) and Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez (2002) in the context of verbal communication. Noting the interdependency between metonymy and metaphor, Goossens (1990) labels this interdependency as 'metaphtonymy.' It is indicated that the roots of metaphorical experiences can be traced to simple forms of metonymy. In addition to this understanding, Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez (2002) develops his theories on how metonymy can serve as a means to gain access to a metaphoric mapping or refine a metaphoric understanding. According to his ideas, metonymy does not merely serve as a mechanism of meaning extension but is also considered to be a hierarchical structure of metaphoric projections. In this way, the understanding of both metaphors and metonymies is no longer confined to individual cognitive process perspectives. From a more visual yet semiotic perspective, Guan and Sun (2023) emphasise the relationship between multimodal metaphor and metonymy as they co-occur in editorial cartoons to characterise the role of both cognitive processes in crafting the image of a particular nation. From the discussion, it is evident that Guan and Sun succeeded in examining the role of metaphors and metonymy in creating a nation's image because they often work hand-in-hand with their focus on metonymy, delicately placing attention on vital national symbols, people, or events for the purpose of setting the stage for their interpretation through metaphors. This is achieved through visual and verbal features such as iconic buildings, clothing, or words. The findings show that analysing verbal and non-verbal communication patterns with the help of the cognitive-discursive approach helped uncover the specificities of the interactions between metaphorical transfers and metonymic shifts in constructing a positive image of China and a negative image of the United States. Going forward, according to Goossens' reasoning, it is reasonable to accept that a potential continuation of a metonymic process and a metaphoric one is not completely discrete. This train of thought led to the formulation of "metaphtonymy," which is a metonymy-based metaphoric construction. This particular blend formalises the idea that there could be instances wherein the role of metonymy is to precede or constitute part of the mechanism of metaphoric projection. In such instances, the task of metonymy is to zero in on a particular aspect or component of a

conceptual domain. Notably, Goessens emphasises that when metonymy is entrenched in metaphor, it retains its status as a distinct mental task. It still retains the first conceptual grounding the metaphor is based on, allowing for greater accuracy or a more contextually suitable interpretation. Metaphonymy thus indicates a stratified process of cognition, where metonymic associations stimulate, hone, or strengthen metaphoric meaning, and shows how the two types of figurative thinking are interrelated and hierarchical. He describes the connection between metonymy and metaphor, outlining the following types: metaphor from metonymy, metonymy with metaphor, metaphor within metonymy, and metonymy within metaphor. Likewise, according to Ruiz de Mendoza and Mairal (2008, p. 77), metonymies and metaphors do not continuously operate in isolation; instead, they frequently interact within broader networks of metaphors and metonymies. Within such networks, multiple layers of mappings may coexist, giving rise to what the authors term *double metonymies* and *double metaphors*. These complex configurations involve sequential or simultaneous meaning projections, in which one metonymic or metaphorical relation may trigger, refine, or build upon another.

In their study, Guan and Sun (2023) also present their version of the metaphor-metonymy interplay classification, which is inclusive and interactive. To classify metaphonymy in this study, the definition of Pérez Sobrino (2017) will be used, who analysed the phenomenon in the multimodal context. He defines multimodal metaphonymy as an “integration of a metonymy in either the source or target domain of a metaphor... in a process that involves a mode shift” (p. 125). The selection of this particular definition is deemed suitable, as it effectively encapsulates the multimodal nature of political cartoons and the accompanying linguistic nuances. According to Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez (2000), multimodal metaphonymy is the repeated use of the same metonymy in the source domain of an analogy or the target domain of a shift or mode change. (Pérez Sobrino, 2017, p. 125). Three categories of multimodal metaphonymies have been identified as being associated with the discussion of images, particularly in the context of political cartoons: metaphonymy with a metonymy incorporated into either the metaphoric source or target, metaphonymy with a metonymy incorporated into both the metaphoric source and target, and metaphonymy with a metonymic chain structuring the metaphoric source.

Furthermore, Ruiz de Mendoza and Velasco (2002) discuss some combination patterns that emerge when two metonymies interact. These comprise double domain reduction, double

domain expansion, domain reduction and domain expansion, and domain expansion and domain reduction (cf. Alousque, 2013). One of the first scholars to examine the connections between metonymy and metaphor in multimodal discourse is Alousque (2013), who discusses the topic of political cartoons as a significant point of study. In her analysis, she demonstrates that there is no linear relationship between these two cognitive mechanisms, but rather, they are involved in various ways of representing configurations. Introducing the source domain of a metaphor highlights situations where the source domain of a metaphor is itself metonymically invoked, such as when a single object or term represents a larger conceptual area from which the metaphor is derived. On the other hand, she also demonstrates that the target domain can be expressed in a metonymic style, i.e., a prominent attribute of the desired idea is used to represent the entire target. Alousque's fine-grained analysis provided a clear differentiation between each kind of metonymy. These are: Whole-for-the-part (as in an institution representing a part) and part-for-the-whole (as in a leg representing a human being). (Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez & Otal Campo, 2002, p. 58).

In practice, this suggests that either the source or target domain, or both, may be realised metonymically as part-for-whole or whole-for-part representations. A helpful illustration offered by Alousque (2013, pp. 74-75) demonstrates this process of metonymy-based metaphor, in which England is conceptualised through the culturally salient metonym of tea.

Through this example, Alousque shows how a culturally entrenched element (tea) activates the broader conceptual frame of "England," thereby enabling a metaphorical construal grounded in metonymic access. Two part-whole metonymies are used in the cartoon: *THING (RELATING TO A COUNTRY) FOR COUNTRY*, where the tea represents the British national drink, and *SUBSET OF A COUNTRY FOR ENTIRE COUNTRY* (with "England" representing all of Great Britain). Additionally, the verbal realisation of another metonymy-invoked phrase, "Europe is caffeine" (Euro non-free), where the euro is the target depicted through metonymy, is the metaphorical assertion "100% euro free." The metaphor illustrates Britain's disassociation from Europe by highlighting the benefits of tea's lack of caffeine. The metonymies occurring as a result of the part-for-the-whole metonymies were found to be more frequent than those occurring as a result of the whole-for-the-part metonymies, according to the final analysis conducted by Alousque. It is, however, crucial to bear in mind that this is a natural phenomenon and that the meaning is, to some extent, intrinsic. Consequently, it is possible to focus on a

specific aspect of a given subject, thus saving time for both the reader and the cartoonist. Additionally, this approach is more time-saving for the observer and can be associated with a more significant idea.

Using multimodal fusion analysis, Lin and Chiang (2015) focus on political cartoons featured in Taiwanese newspapers relating to the U.S beef event in Taiwan. The cognitive mechanism of multimodal fusion encompasses two types: the Metonymic Network and the Diversified Metaphoric Network. The study highlights the role that metonymy plays in the multimodal context of political cartoons and how metonymies and metaphors are intertwined in the process of multimodal blending, which has evolved from metonymic-metaphoric networks. One of the most significant and pervasive representations that can consolidate complex general issues is multimodal fusion, as evidenced by writers who discuss it in political cartoons. The extant literature suggests that there is sufficient evidence to demonstrate the manifestation of visual metaphors in other genres of communication. To comprehend the intricacies of these genres, it is recommended that researchers employ one or two of the aforementioned theoretical frameworks to effectively extract the underlying message.

2.7.0 Chapter Summary

This chapter traced the development of metaphor studies from Aristotle's description of it as a poetic device and decorative figure to the cognitive or conceptual perspective. The cognitive aspect of the discussion focused on Lakoff and Johnson's 'Metaphors We Live By', which established the basis for conceptual metaphor analysis. The discourse was expanded to encompass additional cognitive devices, including the conceptual blending theory (CBT) propounded by Fauconnier and Turner, who advanced the concept of four mental input spaces, as well as the conceptual metonymy and multimodal metaphor proposed by Forceville. The discussion also focused on some relevant studies that employed these theories and political cartoons as their source of data.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1.0. Introduction

This chapter is devoted to an examination of the research methodology employed in this study. The following areas are covered: research approaches, data sources, data size, data collection and sampling procedures, data analysis procedures, and justification of the data source. To

obtain responses to the fundamental questions posed by this study, a visual cognitive analysis was conducted on the selected cartoons, focusing on the visual elements that cue the metaphor and metonymy behind the cartoons.

3.1.1 Research Approaches

The research approach is qualitative, as the nature of the data requires understanding a phenomenon in its actual context; therefore, it is necessary to employ a qualitative research methodology. This study subjected the data to qualitative analysis and interpretation, including an examination of political cartoons and their accompanying linguistic elements, such as bubble speeches and captions. Qualitative methods are particularly efficacious in the data analysis of this study. They are beneficial for summarising and presenting patterns within the data. In addition, they are well-suited for identifying common themes that have emerged from a selection of cartoons. The thematic content encompassed a variety of subjects, including health, economics, sports, travel, and religion.

3.1.2 The Qualitative Approach

This approach has been adopted in numerous social science studies due to its ability to elucidate social realities (Mohajan, 2018). As Kumar (2018, p.32) observes, “qualitative research is primarily concerned with describing situations, natural phenomena, problems, and actual enumerations of events, behaviours, and conditions, without employing quantitative methods”. In other words, Mackey and Gass (2005, p. 162) define qualitative research as a field of study that employs descriptive data and does not regularly utilise statistical procedures. To elucidate the communication of social, political, economic, religious, and contemporary issues in Ghanaian political cartoons, the present study employs a qualitative methodology to identify and analyse the deployment of multimodality and linguistic features, such as metaphor and metonymy, from a visual perspective. Qualitative research focuses on understanding a particular process and its significance within a specific context. In this case, the objective is to examine how cartoonists effectively utilise their craft in response to the developments occurring within Ghana. This is achieved by undertaking an analysis and evaluation of the linguistic and visual elements that are integrated into the cartoons.

According to Cresswell (1994, p.145), this research approach aims to “investigate how individuals construct meaning and coherence in their lives”. The research is exploratory,

intending to gain insight into the subject matter. Additionally, it is descriptive in the sense that it aims to provide a detailed interpretation of the phenomenon being studied. In other words, qualitative research represents a strategy that provides a methodical approach to understanding the themes and patterns that emerge from the data (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 12). Despite the inherent strengths of qualitative research, it is not without its limitations. The subjective nature of research, predicated on the respondents' personal experiences and interpretations of the phenomena under study, is a key weakness. The crux of the issue pertains to the question of consensus in interpretation. Can it be assumed that all individuals identically interpret the same concepts? This is a fundamental question that gives rise to the subjective nature of the approach. It is essential to recognise that individuals may offer divergent interpretations of the same concept, with these variations being attributed to a range of factors. These factors may include the individual's current emotional state, their social and cultural background, and external factors (Mwita, 2022). Nevertheless, within the domain of visual studies, there is a certain degree of acceptance of subjectivity, given that viewers may arrive at divergent interpretations based on the visual materials available to them

In light of the aforementioned considerations, a comprehensive examination of the underlying meanings of the selected political cartoons was conducted by utilising a diverse array of cognitive tools and approaches. These included those developed by Forceville's multimodal approach (1996), Lakoff and Johnson's Cognitive Metaphor Theory (1980), and Fauconnier and Turner's Conceptual Blending Theory (2002) framework. In Chapter Two, the theoretical foundation underpinning the investigation is discussed in detail.

3.2.1 Sample/Data/Corpus

The present investigation spans the period from 2016 to February 2025. This timeframe has been deliberately selected to ensure that the two cartoonists are examined equally in terms of the year of production. Although Akosua's cartoon publication commenced before 2016, the rationale for choosing this timeframe for the study stems from the fact that Tilapia Da Cartoonist officially began publishing on 3 News in 2016. To circumvent any potential inconsistencies that may arise from disparate timeframes, it is recommended to initiate the study from 2016. This timeframe is considered sufficiently extensive to facilitate the establishment of generalisations and the acquisition of insights into the issues under investigation. From a political perspective, the period between 2016 and 2025 signifies a new era in the nation's political landscape,

characterised by a transition of authority from the eight-year tenure of the National Democratic Congress (NDC) to the primary opposition, the New Patriotic Party (NPP). Economically, from 2016 onwards, the circulation of Tilapia Da Cartoonist's works on national television significantly impacted the mileage and financial value of political cartoons. It is imperative to recognise that the study focuses on Ghanaian news reports from a visual and multimodal perspective. Researchers such as Oduro-Frimpong (2018) and Olaniyan and Limb (2018), who examine the utilisation of political cartoons and visual depictions of Ghanaian matters from this viewpoint, generally cite 1957, the time of independence, as the genre's genesis (Oduro-Frimpong, 2018; Olaniyan & Limb, 2018). This is attributed to the substantial evolution in Ghanaian visual journalism since that period.

The corpus of political cartoons utilised in the present study was retrieved from two media outlets: Tilapia Da Cartoonist (3 News) and Akosua Cartoon (Daily Guide). Several factors substantiate the selection of these media outlets. Notably, these two cartoonists are among the most influential in Ghana at present. Tilapia Da Cartoonist is a celebrated cartoonist, as evidenced by the accolades he has received. At the 2024 Ghana Comedy Awards, he was awarded the Best Comic Cartoonist/Animator of the Year award. In addition to this accolade, the artist was awarded the Ghana Leadership Awards for the Best Political Cartoonist in 2020. Furthermore, he was awarded the title of Best Comedy Sketch/Cartoon Artist by the Comedy and Poetry Awards (Ghana) in the same year. Secondly, TV3, a privately owned station, is believed to have a vast viewership comprising individuals from all sixteen regions of Ghana. The findings of Geopoll's media measurement service, conducted last year, ranked TV 3 second in Ghana in coverage, surpassing even state-owned TV stations, corroborating this assertion. The popularity of Tilapia Da Cartoonist's work is enhanced by its airing on this station, which provides it with a broader audience. Once more, due to the impartiality of Tilapia Da Cartoonist in addressing national matters without any political bias, he is the most widely followed Ghanaian cartoonist on both Facebook and X (Twitter), with over 119,000 and 31,700 followers, respectively. Finally, Tilapia Da Cartoonist has attained a certain degree of recognition due to his ability to convey and illustrate contemporary issues satirically through visuals that resonate with the Ghanaian audience, both at home and abroad.

In Ghana, there have been allegations that some newspapers espouse pro-government and anti-government perspectives. For example, the Daily Guide and the Statesman newspapers

are perceived as aligned with the incumbent New Patriotic Party (NPP). In contrast, the Democrat and the Enquirer newspapers are regarded as representing the opposition National Democratic Congress (NDC). However, other newspapers, such as the Daily Graphic and the Ghanaian Times, do not align with any political party and are considered national newspapers. This study aims to obtain a comprehensive and balanced representation of Ghana in political cartoons, which will be achieved by analysing a representative sample of cartoons from various newspapers. However, it is essential to note that not all newspapers have maintained their commitment to publishing cartoons.

Daily Guide began its publication around 1999, and Western Publications Ghana Limited currently owns it. The objective of the establishment is to “facilitate the enhancement of democratic processes within the context of Ghanaian politics. This will be achieved by providing information, entertainment, and education to the readers” (<https://repository.gij.ed>). It has continued to publish political cartoons (Akosua) since its inception. In a 2006 report published by the African Media Development Initiative (AMDI), an international organisation dedicated to the growth of the media landscape in Africa, the Daily Guide was rated as the second most widely read newspaper in Ghana, second only to the state-owned Daily Graphic. Oduro-Frimpong cited this information in his 2013 study. At the time of writing, Akosua’s cartoon is the sole visual journalistic contribution to the Daily Guide newspaper. Currently, the publication is available in an online format, thus providing greater accessibility to those who are unable to obtain a printed copy of the newspaper. The selection of Daily Guide’s Akosua was based on many factors. It is hypothesised that she is aligned with the New Patriotic Party (NPP) due to the proprietor of the Daily Guide newspaper being a staunch member of the NPP. In light of this, it can be posited that the cartoons in question tend to favour the NPP. Nevertheless, it can be argued that her cartoons reflect the ideological standpoint of the publisher and her perspective on socio-political issues, particularly in comparison to the incumbent NPP and the opposition NDC. Secondly, Akosua was selected to offer a divergent perspective on the presentation of socio-political and economic issues. Ultimately, both cartoonists were selected due to their availability and consistent publication of issues, as other prominent cartoonists such as Daavi have ceased producing political cartoons. It should be noted that this study is not motivated by any political considerations but is conducted in an entirely academic context. It would be a misrepresentation of the facts to suggest that the investigation

of these two cartoonists represents the entirety of the media's coverage of socio-political and economic issues. Nevertheless, they are anticipated to exhibit characteristics encouraging other scholars to pursue research in this area.

3.2.2 The Sample Size

The sample of this dissertation comprises one hundred and twenty (120) political cartoons published by the aforementioned cartoonists from 2016 to February 2025. Political motivations do not drive this period; somewhat, it is grounded in considerations of practicality and the accessibility of relevant data. At the time of data collection for this study, Tilapia has published 950 cartoons since 2016, while Akosua has published 2,131 cartoons since 2018, which span several topics. The cartoons were obtained through manual download from the online websites of the respective cartoonists. The cartoons were then categorised according to a range of source domains that had been established for the study. This categorisation was based on the visual elements present in the cartoons. Despite the existence of a substantial corpus of publications by these cartoonists, the study utilised a sample of 120 cartoons. The rationale behind selecting this sample size is outlined below. The sample size has been determined to be adequate for the present research, given the comprehensive examination of visual metaphor and visual metonymy, in conjunction with the associated linguistic elements embedded in the cartoons. The question of the optimal data size for a given study is not universal but rather depends on the specific research methodology employed.

In light of this, Anthony (2001) establishes that the selection of data for a study should align with the study's focus to ensure the validity of the results. This may be either a comprehensive investigation or a more concise one. A comprehensive investigation of a specific phenomenon, involving a substantial amount of data, can present significant challenges to the research process, particularly in terms of the methodology employed and available space constraints. Nevertheless, a cursory investigation utilising a limited data set is not recommended.

Secondly, the existing literature also guides this decision. The data sets utilised in preceding studies conducted within the previous six years on the subject of political cartoons exhibit variability depending on the objectives of the researcher, for example: Virág (2023) examines 585 editorial cartoons in her doctoral thesis, Andima (2019) investigates 18 political

cartoons from Namibian newspapers in his doctoral dissertation, in her doctoral dissertation, Toumi (2022) explores 95 political cartoons that were published in the Algerian press, and Ohemeng (2020) also analyses 150 political cartoons from Akosua of the Daily Guide, a Ghanaian newspaper. A review of the sample sizes used in the existing research reveals a range of 50 to 100, with Virág's study constituting a notable exception due to its use of an ample sample size of 585. Accordingly, the present study utilises a sample of 120 political cartoons, as sample size is not a significant factor in determining the study's significance or quality in qualitative research (Holloway & Wheeler, 2002). It is worth noting that there are no established guidelines for determining the appropriate sample size in qualitative research.

3.2.3 Sampling Technique and Data Collection Procedure

As defined by Parahoo (1997, p. 232), purposive sampling is an approach used in selecting participants for a study based on their ability to provide the necessary data to advance the research. In light of the aforementioned explanation, a purposive sample strategy was employed to select the most prolific and renowned cartoonists for data collection within the specified period, under the project's criteria. This process involves downloading political cartoons published within the stipulated time frame by the two cartoonists: Tilapia Da Cartoonist of TV 3 (3 News) and Akosua of the Daily Guide, which contain elements of the available source domains and the target topics to be analysed. After retrieving the cartoons from their internet portals, they were categorised according to the predominant topics: economy, sports, travel, health, and religion. It should be noted that the subjects listed may not apply to all of the political cartoons that have been downloaded. However, given that the study employs visual metaphors and metonymy, some cartoons exhibit metonymic features. This decision was influenced by the assertion made by Wallen and Fraenkel (2013) that purposive sampling methodology is the optimal approach for creating a sample that aligns with the specific requirements of a given study.

3.2.4 Data Analytical Framework

The present study employs a cognitive linguistic analytical technique for visual conceptualisation in the context of Ghanaian political cartoons. The study aims to ascertain how socio-political, economic, and contemporary topics are conceptually represented in Ghanaian political cartoons. The Conceptual Blending Theory (CBT) is designed to account for the

creative and novel construction of metaphors, which typically results in the emergence of new structures. Its fundamental objective is to elucidate the precise functioning of metaphor and metonymy in discourse, especially when these devices are constrained within the context of the visual genre. A central tenet of the cognitive linguistics framework, particularly in visual studies, is the utilisation of analytical tools that facilitate the investigation of the underlying motivations behind the depiction and employment of specific elements within a cartoon.

As advanced by Rohrer (2004), Conceptual Integration Theory employs an enhanced schematisation of the process of meaning construction, thereby providing a suitable framework for analysing the intricate nuances of cartoons. The present study employs various analytical tools to represent a key approach in exploring visual and cultural cognition. These include conceptual metaphor theory (CMT), multimodal metaphor, conceptual blending theory (CBT), and visual metonymy. The aforementioned tools benefit the present study, as they facilitate a valuable, systematic, and objective exploration of creativity and novel metaphor construction embedded in political cartoons. This objective will be achieved by employing a process of conceptual mapping, whereby concepts from a range of sources, including traditional, religious, and international contexts, are applied to the specific context of Ghanaian political discourse.

The study employs the conventions of multimodal metaphor, conceptual metaphor, and conceptual blending to unravel the messages behind these cartoons. In examining the multimodal metaphor approach, the visual elements embedded in the political cartoons that contribute to the construction of the metaphor will be explored. I will identify and explain the conceptual metaphor underlying the selected cartoons, providing a detailed account of the characteristics and elements deemed relevant for mapping in the two domains. This will be accomplished with due consideration of the tenets of conceptual metaphor theory. Due to the limited space, it is not feasible to diagrammatically represent all the data using the four mental spaces module as proposed by Facounnier and Turner (2002). Regarding conventions, the conceptual metaphor will be presented in uppercase, while the remaining conceptual information, including mappings between the two domains, will be written in lowercase. Furthermore, the present study employs the use of “IS” (e.g., “THE PRESIDENT IS A DRIVER”) for all conceptual metaphors identified throughout the study. The following section demonstrates how the present study employs these analytical tools to identify novel and creative metaphors and metonymies in Ghanaian political cartoons.

3.2.5 Procedure: Identifying Visual Metaphors in Ghanaian Political Cartoons

Many researchers have examined the utilisation of metaphors in visual genres. For instance, Caballero 2009; El Refaie 2003, 2009; Rojo and Orts 2010; Velasco-Sacristán and Fuertes-Olivera 2006a, 2006b; Serig 2006. Other studies have focused on the identification and analysis of visual metaphors in advertising (Andriessen et al., 2009; Forceville, 1994, 1996, 2002, 2008; Kaplan, 2005). It has been posited that, given the potential of metaphors to manifest in diverse genres, a process of visual identification may require a methodology analogous to that of the verbal counterpart. The identification and interpretation of visual metaphors was initiated by Forceville (1996) and subsequently developed by Kaplan (2005). However, these procedures have limitations and shortcomings, as articulated by Šorm and Steen (2018). For this study, the procedure promulgated by Šorm and Steen for identifying and interpreting visual metaphors will be utilised, since it encompasses aspects of Forceville's (2002) procedure. The MIP and procedures, as proposed by the Pragglejaz Group (2007) and Steen et al. (2010), respectively, represent two distinct methods for identifying verbal metaphors in discourse.

To address this need, Šorm and Steen (2018) present the Visual Metaphor Identification Procedure (VISMIP), which was developed to address the visual aspect of metaphor identification. This has proven to be a problematic aspect for researchers in this field. The studies presented here offer methodologies for the visual identification of metaphor and for delineating the underlying cognitive constructions. Negro et al. (2017) assume that the identification of metaphors should adhere to the commonly accepted standards of methodological quality. Nevertheless, in this sense, the methods of visual metaphor identification and analysis lack distinct definitions and guidelines. However, certain scholars have proposed procedures to address this lacuna. In this context, a proposal was made to develop a procedure for this exercise based on the verbal counterpart procedure. The Visual Metaphor Identification Procedure (VISMIP) was developed to address the visual aspect of metaphor identification, aiming to yield reliable, interpretable, and replicable results. The VISMIP approach is not a novel one, as other scholars have promulgated similar methods.

The VISMIP approach is deemed appropriate for this study, as it encompasses aspects of Forceville's approach. In their proposal, Šorm and Steen enumerated seven procedural steps to be followed when applying VISMIP. The steps are listed below.

1. The analyst should be able to define the meaning of the image. The visual analysis that helps uncover meaning involves visual semiotics, iconography, and argumentation. Additionally, the denotative and connotative layers of the image must be taken into account. The image's denotative aspect responds to the question of what the subject is, whether a person or an object. What action is being performed? In contrast, the connotation pertains to discernible visual elements associated with specific locations, individuals, and cultural meanings and ideologies embedded within the image's context.
 - 1 (a) Provide a concise explanation of the referential meaning of the image, including a description of what is depicted and what is being done.
 - 1 (b) In order to attach a more general and abstract meaning, one must look out for cues that will enhance one's understanding of the image.
 - 1 (c) Reconstruction of the underlying point of the image should be conducted.
 - 1 (d) Derive the message's subject from step 1c, thus establishing the focal point of the text.
2. The proponents posit that analysts should consider the entirety of the image to establish a comprehensive understanding of it. This entails focusing on both the visual and verbal elements inherent to the image.
 - (2a) A reference to the image's subject should be described by the reviewer, which entails the various elements that are recognisable within the image. In other words, the referential meaning of the image is to be understood in terms of the depicted subject, the action being performed, and the location in which this action is taking place.
 - (2b) The analyst should assign the image to a more general and unknown meaning; it is important to look for clues that will enhance the interpretation of the image.
 - (2c) The point related to the image should be reconstructed by the analyst.
 - (2d) The analyst should derive the topic of the message from the point stated in 1(c).
- (3) It is the analyst's responsibility to define the unit of analysis. This illustrates the meaning of the image in Step 1a. According to the conceptual framework proposed by Tam and Leung (2001), a unit of analysis within the VISMIP framework is defined as a constituent element of a comprehensive portrayal of the image's significance and its

reference. A constituent can be designated as an agent (performer), an action (activity), an object (receiver), or a setting (event, place).

- (4) The analyst must address the analysis issue in the process, which involves developing a descriptive phrase under the instructions set out in Step 1a. Regarding the descriptive phrases, Tam and Leung (2001) offer the following guidelines: an agent is essentially a noun representing the individual or entity responsible for performing an action, initiating a process, or causing an event. In most cases, the agent can be qualified by an adjectival phrase. An action is the word-like aspect that indicates the action the agent performs. An action may be performed with an object as the recipient, whereas a setting is defined by the event and the place where the event occurred. A descriptive phrase may encompass multiple settings.
- (5) As outlined in Step 2, the analyst should systematically examine the visual incongruity present in each identified unit of analysis. This process involves identifying the representational topic depicted in the image, the prevailing conceptual frame in the picture, and the distorted visual properties.
- (6) To identify the incongruous visual unit within the image, the analyst should first determine whether each unit is incompatible with the formulated topic under step 1d. This will be done for each unit identified as topic-congruous under step 2. In addition, the analyst should also ascertain whether each topic-congruent element displays features incompatible with the features characteristic of that element.
- (7) If the findings of tests 4, 5, and 6 are positive, then a visual unit should be marked for metaphor
- (8) The analyst is encouraged to test the image's cross-domain nature. This can be achieved by utilising WordNet (<http://wordnet.princeton.edu>), a database that has been demonstrated to be effective in comparing two concepts believed to originate from two distinct entities.
- (9) The analyst must determine whether the comparison is relevant to the image's subject matter. Subsequently, a preliminary cross-linking exercise should be conducted, whereby the visual entities that serve as the familiar concept are mapped onto the visual entities that serve as the target domain. (Šorm and Steen, 2018, pp. 48–83).

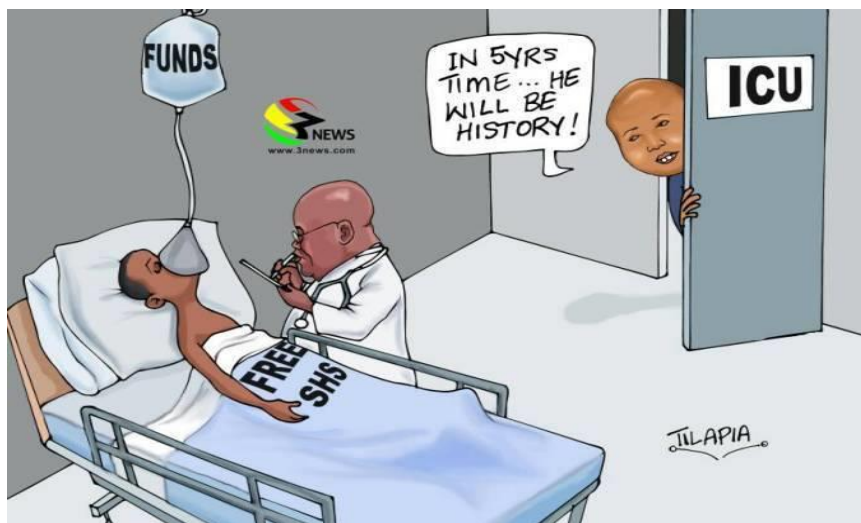
Furthermore, the document entitled “General image understanding in visual metaphor identification” by Negro et al. (2017) is hereby presented. The two VISMIP proponents collaborate with Negro in this publication to enumerate the procedures to be followed for this exercise, which I find is a more relevant and persuasive approach for this study.

1. The first step is acquiring a general understanding of an image, which entails two distinct aspects of image understanding.
 - 1 (a) describes the representational meaning of what can be observed, including the physical features.
 - 1 (b) determining the symbolic meaning of the image elements, this borders on other meanings that can be derived from the physical visual aspects described in (1a)
2. It involves describing the representational meaning of the image. Images are susceptible to different interpretations, which makes them problematic for readers. According to this perspective, “the visual world is always ambiguous without a single level of meaning that can be explained in words,” Smith et al. (2005, 16) asserted. Determining the representational meaning has revealed the following issues that need attention.
 - (a) Identification of the visual element pertains to the extent of the analysis and the elements that should be incorporated therein. Consequently, it delineates the objective of the analysis. To proponents, the relationship between image and text influences the creation and identification of metaphors. Barthes (1977) proposes two types of relationships between text and image: the text expands upon and elaborates on the meaning of the image, or the image augments the text’s message by introducing new interpretations.
 - (b) Selection of visual elements- in instances wherein an image comprises multiple elements, analysts may elect to accentuate certain aspects while disregarding the rest
 - (c) The relationship between the visual objects is such that grouping or separating visual elements offers an interpretation of the image.
 - (d) The subsequent step in the process is image interpretation. This is preceded by identifying the visual components that require attention. The analyst’s socio-political knowledge then guides the interpretation of these components.
 - (e) Image description entails the denotative and connotative meanings of the signs embedded in the image. Denotation is defined as a sign’s explicit, obvious, and straightforward primary

meaning, whereas connotation is understood as the implicit, conventional, and secondary meaning. As posited by proponents of the theory, symbolic meaning constitutes the visual representation of an abstract concept. It can be explained as the content that goes beyond the visible characteristics of the object represented in the image. Perhaps it is commonplace, yet it is necessary to emphasise the role of pictorial (as opposed to symbolic) elements of the image, that is, shape, size, colour, and layout, in creating its symbolic content.

3.2.6 Application of VISMIP

Figure 4 Displaying a hospital scene



published by Tilapia on 4th August 2019

<https://www.facebook.com/TilapiaCartoons/photos/pb.100063686824366.2207520000/100803784609214/?type=3>

1. Consider the entire image to gain a general understanding, including both visual and verbal elements.

1(a). Provide concise descriptions of the characters depicted and their actions concerning the references made.

Analysis 1a: a doctor attends to a patient in a hospital,

1(b). Ascertain whether there are any indications that a more general and abstract interpretation should be ascribed to the description provided in 1a.

Analysis 1(b): the doctor and the patient, together with the linguistic element, ICU, and funds, collectively indicate the gravity of the illness and the financial constraints.

1(c). Restructure the principal point underpinning the image.

Analysis 1(c): Following the aforementioned description, a medical practitioner endeavours to preserve the life of a critically ill patient while another individual alerts the practitioner to the patient's imminent demise.

1(d). Formulate and state the topic of the point identified in step 1c.

Analysis 1(d): I formulated the statement in terms of the seriousness of attending to a patient.

(2) The descriptive component should be structured according to the guidelines outlined in step 1a.

Analysis (2): a physician threatens a patient, and the physician is President Nana Addo Dankwa, and this unwell person is the Free SHS policy. Agent (doctor), Action (treatment), Object (patient), Setting (hospital).

(3) Identify the incompatible visual element.

3 (a) The analyst must ascertain whether the topic generated in step 1d is incompatible with the components identified in step 2.

Analysis 3(a): The topic is treatment in the hospital. The Action is (treats), the Agent (doctor), and the Object (patient) are congruent with the topic, together with other visual components.

3(b). With the stipulations outlined in Step 2, determine whether any of the topic-congruous units exhibit incongruous features usually associated with that component.

Analysis 3(b): Object (patient) -THIN (a-archetypal entity characteristics) ATTACKED BY SICKNESS, IN ICU (a-archetypal situational characteristics). Object (Free SHS policy) – PALE (a-archetypal entity property) UNDER SEVERE FINANCIAL DISTRESS, IN THE COUNTRY (a-archetypal situational property).

(4) Should the incompatible visual elements be incorporated into the overarching structure through comparison?

4(a). To ascertain which incompatible elements under 3a should be substituted, the analyst must first determine which of the remaining units should be congruent with the topic AND consistent with the image's meaning.

Analysis 4(a): For the incompatible entity, the Agent (doctor), to be incorporated within the universal theme, a comparison must be made with the following agent: MEDICAL PRACTITIONER. Similarly, the additional, incompatible entity —the setting (ICU) — must be incorporated into the health facility setting. This will result in the subsequent explanation of a patient being attended to by a doctor in a health facility. (Agent-doctor), (Object-patient), (settings-health facility).

4(b). To ascertain which unit is incongruous under 3b, the analyst must first determine features coherent with the image's meaning.

Analysis 4(b): The Object (patient) and object (Free SHS policy) have characteristics that are not archetypal: Object (patient) – THIN, ATTACKED BY SEVERE SICKNESS IN A HOSPITAL; Object (Free SHS policy) – PALE, ATTACKED BY FINANCIAL CONSTRAINTS IN THE COUNTRY. The Object (patient) and the object (Free SHS policy) are likened to prey, which will be consistent with the referential meaning: the patient is attacked by an ailment in the hospital. [Agent (doctor) Action (treats) Object (patient=*prey* Setting (in the hospital).

(5). Assess if the identified comparison(s) is/are candidate(s) for mapping.

Analysis (5): the identified comparisons can be tested in WordNet. The word ICU belongs to the health emergency unit, whilst the patient falls under weakness greater than affected. >*affected*>stagnant. The doctor also falls under management.> administration > The ICU is in a building.>*physical structure*>*entity*>*unit*.

The doctor and the patient identified in step 1b denote treatment that falls under the category of handling. >intervention> Caring (WordNet).

(6). The contrast (s) in question constitute an implicit discussion of the topic formulated in Step 1d.

Analysis (6): The contrast between a sick patient and a struggling Free SHS policy can be regarded as an implicit discussion about the topic's image: lack of funds threatens the progress of the Free SHS policy.

The comparison of a doctor and a president can be regarded as an implicit discussion about image: a doctor caring for a patient is akin to a president attending to the Free Senior High School (SHS) policy.

(7) If the test results prove affirmative and a graphic element is exhibited, a metaphor can be identified.

Analysis (7): The tests' conclusions are affirmative; therefore, the subject-incompatible Agent (doctor), Setting (hospital), and incongruous Object (patient) should all be marked for metaphor.

The aforementioned approach, as exemplified by Sample 1, will be employed to demonstrate its applicability within the context of this study. The visual elements employed in the cartoon, along with the characters, evoke a metaphorical conceptualisation. The portrayal of the President as a medical practitioner is metaphorical, whereby the role of a president is analogous to that of a doctor attending to an unwell individual. The two characters in question originate from disparate domains within the hospital setting: the source and target frames, which pertain to governance. Thus, a cross-domain mapping exists between the following concepts: "A DOCTOR ATTENDING TO A SICK PERSON" and "A GOVERNMENT ATTENDING TO ITS PROGRAMMES." A DOCTOR SAVING A LIFE IS A PRESIDENT SAVING A POLICY.

Below are the mappings associated with this conceptual metaphor:

A doctor saving a life is a president saving a policy introduced

Source domain: HEALTH CARE,	Target	domain:	POLITICAL
ARENA/POLITICS			

Sick person	→	Distressed Free SHS policy
Doctor	→	President Nana Addo Dankwa
Patient	→	Free SHS policy
ICU	→	critical nature, the Free SHS policy finds itself

A drip of oxygen →

the only means for the patient to survive

3.2.7 Procedure: Identifying Visual and Conceptual Blends in Ghanaian Political Cartoons

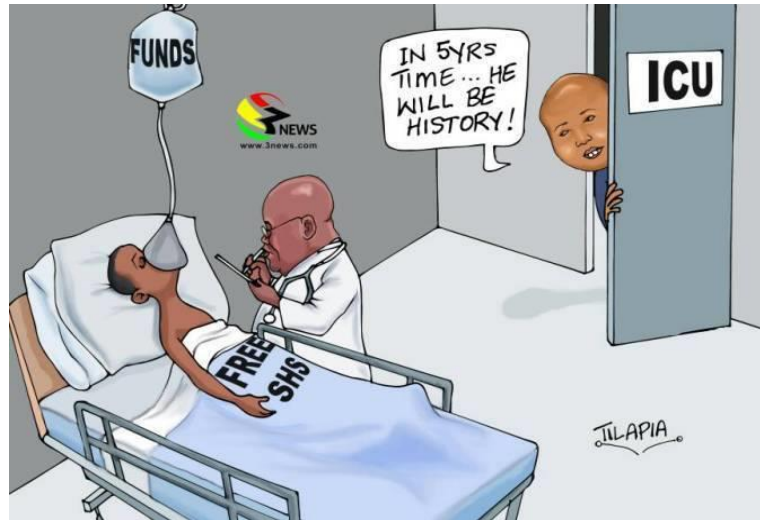
As previously established in the literature, metaphor is a phenomenon that manifests in genres beyond the boundaries of language. This can be demonstrated through various tropes. Consequently, many non-linguistic elements demonstrate the manifestation of metaphorical units, with political cartoons serving as a notable example of this phenomenon. As previously outlined in the preceding chapter, Conceptual Blending Theory (CBT) offers an interpretative avenue for the novel and creative aspects of metaphor by extending the two model approaches of CMT and mental space theory to three model approaches (input spaces, generic space, and blended space). This is due to the limitations of the aforementioned theories in adequately addressing the novelty of metaphor usage. The complex and nuanced nature of political cartoons and subtle symbols presents a significant challenge in fully comprehending their underlying messages. To gain a comprehensive understanding of their significance, it is necessary to employ CBT. In the verbal aspect of CBT analysis, the analyst's responsibility is to establish the mental links between the two mental spaces, which will ultimately facilitate the establishment of the generic and blended spaces. The same is true of the visual analysis of CBT, which is similarly demanding. To establish the links between the two mental spaces, the analyst must draw on their semiotic abilities and pragmatic knowledge, as these will influence the establishment of the generic and blended spaces.

This analytical procedure is expected to yield systematic results that will produce conceptual patterns relevant to the present data set. Once the analyst has understood the entirety of the cartoon and identified the utilisation of specific elements that evoke a novel visual metaphor, the analysis enters the conceptual blending domain.

The selected cartoons are analysed through the following steps; the initial stage of the analytical process involves the identification of the inputs, the generic space, and their constituent elements, in the second stage, the analyst identifies connections and partial mappings between counterparts, in the third stage, the analyst identifies the organising frame(s) and the type of integration network (simplex, mirror, single-scope, or double-scope), and in the fourth stage, the analyst proceeds with the analysis by identifying the emergent structure in the blend and the

processes of composition, completion, and elaboration. This procedure serves as the analytical framework for examining visual and novel metaphors in political cartoons as conceptual blends in the framework of the current investigation. I demonstrate how CBT is applied to the construction of novel metaphors and visual metaphors from my data.

Figure 5 Hospital's Intensive Care Unit



The analyst is required to utilise the background and contextual information available to the data, which constitutes the visual elements present in the cartoon. This enables the analyst to understand the general impression conveyed by the cartoon as a hospital scene. The two characters that the data revolve around evoke the doctor-patient relationship. In contrast, in the political sense, the two characters evoke the relationship between government (president) policies and their implementation. The aforementioned data presents a conceptualisation of the President of Ghana, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, as a medical practitioner attending to a patient. In this case, the patient is the Free Senior High School (SHS) policy initiated by the president and is currently experiencing difficulties. These difficulties can be viewed as an exemplification of an unhealthy situation. One method of interpreting the visual metaphor is through cross-mapping event scenarios (domains) between the two concepts, specifically the hospital and governance, as previously discussed.

The conceptual integration network for

Figure 5 Hospital's Intensive Care Unit is provided in the diagram below

The conceptual integration network for

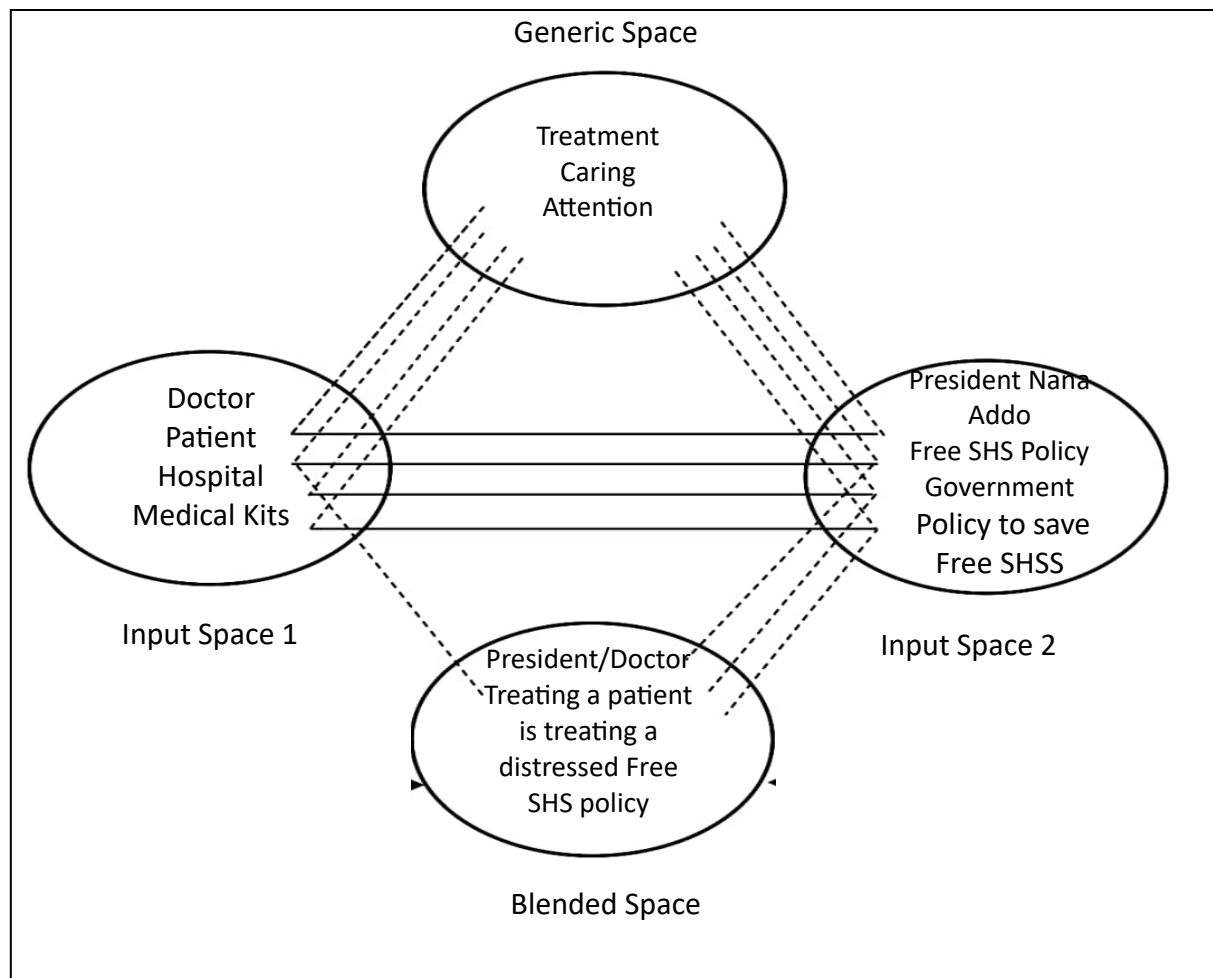


Diagram 5 Conceptual integration model depicting distressed Free SHS Policy

The target domain of salvaging a distressed Free SHS policy can be seen to exhibit a system of relations with the source domain of treating a patient. Consequently, the elements and relations will be aligned based on the analogous roles shared between the two domains. The source input domain (Input Space 1) contains conceptual knowledge about the doctor-patient relationship, whereas the target input space (Input Space 2) comprises conceptual knowledge about the salvaging of the distressed Free SHS Policy. It is also important to note that not all possible elements within the hospital domain, such as the inscription on the back of the door, nasal prone, and the person peeping, are involved in the blend. Similarly, not all potential elements within the governance domain, such as the president's initiative and the ministers responsible for the

Free SHS Policy, are engaged during the blending process. Nevertheless, there must be a discernible commonality between the two domains; otherwise, integration will not occur. The generic space furnishes the commonality that establishes the link. The generic space contains a schematic structure that is identical to that of the input spaces. The generic space comprises treatment, caring, and attention. The elements of the two input spaces are presented in the diagram above.

In the cross-space mapping, the president in input space the doctor represents two in input space 1, the patient in input space one by the Free SHS policy in input space 2, the hospital in input space one by the government office in input space 2, and the medical kits in input space one by the plans to salvage Free SHS policy in input space 2. Applying the aforementioned blend enables the development and implementation of a treatment plan for an ailing patient, much like the salvaging of the Free SHS Policy. The two domains are connected by an outer space conceptual relation of similarity, which is compressed into uniqueness in the blend. In addition, the blend is structured according to the same organisational frame as the source input, resulting in a single-scope network.

The blend, therefore, contains the following emergent structures: treating a sick person is equivalent to treating a distressed individual under the Free SHS Policy. It is also critical to emphasise that neither of the input spaces contains this emergent structure in its original form. The emergent structure results from three types of blending processes: composition, completion, and elaboration (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002). Regarding the governing principles for compression, the non-scalable relation of ROLE REPRESENTATION is satisfied, as the mappings introduced by the compound automatically recruit pre-built information about the role of doctors in treating patients and the role of presidents in managing financially distressed policies. The immediate socio-political context informs this conceptual blend. The political context is evidenced by the inscription embossed on the patient, which pertains to the Free SHS policy, one of the flagship policies introduced by President Nana Addo.

2.2.8 Procedure for Identifying and Analysing Visual Metonymy in Political Cartoons

Metonymies and metaphors represent the fundamental and pervasive cognitive devices in cognitive linguistics, which appear to be inextricably linked. The identification of metaphors

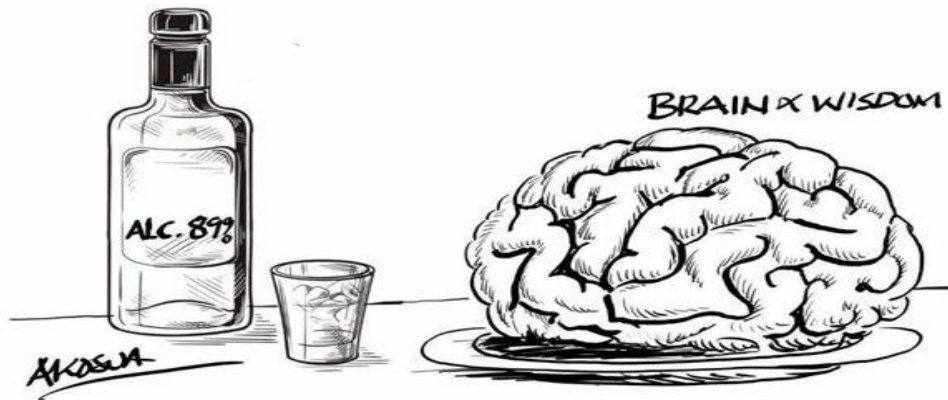
is facilitated by a standardised procedure, whether visual or verbal. This enhances the analytical process. However, the situation is less clear-cut in the case of metonymy, where no approved identification procedure exists. The dissertation acknowledges the occurrence of conceptual metonymy in diverse modalities across various genres, including cartoons and films. Therefore, both metonymic domains are represented visually in a visual metonymy, whereas both are expressed in their verbal counterpart. Concerning the procedures for identifying metonymy, in his overview of the current state of knowledge, Tóth (2017, pp.155-165) highlights the contrast between metaphor and metonymy, noting the scarcity of empirical evidence in the latter. Most research into metonymy is conducted using instinctive and reflective techniques, with the majority of findings being produced in a physical setting. The dissertation employs the procedure proposed by Pérez Sobrino, which draws upon the methodologies of Babarczy et al. (2010, p. 32) and Stefanowitsch (2006, p. 2). This protocol is poised to become the dominant approach in metonymy identification, given its widespread use in advertising. The procedure proposed by Pérez Sobrino (2017) involves analysing a corpus of advertisements to identify themes of metonymy and metaphor complexes. The precise protocol includes the following steps (Pérez Sobrino, 2017, pp. 88-90):

(1) the identification of the target domain, (2) what is the source domain?, (3) determining whether the procedure in question is metonymical or metaphorical, (4) identifying the pattern that characterises the discussed product. However, it should be emphasised that step 4 will not be used in this adaptation because the selected cartoons do not always target the politically represented visual elements.

In addition to these steps, it is equally important to be aware of the political context and background information regarding the publication, as this provides valuable insight into its conceptual framework. In analysing metonymy, it is essential to consider the role of salient visual cues in facilitating access to other visual elements, enhancing the analytical process. This approach identifies relationships such as part-for-whole, whole-for-part, source-in-target, and target-in-source.

Error! Reference source not found.

CHOICE FOR VOTE 2024



<https://dailyguidenetwork.com/choice-for-vote-2024/>

The data in Error! Reference **source not found**. was published on 30 August 2024, coinciding with the approach of Ghana's 2024 general election. The cartoon's title indicates that the data pertains to this imminent electoral event. In the context of the electoral campaign, the two principal political parties, the NPP and the NDC, have resorted to disparaging and unprintable language in their attacks on their respective opponents' candidates. The leader of the opposition NDC party, Mr John Dramani, is the subject of disparaging remarks, with him being labelled as a drunkard. Similarly, the leader of the NPP is also the target of criticism, with him being accused of consuming pork, which is considered taboo for Muslims. In light of the aforementioned general information, it can be posited that the cartoonist employs metonymy as a conceptual device to present this phenomenon.

Consequently, the depiction of the human brain for the NPP leader, Dr Bawumia, is a metonymic representation of the cognitive function of the human brain, which is the organ responsible for intelligence and knowledge. This invokes the metonymy of PART FOR WHOLE. Similarly, the bottle bearing the inscription "alcohol" is a metonym for the leader of the NDC, Mr John Dramani. This is because the bottle represents the content it contains, thus, CONTAINER FOR ITS CONTENT, namely alcohol. This constitutes a metonymic relationship between the bottle and its contents. In light of the data, it can be seen that the two items represent the two candidates: the "Bottle for John Mahama" and "The Brain for Dr Bawumia", respectively representing the NDC and the NPP. In the context of electoral voting, this can be

interpreted as a decision between conscious and non-conscious decision-making, informed by a comprehensive understanding of the elements available in the data review.

3.2.8 Analysing the Verbal/Linguistic Components of the Cartoons

The genre of political cartoons, as well as other visual forms, typically incorporates textual elements, including captions, titles, and speech bubbles. It is imperative to emphasise the pivotal role of these linguistic elements in the cartoon's visual analysis. According to Barthes (1977), the text plays a predominant role over the image because the role of the text is to give a definite visual meaning, whereas visual meaning is usually subject to interpretation. He puts forth two possibilities of correlation between the image and the text. These are: (1) a relay is simply a device that either broadens the message of a given image or, on the other hand, forms a new message that fulfils the message; (2) elaboration defines and specifies the meanings in a more definitive and precise way. Barthes points out two different types of elaboration: firstly, the text is explained in the image, and secondly, the visual (anchorage) is reiterated in the text more clearly and accurately. Similarly, El Refaie's 2003 study shows a reciprocal relationship between text and image, with one mode supporting the other (p. 87). Following the aforementioned advantages, the analysis will be keen on the verbal elements of the data, as they either summarise or provide details to the readers.

To illustrate, the verbal components of the cartoon, "*Choice for Vote 2024*," indicate that the data pertain to elections based on the selected vocabulary and the year 2024, which suggests an impending election. Consequently, the caption informs the reader that the data relates to elections. It is therefore evident that an understanding of the verbal aspects of the data will facilitate a deeper comprehension of the cartoons' implied messages.

3.3.0 Chapter Summary

This chapter outlines the research approaches, including the qualitative approach, the sample, data, and corpus, the rationale for the sample size, the sampling technique and data collection, the rationale for the data analytical framework, the procedure for identifying visual metaphors in Ghanaian political cartoons, and the application of VISMIP. The following sections present the procedure for identifying visual and conceptual blends in Ghanaian political cartoons, the identification and analysis of visual metonymy in these cartoons, the analysis of

the verbal components used in this study, and the procedures for their analysis. All decisions taken in this chapter have been fully explained and justified.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter analyses the cognitive devices embedded in the selected cartoons, focusing on the conceptual metaphors and metonymies. The role of these devices in bringing out the cartoonists' implied meanings is also examined. In the case of the conceptual metaphor, the conceptual metaphor behind each of the cartoons is identified and represented in lowercase. At the same time, the visual representation is carried out using Fauconnier and Turner's conceptual integration model. The model of conceptual metonymy applied here is the X model, which stands for the Y model, with the target predominantly being politicians, political actors, and their actions. The chapter also discusses the contributions of the various semiotic tools in helping viewers to understand these messages. The content is organised into structured segments, with each segment focusing on a distinct theme related to the study. The target domain is politics, which encompasses a range of sub-themes, including the economy, health and illness, sports and games, travel and journeys, and religion.

4.2 Metaphors in Political Cartoons

The investigation reveals a dearth of studies on conceptual blending in the context of political cartoons, particularly from the cognitive linguistics perspective that pertains to Ghanaian politics. This section of the paper presents and analyses creative and novel metaphors employed in Ghanaian political cartoons, with meanings derived from mapping elements from concrete conceptual (source) domains to less concrete (abstract) domains of experience. The analysis commences with the theme of the economy.

4.2.1 Theme of Economy/Conceptualisation of Economic Issues

The section is devoted to a comprehensive examination of the economic issues presented by both cartoonists. These issues are categorised into two sections: the metaphorical representation of living organisms and the metaphorical representation of non-living organisms, with a focus on fiscal policy, investment and financial markets, monetary policy, central banks, corruption, economic inequality, poverty and shadow economy. Following McCloskey (1986,

p. 502), Henderson (1994), and Smith (2007, p. 45), metaphor has emerged as a fundamental aspect of every discourse domain, including business and economics. This finding suggests that metaphor is a prevalent feature in economic discourse, manifesting itself through both visual and verbal means.

4.2.1.1 The Economy as a Living Organism

The metaphor of the economy as a living organism is a widely implemented cognitive framing in political discourse, economic commentary, and visual communication. In this conceptualisation, the economy is represented as a living being, which matures, collapses, heals, or bleeds, or dies in accordance with the changing and susceptible quality of the national economic system. Assuming human or biological properties on the economy, the cartoonists render an abstract and extraordinarily complex system available by recognising the familiarities of bodily health, illness, and healing. This framing not only helps in supporting persuasive messages but also presents a moral and affective angle at economic discourse, which allows the population to view economic problems as urgent, curable and in the hands of responsible custodians. The metaphor supports the belief that political leaders are doctors, nurturers or even a threat to the economic body of the nation, and it determines how people view accountability and interference.

Figure 6 The Economy is a Plant

<https://www.facebook.com/TilapiaCartoons/photos/pb.100063686824366.2207520000/826424195380499/?type=3>



Based on the visual and verbal elements of the above data, the conceptual metaphor behind this figure can be construed as **ECONOMY IS A TREE**. Another metaphor that can be derived from the data is **POLITICAL ACTION IS PHYSICAL FORCE**. The cartoonist employs the familiar concept of tree felling to help readers understand the activities of government officials that are detrimental to the economy. The visual representation of the above figure using the conceptual integration network is provided in Diagram 6 Visual representation of the economy as a tree.

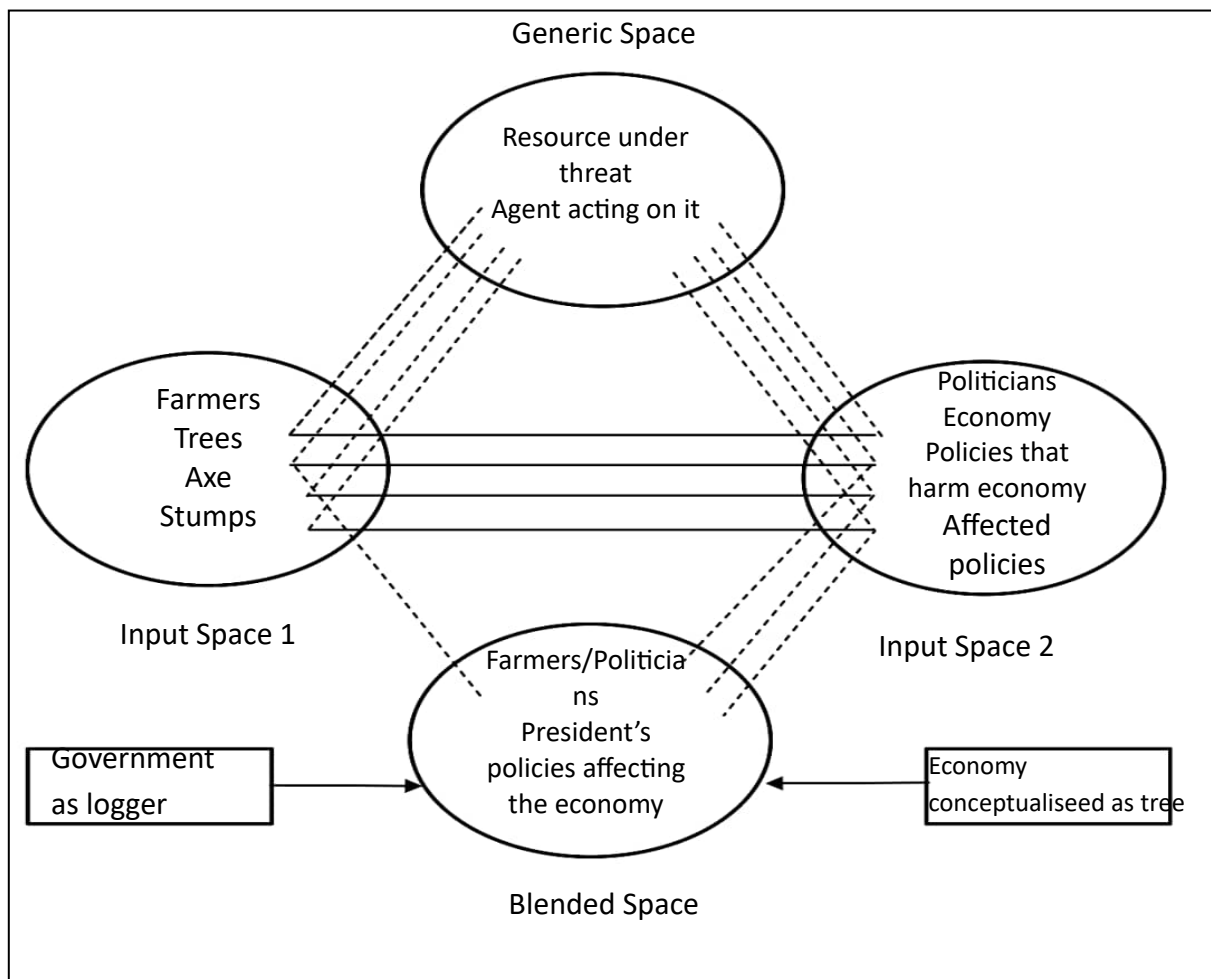


Diagram 6 Visual representation of the economy as a tree

The cartoonist employs a two-frame, political context and logging scenario to facilitate a more concise understanding of the relationship between farmers and politicians. The

cartoonist uses known sources to communicate his messages, as viewers rely on familiar references for understanding the content; in this context, the cutting down of trees. In one input space, the focus is on farming; in another, the emphasis is on politics, with the two domains being interconnected via a cross-space mapping system. In this single-scope conceptual integration network, input Space 1 contains the farmers, tree, axe, and stumps. Input space two, on the other hand, contains the president, the finance minister, the economy, policies that harm the economy, and the already affected economic indicators. Mapping of systematic elements occurs between objects in both domains. The generic space that evokes the commonality between the two input spaces is the destruction by the individuals. The blend inherits the frame structure from input space two and selective projections from input space one, leading to the formation of a new emergent structure that destroys the forest, which in turn destroys the economy.

The cartoonist juxtaposes the activities of illegal tree cutting, which destroy the environment, with government activities that impact the economy. In light of this, the cartoonist conceptualises the then-president of Ghana, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, and his finance minister, Hon. Ken Ofori-Atta, as environmental destroyers. The cartoonist parallels the illegal activities of tree felling and the economic mismanagement by the two individuals in question, Nana Addo and Ken Ofori-Atta, who are depicted as the custodians of the nation's economy. The president oversees all national activities, while the finance minister manages state finances. The data reveal the presence of stumps that serve as indicators of previously felled trees. The cartoonist has designated these stumps as representing inflation, cedi, and fuel prices, which can be interpreted as the fundamental components of the economy (i.e., the tree). If functioning optimally, these components should facilitate the tree's growth; however, felling these components has had a deleterious effect on the tree's growth. The data suggests that the imminent failure of the tree (economy) is attributable to the actions of the two individuals wielding the axe. The axe can be interpreted as a metaphor for the detrimental policies and programmes introduced by the two characters, which have deleteriously affected the tree's development. One salient aspect of the data pertains to how the characters are depicted in attire, as illustrated by the cartoonist. The cartoonist's use of specific colours (red, white, blue) to adorn the characters symbolises their affiliation with the New Patriotic Party (NPP). Through

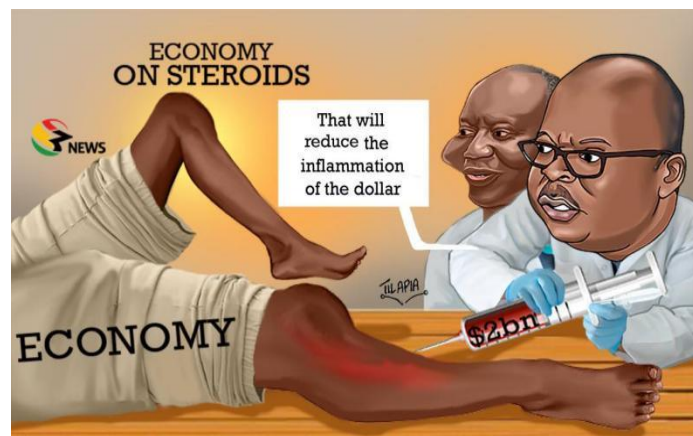
their characters' colour choices, the narrative demonstrates how the NPP negatively affects the economic system.

The analysis is expanded to encompass the verbal components of the data, as they play a pivotal role in deciphering the implied meaning of the cartoonist. The bubble speech attributed to President Nana Addo states, "We will break this 8, by the next election." The president's communication conveys that, despite the lamentable management of the economy, the NPP is poised to shatter the eight-year jinx that has seemingly become the norm since the 1992 elections. It is evident from the speech's content that the political party's primary concern is the outcome of the forthcoming election, rather than addressing the prevailing economic challenges confronting the nation.

Aside from the metaphor that is present in the above cartoon, the cartoonist also employs metonymy as a cognitive device, where the tree represents the economy, which evokes WHOLE FOR PART, and the stumps represent collapsed economic indicators.

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<https://www.facebook.com/TilapiaCartoons/photos/pb.100063686824366.2207520000/835889941100591/?type=3>



24th August 2022

As illustrated in Error! **Reference source not found.**, the integration of verbal and visual elements in the cartoon serves to elucidate the conceptual metaphor RESTORING A DYSFUNCTIONAL ECONOMY IS CURING A SICK PERSON'S LEG. (to get the economy back on its feet).

The visual representation of **Error! Reference source not found.** is provided below using the conceptual blending model.

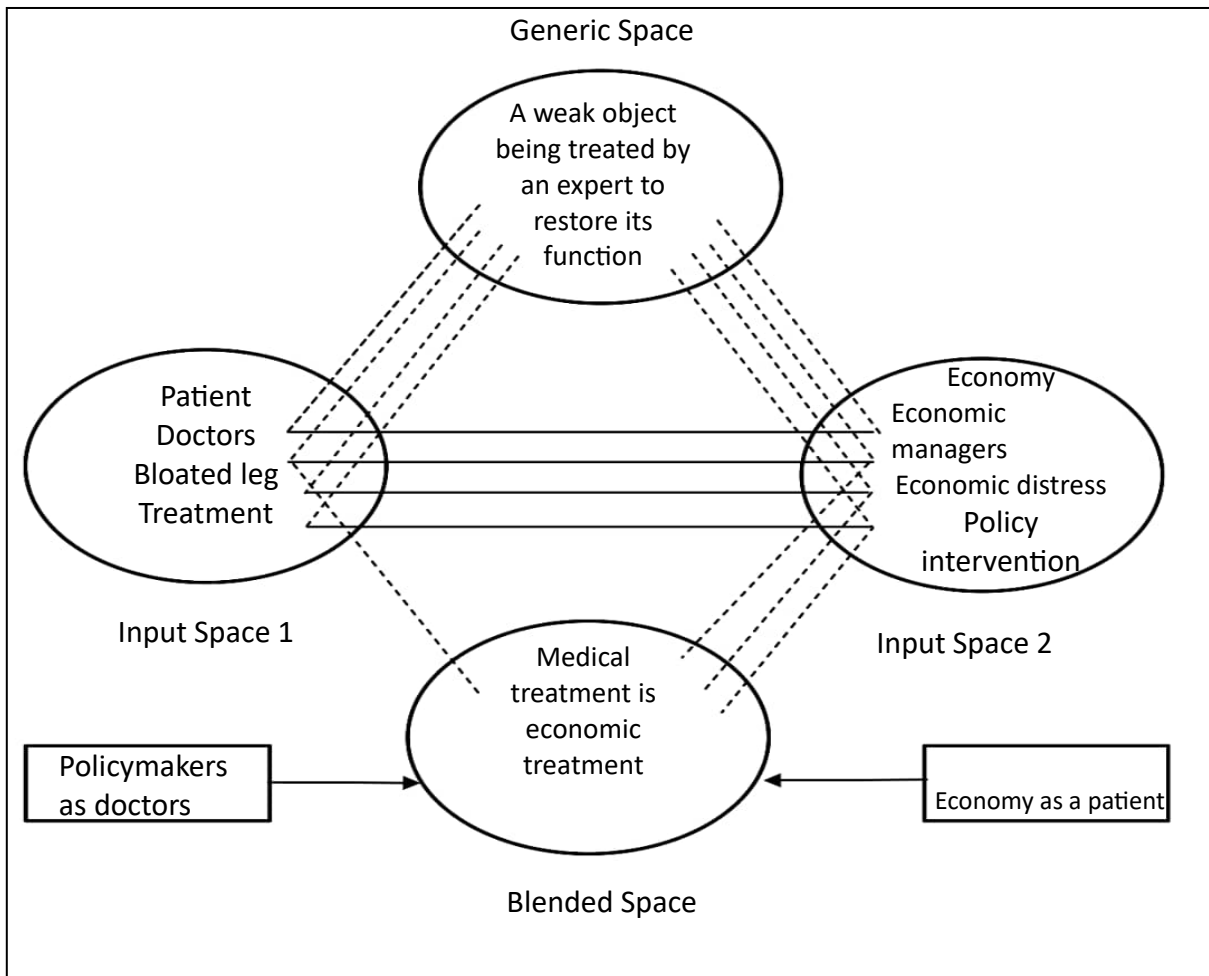


Diagram 7 The Economy on Steroids **Error! Reference source not found.**

In this single-scope conceptual integration network, Input Space 1 (medical treatment scenario) contains doctors, bloated legs (representing a sick person), and a syringe (with a dose of steroids). Input space two (economic context), on the other hand, comprises the Governor of Ghana, the finance minister, and measures to save the economy. Then, the mapping process establishes an organised relation between elements across both input domains. The generic space that evokes the commonality between the two input spaces is treatment and care. The blend inherits the frame structure from input space two and the selective projections from input

space one, which leads to the formation of a new emergent structure: caring for a sick person is akin to treating an ailing economy.

The comprehension of this blend depends on accurate inferences drawn from an encyclopedic knowledge of medical professionals' health duties and politicians' economic responsibilities. In this regard, the Governor of the Bank of Ghana and the Minister of Finance fulfil these roles. The depiction of professional doctor roles, which entail prescribing medication and treating patients, is evident in this work. The artist uses visual representation to depict three individuals, with two figures appearing larger than the third person. The cartoonist employs metaphorical imagery to depict Dr Ernest Addison and Honourable Ken Ofori-Atta as medical professionals healing a symbolic patient, representing Ghana's economic state. The artist chose to portray the Minister of Finance and Governor of the Bank of Ghana as healthcare providers because they strive to maintain economic stability, which remains their fundamental responsibility. Similarly, the cartoonist represents Ghana's economy through the image of an ill person in need of medical treatment. The economy's inflated state, symbolised by the cartoon's exaggerated leg, is likened to an individual requiring expert intervention to rectify its condition. The intervention, depicted as an injection, is portrayed as a remedial measure to address the inflated state of the economy. The medical professionals, represented by the cartoon's doctors, are depicted as administering steroids, a pharmaceutical agent employed in the treatment of inflammatory conditions. It appears that, according to medical professionals, the recommended course of action for treating swollen legs is a two-billion-dollar injection with a needle.

The red liquid within the syringe is a metonym for blood and thus for life; consequently, medical professionals effectively bestow life upon the patient (in Ghana's economy). Littlemore (2015, p. 4) explains that metonymic processes enable us to understand parts of things as representing the complete items. In this instance, the cartoonist selects legs as a metonymic representation to depict human beings. This evokes PART-FOR-WHOLE METONYMY. The legs, being pivotal to the mobility of the human body, are thus emphasised by the cartoonist to communicate his perspective on the economy's failure to function efficiently. The analysis extends its focus to examine linguistic elements within the cartoon. The utilisation of the balloon speech in the cartoon facilitates comprehension of the message conveyed by the cartoonist. The cartoon's bubble reads "this will reduce the swelling of the dollar," suggesting that doctors believe the planned injection may effectively combat the dollar's inflamed state. The therapeutic

injection might serve as a key factor in achieving patient stabilisation when treating inflamed legs, representing the state of the economy if its implications come to pass.

Figure 7 Cedis on Drip

<https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=573328644800025&set=pb.100063686824366.-2207520000&type=3>



16 December 2022

As illustrated in

Figure 7 Cedis on Drip, the cartoon provides a further elaboration on the subject of the economy's fragility. The linguistic and visual elements instantiate the conceptual metaphor "REVIVING THE ECONOMY IS TREATING A PATIENT." For the visualisation using the integration model, see Diagram 8 visual representation of the Cedi's resurrection

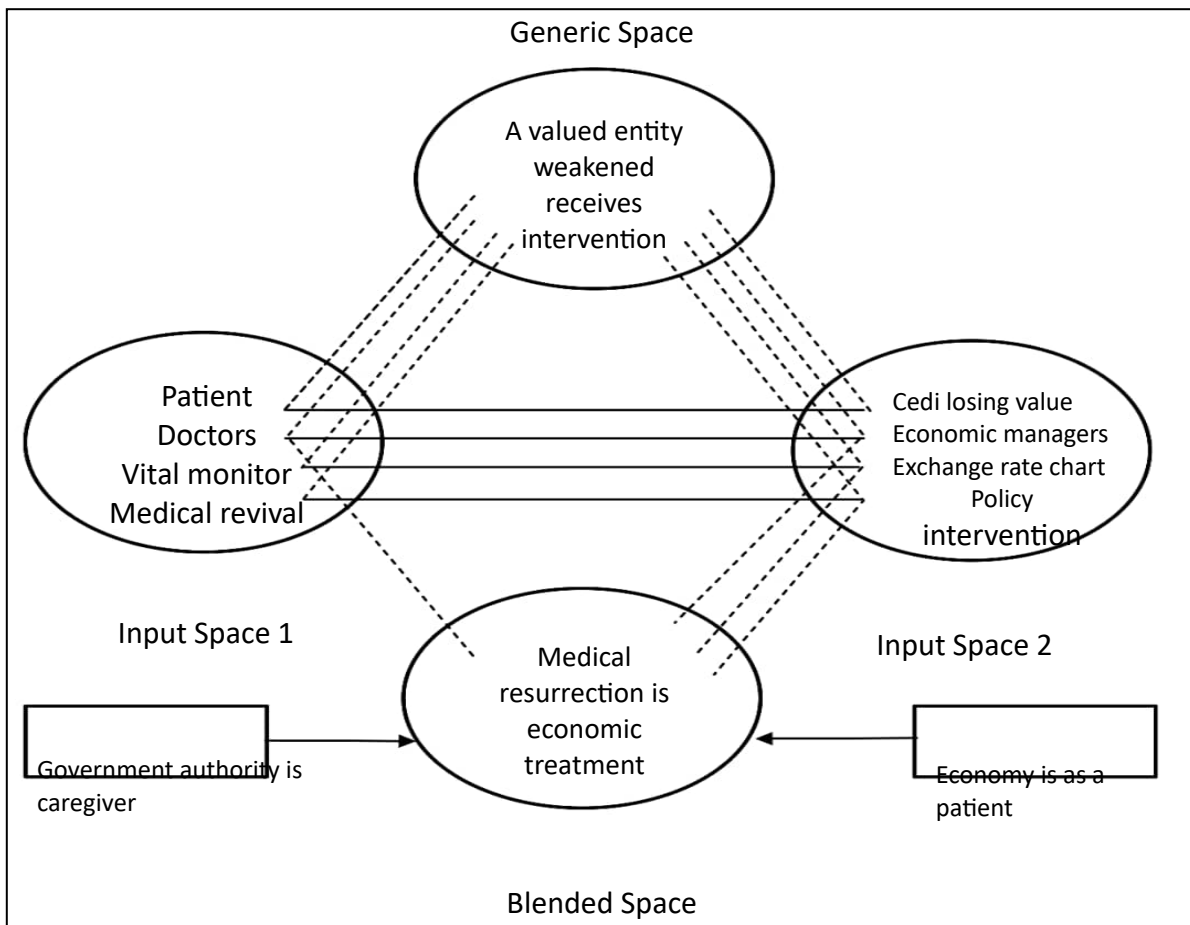


Diagram 8 visual representation of the Cedi's resurrection

The cartoonist employs a two-frame scenario, a medical scenario, and an economic scenario to facilitate a more concise understanding of the relationship between politicians (government officials) and medical practitioners. In input space 1, I identify patients, doctors, vital monitors, and medical revival. Likewise, in Input Space 2, I identify the cedi as representing the economy, economic managers, the exchange rate chart, and policy intervention. The commonality that runs through the two input spaces is a weakened entity that requires intervention for survival, while the emergent structure, akin to medical resurrection, is economic treatment. I identify the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) and emergency wards in hospital facilities as the chosen scene for this data. The cartoon displays an electrocardiogram (ECG), which indicates that the healthcare scene takes place either in an intensive care unit (ICU) or an accident and emergency unit (A&E).

The admission rates of this unit are a reliable indication of the severity of patients' medical conditions. The cartoonist communicates his message through personification by using

a metonymically inspired metaphor. Through personification, the economy assumes characteristics of human behaviour and qualities. The metaphor relies on metonymic motivation by positioning cedi symbols on top of the sick person. The Ghanaian economy is represented by the Ghanaian cedi, exemplifying a metonymic and metaphorical interaction. The metaphorical ‘patient’ (economy) requires medical intervention to recover. The cartoon delineates the Finance Minister, Ken Ofori-Atta, as a doctor treating a sick patient. The cartoonist uses this image to show the Honourable Ken Ofori-Atta’s role in leading the economic management team to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to seek a loan facility.

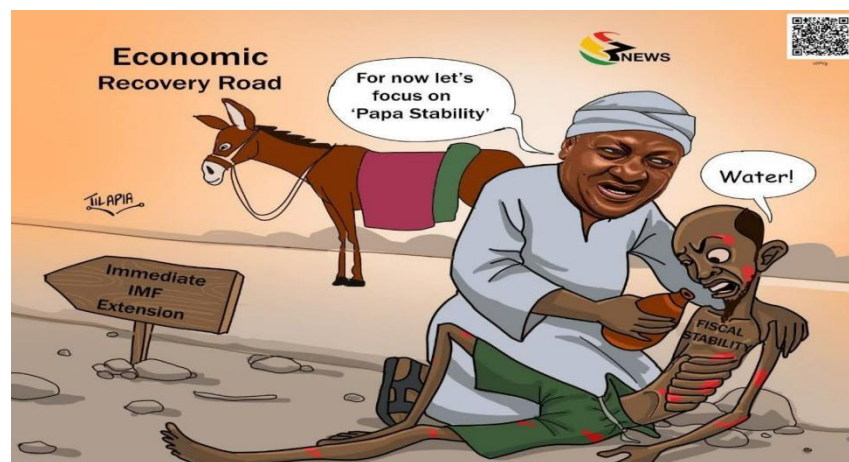
Beyond the economic health metaphor, the cartoonist uses elements of size in the illustration to support the reader’s interpretation as both the sickbed figure and its dimensions symbolise the economy’s absolute positioning versus its growth requirements. The doctor, serving as the finance minister, administers an effective blood transfusion to the patient on the sickbed, aiding in their recovery. The cartoonist employs the metaphor of blood transfusion, a crucial element in the narrative, to convey a compelling message: the ailing individual requires a life-saving procedure. This assertion is further substantiated by the data presented in the following section. A further step in treating the patient is administering a nasal prong or nebuliser cap by a medical practitioner (the finance ministry). The cartoonist employs nose caps to administer supplemental oxygen to patients who experience respiratory distress, making nose prong oxygen delivery a suitable approach for healthcare professionals.

The IMF loan received serves as a relief to the patient (the Ghanaian economy). The artist depicts an attending physician administering blood and oxygen to the patient, which parallels the \$3 billion IMF loan intervention into Ghana’s economic system. The primary visual element of this cartoon is the use of screens by medical staff. These tools are utilised by clinical staff to monitor both physiological parameters and the unique conditions of individual patients. The utilisation of these screens facilitates the display of data and the recording of recovery progress. The cartoonist employs the same principle, demonstrating the patient’s recovery (the Ghanaian economy) on the monitor. The monitor displays markings representing the patient’s recovery process (economy). The display shows that one dollar equals 10 Cedis, but the exchange rate fluctuates between these values. The 45 inscription signifies the cedi’s persistent resurgence against its primary competitor, the dollar. The zigzag graph on the screen visually (metonymically) represents the cedi’s instability and the perpetual fluctuations it experiences.

The examination is broadened to incorporate the linguistic components (speech balloons) present in the data, as these elements are recognised as instrumental in deciphering the artist's message. It is hypothesised that these elements represent the spoken utterances of the depicted characters within the data. Through the doctor's speech bubble, which reads "Welcome back!" the doctor (finance minister) signifies how the deceased economy and the unconscious patient have gained enough strength for recovery. Concurrently, the speech bubble attributed to the patient (the economy) poses the question, "Has the price of kenkey drop? I need some mashed kenkey, please." This confirmation establishes that the patient was unconscious or deceased and is gradually improving. In this instance, the cartoonist employs source-in-target metonymy, a rhetorical device in which the source (i.e., the kenkey) is incorporated into the target food.

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18 February 2025

The cartoon in **Error! Reference source not found.** is reminiscent of the biblical story of the Good Samaritan. This Figure also confirms the message in Error! **Reference source not found.** and

Figure 7 Cedis on Drip. The visual elements, coupled with the linguistic element, cue the conceptual metaphor ATTENDING TO A FRAIL ECONOMY IS FEEDING AN EMACIATED

PERSON. For the visual representation of the conceptual integration network, see **Error!**
Reference source not found.

In this single-scope conceptual integration network, input Space 1 contains a priest, a frail person, and a horse. Input space two, on the other hand, contains the current president of Ghana, the Ghanaian economy, and plans to save the economy. The mapping process matches corresponding elements between both input domains. The generic space that evokes the commonality between the two input spaces is treatment and care. The blend inherits the frame structure from input space two and the selective projections from input space one, resulting in the formation of a new emergent structure that attends to a sick person while addressing a struggling economy.

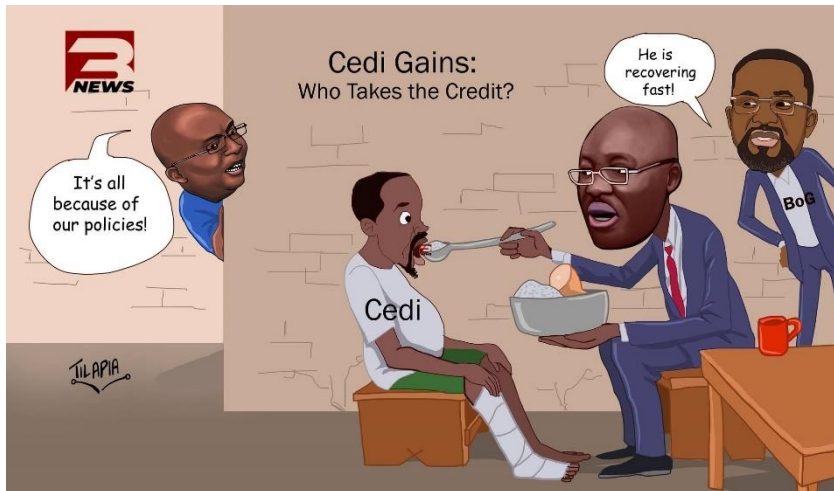
The interpretation of this blend depends on drawing the correct conclusions from an extensive understanding of the biblical story of the Good Samaritan, which highlights the importance of caring for the needy, as well as the role of politicians in managing the economy, particularly the president. As mentioned, the cartoonist uses a visual narrative of the biblical allusion of the Good Samaritan, depicting two individuals, to convey his message. The cartoonist conceptualises the President of Ghana, Mr John Dramani Mahama, as the Good Samaritan who has compassion for the poor man and decides to take care of him. In the context of this cartoon, the cartoonist conceptualises Ghana's economy as the poor man in the biblical story who was left unattended. The personified economy, which is emaciated and frail, suggests that the previous government neglected it and did not take care of it. The starving man labelled 'fiscal stability' represents the dire economic situation. His bubble speech, 'Water,' symbolises the urgent need for a realistic economic situation.

The President (Good Samaritan) is seen giving water to the starving person, which can be interpreted as providing economic relief and solutions to the frail person. His bubble speech reads "for now let's focus on Papa stability", suggesting that his focus is on how to make the emaciated person gain strength. The signpost bearing the inscription "Immediate IMF Extension" is another element of the data that warrants consideration. This indicates that the previous administration approached the IMF for a financial bailout. Therefore, the current administration must continue with the IMF programme for the economy to achieve stability and resilience. Using colour to convey the artist's message is a pivotal aspect of the analysis. The artist employs white, green, and red in their depiction of the data that constitutes the flag of the

National Democratic Congress (NDC), thereby signifying the party in power and the president's affiliation.

Figure 8 Feeding the economy

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5th June 2025

The above cartoon evokes the conceptual metaphor ECONOMY IS A PATIENT as a bigger umbrella, which can have other metaphors, such as ECONOMIC POLICY IS NOURISHMENT. For a diagram representation of the image above, see diagram 12.

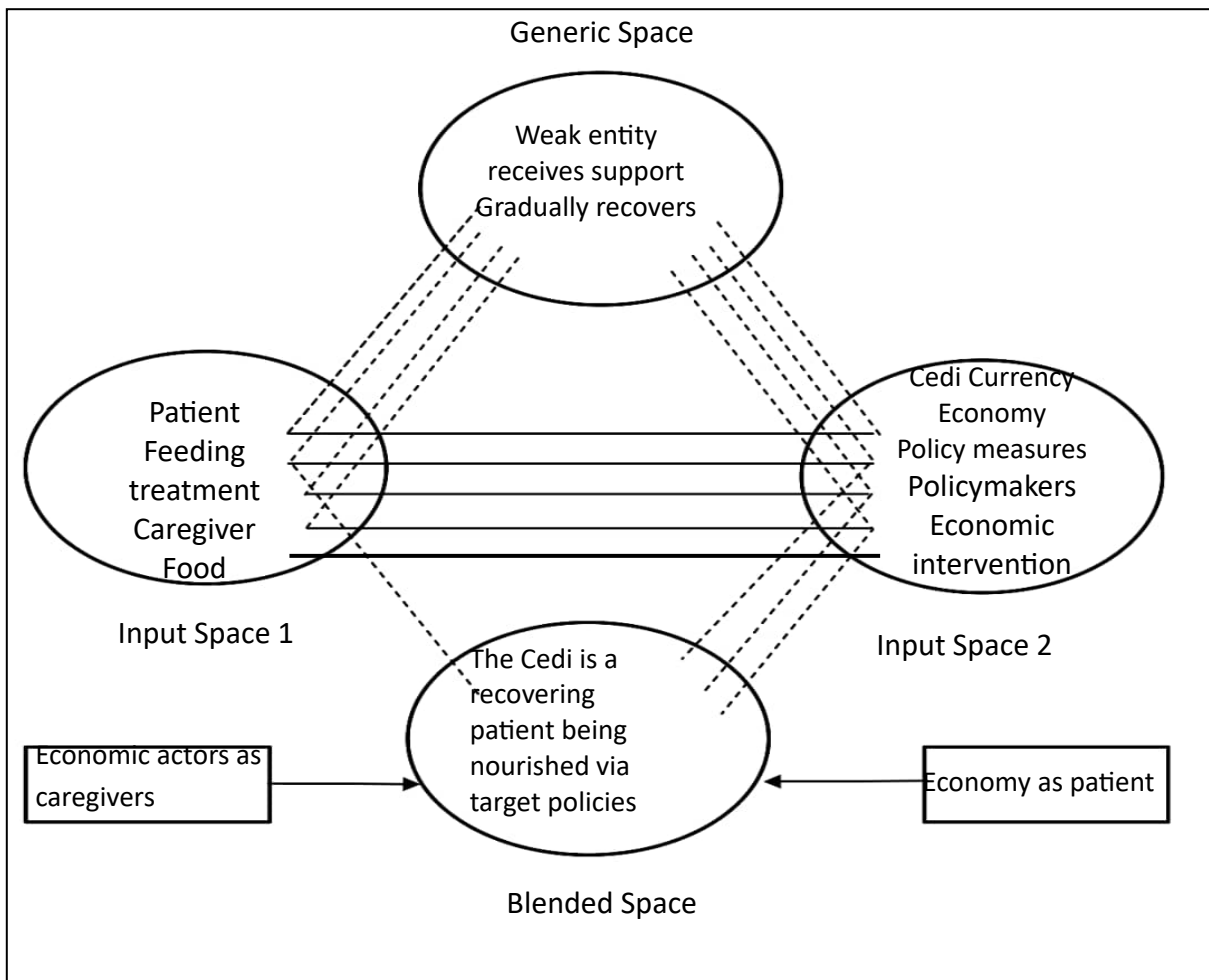


Diagram 9 Visual representation of feeding the economy

The above diagram employs the double scope blend, where two scenarios, the healthcare scenario and the economic scenario, are blended to convey meaning. In input space 1, I identify the patient, the feeding treatment, the caregivers, and the food. While in Input Space 2, I identify the Cedi Currency, economic policy measures, and economic interventions. The commonality that runs through the two input spaces within the generic space is a valued entity, which weakly corresponds to treatment and improvement, leading to competition over credit. In the new emergent structure that forms the blended space, including the cedi as a recovery patient, government authorities serve as caregivers. Feeding is a policy intervention that aids in the recovery process.

To help viewers understand the state of the Ghanaian economy, the cartoonist employs a familiar domain, feeding a sick person, to illustrate the target domain of the economy. The

cartoonist employs personification, whereby the Cedi (the economy) is depicted as a sick person, an injured patient sitting weakly, being spoon-fed. This phenomenon is indicative of the precarious state of the Ghanaian currency. The notion of “spoon-feeding” implies that the Cedi is incapable of self-recovery and necessitates external intervention, such as economic policies or monetary support. The patient’s prolonged recovery period is commensurate with the incremental strengthening of the Cedi following a period of decline. The cartoonist conceptualises the agents as government officials to carry out the feeding exercise. The artist employed a figurative representation of the Finance Minister, Hon. Cassel Ato Forson, as a parental figure providing sustenance to an ailing child, thereby invoking an economic metaphor that alludes to the government's role in nurturing and safeguarding the nation’s economy. This conceptualisation is in order, as the finance minister is responsible for the growth of the cedi and, to a large extent, the economy. The provision of food to the patient (the Cedi) by the Finance Minister can be interpreted as an indication of the government's economic policies, such as loans or financial injections, which are designed to strengthen the Cedi, which is currently experiencing economic weakness.

Another character present behind the Finance Minister bears the inscription ‘BOG, which is an abbreviation for ‘Bank of Ghana’. This character is reminiscent of the Governor, Dr Johnson Asiama, who collaborates closely with the Finance Minister to facilitate the recovery of the patient. A bubble speech attributed to Dr Asiama reads, ‘he is recovering fast.’ This speech may be interpreted as indicative of the governor’s belief that the measures implemented by the government’s management team, of which he and the finance minister are members, are yielding the intended outcomes.

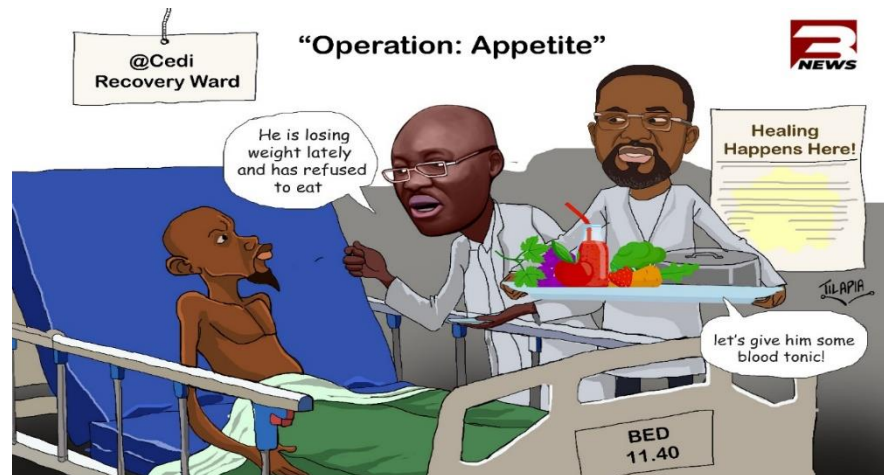
Another character is visible behind the wall, represented by his head, which bears a striking resemblance to that of Dr Bawumia, the former Vice President of Ghana (2016-2024). He comes with a bubble speech that reads “it’s all because of our policies”. Dr Bawumia sought to claim recognition for the cedi’s gains as the immediate past leader of the government’s economic management team before he departed from office in January 2025, suggesting that the current government is ripping the policies he implemented during his tenure.

In this data under consideration, there is a manifestation of metonymy as another conceptual device embedded in the cartoon. This manifestation includes PERSON-FOR-

INSTITUTIONAL ROLE where Dr Asiama represents the institution he leads, thus the Bank of Ghana (BOG) as the governor, while Dr Ato Forson represents the Ministry of Finance.

Figure 9 Cedi recovery ward

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2 September 2025

As illustrated in Figure 9 Cedi recovery ward, the cartoon demonstrates a strong association with the economy, both of which fall under the overarching conceptual metaphor of “THE ECONOMY IS A PATIENT”. The identified conceptual metaphor can evoke another conceptual metaphor: ECONOMIC HEALTH IS PHYSICAL HEALTH. The cartoonist once again employs the metaphor of the Cedi (₵) as a sick patient, this time represented as a hospitalised individual in a bed at the “Cedi Recovery Ward”. The designation “Operation: Appetite” conceptualises the situation in terms of a medical crisis with a focus on nutrition, proposing that the Cedi is “malnourished” and necessitates interventions to enhance its nutritional status.

The Conceptual blending diagram below represents a visual representation of **Error! Reference source not found.**

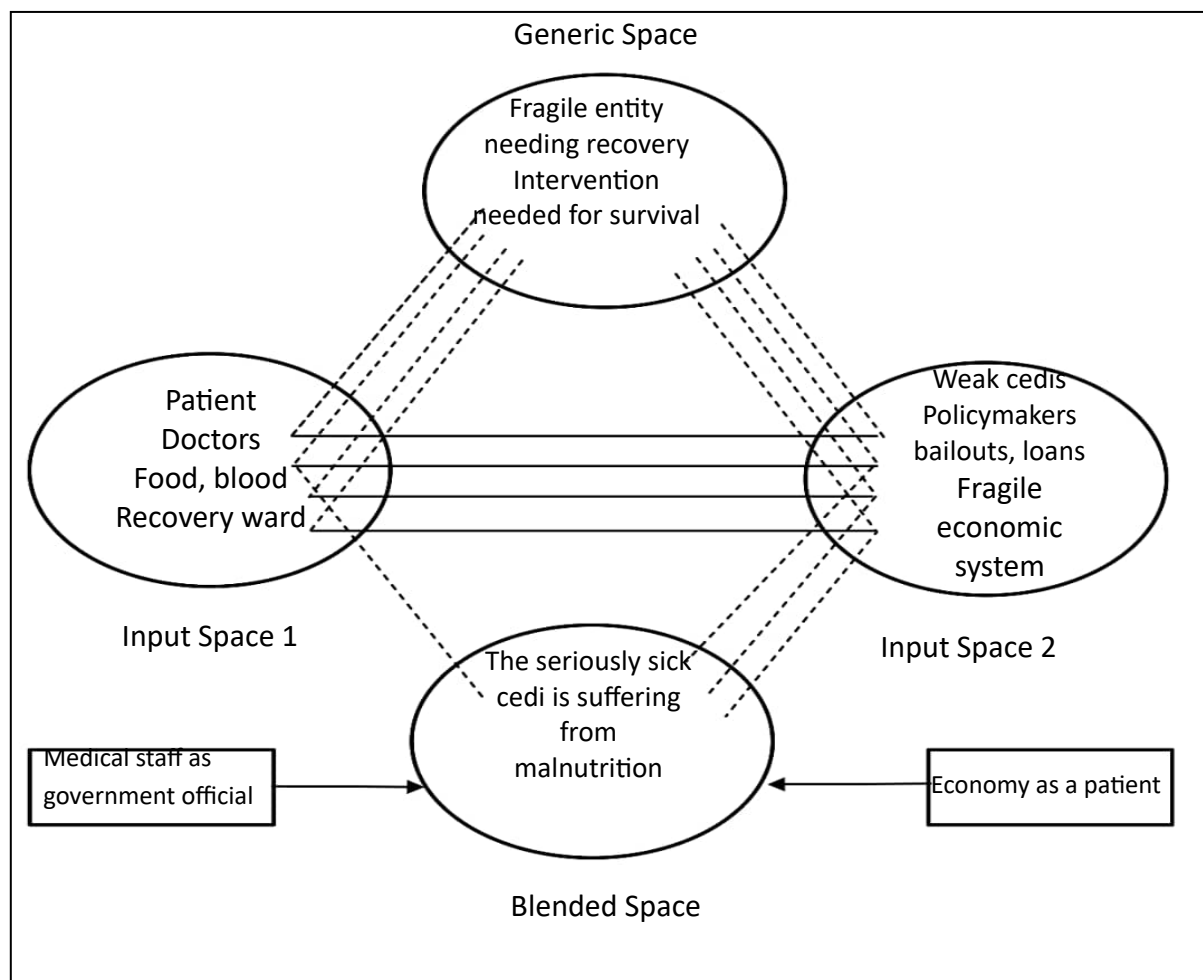


Diagram 10 visual representation of the hospitalised economy

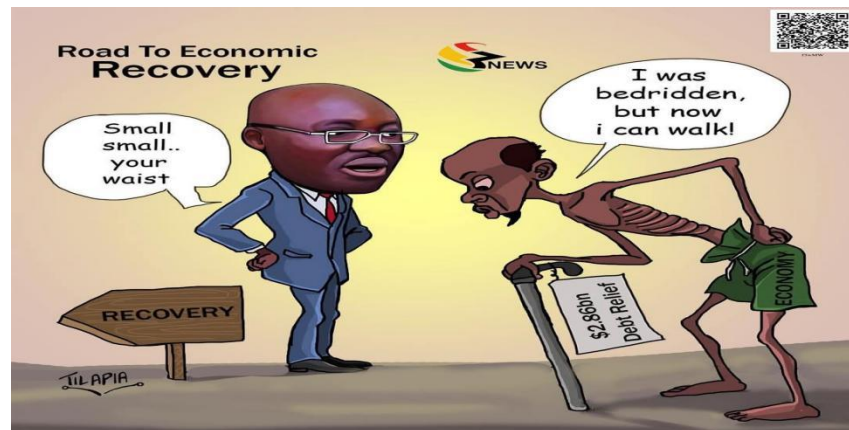
Using the above data, the cartoonist employs two frames to convey the intended message, thereby bridging the medical and economic domains. Within the input space 1, I identify patient, doctors, food/blood and the recovery ward, while in input space 2, I identify the weak cedis, economic policy makers, bailouts or loans, and the fragile economic system. The generic space that deals with the commonality between the two input spaces is a Fragile entity that requires recovery and intervention for its survival. The new emergent structure that emerges from the blended space is the cedi, which is dangerously weak and struggling to respond to interventions. At the same time, policymakers claim to be providing solutions, but recovery remains uncertain and possibly superficial.

The cartoonist utilises hospital settings to convey his message about the weaknesses of the Ghanaian economy, as most readers can readily relate to hospital issues. The cartoonist conceptualises the government officials, respectively, Hon. Ato Forson, the Finance Minister, and Dr Asiamah, the Governor of the Bank of Ghana (BOG), as medical practitioners attending to a sick person. The sick person in this case refers to no entity other than the Ghanaian cedi (economy) that has been personified. This personification of the cedi has given it human status, making it appear weak. The frail nature and physical stature are strong indications of how the cedi has lost value, likely in the international market. The conceptualised doctors who are part of the economic management are working assiduously to ensure the patient (the economy) recovers from the shock of the world market. The food on the tray, intended for the patient's consumption to aid in the recovery process, can be viewed as a policy remedy or a financial intervention, which the doctors are optimistic about, to save the situation. However, a bubble speech attributed to the finance minister reads, "He is losing weight lately and has refused to eat". This statement can be interpreted as the patient's (economy) inability to recover the market strength. To overcome the frailty of the patient, the Governor of the Bank of Ghana, Dr Asiamah, has suggested a solution, as captured in his bubble speech, which reads, "Let's give him some blood tonic!" This can be interpreted as the government's economic support intended to help alleviate the situation.

There is an inscription in front of the bed that reads 11.40, indicating the exchange rate of the Ghanaian currency (Cedi) in terms of the most common business transactions, thus, the dollar. This evokes metonymy as another form of conceptual device, thus, PART FOR WHOLE metonymy.

Figure 10 Economic Recovery

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29 January 2025

The message conveyed by the cartoons in **Error! Reference source not found.** and Figure 8 Feeding the economy is similar, despite the presence of distinct visualisations and characters. The conceptual metaphor behind this data can be construed both verbally and visually as “ECONOMY’S RECOVERY IS RECUPERATION OF A SICK PERSON.” The cartoonist draws parallels between the activities involved in attending to a sick individual, which can be considered the source domain, and the recovery of the economy, which can be regarded as the target domain. The cartoonist utilises two characters to communicate his perspective on the economy. The current Finance Minister, Hon. Cassiel Ato Forson, who concurrently serves as the Member of Parliament for the Ajumako-Enyan-Esiam Constituency, is one of the characters depicted. The emaciated character with a walking stick represents the Ghanaian economy, as interpreted by the cartoonist. This attribution is derived from the inscription on the character’s attire.

The state of the personalised economy, as indicated by its physical manifestation, indicates its broader health, which is deplorable. The finance minister is regarded as the individual with the technical expertise required to facilitate recovery and revitalise the economy. His bubble speech reads “small small your waist”. This is indicative of the progress being made in the economic recovery. This assertion is further substantiated by the signpost bearing the

inscription “Recovery” situated behind the finance minister. Following the bubble speech of the personalised economy, which reads “I was bedridden but now I can walk”. This speech may indicate that the economy was in a state of decline during the previous administration’s tenure under Nana Addo. The symbolic walking stick, inscribed with the message “\$2.86 billion debit relief,” has been identified as the catalyst for this transformation. Despite prolonged confinement to bed, this development could indicate the personalised economy’s capacity for advancement.

Figure 11 Economy at Physio

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28 February 2025

As previously conveyed in **Error! Reference source not found.**and **Error! Reference source not found.**

Figure 11 Economy at Physio communicates a similar message. The conceptual metaphor that underpins this data is **FIXING THE ECONOMY IS FIXING AN INJURED PERSON**. To facilitate comprehension among readers regarding the prevailing economic situation in Ghana, the cartoonist has employed a verbal inscription in a widely relatable context, such as physiotherapy treatment. The cartoonist has chosen to depict the Finance Minister, Hon. Cassiel

Ato Forson, and the Governor of the Bank of Ghana, Dr Johnson Asiamah, attired in green shirts, as physiotherapists working at the “Reset Therapy” clinic. The term “reset” is one with which the majority of Ghanaians are familiar, as it was adopted by the National Democratic Congress (NDC), the country’s opposition party at the time, as its campaign slogan before the 2024 general elections.

In light of this, the cartoonist has named the therapy “reset” to foster loyalty to the NDC. As is evident from the data, the finance minister is diligently tending to a patient. This patient is none other than the personification of the economy. This attribution is substantiated by the inscription of the patient’s short. The frailness of the personified economy signifies the poor condition of the patient. The cartoonist’s conceptualisation of the Finance Minister and the Governor of the Bank of Ghana as physiotherapists is appropriate, as they manage the country’s economy. Consequently, economic issues must be their top priority. The artist’s selection of physiotherapy as a means of economic recovery can represent the economy’s need for stabilisation, suggesting that it has been adversely affected and necessitates a meticulously designed intervention to facilitate its recovery. This depiction cues another metaphor: A SOUND ECONOMIC SITUATION IS PHYSICAL FITNESS. This symbolism could be interpreted as a metaphor for economic policies, reforms, or austerity measures aimed at rectifying financial instability. As the Finance Minister adjusts the metaphorical economy, his countenance evinces discomfort, and the associated discourse reads “Agyei... Yaree ye ya”! (Akan Language) In essence, the notion conveyed is that illness is a disagreeable condition. Another character positioned at the head of the patient bears a striking resemblance to Ghana’s President, John Mahama. His bubble speech reads, “Fix him at all costs.” This can be interpreted as leadership demanding urgent intervention, possibly at any cost, in the form of instructions to the Finance Minister and Governor of the Bank of Ghana to ensure the economy becomes active and functioning.

Figure 12 Economic Crime Scene

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24 February 2025

The conceptual metaphor underpinning Figure 12 Economic Crime Scene can be formalised visually and verbally as “INVESTIGATING THE CAUSE OF THE POOR ECONOMY IS INVESTIGATING A CRIME SCENE.” To facilitate viewer comprehension of the message regarding the current state of the Ghanaian economy, the cartoonist employs a visual metaphor, drawing parallels with a crime scene. The conceptualisation of the cartoon is informed by the yellow barricade, which functions as a warning sign, prohibiting individuals from venturing onto the scene for investigation. In this context, the cartoonist employs a metaphorical representation of President John Mahama as a detective investigating the crime scene, utilising a metaphorical flashlight. This serves to symbolise the act of illuminating the current economic condition, thereby indicating a process of scrutiny. The utterance ascribed to the detective (President) and translated as “Economy paa nie” (loosely rendered as “Is this really the economy?”) appears to convey a sense of scepticism or sarcasm. This could be interpreted as either a reaction of astonishment at the extent of the devastation or as a form of mockery directed towards the prevailing economic circumstances.

The cartoonist employs a metaphorical skeleton to symbolise the economic system, with the verbal inscription ‘economy’ carved into the metaphorical skeleton of the fish. The state of the metaphorical skeleton (i.e. the economy) being stripped bare suggests inadequate economic management. The skeletal nature of the fish alludes to the concept that the economy has been significantly eroded, with the previous government consuming the flesh. The deployment of the skeleton as a symbol in the Ghanaian context indicates its association with death. In this

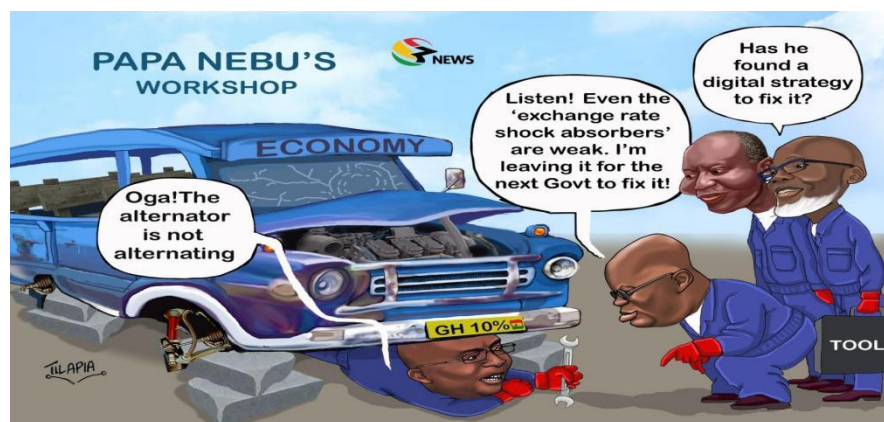
instance, the utilisation of the skeleton by the cartoonist serves as a metaphorical representation, signifying the economic demise.

4.2.1.2 The Economy as a Non-Living Organism

The image of the economy as a non-living organism is a widespread figurative approach of political and media language, especially in visual communication, including editorial cartoons. It is within this framework that the economy is given attributes which are normally related to tangible physical objects, which are built, broken, fixed, cut down, or repaired. Such a metaphor allows explaining complex economic situations by using easily comprehensible images based on the common experience with objects and artefacts.

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29 August 2023

The conceptual metaphor that underpins this data can be construed as **FIXING A BROKEN ECONOMY IS FIXING A FAULTY/BROKEN CAR**. The visual representation of *Error! Reference source not found.* using the conceptual integration network is provided below.

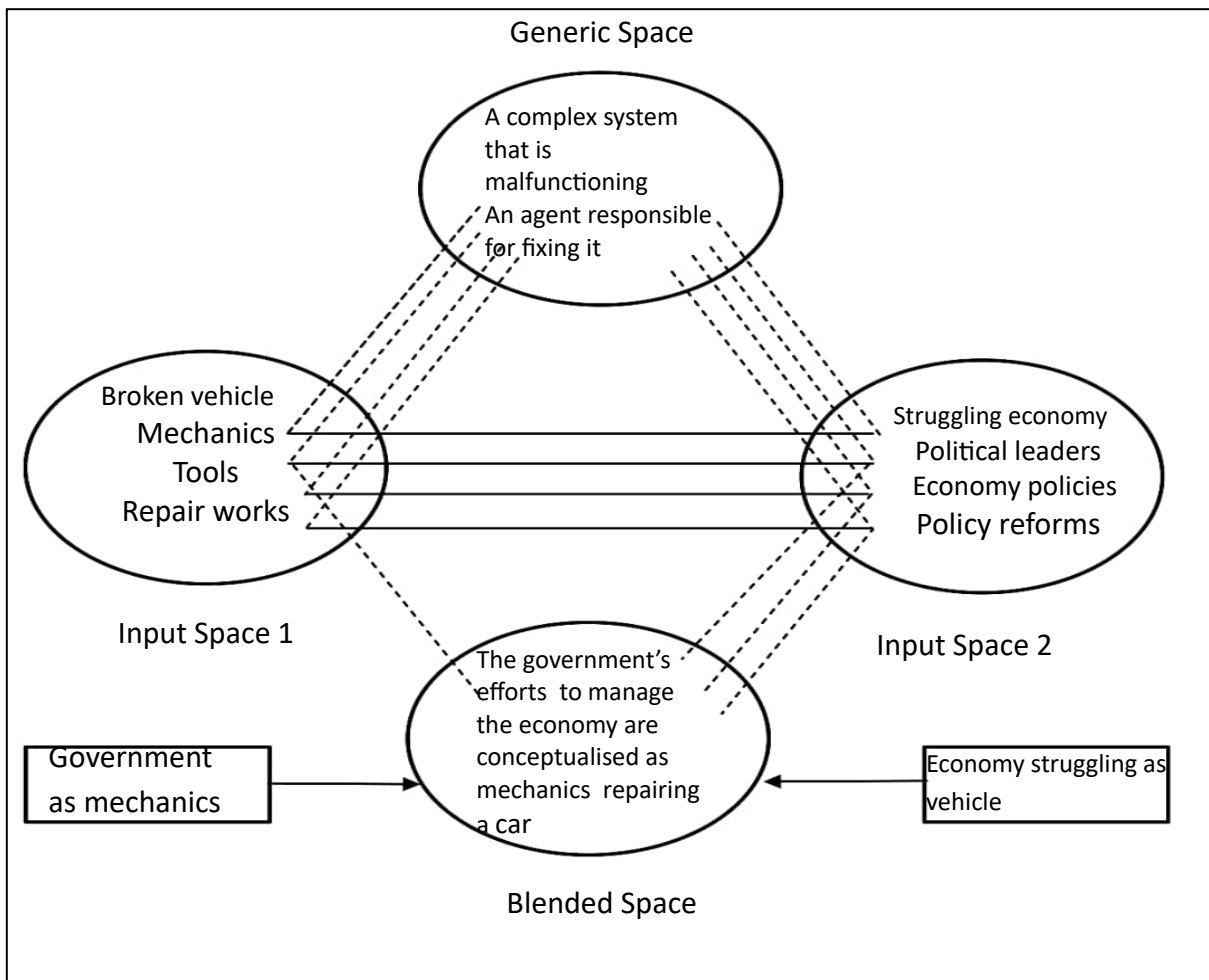


Diagram 11 Visual representation of a broken vehicle

The cartoonist uses two frames to convey his message, which contrasts the broken car space with the economy/governance space. The mechanics, broken car, repair works, and tools are all in input Space 1 of this double-scope conceptual integration network. However, the struggling economy, political figures, economic policies and policy reforms are all included in input space 2. Next, the elements between the input spaces demonstrate a structured relationship through their cross-mapping. A system that needs fixing and an agent fixing it are identified within the generic spaces, which evoke similarities between the input spaces. To create a new, emerging structure for repairing a broken economy, the blend takes over the frame structure from input space two and incorporates selective projections from input space one.

The ability to make accurate deductions from encyclopedic knowledge regarding the role of mechanics in repairing a broken car and the role of politicians, particularly the president, vice president, and finance minister, in managing the economy, is necessary to interpret this

blend. To convey economic conditions, the cartoonist depicts a broken car, which viewers can easily understand due to their familiarity with vehicles. Due to the aforementioned incident involving a damaged vehicle, the services of automotive repair technicians will be required to restore the vehicle to full functionality. In the cartoon, government representatives are metaphorically depicted as automotive repair mechanics.

The visual attributes of the personnel in question, especially their clothing, which is typical of the occupations of engineers and mechanics, form the basis of the concept that creates a link between government officials and mechanics. President Nana Addo Dankwa Akuffo-Addo, Vice-President, Dr Bawumiah, Finance Minister, Hon. Ken Ofori-Atta, and Gabby Asare Otchere-Darko, Executive Member of the Danquah Institute, which is connected to the NPP research and policy think-tank, are the officials (mechanics) in question. The analogy between the two organisations is valid since government officials and auto repair specialists are tasked with vital duties. The former are responsible for guiding economic policies, while the latter are responsible for fixing mechanical problems. Dr. Bawumia assumes the role of chief economist, given his position as the leader of the government's economic management team. The Honourable Ofori Atta, a distinguished member of the economic team, makes substantial contributions by formulating insightful economic strategies and providing invaluable input to the government's revitalisation efforts.

Furthermore, Gabby Otchere-Darko, a renowned figure in his field, has also offered substantial contributions to the government, notably in economic strategies, underscoring a multifaceted and coordinated approach to addressing the nation's economic challenges. Especially, President Nana Addo, the head of all government operations, is widely regarded as pivotal in shaping the nation's economic future. His conceptualisation is particularly relevant, given his comprehensive oversight and strategic vision. As it conveys or enhances the cartoonist's message, the discourse should include the narrative occasionally expressed in the cartoon's accompanying bubble utterances. The main mechanic, Dr. Bawumia, is one example of how the bubbles seem to come from the characters themselves. He is heard shouting, "Oga"! There is no alternation in the alternator. The term 'Oga' is used in Nigeria to refer to a person who has significant power and influence, according to the Dictionary of African Politics (www.oxfordreference.com).

In Ghanaian discourse, this expression has gained popularity. ‘Oga’ used in the cartoon refers to President Nana Akufo-Addo, considered the head of state and a political figure according to the Ghanaian constitution. According to Dr. Bawumia’s assertion in the bubble speech, the methods used to combat the economic crisis are ineffective. In his “bubble speech,” President Nana Akuffo-Addo responds, which can be summed up as follows: “Listen! “I’m leaving it for the next government to fix; even the exchange rate shock absorbers are weak.” The President asserts that, should he fail to improve the economic situation, the next administration should consider implementing a strategy to deal with the fundamental problems. The other two people (Hon. Ken Ofori Atta and Mr Gabby Otchere-Darko) have asked the chief mechanic, Dr Bawumia, “Has he found a digital strategy to fix it?” The vice president has made a name for himself as an advocate of a national digitisation agenda, suggesting that the criterion for digitalisation should be able to tackle Ghana’s problems. This viewpoint sheds light on the query that the other mechanics asked the chief mechanic.

Using this analogy, the political cartoonist compares the policies and programmes of the economic management team to a mechanic’s toolbox, which contains all the necessary tools to repair a broken vehicle. One such action recognised as a viable way to solve the issues affecting the economy is the change to the Income Tax Act 2023 (ACT1094). Additionally, the measure mandates a 10 per cent withholding tax on all gains, whether they come from gambling, the lottery, or betting. The perpetrator’s vehicle registration number, shown on the damaged vehicle, represents the 10% tax.

Knowles and Moon (2004, p. 111) assert that using colour is an essential component of visual metaphor, aiding in the successful dissemination of meaning to a broad audience. Thus, the cartoonist conveys a range of messages with this technique. The New Patriotic Party (NPP), which was in power when the truck was vandalised, is symbolised by the colours blue, white, and red, which the artist uses. The underlying message of the graphic regarding the party these mechanics represent is reinforced by the cartoonist’s selection of these colours.

Figure 13 *Economic War*

<https://www.facebook.com/TilapiaCartoons/photos/pb.100063686824366.-2207520000/851891559500429/?type=3>



16 September 2022

Figure 13 *Economic War* employs the trope of warfare as a metaphor for economic struggle. This concept likely derives from the renowned example posited by Lakoff and Johnson: “ARGUMENT IS WAR, LIFE IS WAR”. Because of this, the conceptual metaphor can be formulated as “ECONOMIC CRISIS IS A BATTLEFIELD.” To facilitate comprehension on the viewer’s part regarding Ghanaians’ economic situation, the cartoonist employs war as a familiar source domain.

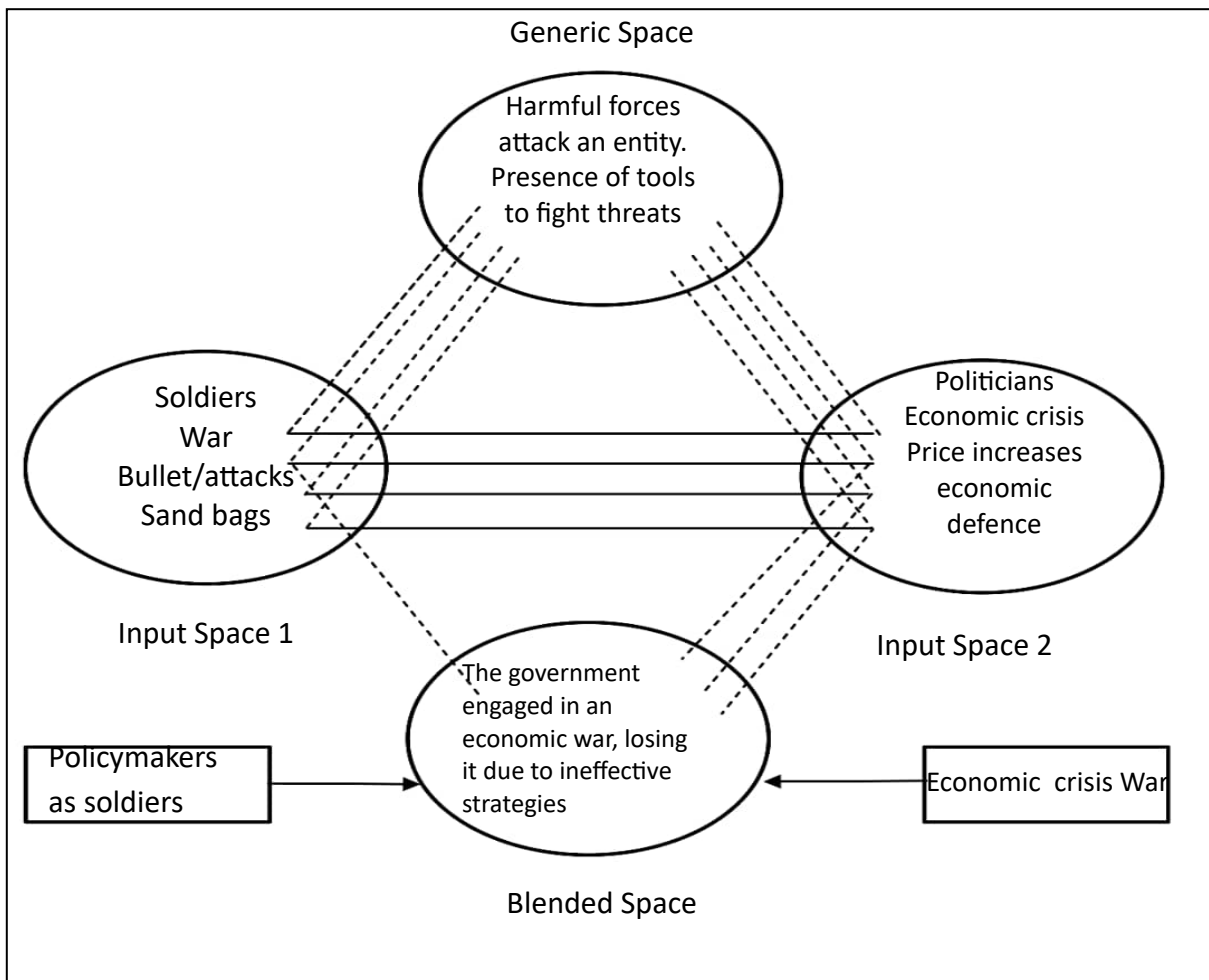


Diagram 12 Visual representation of economic war

In this conceptual integration network of a single scope, Input Space 1 is characterised by war, military personnel, weapons, and ammunition. Conversely, Input Space 2 encompasses the economic challenge, as well as the President of Ghana, the Finance Minister, and programmes to combat the war. Thereafter, systematic mapping processes link elements between the two input domains. The generic space that evokes the commonality between the two input spaces is tactics and strategies to overcome each other. The blend inherits the frame structure from input space two and the selective projections from input space one, resulting in the formation of a new emergent structure where the government is engaged in an economic war; however, using ineffective weapons to combat the war renders the exercise futile. The term “Economic War”, inscribed on the sandbags, established the analytical framework. This term is conventionally employed in the context of military fortifications. The sandbags, therefore, act

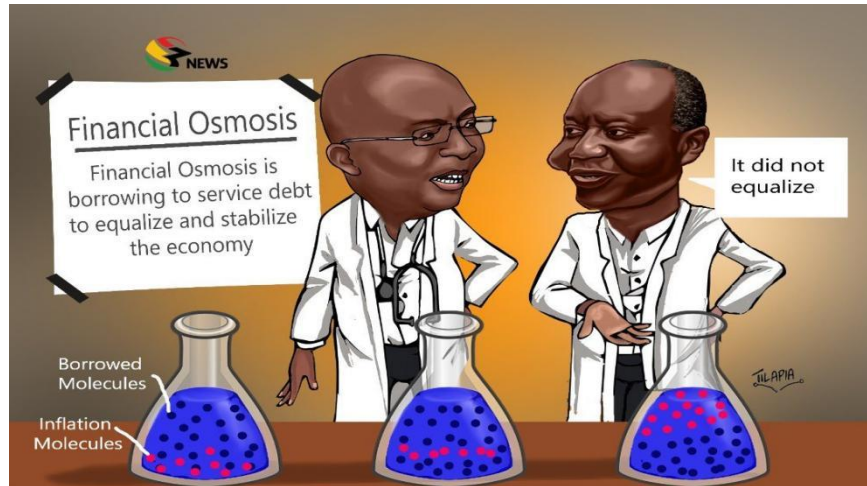
as a metaphorical representation of the defence against the pervasive adversary of economic hardship.

The artist metaphorically represents essential commodities and services, such as fuel, food, light, transport fares, and pure water, as missiles or bombs. This illustrates the increasing costs of these necessities, which can be interpreted as metaphorical representations of the attacks on them in this economic war. The cartoonist employs a figurative representation of President Nana Addo Dankwa and Finance Minister Ken Ofori-Atta as members of the military forces. This is based on their camouflage attire and the fire extinguishers they are holding. The cartoonist's employment of a fire extinguisher can be interpreted as a mechanism that is not suitable for its intended purpose.

Again, this may be interpreted as an attempt to “put out the fire” of the economic crisis. However, it is important to note that in a combat scenario, the efficacy of a fire extinguisher may be questionable. This could be interpreted as an indication of the government's suboptimal responses to economic challenges. It is possible to interpret the character behind the military personnel as the actual recipient of the missiles, thus implying that Ghanaians are the intended targets. This could be construed as metonymy, signified by the term “FEW FOR MANY”. The individual's discourse, characterised by its rhetorical nature and seemingly directed towards the Commander-in-Chief, poses a salient question: “Commander in Chief, Ukraine is winning their war on...what will be your excuse for losing the economic war?” This rhetorical inquiry serves to draw parallels between military conflict and economic governance, potentially offering a critique of leadership for its perceived failure to address the prevailing economic crisis effectively.

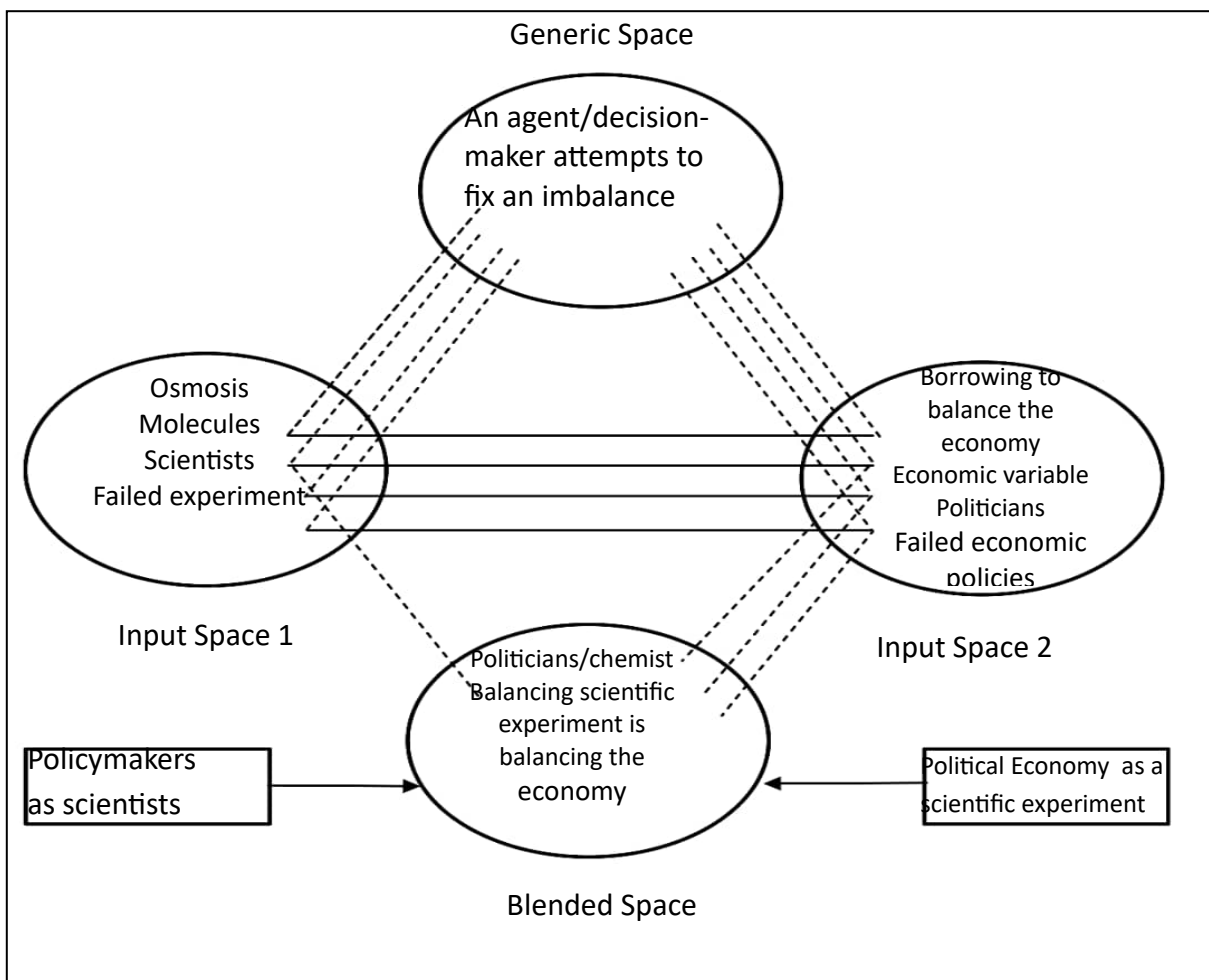
Figure 14 Economy in the Science Lab

<https://www.facebook.com/TilapiaCartoons/photos/pb.100063686824366.-2207520000/787051702651082/?type=3>



13 June 2022

Figure 14 Economy in the Science Lab employs a scientific metaphor to critique Ghana's economic policies, focusing on the use of debt to stabilise the economy. In light of this, the conceptual metaphor that can be construed from Figure 14 Economy in the Science Lab is ECONOMIC MANAGEMENT IS SCIENTIFIC EXPERIMENTATION. In this paradigm, the concept of financial stability is conceptualised through the metaphor of "STABILITY IS BALANCE/EQUALISATION".



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The cartoonist employs two distinct domains: the scientific laboratory, representing the familiar domain, and the socio-economic scenario, signifying the domain of concern. The explanations for the four mental spaces are provided in the diagram above. The image's title is "Financial Osmosis", a term derived from the scientific concept of osmosis, where molecules move through a membrane to equalise concentration. Drawing upon the provided notes, the text suggests that borrowing money ("borrowed molecules") is anticipated to flow into the economy, thereby balancing inflation and stabilising financial conditions. The continuation of the experiment is the responsibility of government officials.

The cartoonist has chosen to depict the Vice President of Ghana, Dr Bawumia, and the Finance Minister, Ken Ofori-Atta, as scientists, based on the appearance of the lab coats they are wearing. The representation of these individuals as scientists is appropriate, given their role in overseeing economic management. Their experiment symbolises policymakers or economists

trying to apply theoretical solutions (borrowing) to a real-world economic problem. The artist employs the metaphor of “flakes” to allude to economic conditions. The two laboratory flasks represent financial inputs and inflationary pressures, containing blue (borrowed molecules) and red (inflation molecules) substances.

It is projected that the dilution effect of borrowing will counteract inflation, thereby engendering stability. A speech delivered by one of the characters, the Finance Minister Ken Ofori-Atta, has been attributed to the idea that “it did not equalise”. This idea is said to express disappointment. The minister’s statement suggests that the desired economic transformation has not been realised despite debt accumulation. This suggests that the envisioned financial stabilisation through debt accumulation has been unsuccessful, which may have exacerbated the prevailing circumstances. Alternatively, the attempt to fix the economy through borrowing was as flawed and unsuccessful as a poorly executed scientific experiment.

Error! Reference source not found.

<https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=922341616565391&set=pb.100063686824366.-2207520000&type=3>



23 April 2024

The conceptual metaphor behind Error! **Reference source not found.** can be identified as **FIXING A BROKEN ECONOMY IS FIXING A BROKEN VEHICLE**. For the visual representation using the conceptual integration model.

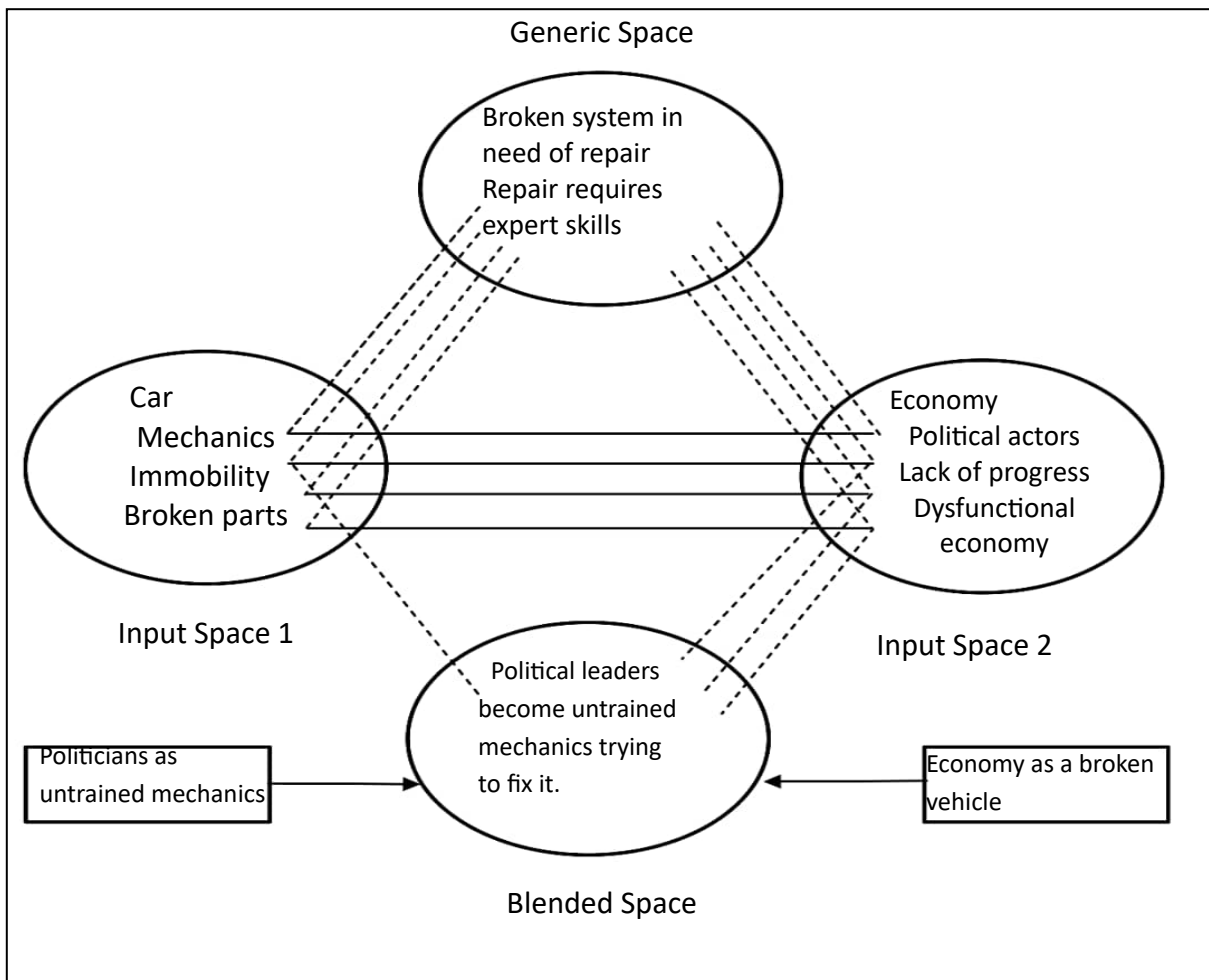


Diagram 13 Visual representation of a broken car (economy)

The cartoonist utilises two distinct scenarios for the input spaces. Thus, in input space 1, there is a familiar car-repairing domain, while in input space 2, there is an economic domain, which is the target domain. To convey his message and facilitate comprehension among viewers regarding the state of the Ghanaian economy. The cartoonist employs a visual metaphor of mechanics attending to a broken vehicle. The metaphor is conveyed through the depiction of the attire typically worn by rural settlers and the arrangement of four male figures around a damaged vehicle, symbolising their efforts to effect repairs.

Moreover, it is noteworthy that the characters are depicted as young children repairing a broken toy car. The cartoonist utilises a recognisable theme, the maintenance of vehicles, to convey the present state of the Ghanaian economy. The artist elects to depict prominent political and economic actors in the Ghanaian context, employing a metonymic technique that draws parallels between them and automotive repair professionals. This artistic approach,

characterised by a subtle and nuanced use of symbolism, involves the portrayal of notable figures, including the President of Ghana, Nana Addo Dankwa; the Vice President, Dr Bawumia; the erstwhile Finance Minister, Ken Ofori Atta; and Gabby Otchere Darko, a distinguished member of the Danquah Institute think tank group affiliated with the New Patriotic Party, engaged in a metaphorical endeavour akin to automotive repair. Considering their participation in economic administration, it is rational to regard government officials as technical specialists, particularly in automotive repair.

The automotive repair technicians' interpretation of a damaged vehicle as a metaphor for the prevailing economic conditions aligns with the presence of the Economy inscription on the vehicle. The conceptualisation of government officials as economic technicians is appropriate, given their oversight of the economy. The vice president presides over the government's economic management team, which includes the finance minister and Gabby Darko, a team member specialising in formulating economic solutions. The president, meanwhile, oversees all activities. These leaders are pretending to fix the economy, despite lacking the necessary skills, tools, or strategy. Their efforts are superficial, unprofessional, and unproductive. Alternatively, the cartoon conveys that economic recovery efforts are poorly conceived, childlike, and insufficient, providing more performance than a solution. The vice president's discourse, which has been attributed to him, contains the following utterance: "Mo ma me steer no!" Vuummmmm.. Vuummmmm.. Pipiimmm!" The vice president making this car sounds substitutes for real mechanical work symbolises empty public assurances rather than genuine solutions. The aforementioned statement, "Mo ma me steer no," is interpreted as a direct appeal to the Ghanaian populace to extend their support and vote for the vice president in the December 2024 general elections, to enable him to assume the role of leadership and manage the economy. In the context of Ghanaian politics, the sounds "vuummmmm," "vuummmmm," and "pipiimmm" can be interpreted as the reliance on these sound effects instead of actual repair, suggesting shallow rhetoric replacing genuine reforms

Figure 15 The Dilemma of the Cause of the Broken Vehicle

<https://dailyguidenetwork.com/the-dilemma/>



23 March 2022

The conceptual metaphor that underpins **Error! Reference source not found.** is formulated as A BROKEN ECONOMY IS A FAULTY CAR. In the single-scope conceptual integration network context, drivers, vehicles, animals, and passengers are represented in input space 1. At the same time, the president, vice president, Ghanaian economy, and citizens are included in input space 2. A systematic mapping exists between the elements of these two input spaces, with a purposeful adventure to a desired destination representing the generic spaces that evoke similarities between the two input spaces. To create a new, emerging structure for repairing a faulty economy, the blend takes over the frame structure from input space two and incorporates selective projections from input space one.

To comprehend the intricacies of this particular blend, one must possess the capacity to extrapolate the correct deductions from the extensive compendium of knowledge about the function of drivers in navigating a vehicle to its intended destination, as well as the function of politicians, most notably the president and the vice president, in overseeing the nation's affairs. To elucidate the prevailing state of the economy, the cartoonist employs the metaphor of a dysfunctional vehicle, a technique with which the audience is well acquainted.

The cartoonist conceptualises governance as a journey, employing a travel metaphor to illustrate the contemporary state of the Ghanaian economy. The President of Ghana, Nana Addo Dankwa, and his Vice President, Dr Mahamudu Bawumia, are depicted as the leaders entrusted with the responsibility of navigating the nation's economic expedition to ensure a secure and

prosperous arrival at its intended destination. In this context, the drivers of the metaphorical vehicle representing Ghana serve as the metaphorical drivers of the nation. The cartoon's caption, "Dilemma", serves as a medium to convey the cartoonist's objective of illustrating the predicament the drivers face as they navigate their route to their destination. The utilisation of personification, a prevalent metaphor, is evident in the depictions of wild creatures, which underscore the challenges confronting the drivers. This artistic approach is further ingrained in Ghanaian culture, where these animals are generally considered dangerous and wild. In light of the aforementioned data, the cartoonist employs a bear as a symbol to represent the Russian struggle. The bear symbolises the detrimental effects of the conflict on Ghana's economy, owing to its associations with power and the wild nature.

Furthermore, the artist utilises a lion to represent the impact of the coronavirus, or COVID-19, on Ghana's economic stability. Finally, the opposition is represented by a cobra, symbolising deceit, cunning, and perceived danger. This may indicate the possibility of the opposition challenging the government. The utilisation of these animals by the artist is implied as having the capacity to impede the successful completion of the journey by the drivers. The above conceptualisation can potentially give rise to the conceptual metaphor WILD ANIMALS ARE AN IMPEDIMENT TO ECONOMIC PROGRESS.

According to the provided description, the drivers are uncertain about their inability to reach their destination. The speech bubble emanating from the passengers in the car and the drivers (President and his Vice) reads, "Kai, Herr! We for use..." The nature of the statement made by the characters on board is elliptical, thereby suggesting the dilemma they find themselves in as they try to identify the root cause of their predicament. The data under review unequivocally demonstrates that the vehicle's tyre is flat, thus rendering it immobile, consequently impacting its ability to reach its intended destination.

This observation evokes the conceptual metaphor PURPOSEFUL ACTIVITY IS SELF-PROPELLED MOVEMENT TOWARDS A DESTINATION. The registration number "GHA" and the phrase "ECONO" are displayed on the bonnet of the vehicle in question. The inscriptions corroborate the cartoonist's assertion that the vehicle in question is a metaphor for Ghana's economy, which is characterised by a dearth of substantial advancement and stagnation. A salient feature of the cartoonist's inscription on the vehicle is its capacity to direct the viewer's attention towards the subliminal message conveyed by the artist, which pertains to the state of

Ghana's economy. It is possible to interpret the passengers on board as constituting a representative sample of the total Ghanaian population, since the data under evaluation includes evidence of metonymy. The phenomenon can be explained by referencing the 'FEW-FOR-MANY' metonymy characteristic.

4.2.1.1 Conclusion on the theme of the Economy

The examples discussed show that the use of economic tropes and images in the work is highly developed as a way to approach the discourse on the problems of a country. Cartoonists make abstract economic policies and results accessible and emotionally resonant by metaphorically imagining inflation, debt, unemployment, taxation, and austerity as physical and relatable experiences, i.e. drowning, bearing the burden, famine, or sickness. Such visual metaphors enable the viewers to come to terms with complex macroeconomic realities based on the frames of everyday life that capture the life experiences of the average citizen.

Moreover, economic tropes are not only descriptive devices, but also arguments. They tend to reveal conflicts between political commentary and economic fact, challenge the success of leadership choices, and emphasise the social impact of governmental failures. By exaggerating, satirising, and blending symbolically, cartoonists portray the economy as a collective body whose health, deterioration or recovery efforts are directly dependent on the incompetence or responsibility of those in authority.

4.2.2 Theme of Health and Illness

Health and illness as a thematic tool in political cartoons has become a strong means of communication in order to criticise the governance process, the decisions of the leader, and the national situation. By putting socio-political problems into medical terms, i.e., disease, diagnosis, treatment, surgery, or even death, the cartoonists are turning complex policy problems into immediately understandable and emotionally relatable situations. The Ghanaian health-illness metaphor allows cartoonists to illustrate that the nation is a suffering patient, political leaders are caregivers or irresponsible health professionals, and economic poverty is a contagious illness or a chronic disease.

Figure 16 Obstetrics and Gynaecology of the Hospital Unit

<https://www.facebook.com/TilapiaCartoons/photos/pb.100063686824366.-2207520000/159089218780670/?type=3>



3 December 2019

Figure 16 Obstetrics and Gynaecology of the Hospital Unit conceptual metaphor can be articulated verbally and visually as PERFORMING ABORTION IS CANCELLING A POLITICAL PROCESS (REFERENDUM)

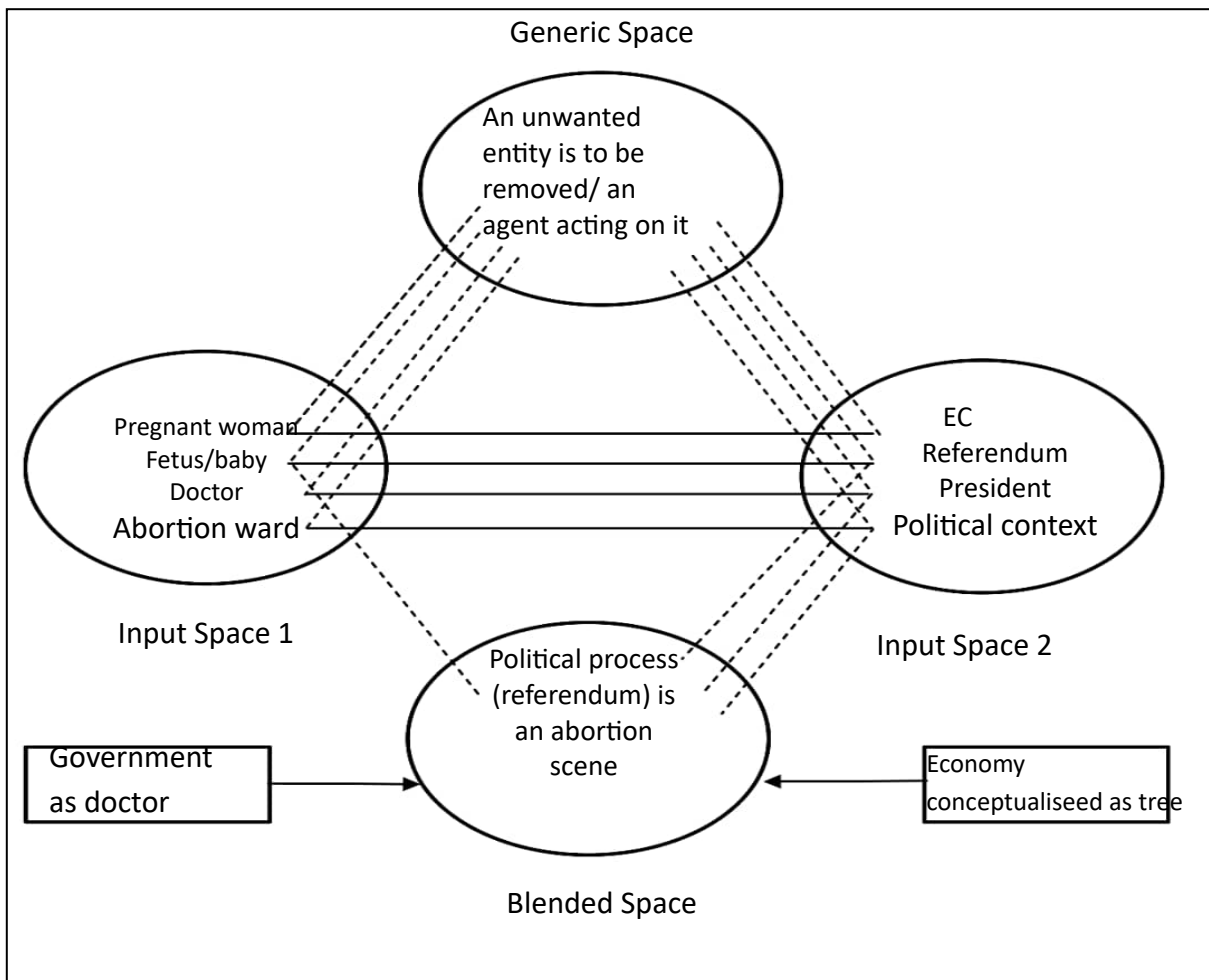


Diagram 14 Visual representation of EC in an abortion room

The cartoonist utilises two domains belonging to each of the input spaces to communicate his message: thus, the medical scene and the political scene. The diagram above explains the four mental spaces. In 2017, the incumbent President, through his Minister of Local Government and Rural Development, Hajia Alima Mahama, presented a bill to Parliament (www.dailyguidenetwork.com) to amend Clause 3 of Article 55 of the 1992 Constitution. The bill aimed to allow political parties to fund candidates for election to district assemblies and lower-tier local government units (www.constitutionnet.org). Consequently, Parliament was tasked with amending Article 243(1) so that Ghanaians could elect their Metropolitan, Municipal, and District Chief Executives (MMDCEs), rather than relying on the current system of appointment by the President (Agomor, Adams, and Taabazuing, 2019). The Electoral Commission (EC) scheduled 17 December 2019 to conduct a referendum to approve the Bill to amend Clause 3 of Article 55 of the 1992 Constitution (www.radioangelus.com). The

referendum aimed to gauge the support of Ghanaians for the proposed amendment to Clause 3 of Article 55 of the 1992 Constitution (www.theafricandream.net). As the date for the referendum approached, President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo delivered a brief address on 1 December 2019, as reported by Citinews.com, in which he announced his decision to cancel the referendum. After consulting with stakeholders, the President justified his choice, citing that the country lacked an enduring national consensus.

The cartoonist employs the health concept of an Abortion Ward to facilitate viewer comprehension of his intended message, as depicted in the caption “December 17 Referendum Abortion Ward”, to convey his message. The artist employs metaphor in depicting the EC chairperson, Mrs. Jean Mensah, portraying her as a pregnant woman who has conceived a child. This conceptualisation is derived from the ‘EC’ inscription on the woman’s attire. The child that the conceptualised pregnant woman is carrying is the subject of the referendum exercise.

The President of Ghana, Nana Addo Dankwa, receives depiction as a symbolic medical practitioner who plans to terminate the pregnancy. The cartoonist’s analogy is that 17 December was when the pregnant woman (EC) was expected to give birth (i.e., the referendum). The President announced the cancellation of the referendum on December 1, effectively ending the expected delivery on 17 December. The following assertion has been attributed to the metaphorical doctor: “This pikin must be removed!” (using “pikin”, which means child in West African Pidgin English), especially in Ghana, suggesting that the child should be terminated. This is a comparison of the referendum to an unwanted baby that must be aborted.

Figure 17 Administering Intravenous Injection

<https://www.facebook.com/TilapiaCartoons/photos/pb.100063686824366.-2207520000/161451705211088/?type=3>



The presence of visual elements in this cartoon evokes the scenario of health and illness. The hospital scenario is characterised by incorporating cartoon elements, including the juxtaposition of a syringe and a stethoscope with a hospital bed and a doctor's coat. Integrating these components substantially enhances the quality of the hospital environment. In light of this, the conceptual metaphor behind the data can be construed as follows: THE CEDI IS A SICK PERSON. Another metaphor that can be identified under this data is ECONOMIC INTERVENTION IS MEDICAL TREATMENT.

The visual representation of Figure 17 Administering Intravenous Injection is provided below.

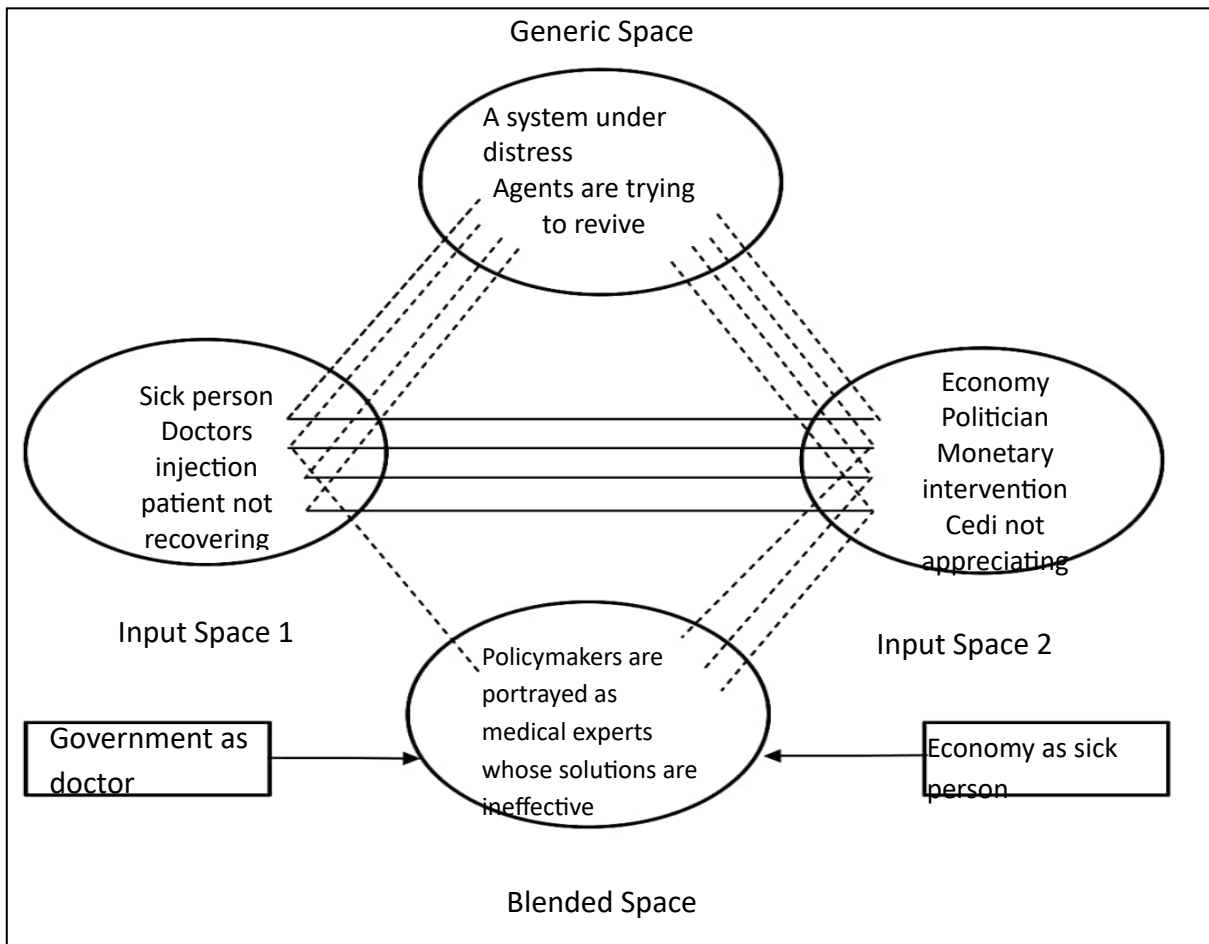


Diagram 15 Visual representation of the sick economy

The above cartoon employs the single scope blend where two domains are used, thus, the hospital domain and the economic frame. The explanations for the four mental spaces (Input

Space 1 & 2, the Generic Space, and the Blended Space) are provided in the diagram above. By the use of personification as a form of metaphor, the cartoonist depicts the state of the Ghanaian economy. A visual representation of the national currency of Ghana, known as the cedi, has been superimposed onto the upper portion of the patient through the utilisation of metonymy as a rhetorical device. The personification of the economy as a sick individual is evident in the image, with the figure lying on a hospital bed. This depiction is not surprising, as human beings are susceptible to disease. In light of the prevailing economic challenges, the resolution of the present circumstances is predicated on the provision of expert services provided by the medical practitioners (namely, Ghana's Vice President and the Governor of the Bank of Ghana).

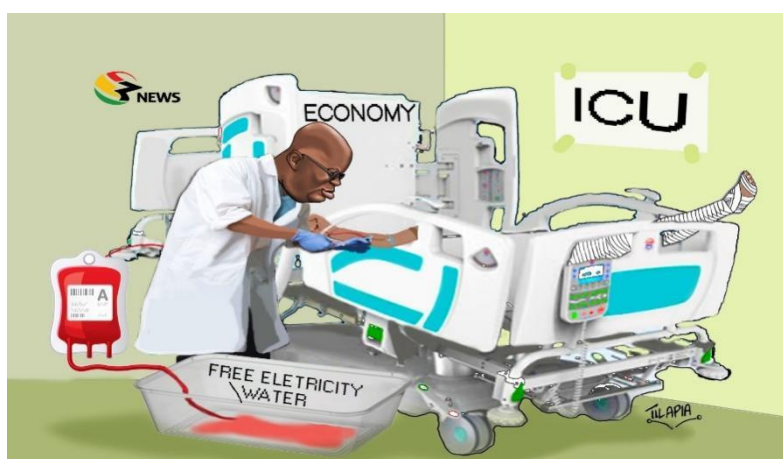
The cartoonist conceptualises two fictional doctoral characters as central elements in his depiction. The reminder about the importance of size in multimodal metaphor analysis highlights the significance of this issue. The doctors maintain their high status, which reflects their position of authority during the patient treatment (Ghanaian economy). The patient's malnourished state indicates Ghana's poor economic performance. The pressing nature of this matter necessitates the urgent involvement of health professionals specialised as financial counsellors. The medical appearance of their attire is symbolic of their position. Dr Mahamudu Bawumia fulfils dual roles, in that he is both Vice President and leader of the government's economic management team. Similarly, Dr Ernest Addison serves as Governor of the Bank of Ghana, overseeing banking and credit system operations. His role is analogous to that of medical practitioners depicted in the conceptual model, who care for patients, representing Ghana's economy. The analysis of the cartoon under consideration suggests that the doctors are employing their comprehensive medical expertise to facilitate the patient's recovery (economy). To resuscitate the patient, the medical professionals administer an injection of unknown composition into the patient. Medical studies have demonstrated that intranasal drug administration achieves higher levels of effectiveness than oral medication delivery methods. The syringe needle has "higher denomination injection" written as a verbal indicator. The conceptual doctors are convinced of the efficacy of this intervention in healing the patient's illness.

The verbal elements in cartoons are paramount, as they augment the primary message that the cartoonist seeks to convey. The speech balloon attributed to the participants reads 'He's still not rising up?' The doctors conveyed their astonishment regarding the patient's unimproved

state through an emotional speech bubble following the administration of the medication (injection). The doctors' initial expectations regarding the medication were high, so the subsequent reaction was dismay and astonishment. This rhetorical inquiry underscores the prevailing sentiment, drawing attention to the underlying issues and potentially stimulating further discourse or reflection. In this instance, the cartoonist employs a rhetorical device strategically to underscore the doctors' frustration, thereby capturing the readers' and viewers' attention. It can be concluded that despite efforts to revive the sick person based on their knowledge, their medication is ineffective, making the exercise futile.

Figure 18 Economy under ICU

<https://www.facebook.com/TilapiaCartoons/photos/pb.100063686824366.-2207520000/312969310059326/?type=3>



28 July 2020

The data in **Error! Reference source not found.** utilises another scene from the health domain to provide commentary on the state of the Ghanaian economy, which is currently in crisis. The utilisation of well-known concrete elements facilitates enhanced comprehension among readers and viewers regarding the critical condition of the Ghanaian economy. The hospital setting, a globally pervasive phenomenon, is a pivotal medium for enhancing the audience's comprehension. Given this, the availability of these visual and verbal elements instantiates the conceptual metaphor as TREATING THE ECONOMY OF GHANA IS TREATING A SICK PERSON.

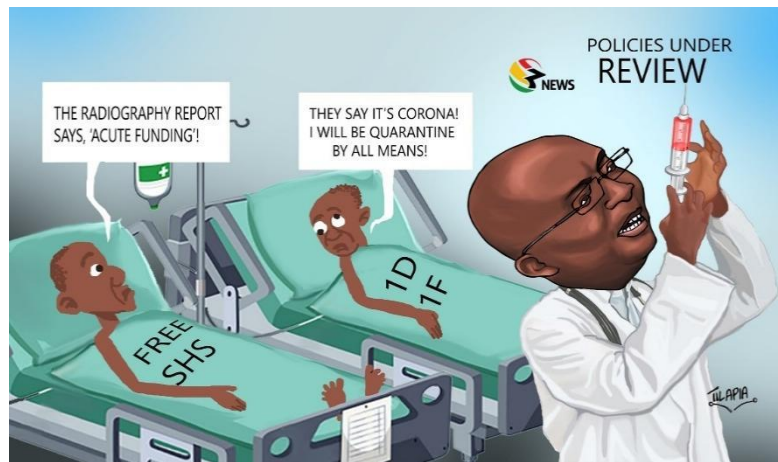
For a visual representation using the conceptual blending theory model, refer to the diagram above. The cartoonist employs a metaphorical representation of the Ghanaian economy, conceptualising it as a human being in a state of infirmity and hospitalisation. The metaphorical hospital bed, labelled “Economy”, symbolises the economy’s precarious and critical condition. The utilisation of the ICU (Intensive Care Unit) tag further highlights the gravity of the situation, suggesting that the economy is not merely struggling but is in a state of emergency, necessitating prompt and decisive intervention to avert a potential collapse. The cartoonist has chosen to depict the President of Ghana, Nana Addo Dankwa, as a physician treating the ailing economy, thereby highlighting the physical resemblance between the two figures and emphasising the doctor’s diligent efforts to revitalise the economy. This cartoon conveys a sense of optimism, highlighting the significance of the president’s task in the economy’s recovery. The cartoonist employs the metaphor of presidential leadership to imply that the president possesses the sole effective remedy for Ghana’s ailing economy.

This manifestation is characterised by seriousness and a formal demeanour on the doctor's part. In this allegory, the physician, President Nana Addo Dankwa, effectively treats the patient, the Ghanaian economy, by administering blood transfusions to address its critical deficiency in essential elements. Doctors take this step to maintain a patient's life. Blood transfusion constitutes a pivotal medical intervention, as healthcare providers utilise it to preserve life in emergencies. In this context, the cartoonist’s use of blood transfusion suggests the economy’s critical nature. The conceptualised doctor (President Nana Addo Dankwa) is seen working assiduously to preserve the patient’s life, but the given blood is redirected into a container labelled ‘free electricity/water’.

To mitigate the socio-economic impact of the lockdown, instigated by the viral outbreak, the President (a medical practitioner) made complimentary power and water provisions available to the entire nation for three months. The cartoonist employs a metaphorical approach to illustrate the adverse effects that supportive measures intended for the general population can have on the individual patient’s health, with the metaphorical blood transfusion into the ‘free electricity/water’ container serving as a visual representation of this phenomenon. The data suggest that the ICU bed shows signs of fatigue and instability, with mechanical issues indicating a fragile economic structure. This indicates that the economy’s foundation is deteriorating and that temporary measures may not be sufficient to restore stability.

Figure 19 Government Policies under Review

<https://www.facebook.com/TilapiaCartoons/photos/pb.100063686824366.2207520000/730405014982418/?type=3>



22 March 2022

The cartoonist adopts a different hospital ward to communicate his message, a metaphorical critique and review of government policies and programmes. This evokes the conceptual metaphor **GOVERNMENT POLICIES ARE PATIENTS IN CRITICAL CONDITIONS**. For a diagram depicting the conceptual blending theory model of the data, refer to diagram 19.

The political cartoonist has chosen to utilise a cartoon to illustrate his argument, depicting government policies as human beings on hospital beds, with the patients labelled "Free SHS" and "1D1F". The patients' physical fragility indicates the critical condition from which they are suffering. The New Patriotic Party (NPP) government, prior to the 2020 general election, had made many promises, two of which were of particular interest to many Ghanaians. These were the Free Senior High School and One District, One Factory policies. The former government committed to providing secondary education free of charge to all Ghanaians within the school-going age, and to establishing a factory in every district of the country. The existence of patients within a medical facility suggests that the aforementioned policies are encountering significant challenges or are in a state of extreme vulnerability. These difficulties could be

attributed to financial constraints or inadequate execution. Considering the aforementioned points, the cartoonist conceptualises the then vice president, Dr Bawumia, as a medical practitioner. This attribute is derived from the subject's attire and the utilisation of a syringe, which can be interpreted as a representation of his capacity to treat patients.

The concept of the vice president as a medical practitioner can be interpreted as a result of his role in government and as a member of the lead economic management team responsible for supervising all government policies. The data's title, "Policies under review", suggests that the government is reevaluating its commitments, possibly due to economic constraints. The conceptualised patient tagged "Free SHS" comes with a bubble speech that reads, "The radiography report states acute funding", which signifies that the fundamental issue confronting him is a severe lack of financial resources. The other patient, labelled 1D1F, also comes with a bubble speech that reads "they say it is corona! I will be quarantined by all means!" This suggests the possibility that the government is using external factors, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, as a pretext for its policy failures rather than addressing the fundamental issue of financial instability.

4.2.2.1 Conclusion on the Health theme

The application of health and medical tropes by Ghanaian cartoonists is an effective communicative tactic wherein the socio-political reality is diagnosed, criticised and re-imagined. Cartoonists rebrand the elitist political negotiations into the visual rhetorical register of disease, infection and treatment/surgery by conceiving governance failures as illness, corruption as infection and policy interventions as cure, immediately available to the masses. Medical imagery provides an interpretive frame that places the state as a living body, one that is vulnerable to sickness, needs attention and responsibility to be upheld by those charged with its health.

4.2.3 Theme of Sports and Games

In this section of the analysis, the use of sporting and gaming metaphors to convey views on governance, leadership, public policy, and socio-economic performance is examined. The cartoonist succeeds in conveying the complexities of the political circumstances to the audience by applying the metaphorical paradigm of sports, which is characterised by a competitive, rule-bound, and performance-oriented dynamic, to the political sphere. This strategy helps the

audience to know complex political situations from the perspective of the already existing conceptualisations, thus helping people to perceive political situations in a more subtle and accessible way.

4.2.3.1 Boxing Scenario

Figure 20 Presidential Boxing Match

<https://dailyguidenetwork.com/2016-memories-for-2020-rematch>



23 May 2018

The cartoonist employs the visual metaphor of boxing to preempt the outcome of the 2020 elections in Ghana. The conceptual metaphor behind this cartoon can be cued both visually and verbally as **POLITICS IS A BOXING MATCH**, which can evoke another secondary metaphor as **WINNING AN ELECTION IS WINNING A BOXING MATCH**. This can be interpreted literally as **KNOCKING YOUR OPPONENT IS WINNING THE ELECTIONS**.

The visual representation of **Error! Reference source not found.** using the conceptual blending model is provided below.

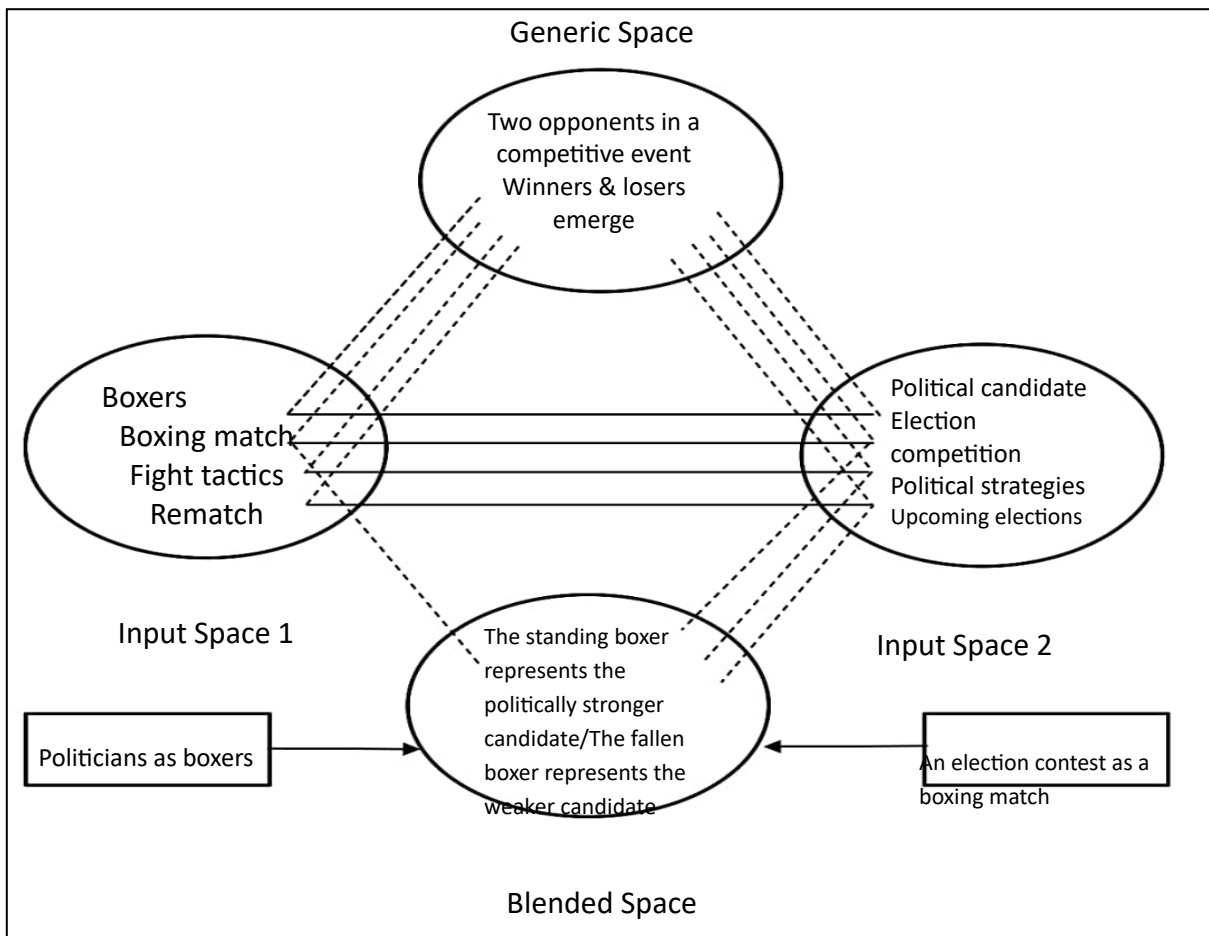


Diagram 16 Visual representation of the boxing match

The data above uses a single scope blend where two domains, the boxing frame and the election frame, are utilised to communicate the message of the election outcome. The various elements within the four mental spaces are articulated in the diagram above.

The interpretation of this blend depends on the ability to draw correct inferences from encyclopedic knowledge about the outcomes of boxing matches to politicians winning elections. Considering the aforementioned points, the cartoonist has conceptualised the two presidential candidates who contested the 2016 general elections as boxers in a boxing ring. The two candidates in question are John Dramani Mahama of the NDC, the incumbent, and Nana Addo Dankwa of the NPP, the main opposition party. This conceptualisation stems from the physical appearance of the two boxers who are engaged in a fierce contest. The data under review suggests that Nana Addo of the NPP prevailed over his opponent (John Mahama),

resulting in a victory for the opposition party. The outcome of the boxing match is analogous to the result of the 2016 general election. This can be deduced from Nana Addo's posture.

The posture of the two boxers can be interpreted as a primary metaphor based on our physical orientation, with HAPPINESS/JOY being POSITIONED UP AND SADNESS being POSITIONED DOWN. This can also be interpreted as WINNER IS UP AND LOSER IS DOWN. A salient feature that merits attention is the utilisation of symbols by the cartoonist. A close examination of the data reveals that each of the two boxers is adorned with symbols on their shorts. Specifically, Nana Addo is emblazoned with an elephant embossed on his shorts, while John Mahama has an umbrella symbolised. The employment of these symbols can be interpreted as metonymic, with the elephant representing the NPP and the umbrella symbolising the NDC. Thus, SYMBOLS FOR INSTITUTIONS THEY REPRESENT. In this context, these symbols (the elephant & umbrella) represent the two political parties, as represented by the two boxers.

Figure 21 Dome Kwabenya Parliamentary Bout

<https://www.facebook.com/TilapiaCartoons/photos/pb.100063686824366.2207520000/287773075912283/?type=3>



22 June 2020

The data presented herein details the 2019 constituency primaries of the New Patriotic Party, focusing on the electoral process that transpired in the Dome Kwabenya Constituency of the Greater Accra Region. Dome Kwabenya is recognised as one of the most populated constituencies in the Greater Accra Region and the nation. It is widely regarded as a stronghold

of the New Patriotic Party. The conceptual metaphor behind this cartoon can be construed as WINNING CONSTITUENCY PRIMARIES IS WINNING A BOXING MATCH. This can be represented literally as KNOCKING YOUR OPPONENT IS WINNING THE ELECTIONS. For the visual representation through the conceptual blending network, see Diagram 16 Visual representation of the boxing match.

In this conceptual integration network of a single scope, Input Space 1 comprises Boxer 1 and 2, a boxing match, a boxing ring, and preparation and punches. In contrast, Input Space 2 encompasses Hon. Adwoa Safoa, Mr Mike Oquaye Jnr, Dome Kwabenya, and campaign strategies. Thereafter, a systematic relationship exists between components in both spaces. The commonality between the two input spaces is encapsulated in the competition between opponents and the winning mentality, with the blend inheriting the frame structure from input space two and selective projections from input space one. This forms a new emergent structure, whereby Adwoa Safoa's victory in a boxing match is analogous to her success in the Dome Kwabenya Constituency primaries. Adhering to the fundamental principles of conceptual metaphor theory, the cartoonist employs a boxing match as a metaphor for the election results. By using a well-known and familiar event to represent an unknown and unfamiliar one, the artist employs the technique of a technical knockout as a metaphor for the victory of the incumbent candidate, Sarah Adwoa Safo, over her opponent, Mike Oquaye Junior. This is because a technical knockdown is the only way to make a boxer fall in boxing. The cartoonist's depiction reveals two metaphors based on spatial orientation: HAPPY IS UP, and SAD IS DOWN. This also leads to another primary metaphor: WINNER IS UP, and LOSER IS DOWN. The posture adopted by Mike Oquaye Jnr indicates that he has been unsuccessful in his electoral bid against the incumbent Member of Parliament, Honourable Adwoa Safo.

A notable element warranting discussion within the context of this data pertains to the depiction of two male figures. The individual positioned within the confines of the boxing ring is identified as Apostle Kwadwo Safo, the progenitor of Adwoa Safo. Apostle Kwadwo Safo is recognised for his engineering prowess and philanthropic endeavours. The second figure, positioned outside the ring, is the former Speaker of Ghana's Parliament from 2017 to 2021, Honourable Aaron Mike Oquaye, who is the father of the unsuccessful candidate, Mike Oquaye Jnr. The cartoonist further illustrates his message regarding the fathers' positions of the two

parliamentary candidates. The illustration centres on the metaphor of physical closeness as intimacy, with the winner's father seen in the ring and the loser's father outside it.

4.2.3.2 Wrestling Scenario

Figure 22 Parliamentary Intense Debate

https://x.com/Tilapia_gh/status/1485914331367813120/photo/1



25 January 2022

The cartoon in **Error! Reference source not found.** is set in the Ghana Parliament House. To facilitate comprehension amongst the readership, the cartoonist employs a visual narrative technique, illustrating a confrontation between two factions within parliament: the majority and the minority. The artist conveys his message using the wrestling metaphor, drawing upon the recognisable domain of sporting competition. In light of this, the conceptual metaphor can be formulated verbally and visually as **POLITICAL DEBATE IS A PHYSICAL FIGHT (WRESTLING MATCH)**.

The visual representation of Figure 22 Parliamentary Intense Debate via conceptual blending is shown in Diagram 17 Visual representation of parliamentary debate

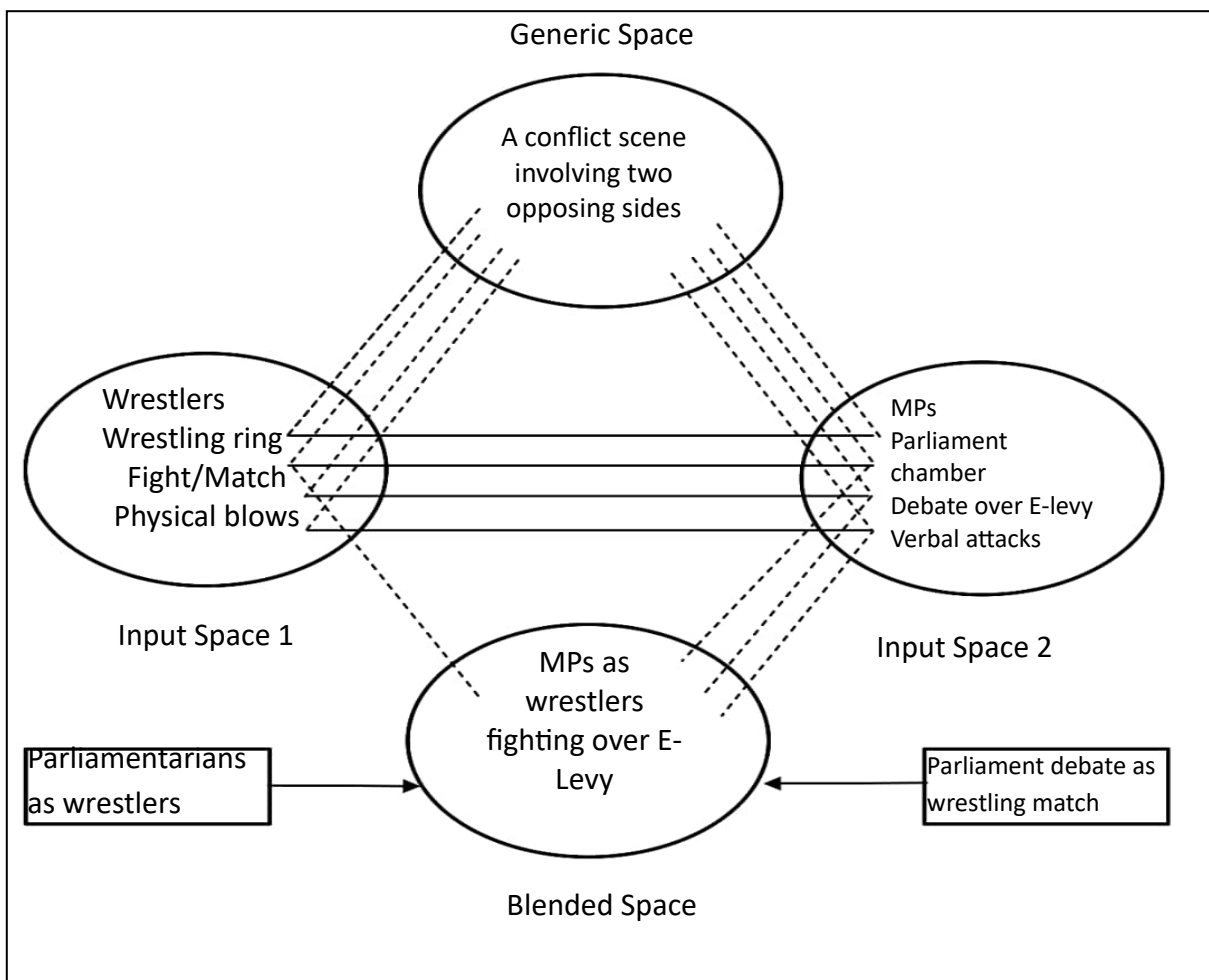


Diagram 17 Visual representation of parliamentary debate

In November 2021, the Finance Minister delivered the 2022 budget in Parliament, which included the announcement of a 1.5% electronic charge on mobile money transactions. This decision met significant opposition from the Ghanaian populace, particularly members of parliament affiliated with the National Democratic Congress (NDC) political party. A physical altercation between the two sides in parliament served as a symbolic representation of the peak in the contestations surrounding the bill within the legislative body. The majority faction within parliament has expressed its unyielding support for the bill. At the same time, the minority has adopted an oppositional stance, employing various means to voice their dissent, including issuing statements, holding press conferences, and staging walkouts. The data's caption, "E-levy return fight", accentuates the identified conceptual metaphor that the e-levy is wrestling. In transmitting a new bill to parliament, the majority and minority caucuses discuss the subject. The cartoonist employs a metonymic technique by depicting the Majority Leader, Honourable

Kyei Mensah Bonsu, and the minority leader, Honourable Haruna Iddrisu, as wrestlers. The artist's choice to depict the leaders as wrestlers is metonymic, given that the majority leader represents the New Patriotic Party (NPP), while the minority leader represents the New Democratic Congress (NDC) in the legislature. This invokes PART-FOR-WHOLE METONYMY, each leader representing their respective parties in the parliamentary house.

Aside from the two prominent leaders, another figure is depicted behind the minority leader, resembling Hon. Muntaka Mohammed, a Deputy Minority Leader. This figure probably aims to support his leader, as is customary in such circumstances. Employing colour as a semiotic device is pivotal in deciphering visual discourse. In this instance, the cartoonist deliberately utilised specific colours to represent the majority leader (NPP): blue, red and white. In contrast, the captain's hand band of the minority leader incorporates the colours that constitute the NDC flag: green, black, white, and red. The cartoonist's message to his readership is conveyed through the depiction of the heated debate on the parliamentary floor when the bill was presented, a debate that nearly escalated into a contentious tax dispute between the two factions. Through this visual medium, the reader is presented with a clear representation of the message, highlighting the opposition of the minority in parliament to the E-Levy. In conclusion, this metaphor is employed to depict political disagreement as a violent and performative contest rather than a rational discussion, wherein each side endeavours to defeat or humiliate the other.

4.2.3.3 Race Scenario

Figure 23 Presidential Race

https://x.com/Tilapia_gh/status/1863547249604575738/photo/1



The data in Figure 23 Presidential Race was published before Ghana’s December 2024 general election, highlighting the use of race to communicate the election process. The visual and verbal elements contained within the data are indicative of the primary umbrella metaphor, “POLITICS IS A RACE.” In this context, the conceptual metaphor can be formulated as “PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION IS A COMPETITIVE RACE.”

The visual representation using the conceptual blending model is provided below.

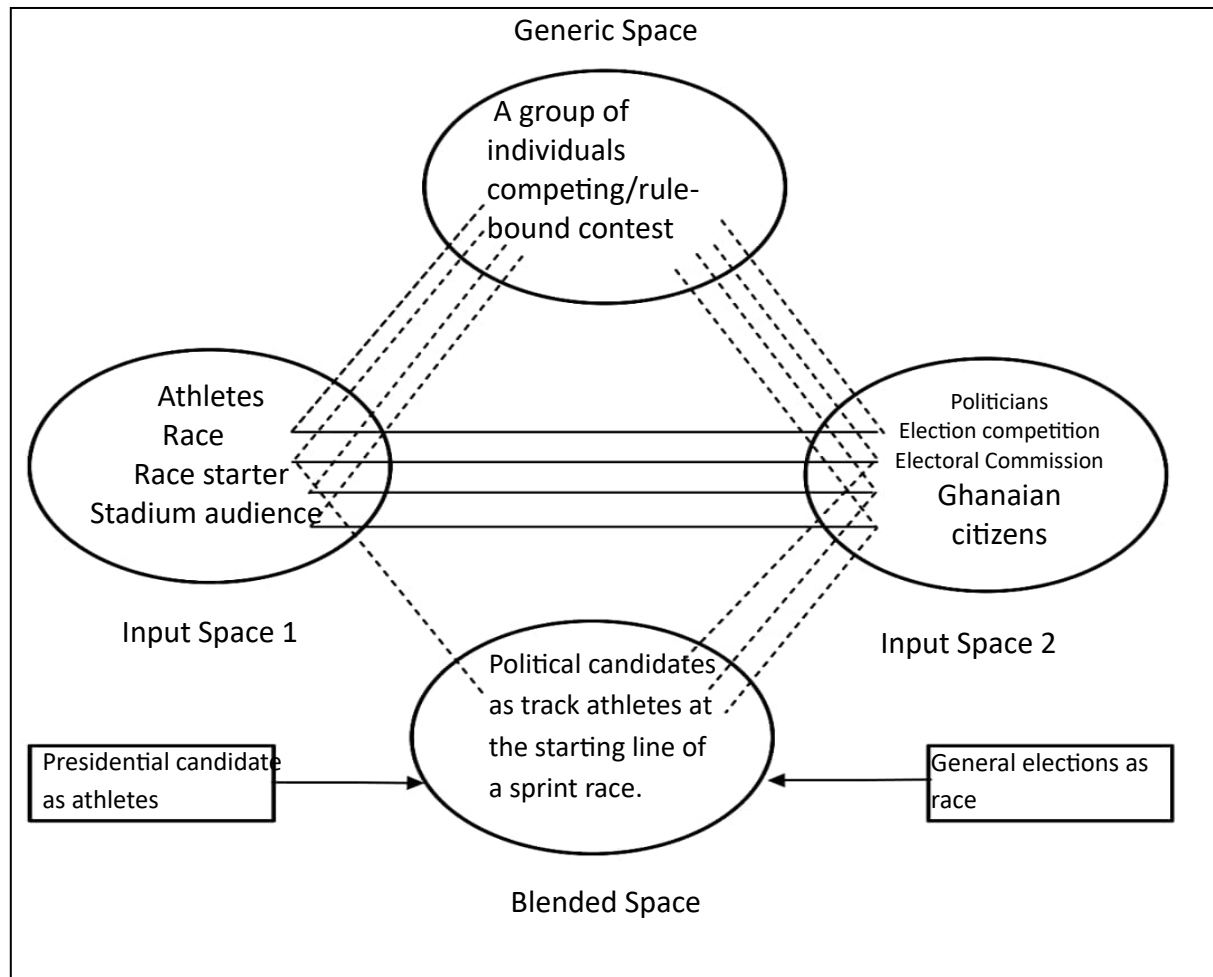


Diagram 18 Blending network depicting the presidential race

The data utilises a single scope type of blend to convey its message, employing two different frames. These frames are the race domain and the election domain, where the race frame

dominates to enhance understanding of the intended message. The four mental spaces and their explanations are provided in the diagram above.

The data's caption, "Election 2024, Who wins the Race", sets the tone for the ensuing discussion. The cartoonist employs the conceptual framework of race to portray the 2024 general elections as a sporting event, with the presidential candidates as the athletes. These include Dr. Bawumia of the New Patriotic Party (NPP), Mr. John Mahama of the National Democratic Congress (NDC), Nana Kwame Bediako of the New Force, Mr. Alan Kwadwo Kyerematen of the Movement for Change, and Mr. Christian Kwabena Andrews of the Ghana Union Movement (GUM). The cartoonist's depiction of the two athletes representing the major political parties in Ghana, with Dr Bawumia of the New Patriotic Party (NPP) as the first person on the list and Mr Mahama of the National Democratic Congress (NDC) as the second person on the list, employs metaphorical language to underline the notion that physical size is indicative of political influence. The phrase, "BIG IS SIGNIFICANT," is a metaphorical device that conveys that a larger political stature holds greater influence. In this instance, the cartoonist has elected to depict the two characters in their respective colours of allegiance. Interestingly, Dr Bawumia is adorned in red, blue, and white, representing the NPP, while Mr Mahama is decorated in green, black, white, and red, representing the NDC.

The cartoonist conceptualises the Electoral Commission as the institution responsible for free and fair elections. The cartoonist further conceptualises the chairperson of the Electoral Commission, Mrs Jane Mensa, as the referee/race starter who is constitutionally mandated to conduct a free and successful race. The cartoon's visual narrative is initiated with the image of the chairperson, Mrs Jane Mensa, poised and ready to commence the race; her raised starting pistol symbolises her commitment to ensuring a fair and equitable electoral process. A bubble speech attributed to her reads, "Ready, set..." This speech confirms the visual depiction of her readiness to start the race (general election).

The crowd, or the spectators in the background of the image, can be interpreted as a metonymy for all the Ghanaian citizens, specifically the electorate. This depiction evokes another conceptual framework known as metonymy, particularly PART-FOR-WHOLE metonymy. The spectators' chant reads, "Free and fair ooo, no libilibi." This speech, particularly "no libilibi", is a Ghanaian local term which resonates with public concerns regarding electoral

integrity and fairness. This expression is emblematic of the public's clarion call regarding electoral transparency, honesty, and fairness, and it echoes profoundly on a cultural level.

Figure 24 NPP Presidential Race

<https://dailyguidenetwork.com/kukrudu-23-800m-race/>



1 August 2023

The cartoonist employs a different sporting scenario to communicate his message about the NPP's flagbearership contest. The conceptual metaphor behind Figure 24 NPP Presidential Race can be formulated as **POLITICAL COMPETITION IS A RACE**. Another metaphor that emerged from this data is **WINNING LEADERSHIP IS FINISHING FIRST**. The visual representation is provided below using the conceptual blending network model.

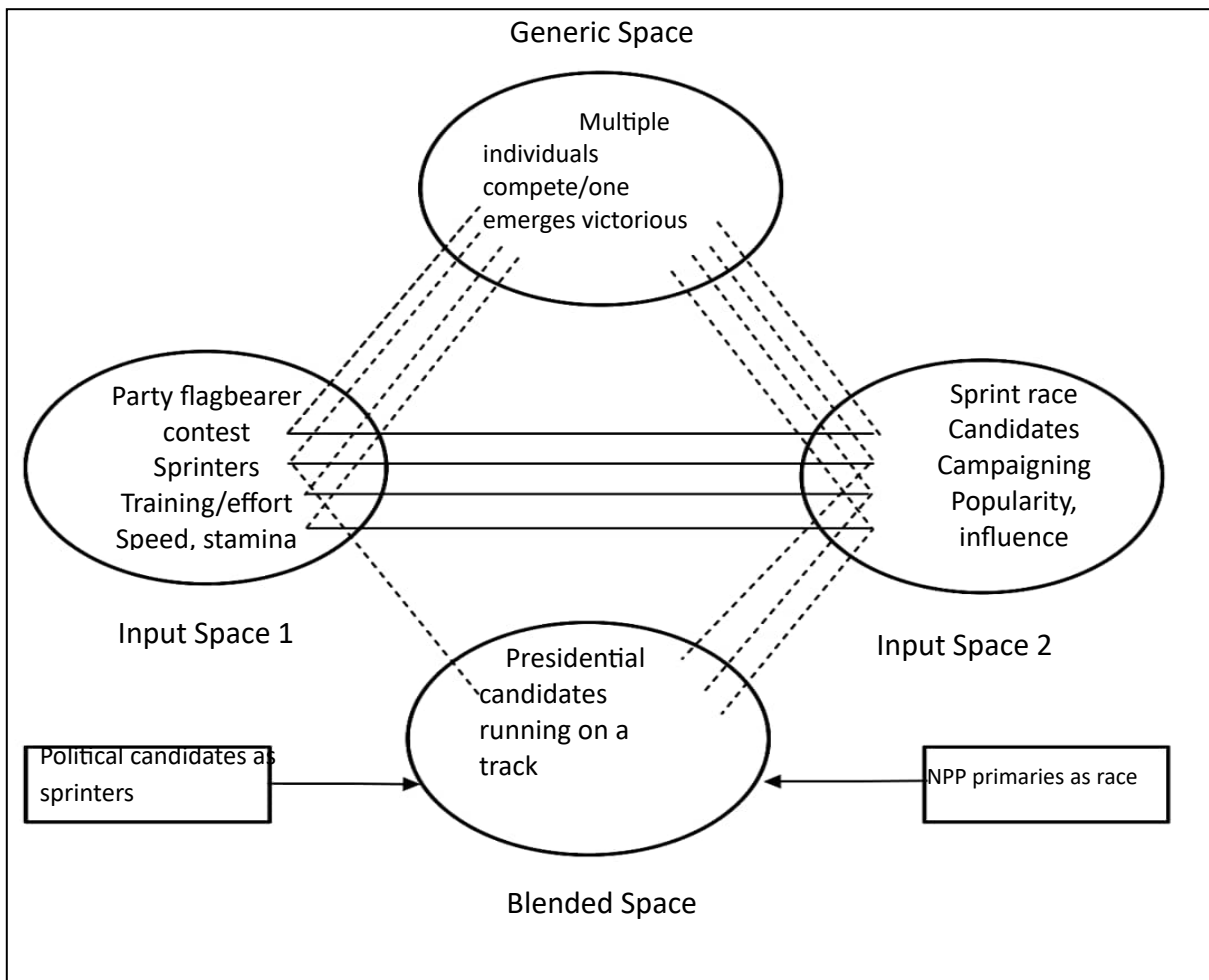


Diagram 19 NPP Presidential RaceError! Reference source not found.

The above data utilises the single-scope type of blend to convey its message. Two distinct frames are used, thus, race and election. With this, the race becomes the dominant one that most people are familiar with. The contest of the 800-meter race produces a new outcome structure that determines the winner of the presidential election. The comprehension of this blended metaphor depends on accurately deriving implications between races and the outcomes of political elections from a comprehensive body of knowledge. The cartoonist has chosen to conceptualise the aspirants in the NPP presidential primaries based on their appearance on the ballot papers.

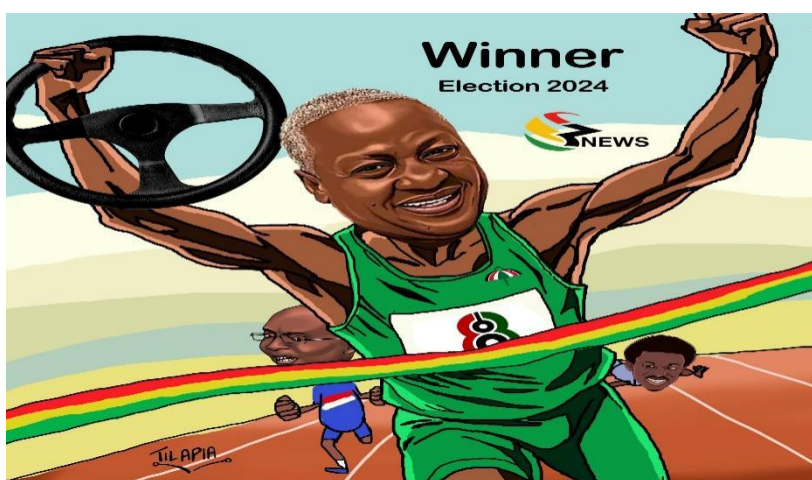
The cartoonist depicts the following candidates as athletes: Hon. Ken Agyapong, Dr Mahamudu Bawumia, Hon. Francis Addai Nimo, and Dr Afriyie Akoto. It is noteworthy that the cartoon incorporates numerical elements into its depiction. Specifically, three characters are

depicted as wearing shirts bearing numerical inscriptions. The individual identified as Hon. Ken Agyapong is attired in a shirt bearing numeral 1, while the figure referred to as Dr. Mahamud Bawumia is adorned with a shirt bearing the numeral 10. The third figure, Hon. Francis Addai Nimo, is attired in a shirt bearing the numeral 3. Notably, the cartoonist's choice of numerical inscriptions is not merely a stylistic element. However, it is a deliberate reference to the numerical values assigned to these individuals during the balloting process for the special delegates conference. This numerical allocation is reflected in the attire worn by the characters, emphasising the thematic significance of the numerical elements in the cartoon.

The linguistic aspect of the data under review supplements the message that the cartoonist seeks to convey, and it is noteworthy that the 800-metre race has been selected as the focal point of the cartoon, given its symbolic significance within the broader context. The candidates are all endeavouring to communicate to the electorate that, if elected, they can lead the party to overcome the eight-year jinx that has prevailed since the advent of the Fourth Republic. In this context, the cartoonist has deliberately chosen the 800-metre race to convey his message about breaking the '8', which has become the mantra of the NPP. This medium choice indicates the cartoonist's strategic approach to communicating a specific message to his audience.

Figure 25 Finishing First in a Race

https://x.com/Tilapia_gh/status/1866199356082155931/photo/1



9 December 2024

The conceptual metaphor behind Figure 25 *Finishing First in a Race* can be construed verbally and visually as *WINNING AN ELECTION IS FINISHING FIRST IN A RACE*. For the visual representation using the conceptual blending network, see Diagram 19 NPP Presidential Race

The conceptual integration network comprises a single scope, which encompasses the elements of athletes, race, preparation, and training in Input Space 1, as well as the 2024 presidential contestants, general elections, and campaign strategies to win in Input Space 2. The method of systematic mapping occurs between elements from both input spaces, and the two input spaces share a common ground through oppositional competition and a winning mentality, which develops from the frame structure of Input Space 2 alongside selected elements from Input Space 1. The emergent structure that results from this integration process is the notion that securing victory in the race is tantamount to securing the 2024 general presidential election. Understanding this blend metaphor depends on the precise inference of correlations between races and presidential election results from a large body of information. Given the identified event, the cartoonist uses the athletic metaphor to conceptualise the leading candidates in the general elections. Among them are Mr John Mahama of the National Democratic Congress (NDC), Dr Bawumia of the New Patriotic Party (NPP), and Nana Kwame Bediako, an independent candidate. The term ‘big’ is significant in this context, as how these individuals are depicted employs size as the primary metaphor. This illustrates the depiction of the ultimate victor, who is portrayed as surpassing his two rivals in stature.

As posited by Knowles and Moon (2004, p. 111), colour is identified as one of the fundamental elements worthy of consideration, emphasising the pivotal role of colour in facilitating effective communication of meaning to the viewer. Considering the aforementioned points, it may be observed that the cartoonist has employed the medium of colour in a manner that serves to augment the comprehensibility of the message conveyed. The eventual victor, Mr Mahama, is adorned in colours predominant within the flag of the National Democratic Congress (NDC), namely green and white. In contrast, Dr Bawumia is adorned in colours that are representative of the New Patriotic Party (NPP), primarily blue, white, and red, thereby underscoring the political allegiances of each figure. It is noteworthy that the cartoonist used the colours of the Ghanaian flag to embellish the crossing line, emphasising the country’s connection to the message. The winner’s clothing has several distinctive embossing details worth mentioning. First and foremost, the winner’s clothing prominently features the number

8, representing the NDC's election standing. It is also noteworthy to mention the presence of an engraved umbrella sign. This symbol invokes metonymy, thus SYMBOL FOR THE INSTITUTION OR GROUP IT REPRESENTS. The metonymic portrayal of the National Democratic Congress (NDC) in its flag and ceremonial attire symbolically embodies the party's ideological tenets. The figure of the final winner can be interpreted as a metaphor for leadership and power, depicted holding a steering wheel firmly and beaming with radiant happiness.

Figure 26 Utility Tariff Race

https://x.com/Tilapia_gh/status/1310806538731352064/photo/1



29 September 2020

The image in **Error! Reference source not found.** employs a horse race metaphor to illustrate the escalating cost of utility tariffs, with a particular focus on electricity and water. Because of this, the conceptual metaphor can be construed visually and verbally as RISING UTILITY BILLS ARE UNCONTROLLABLE RACEHORSES.

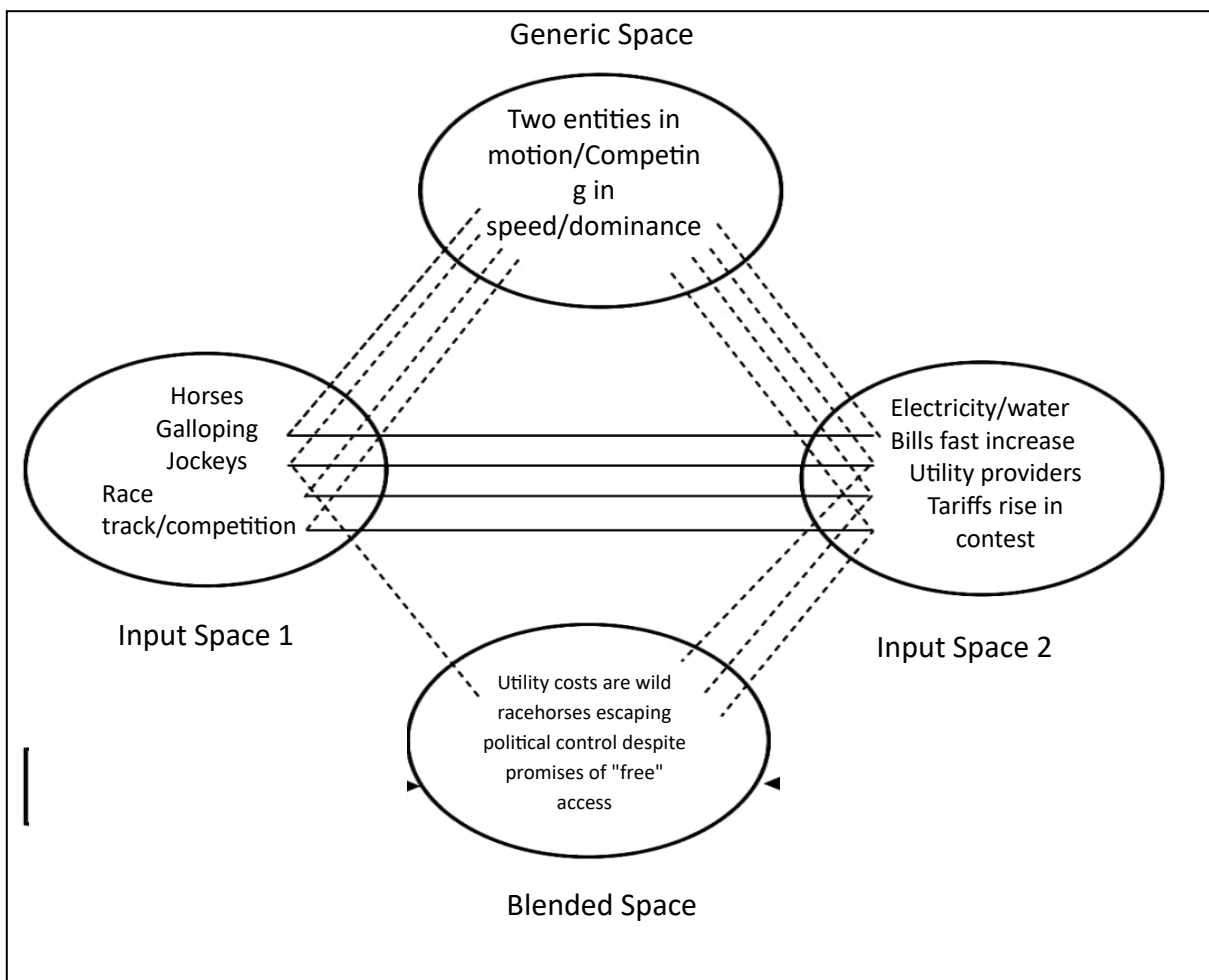


Diagram 20 Utility Tariff Race **Error! Reference source not found.**

In this single-scoped type of blend, the cartoonist employs a recognisable concept of a horse race in one frame, juxtaposed with the escalating tariffs in another. This conceptualisation assists viewers in understanding the escalation in utility costs. According to the data, the two horses, as indicated by the label, are emblematic of the two utilities, namely water and electricity, symbolising the rising rates in these industries. The race thus serves as a metaphor for price increases, with the galloping horses representing the sharp rise in utility bills.

A distinguishing feature of horses is their remarkable capability to accelerate at a rate which increases over time. This characteristic of the horse is compared to the progressive speed of the utility tariff's escalation. The cartoonist further conceptualises the then-president of Ghana. Nana Addo Dankwa, depicted in a suit, is portrayed as the race steward overseeing the event. The depiction of the president in that manner is appropriate, as he oversees and controls

tariff regulations. Another character portrayed in this image can be interpreted as a concerned citizen who suffers from the horse race (escalating utility tariffs). This representation is metonymic, serving as a PART-FOR-WHOLE, and thus a metonymic representation of all Ghanaians who endure the escalating effects of tariffs. This character is accompanied by bubble speech that reads, “Oga! You promised free water and electricity, but why are the bills running?” The term ‘Oga’ is a Nigerian pidgin term meaning boss, which refers to President Nana Addo Dankwa. This character’s query is expressed as a combination of shock and disappointment, reflecting the viewer's sentiments towards the president being addressed in a local term for someone in authority. It also evokes the broken promise of free basic services. The citizens’ frustration stems from the fact that during the height of the pandemic and the subsequent lockdown, President Nana Addo Dankwa provided Ghanaians with complimentary water and electricity for three months. This magnanimous gesture was accompanied by a speech delivered by the President, in which he sought to address the nation on the subject of his earlier promise of complimentary water and electricity for three months. The citizens’ discontent is further compounded by the perception that the services initially intended to be complimentary are now subject to financial obligations, resulting in escalating costs that continue to be a source of concern.

4.2.3.4 Hurdle/High Jump Scenario

Figure 27 Commodities Hurdle Race

<https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=971864378279781&set=pb.100063686824366.-2207520000&type=3>



The visual elements embedded in Figure 27 Commodities Hurdle Race employ the metaphor of a hurdle race to illustrate the challenges that individuals, presumably Ghanaian citizens, face in the context of escalating costs of essential goods. In light of this, the conceptual metaphor can be formulated as RISING PRICES OF ESSENTIAL GOODS ARE ESCALATING HURDLES IN A RELENTLESS RACE.

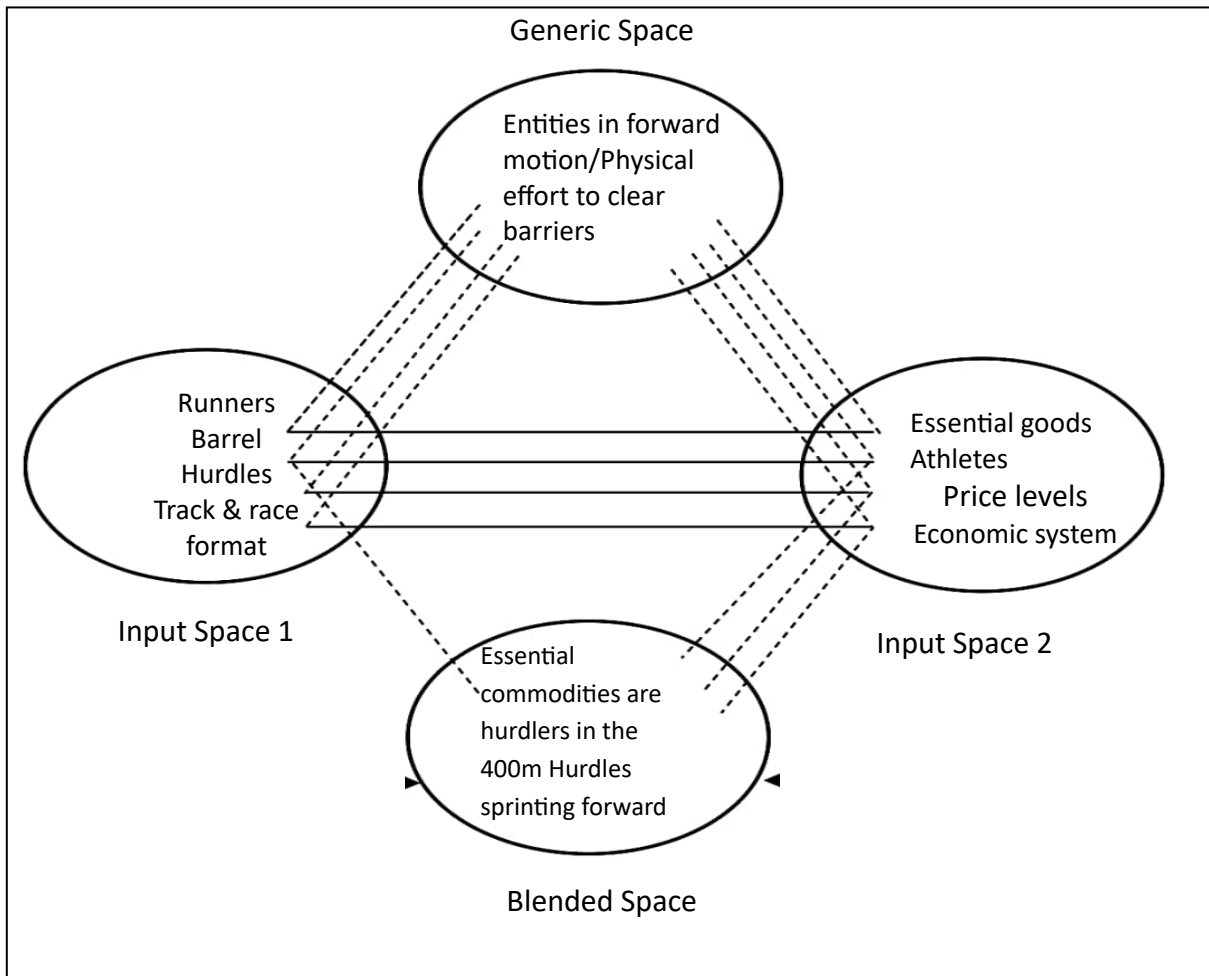


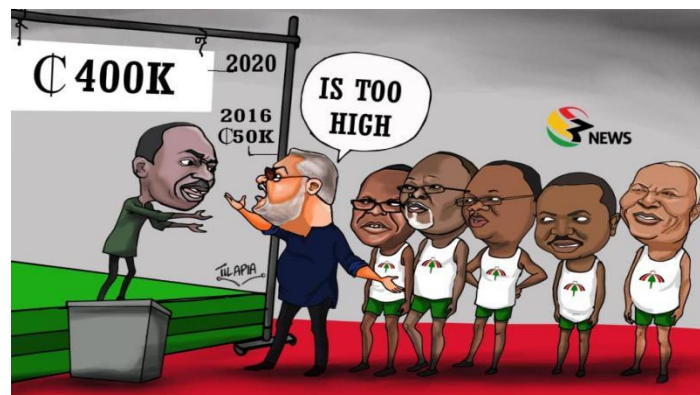
Diagram 21 Conceptual blending depicting commodities race

The cartoonist employs two frames within the single-scope blend to communicate his message. In the first frame, the familiar domain is represented by a hurdle race, while in the second frame, the target is conceptualised as the essential commodities. The cartoonist conceptualises the essential commodities as embarking on a race. The cartoonist's deployment of personification further accentuates this, effectively depicting these commodities. The verbal

inscriptions on the upper part of these conceptualised entities confirm the assertion of personification. These commodities include cement, fuel, oil, light, and rice. The hurdles, which symbolise the skyrocketing costs, are portrayed as obstacles that individuals must surmount to attain a comfortable standard of living in the country. The data indicate that the runners are in the mid-jump position, signifying their considerable challenge in overcoming the aforementioned economic burdens. The data's caption reads "Happy Republic Day", a statutory holiday celebrated annually on 1 July, marking the nation's transition to a republican form of government. The caption adopts a satirical tone, seemingly intended to critique the situation. The caption can be interpreted as an ironic statement, where freedom is replaced by financial bondage. The hashtag PriceApocalypse can be regarded as an Ironic celebration of a national holiday amid economic suffering.

Figure 28 NDC Presidential Fees Jump

https://x.com/Tilapia_gh/status/1070199109926170625/photo/1



5 December 2018

The cartoon in Figure 28 NDC Presidential Fees Jump can be interpreted as a representation of the National Democratic Congress flagbearership's filing fee adjustment. The cartoonist employs two distinct domains to convey his message. Thus, the high jump metaphor is used to convey the dualistic nature of the political party's financial obligations, juxtaposing sport with the realm of politics.

For a visual representation, refer to Diagram 21 Conceptual blending depicting commodities race.

Given the above data, the conceptual metaphor can be construed as AN INCREASE IN FILING FEES IS RAISING THE BAR OF A HIGH JUMP. The cartoonist has chosen to

conceptualise the contestants of the 2018 NDC's presidential race as athletes; the conceptualisation of the aspirants as NDC members is derived from the attire they wear. From left to right, the athletes depicted are Alban Bagbin, Ekwow Spio-Gabrah, Sylvester Mensah, Nurudeen Iddrisu, and Prof. Joshua Alabi. Prior to being permitted to stand for election, it is incumbent on these individuals to pay a fee of ₵400k, which is referred to as the 'filing fee'. An examination of the regulations reveals that, following the recalibration of the fee structure in 2016, the initial fee was set at ₵50,000.

A subsequent adjustment in 2020 saw the fee elevated to ₵400,000. This adjustment evokes the primary metaphor MORE IS UP. One of the characters attired in black is reminiscent of Jerry John Rawlings, the founder of the NDC and former President of Ghana. A bubble speech with the words accompanies his character, "Is too high?" This prompts consideration of the issue of the significant increase in filing fees. Another character attired in a green dress is Mr Asiedu Nketiah, the General Secretary of the National Democratic Congress (NDC), responsible for communicating the adjustment to the general public. He is positioned on a ballot box, which symbolises the electoral process and implies the image is about the election and issues surrounding it, including the exorbitant filing fees.

Another salient feature that merits discussion is the cartoonist's effective utilisation of colour. The artist has chosen to utilise the colours green, red, white, and black, which, when arranged in a specific sequence, correspond to the colours of the NDC party flag. The use of these colours can be interpreted as metonymic, as these colours represent the political party of the aspirants. The athlete's attire features the embossed NDC umbrella symbol, a detail that reinforces the message conveyed by the cartoonist about NDC presidential aspirants and the high cost of filing fees.

4.2.3.5 Soccer/Football Scenario

Figure 29 Injured players on the team

<https://www.facebook.com/TilapiaCartoons/photos/pb.100063686824366.-2207520000/825594588796793/?type=3>



22 August 2022

The cartoon in

Figure 29 Injured players on the team uses a football match (soccer) team metaphor to comment on political or leadership decisions. In light of this, the conceptual metaphor can be formulated as POLITICS IS A FOOTBALL TEAM, specifically GOVERNANCE IS TEAM MANAGEMENT IN FOOTBALL

For the visual representation of the above data, the conceptual blending network model is shown below, see Diagram 22 visual representation of the injured players.

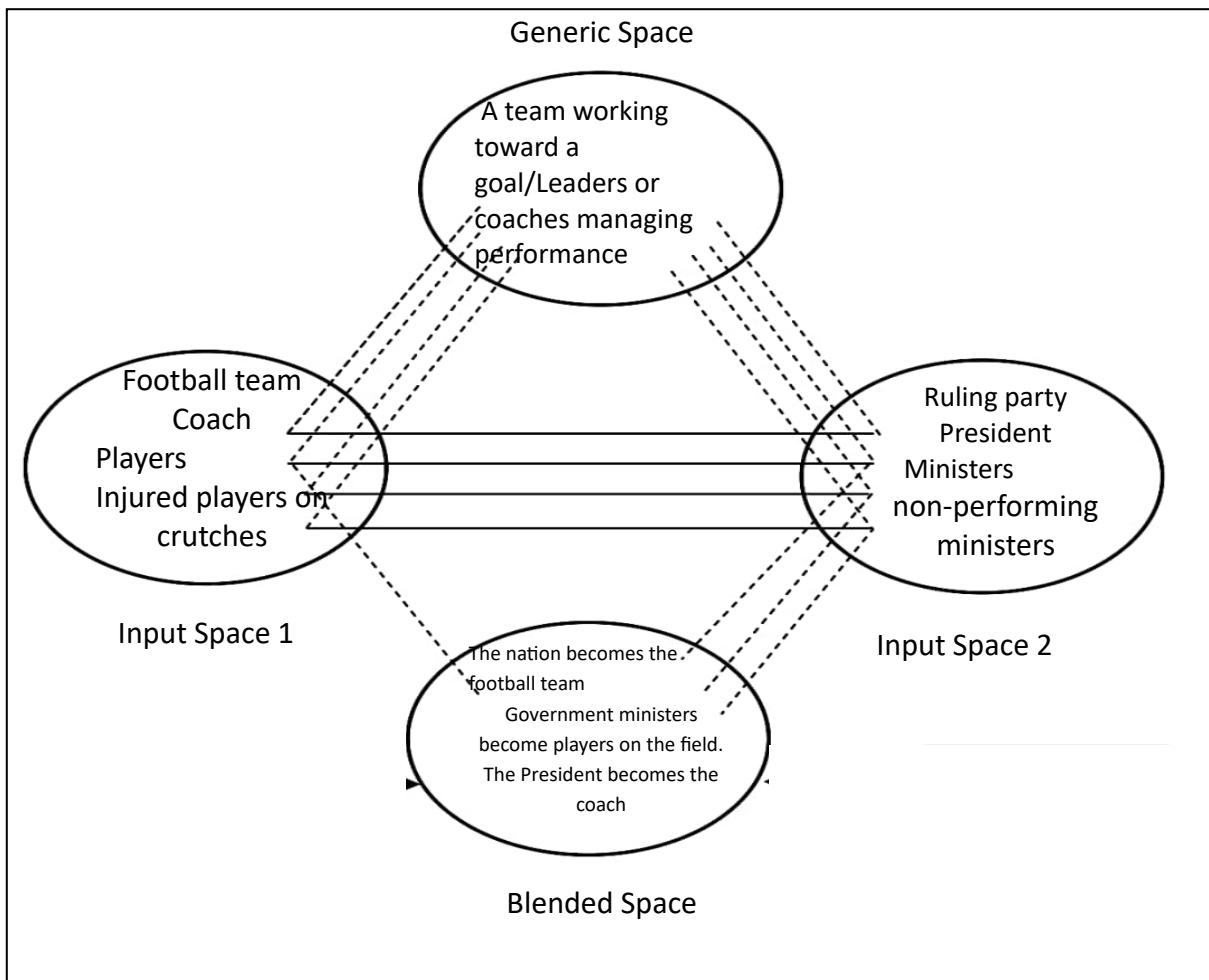


Diagram 22 visual representation of the injured players

The image employs a single scope of blend to convey its message, utilising two distinct domains: football and governance, as its targets. The diagram explanations for the four mental spaces are provided in the diagram above. To facilitate comprehension for the reader, it is essential to draw upon their existing knowledge and experience regarding the presence of injured players within the context of a football match.

In light of this, the artist has created a visual representation of two ministers whose performance has been unsatisfactory by depicting them as injured players. The injured players (underperforming ministers) are Hon. Ken Ofori-Atta, the Minister of Finance, and Hon. Amoako Atta, the Minister of Roads and Highways. This conceptualisation is informed by the pervasive discontent voiced by the Ghanaian populace regarding the President's administration of the ministry by these two ministers, which has led to an impassioned call for a change in personnel. The cartoonist's use of crutches and bandages around the legs helps to describe the

players as injured, with the crutches depicting inefficiency, weakness, or incapability in discharging one's duties. Furthering this analogy, the artist conceptualises the then-President of Ghana, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, as a football coach who possesses the technical expertise to manage the team (Ghana) and adjust when necessary.

The cartoonist depicts the president, who is constitutionally empowered to appoint and dismiss ministers based on their performance, as analogous to a soccer coach with the authority to substitute underperforming players. In one of his addresses to the nation, the President, through his "bubble speech", has informed Ghanaians that he has no strong reason to heed the call to substitute. This statement suggests that the president is unwilling to replace the injured players (ministers), despite the citizens' demands for change. The visual evidence suggests that the players (ministers) are not performing satisfactorily in their roles, yet the President remains steadfast in his decision to retain them in their positions.

The coach's speech suggests denial, defensiveness, or an unwillingness to heed the public outcry for change. To demonstrate the substandard performance of the ministers, the cartoonist employs a metaphorical comparison between injured and frail players, who are not physically fit for this purpose, and the ministers themselves. The following writing conveys the cartoon's message: "We have the men FC". This phrase is attributed to the coach (president) in a speech. The cartoonist's underlying message is that if the coach asserts he has the necessary players, why are the injured players still on the field without being substituted?

A salient feature of the data that merits discussion is the stadium or soccer pitch where the players perform. The stadium is conceptualised as the offices of the underperforming ministers, as it serves as their workplace. The significance of colours in visual studies remains a subject of ongoing research. The injured players and coach are attired in blue and white, colours that are among the dominant colours of the ruling New Patriotic Party (NPP) flag. The cartoonist has deliberately chosen to depict the injured players and coach in this manner, intending to convey a specific political message and thereby highlighting the affiliation of the characters with the ruling NPP party.

4.2.3.6 Conclusion on the cartoonists' use of Sports metaphors

Ghanaian political cartoonists (Tilapia, Akosua) always resort to the imagery of sport to render abstract socio-political and economic problems into bright and instantly recognisable criticisms,

such as racing (horse racing, 100m sprint, 400m hurdles), boxing, football, and even high jump/hurdles. This is not merely a decorative and chance decision; sport serves as one of the most potent and culturally appealing conceptual arenas in the Ghanaian satire due to the following reasons: universal familiarity and emotional charge, as it has lasting memories in the minds of viewers, critical advantages of the sports frame and inherent dramatic structure where there are always winners versus losers.

4.2.4 The Theme of Journey/Travel

This session of the study examines how political cartoonists in Ghana utilise the metaphor of journeys, based on regions of travel, transportation, and logistics, to portray the complex realities of socio-political and economic issues in visual representations using cartoons as a medium. In political cartoons, such metaphors, symbols, and representations are used for illustrative purposes only. In the domain of transportation, vehicles such as troksis, buses, taxis, boats, ships, aeroplanes, and trains denote complex conceptual blends. It usually involves MOVEMENT AND DIRECTION to a particular destination.

Figure 30 An Overburdened Bus

https://x.com/Tilapia_gh/status/1400681321291304970/photo/1



4 June 2021

The image in Figure 30 An Overburdened Bus employs an overloaded vehicle metaphor to portray the financial nuisance that the rising cost of living imposes on the ordinary Ghanaian citizen. In light of this, the conceptual metaphor behind it can be framed as the ECONOMIC

HARDSHIP IS AN OVERLOADED VEHICLE. The identified conceptual metaphor has been presented in the diagram below:

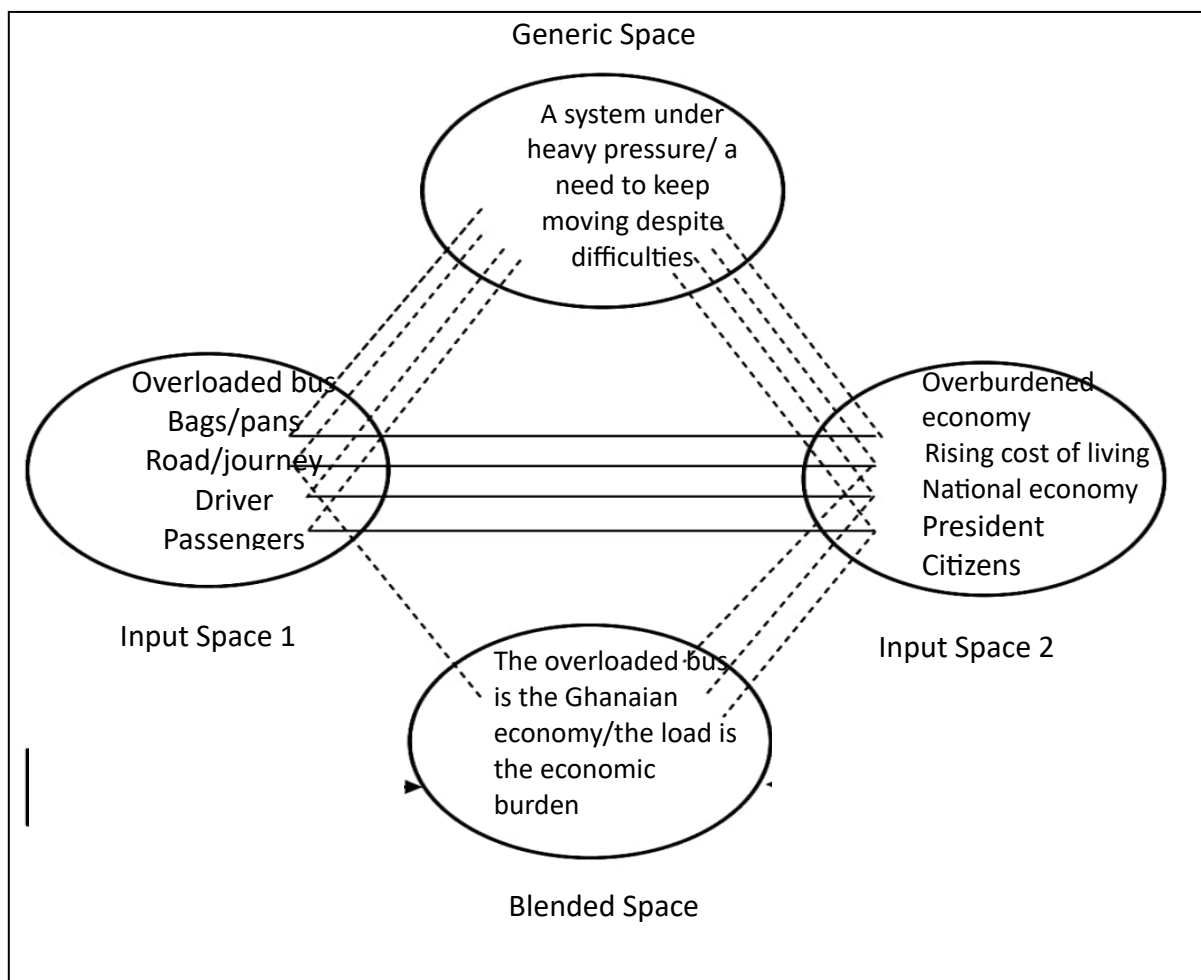


Diagram 23 Conceptual blending network depicting an overloaded vehicle **Error! Reference source not found.**

With the above cartoon, the cartoonist relies on a single-scope blend to convey his message, which employs two different domains. Thus, the bus scenario and the economic scenario. The explanations for the four mental spaces are provided in the diagram above. The bus, emblazoned with the inscription "We Move", serves as a metaphor for the average Ghanaian citizen trying to make ends meet in the face of prevailing economic pressures. The vehicle is portrayed as heavily overloaded with sacks of food, cooking oil, and kitchen utensils. These items collectively represent the bare essentials and daily living expenses of the average Ghanaian. From the data, it can be inferred that the vehicle's structural integrity is compromised, as indicated by the buckling tyres and the noticeable tilt of the frame. This visual distortion

metaphorically mirrors the growing financial pressure on the individual, suggesting that the cumulative cost of necessities has become an overwhelming burden.

The vehicle is deliberately decorated in the colours of the Ghanaian flag, red, yellow, and green, to underscore the national relevance of the cartoonist's message. The excessive load stacked atop the vehicle is labelled "high cost of living," foregrounding the central theme of widespread economic hardship. Additionally, the inscription indicating transport fare increases of up to 15% points to a parallel rise in transportation costs, further intensifying the financial pressures faced by ordinary citizens. The daily minimum wage of GHS 6 highlights the stark disparity between earnings and rising inflation, thereby exacerbating the economic challenges facing the population. Once again, the symbol of the overloaded vehicle serves as a metaphor for an economy burdened by escalating living expenses. These pressures have the potential to push individuals deeper into poverty and hardship.

Within the data under review, a metonymic effect is evident. The passengers in the vehicle, standing in for Ghana as a whole, function as a metonym, symbolising the broader citizenry. This reflects a typical metonymic pattern in cognitive linguistics, where 'a FEW STAND FOR MANY,' enabling the cartoonist to use a small, relatable group to represent the experiences of the entire population.

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https://x.com/Tilapia_gh/status/1075988490821734400/photo/1



21 December 2018

The image in Error! Reference **source not found**.utilises the metaphor of “migration as a deadly journey” to depict the harrowing experiences of migrants traversing the Mediterranean Sea in pursuit of more favourable prospects. Given the aforementioned points, the conceptual metaphor can be formulated as follows: “ILLEGAL MIGRATION IS A DANGEROUS SEA JOURNEY”. More specifically, another metaphor that can be identified is RISKS AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC OBSTACLES ARE DANGEROUS WAVES.

The visual representation using the conceptual blending model is provided below.

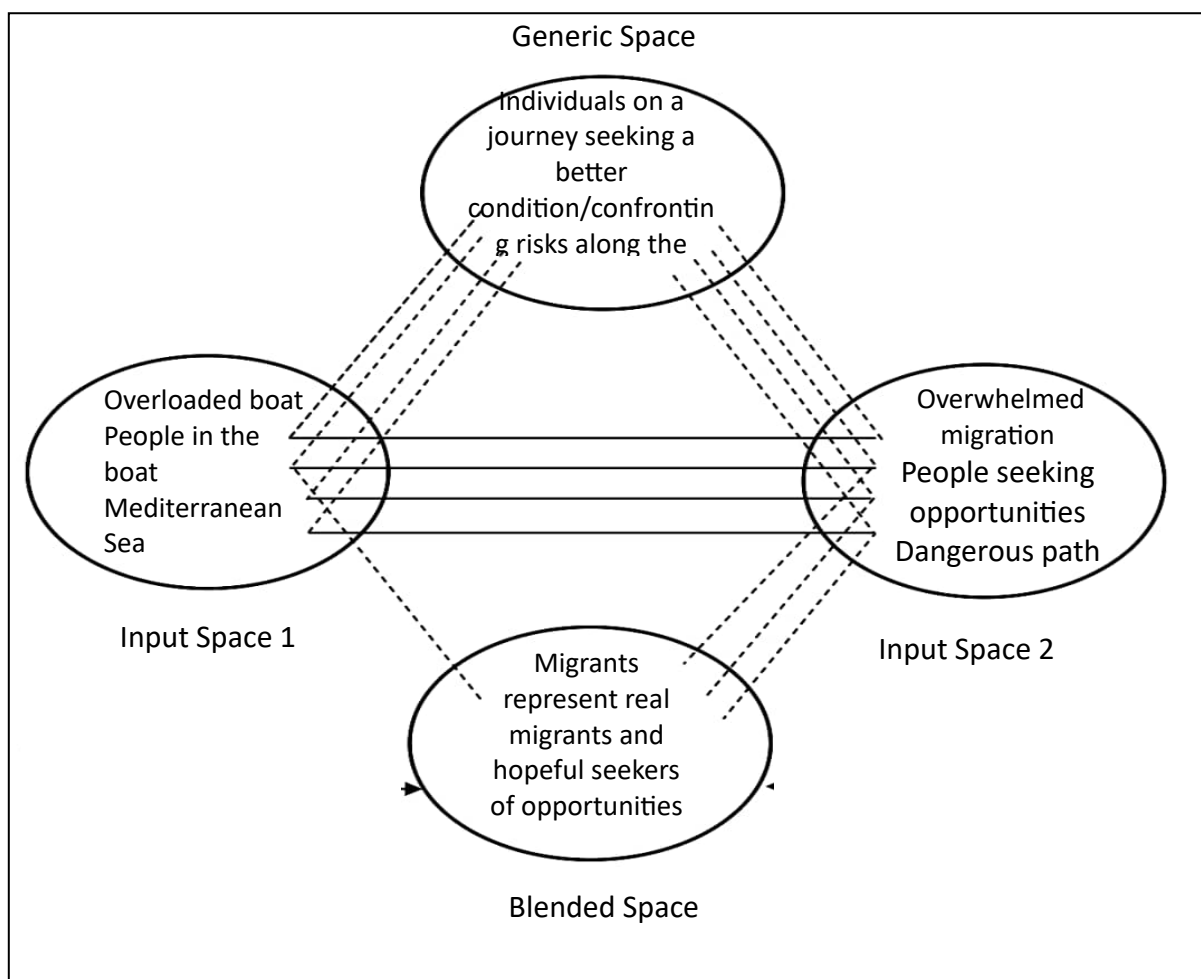


Diagram 24 Conceptual blending depicting a deadly voyage

The above discussion, which highlights the economic difficulties faced by Africans, especially in Ghana, sets the tone for this depiction. The cartoonist employs a single-scoped blend to convey his message. Thus, it is the Mediterranean Migrant Crisis and the journey to seek greener pastures. The diagram above provides a detailed explanation of the four mental spaces. The

cartoonist depicts a run-down, overcrowded boat, marked with sharpness by the word “MIGRANTS,” its structure creaking with desperate human beings. This cartoon is a representation of the dangerous journeys that many Africans have been forced to take due to poverty, bloody wars, or disappearing opportunities back home. The desperate disposition of the migrants, with their strained postures, wide eyes, and clenched jaws, expresses a cocktail of dread, uncertainty, and raw desperation, not only on their faces but also in the tilt of the boat against the abyss looming over their heads. The naked suffering of the migrants (written in shaky limbs and sunken eyes) combined with the inhuman cramming of the boat creates a nauseating scene of humanity, exposing the savage cost of their dangerous journey.

The cartoonist portrays a massive wave written with the name Mediterranean, which is used metaphorically to represent a whale with its jaws wide open, ready to swallow the migrants. This graphic arrangement serves as a foreshadowing of the utmost danger that migrants face in their journey, as it encompasses drowning, adverse weather conditions, and the inherent vulnerability of irregular migration routes. The implicit metaphor of the Mediterranean Sea creates an image of a twofold object: simultaneously, a source of new opportunities and a life-threatening danger. The migrants express their hopes for a better life and economic stability in Europe through their speech bubbles, and this is summed up in the phrase “Greener Pastures,” which is used to depict what the migrants expect from their future of prosperity, security, and social progression.

4.2.4.1 Conclusion on the cartoonists’ use of the Journey or Travel metaphor

The repetitive nature of the journey in Ghanaian political cartoons is a versatile multimodal tool that allows cartoonists to express multifaceted, multitasking, and multidimensional socio-political concerns. By placing the political actors in the situation of a well-known journey, like the passengers of an overrun bus, the travellers who are forcefully displaced or the leaders who are represented as drivers of an awkward path, cartoonists turn to the knowledge of their own culture to organise political processes as the movement over space and time. This figurative encoding enables viewers to envision the process of governance, the shifting of by-elections, legislative crises, and political responsibility as a journey that presents challenges and/or deviations, encumbrances, or even stagnation. In these visual travels, the cartoonists not only tell the story of political happenings but also reveal the tension, failures and hopes of the democratic world of the country. Finally, the journey metaphor becomes a powerful

communication device, reorienting everyday mobility into a symbolic prism through which people can judge and critique the paths of their leaders and institutions.

4.2.5 Theme of Religion/Biblical Allusion

Ghanaian political cartoons heavily rely on religious and biblical allusions as a significant semiotic source, highlighting the strong interconnection between faith and politics, as well as national and popular life. With Christianity and other religious customs playing a significant role in shaping moral values, political expectations, and general interpretations of events in everyday situations, cartoonists selectively rely on commonly recognised scriptural accounts, symbols, and theological patterns as means of commenting on current socio-political realities. The part of the analysis discusses how the Ghanaian cartoonists use these allusions to visualise politics, criticise leadership, and present national issues in familiar religious paradigms. Through the use of biblical figures, prophetic forms, and religious imagery, the cartoonists are not only likely to make their messages more interpretively approachable but also to leverage the weight of religious discourse to make their satirical commentary more resonant and powerful.

Figure 31 Building National Cathedral

https://x.com/Tilapia_gh/status/1605790812062638080/photo/1



22 December 2022

The cartoon in Figure 31 Building National Cathedral employs metaphorical representation by mapping the opposition in the Nehemiah narrative onto the present political context in Ghana. Given this, the conceptual metaphor can be formulated as POLITICAL LEADERSHIP IS

SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP. More specifically, POLITICAL OPPONENTS ARE BIBLICAL ENEMIES, and A GOVERNMENT PROJECT IS A DIVINE BUILDING MISSION.

The structural mapping within the identified metaphor is presented below, utilising the conceptual blending theory model.

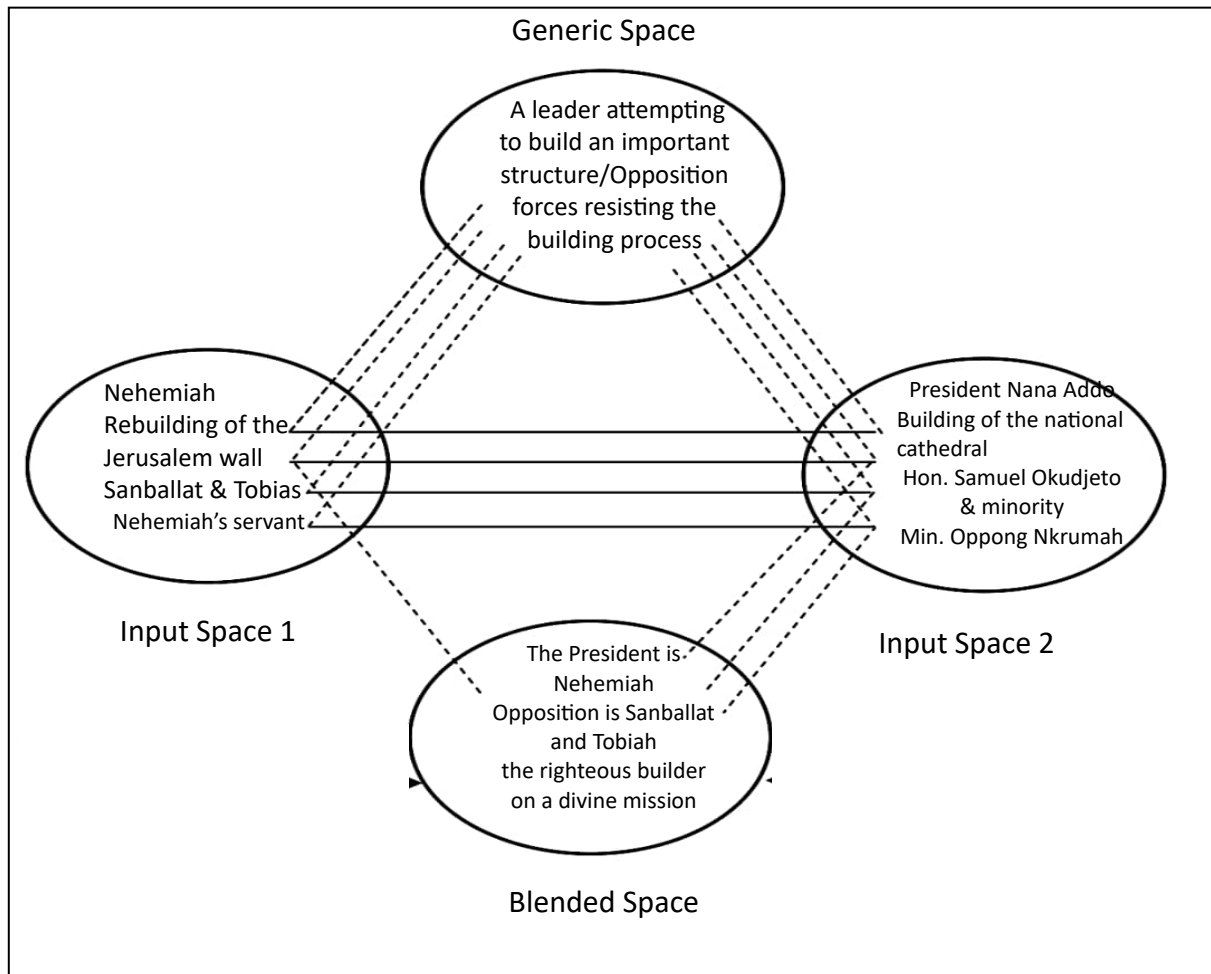


Diagram 25 Visual representation depicting the building of the Cathedral

In the lead-up to the 2016 general elections, the then-presidential candidate Akufo-Addo made a public vow, both to God and to the people of Ghana, that, if elected, he would build a national cathedral for God and the broader Christian community. Upon winning the election, President Akufo-Addo moved to honour this pledge. In line with his campaign promise, he launched a national fundraising initiative on 28 December 2018 to support the commencement of the cathedral's construction. To illustrate this point, the cartoonist strategically invokes a familiar biblical narrative to structure his message. President Nana Addo is conceptualised as

the biblical figure Nehemiah, the prophet who led the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem. By drawing this parallel, the artist aligns Nehemiah's divinely inspired construction project with the President's commitment to building the National Cathedral, thereby framing the contemporary political initiative as a sacred undertaking grounded in religious duty and perseverance.

In the story of Nehemiah, who came to rebuild the wall of Jerusalem, there was constant opposition to his work. The most tremendous opposition came when he was ridiculed by Sanballat and Tobiah, who were determined to undermine the project. The cartoonist makes an intentional comparison between this opposition and the one President Nana Addo has been encountering from the parliamentary minority regarding the cathedral project. The minority resistance has been embodied in this visual analogy by the Member of Parliament representing North Tongu, Hon. Samuel Okudjeto Ablakwa, who is cast in the roles of Sanballat and Tobias. In such mapping, the cartoonist makes the modern political discontent resemble the biblical hostility that Nehemiah faced, thus supporting the argument that the cathedral project is a God-led endeavour that had to face the opposition of sceptics.

As depicted in the cartoon, Hon. Ablakwa is symbolically represented by his head peering from behind Nehemiah (President Nana Addo), visually aligning him with the biblical antagonists. In the scriptural account, Sanballat persistently sent messages to Nehemiah through Tobiah, each letter reiterating the same accusatory and discouraging themes. This visual arrangement, therefore, evokes the persistent opposition faced by Nehemiah, suggesting that Ablakwa's criticisms of the cathedral project function in a similar manner, continuous, insistent, and aimed at undermining the leader's mission.

The cartoonist depicts Hon. Kojo Oppong Nkrumah as Geshem, the loyal aide of Nehemiah (President Nana Addo). This metaphor is particularly apt, given Oppong Nkrumah's role as Minister of Information, responsible for articulating and defending government positions. The artist reinforces this conceptualisation through the servant's speech bubble, in which he calls out, "Nehemiah!", followed by a report that "Sanballat and Tobias reject the GHC80m budgetary allocation for the cathedral." This visual and textual framing maps directly onto the biblical narrative: just as Nehemiah faced persistent resistance from Sanballat and Tobiah when attempting to rebuild the Jerusalem wall, the President encounters staunch opposition from the minority in parliament regarding the cathedral's budget. The metaphor thus

highlights the parallel between ancient obstruction and contemporary political resistance. This persistent obstruction significantly impeded progress on the cathedral project, ultimately contributing to the resignation of several members from the cathedral's board, an outcome further illustrated in the subsequent figure.

*Figure 32 Visual representation depicting the building of the Cathedral***Error! Reference source not found.**

<https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=943767771089442&set=pb.100063686824366.-2207520000&type=3>



22 May 2024

The cartoonist employs a religious reference, comparing a sacrosanct repast, the Last Supper, to a celebration characterised by an unethical and dishonest distribution of resources. Political actors, symbolised by their likeness, are shown to engage in the consumption of dishonest transactions. In light of the aforementioned, the conceptual metaphor can be formulated as **POLITICAL CORRUPTION IS A SACRED FEAST**. More specifically, **THE GOVERNMENT'S FINAL DAYS ARE THE LAST SUPPER**.

The structural entailment of the identified metaphor leading to the visual representation is provided below.

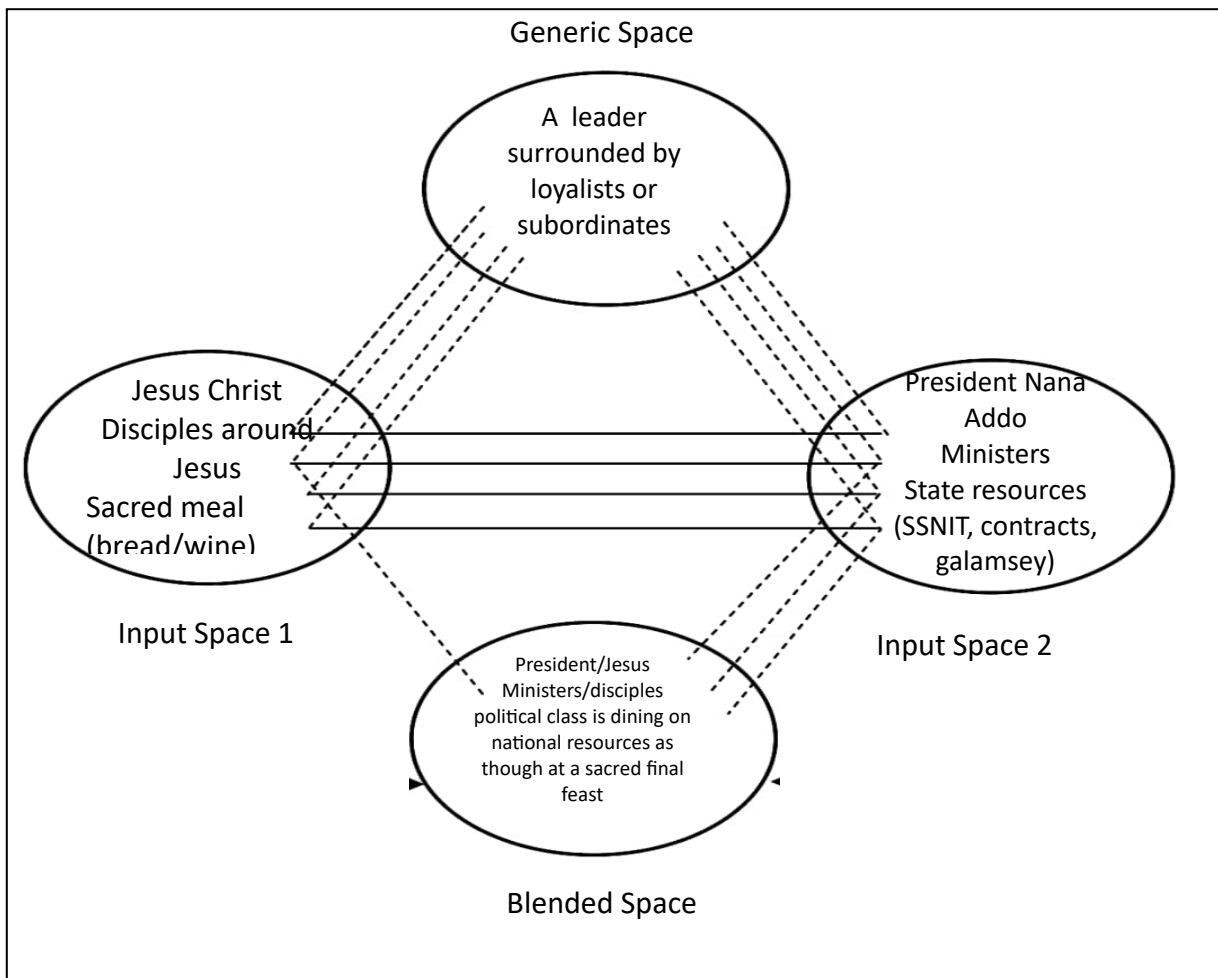


Diagram 26 Visual depiction of the Last Supper

The cartoonist draws on a well-known biblical narrative, as signalled by the caption “*Last Supper*” and the accompanying visual cues, which immediately frame the scene within the context of Jesus’s final meal with his twelve disciples. In this recontextualisation, the President of Ghana, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, is conceptualised as Jesus Christ, a portrayal reinforced through visual resemblance and attire. His appointees are correspondingly cast as the disciples, seated with him at the table. These figures range from senior government officials to key administrative actors, including the Vice President, Dr Mahamudu Bawumia; the Chief of Staff, Hon. Frema Opare; the Governor of the Bank of Ghana, Dr Ernest Addison; Senior Presidential Advisor, Hon. Osafo-Mafo; the Minister of Energy, Hon. Matthew Opoku Prempeh; the Minister of Communications, Hon. Ursula Ekufu; former Minister of Finance, Hon. Ken Ofori-Atta; and the Ashanti Regional Chairman of the NPP, Mr Bernard Antwi-Boasiako, among others. Their identification within the tableau is grounded primarily in visual

likeness, enabling viewers to recognise the intended political actors and understand the mapping from the biblical domain to Ghana's contemporary political landscape. In the biblical narrative, the Last Supper is described as an intimate gathering between Jesus and his twelve disciples, a moment marked by loyalty, betrayal, and the foreshadowing of Christ's sacrifice. By drawing on this well-known scene, the cartoonist activates a rich network of cultural and religious associations that Ghanaian audiences can readily recognise.

The data under review suggests that the number of government appointees, metaphorically described as "disciples", may have exceeded twelve. This numerical excess can be interpreted as a symbolic commentary on the size of the government, implying an expanded or "elephant-sized" administrative structure. Moreover, an analysis of the biblical narrative indicates a conspicuous absence of female disciples of Jesus.

In contrast, the data examined here include female appointees, thereby illustrating gender representation among governmental appointees. The notion of a "feast" is employed metaphorically and is represented through various meats and dishes, which are labelled as *Galamsey* (illegal mining), SSNIT contracts, and *borla* cash (funds related to waste management). These metaphoric labels suggest that the political actors in question are benefiting from the misappropriation of public funds, engaging in corrupt practices, and perpetuating illicit activities, all to the detriment of the ordinary Ghanaian citizen

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9 May 2024

Error! **Reference source not found.** offers a reinterpretation of the baptism of Jesus Christ by John the Baptist, employing a political satire as a medium through which to convey its message. Because of this, the conceptual metaphor can be formulated as POLITICAL ENDORSEMENT IS RELIGIOUS BAPTISM. Another metaphor that can be identified is SUCCESSION IS BAPTISM.

This baptism scenario activates the following mappings under the identified conceptual metaphor, and the visual representation is provided below.

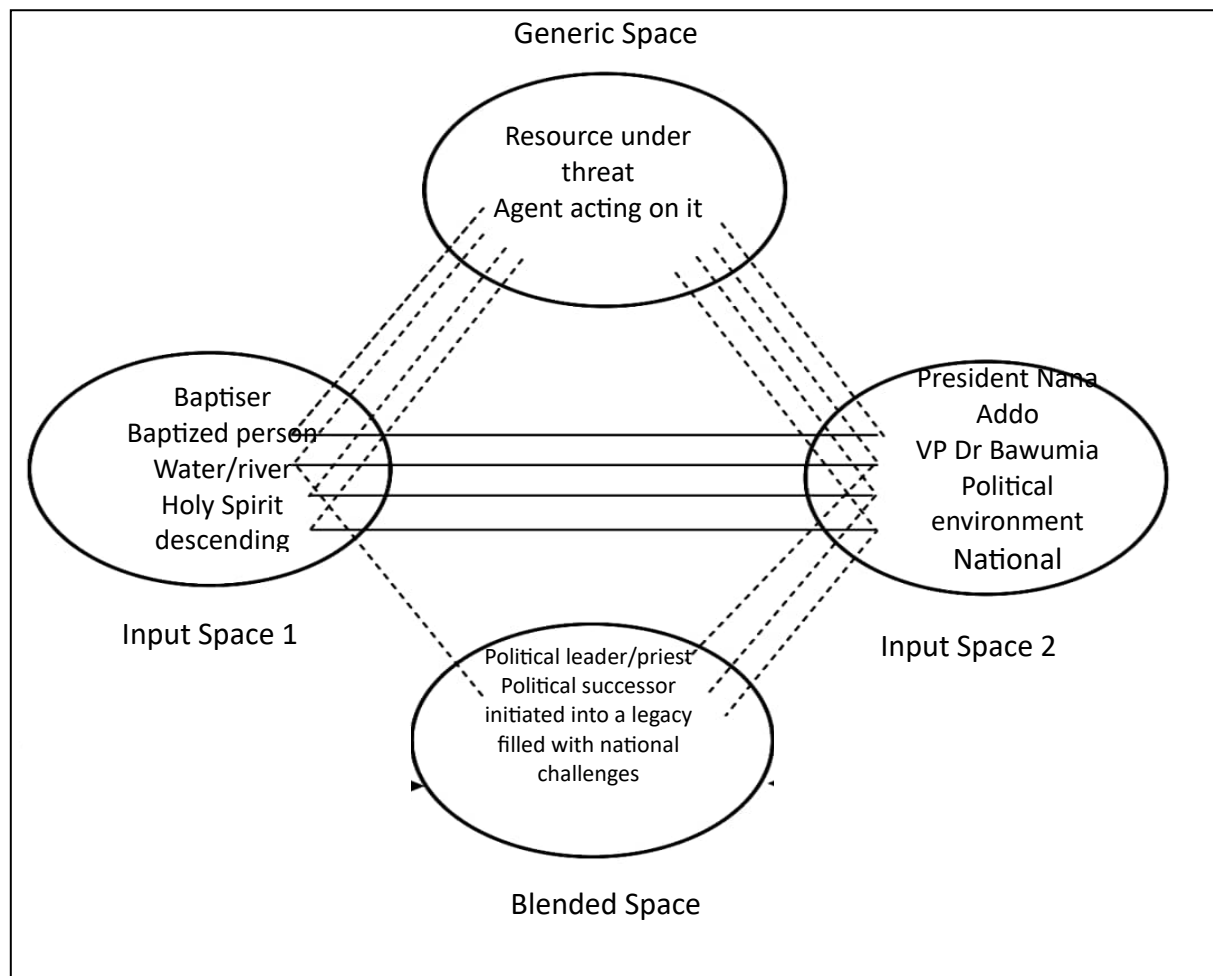


Diagram 27 Visual depiction of the baptism scene

The cartoonist draws on a well-known biblical allusion, the baptism of Jesus Christ by John the Baptist in the River Jordan, to articulate his message about presenting the Vice President as the next national leader. In this blend, the culturally familiar concept of baptism functions as the source domain, while the political act of introducing the Vice President to the

electorate operates as the target domain, a comparatively less familiar or more abstract construct. By mapping the role of John the Baptist onto President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo and that of Jesus onto the Vice President, Dr Mahamudu Bawumia, the cartoonist employs baptism as a metaphorical frame for political endorsement and succession. This analogy not only situates the Vice President within a narrative of divine approval and ritual initiation but also underscores the President's perceived role in legitimising and preparing his successor for national leadership. This gesture symbolically represents the transfer of authority and the intentional passing on of political legacy within the governing structure.

In the biblical account of Jesus's baptism, a voice from Heaven proclaims, *"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased"* (Matthew 3:13-17). The cartoonist mirrors this declaration in the bubble speech attributed to President Nana Addo (conceptualised as John the Baptist), but with a deliberate modification: *"This is my beloved mate with whom I am pleased."* The substitution of "beloved mate" for "son" reframes the relationship from one of divine filial connection to one of political alliance. This linguistic shift signals not a sacred commission but rather the President's endorsement of a trusted political partner, thereby situating the act within the realm of party succession and strategic continuity rather than divine mandate.

The river in which the Vice President is depicted as being baptised may be interpreted as a metaphor for the nation of Ghana itself, a symbolic space into which he is being initiated and which he is expected to lead should he become president. In the biblical narrative, a dove descends from heaven and rests upon Jesus's shoulders as a sign of divine approval. In contrast, the cartoonist replaces the dove with vultures, a deliberate subversion of the original symbol. The use of vultures conveys themes of economic deterioration, predatory behaviour, and political opportunism, suggesting that the environment into which the Vice President is being "baptised" is fraught with decay rather than divine blessing. This inversion intensifies the satire by highlighting the challenging socio-economic conditions surrounding his anticipated succession.

The cartoonist's use of personification is particularly striking, as the vultures function as symbolic embodiments of the economic hardships awaiting the "baptisee." Each vulture represents a specific economic burden, such as debt, inflation, exchange rates, fuel prices, and *dumsor* (the Akan term for persistent power outages). The vulture labelled "inflation" delivers a sarcastic remark: *"Now that he has been baptised into the 'legacy' of his master (President*

Nana Addo), who is going to descend on him like a dove?” This utterance mockingly contrasts the biblical symbol of divine favour with the political reality of inherited economic crises. In response, the vulture marked “dumsor” retorts, “*Ask the exchange rate!*” thus reinforcing the interconnectedness of Ghana’s economic challenges.

Through this satirical baptismal imagery, the cartoonist criticises the act of political endorsement, questioning whether the Vice President’s anticipated leadership will bring meaningful reform or simply perpetuate entrenched patterns of economic mismanagement and political continuity.

Figure 33 Crucifixion

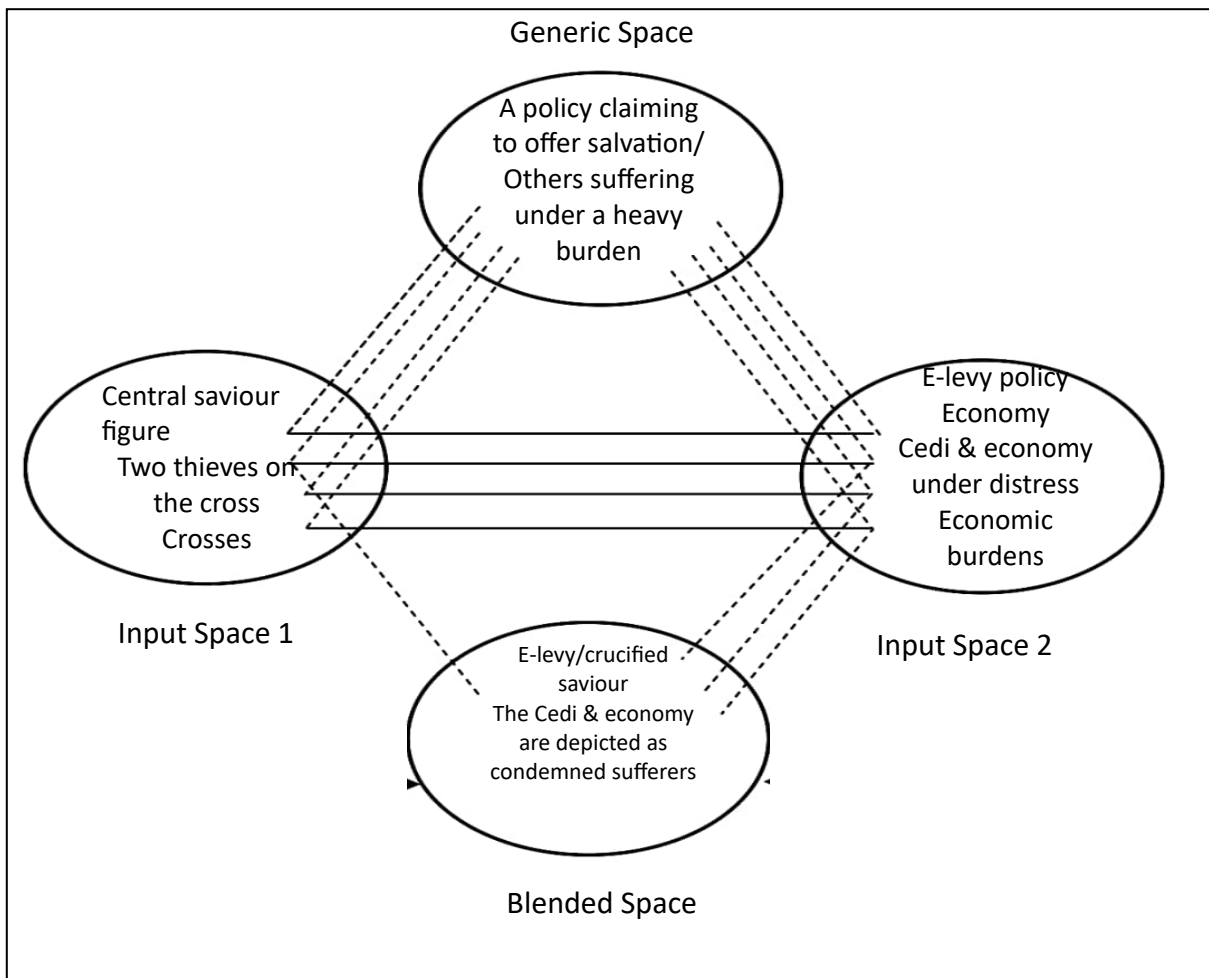
https://x.com/Tilapia_gh/status/1515975562589835268/photo/1



18 April 2022

The cartoon in Figure 33 Crucifixion invokes the imagery of Jesus Christ’s crucifixion to symbolically mirror the suffering endured by Ghanaians in the face of ongoing economic hardships. In view of this, the conceptual metaphor can be interpreted as ECONOMIC HARDSHIP IS CRUCIFIXION.

The identified conceptual metaphor yields the following structural mapping presented in the diagram below.



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Diagram 28 Conceptual blending depicting crucifixion

Using the four-space arrangement of the conceptual blending theory, the cartoonist combines two major input domains: the biblical crucifixion scenario and the modern Ghanaian economic and taxation situation. The cartoonist transfers the seriousness of the atonement of Jesus in crucifixion onto the economic sufferings that the Ghanaian people are going through, thus making the economic woes that the nation is facing both colourful and symbolic. The artist employs personification to animate the economic challenges facing the nation. The Cedi (Ghana's currency) is depicted as a suffering figure, voicing a desperate plea: "Apuu... Arrest the Dollar and Free Me." This lament metaphorically frames the cedi as being "imprisoned" and "beaten" by the dollar on the global market, thereby highlighting its dwindling value and vulnerability. At the centre of the illustration stands the figure of Jesus Christ, crowned with thorns and labelled E-levy. The E-levy (Electronic Levy)- a tax introduced by President Nana

Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo through his Finance Minister, Ken Ofori-Atta, functions here as a symbol of fiscal burden, suggesting that the tax itself has become a site of national suffering. This tax, more particularly, saw widespread resistance on the part of the Ghanaian populace, reflecting that Ghana is already faced with economic hardship to which this tax adds to their misfortune. The usage of a crowned thorn, which is typically interpreted to signify severe suffering, heightens this message by assuming that implementing harmful economic policies is equivalent to having been crucified.

The conceptualised Economy uses bubble speech as a rhetorical device to make persuasive arguments for E-levy. One such argument is: “Remember me when you receive your Momo tax.” The tax on mobile money transactions is what is referred to as the Momo tax. This is a part of the E-levy policy. The Economy argues, “You shall be with me in E-Paradise.” The cartoonist uses this rhetorical device to challenge the prevalent rhetoric on technology being ultimately positive. The cartoonist uses “paradise” and “electronic” together to challenge this rhetoric. The cartoonist argues that a positive rhetoric about technology having solutions to financial problems is also deceptive, given how bad the economic situation is. In this depiction, the cross becomes a symbol of the wider economic burden borne by the populace.

Figure 34 David and Goliath war (Customs War)



12 August 2022

The data in Figure 34 David and Goliath war (Customs War) references a Biblical narrative of David and Goliath to depict a conflict between two government agencies over an ongoing investigation. Through this intertextual reference, the cartoon activates a multimodal conceptual

metaphor, LEGAL INVESTIGATION IS DAVID’S BATTLE AGAINST GOLIATH, which is cued both verbally and visually.

The conceptual blending network for **Error! Reference source not found.** is provided in Diagram 29 Visual depiction of the custom war below.

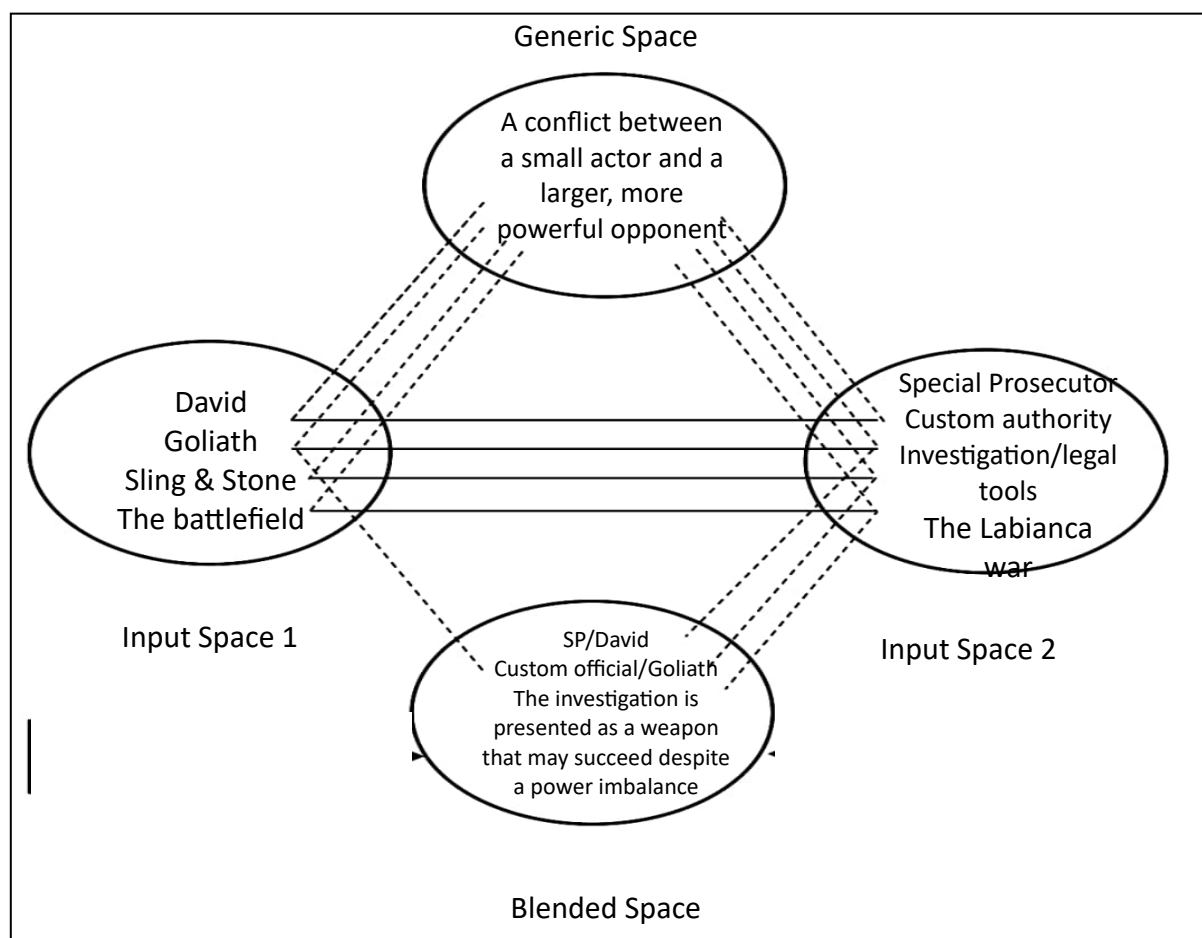


Diagram 29 Visual depiction of the custom war

This metaphorical framing transfers the aspects of the source domain, which is the issue of war, battles, and opposing opponents, to the target domain, which is the issue of the conflict involving the investigation of Labianca. The David-and-Goliath narrative is used here as a culturally recognisable template to illustrate an underdog situation, where one party, who is perceived to be weaker or less advantaged, faces a stronger opponent. In this regard, Labianca Foods, which is a Ghanaian firm owned by an individual member of the Council of State, is brought to the middle of the conflict, in whose case the owner has been caught up in under-reporting income.

Consequently, on 10 August 2022, the Office of the Special Prosecutor, led by Mr. Kissi Agyebeng, released a report detailing its investigation into allegations of corruption and related offences involving Labianca and the Customs Division of the Ghana Revenue Authority. In the cartoon, this development is represented through a metaphorical juxtaposition in which the Special Prosecutor is cast as David, while the Customs boss, Colonel Damoah, is depicted as Goliath. This David–Goliath configuration is used to challenge the SP’s determination that the dissemination of information concerning Labianca is unlawful. The cartoonist further reinforces this conceptualisation by portraying the SP’s “weapon” as an investigative tool, signified by the inscription “*investigation*” on both the sling and the stone.

Conversely, Goliath’s defence is portrayed as a spear, which, together with his aggressive and intimidating posture toward the Special Prosecutor, functions as a metaphor for the opposing force resisting the investigation. The Customs boss’s bubble speech can be interpreted as a form of psychological warfare, aimed at belittling the SP’s capacity and thereby undermining his authority, an established tactic in military conflicts intended to demoralise an opponent. Within the context of the legal dispute, the Customs boss is shown to possess significant institutional backing, including access to government machinery, and he is also depicted as considerably older than the SP. The pronounced difference in the physical sizes of the characters further activates the primary metaphors BIG IS IMPORTANT and SMALL IS LESS, suggesting an imbalance of power and resources in favour of the Customs boss. The next data depicts the outcome of the legal dispute that ensued between the SP and the GRA boss.

Figure 35 Economic Resurrection

https://x.com/Tilapia_gh/status/1252824481652826112/photo/1



The political cartoon in **Error! Reference source not found.** employs the trope of biblical resurrection imagery to metaphorically depict the prevailing economic situation in Ghana following the imposition of nationwide lockdown measures in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. In light of this, the conceptual metaphor can be framed as “ECONOMIC REVIVAL AFTER LOCKDOWN IS A BIBLICAL RESURRECTION. Another subdomain metaphor that can be identified is THE ECONOMY IS A DEAD/ENTOMBED BODY. The visual representation within the identified metaphor is provided in the diagram below.

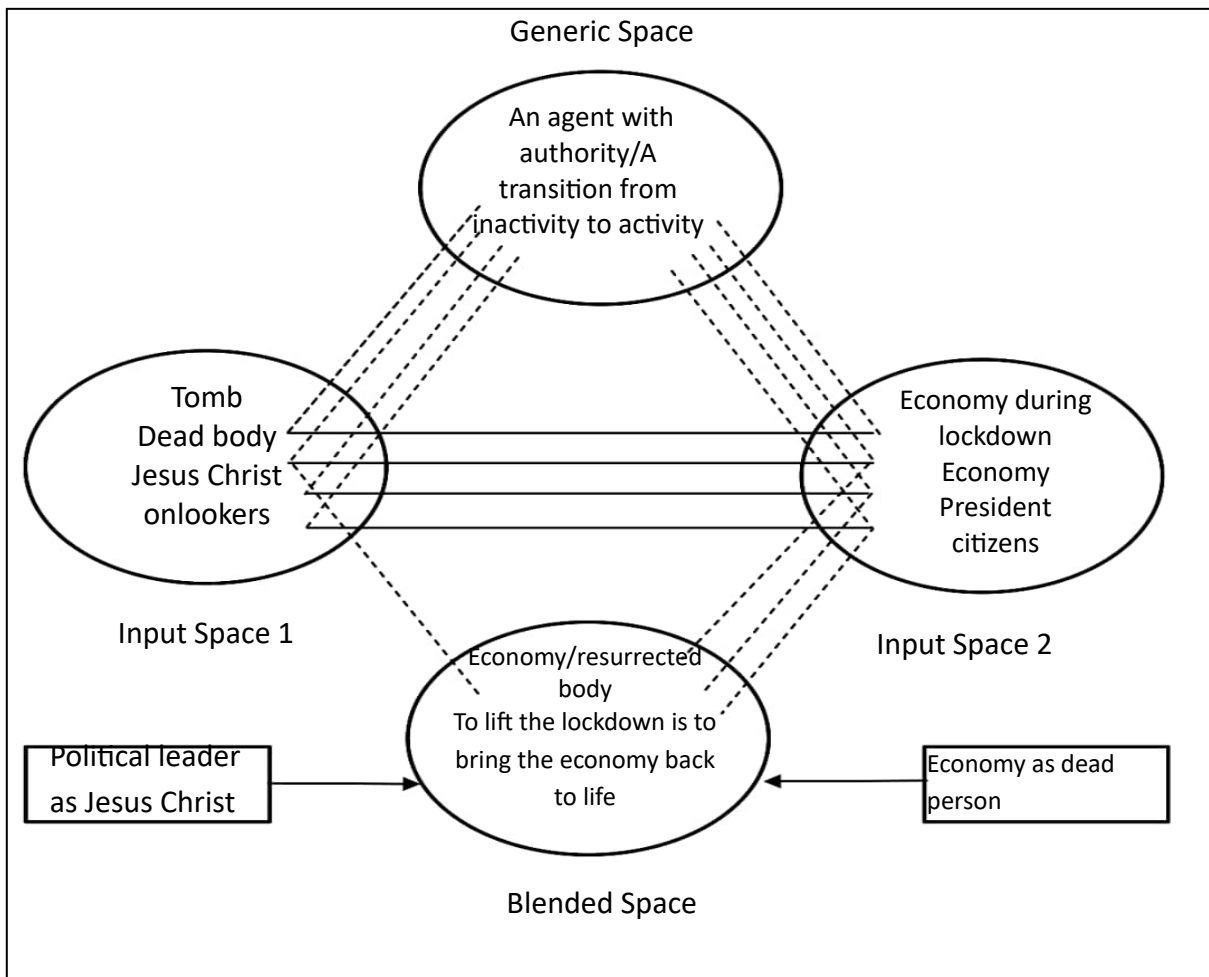


Diagram 30 Conceptual blending model depicting the resurrection of the economy

The cartoonist employs the single-scope type of blend to communicate his message by using the Biblical Resurrection Scenario, juxtaposing it with the economy during the COVID era. The artist employs the allegorical figure of Lazarus, portrayed here as an Egyptian-style

mummy rising from its tomb, to symbolise the revival of the economy after a prolonged period of stagnation. The lockdown, during which economic activity was largely halted, is thus metaphorically conceptualised as a period of “death” for the economy, from which it is now being resurrected.

The inscription on the personified Economy makes it clear that the mummy is in a very weak condition, and it has not yet recovered completely. The cartoonist draws a parallel between a national leader and the biblical character of Jesus, and this time, the cartoonist refers to the story of resurrection to portray the attempts to revive the economy. In the visual framing, the leader can be seen raising a hand in a gesture attributed to Jesus bringing Lazarus back to life. This is reinforced by the words, “Economy, Cumi”, a pun on the biblical command, Talitha cumi, which means little girl, rise (Mark 5:41). Jesus employs this verse when raising a young girl to life. This intertextual allusion places economic revitalisation as a symbolic resurrection in the cartoon.

The data clearly illustrates the government’s attempt to revive economic activity by lifting restrictions. In the cartoonist’s visual metaphor, the stone functions symbolically as the lockdown itself, a barrier that had sealed off the economy from functioning. The inscription “Lockdown Lifted” signifies the removal of this obstacle and the restoration of mobility and productivity. This imagery also subtly evokes the biblical scene in which the stone is rolled away from Jesus’ tomb, reinforcing the overarching resurrection narrative that frames the entire cartoon.

On the right side of the image, jubilant citizens are shown celebrating the return of economic life, signalling collective relief and optimism. Yet a speech bubble attributed to one of the characters injects a note of caution: “Still, observe social distancing!” This reminder emphasises that, despite the reopening, the threat posed by the ongoing pandemic persists. Thus, while the cartoon presents an image of renewal and forward movement, it simultaneously highlights the need for continued vigilance

4.2.5.1 Conclusion on the cartoonists’ use of Religious and Biblical allusions

Ghanaian cartoonists strategically employ biblical and religious allusions as powerful cognitive and communicative tools for framing socio-political commentary. By drawing on widely familiar narratives, symbols, and characters from the Bible, they activate shared cultural

knowledge that enables audiences to interpret complex political events with immediacy and emotional resonance. These allusions, whether referencing the Passion of Christ, the resurrection of Lazarus, the oppression of ancient Egypt, or the David-and-Goliath narrative, function as conceptual source domains that are blended with contemporary Ghanaian socio-political realities. Through this blending, cartoonists succinctly convey ideas about corruption, economic hardship, political leadership, public suffering, and government accountability.

4.0 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter presented the analysis of the data. The present study employed a range of semiotic tools in conjunction with Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT), Conceptual Blending Theory (CBT), and conceptual metonymy, aiming to elucidate the cognitive processes involved in the novel and creative use of visual elements to convey a message visually through political cartoons. The issues were presented within the following recurring themes: economy, health, sports and games, journeys and travel, and religion, predominantly Christianity. The socio-political and cultural background, as well as the metaphorical underpinnings, behind the selected cartoons were discussed by providing the conceptual metaphor behind each cartoon. The implementation of CBT entailed utilising the four input spaces for graphical data presentation, thereby mapping the source domain (input space 1) to the target domain (input space 2). Furthermore, aside from creating a separate section for the discussion of conceptual metonymy, any evidence of metonymy was discussed during the analysis of the various themes, where applicable.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 SUMMARY

The objective of this study is to make a significant contribution to the existing body of knowledge in the field of conceptual analysis of visual studies in political cartoons. This objective was accomplished by implementing analytical frameworks and methodological approaches from cognitive linguistics, including Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980), Conceptual Blending Theory (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002), and Conceptual Metonymy (Barcelona, 2000). The study under scrutiny set out to investigate the conceptualisations of Ghana's socio-political, economic, and trendy issues.

Chapter One introduces the reader to the fundamental concepts underpinning the study, its background, the statement of the problem, the research questions, objectives, and the rationale for the study.

In Chapter Two, the study's conceptual theory development was discussed, with metaphors traced back to antiquity. The following investigation traced the development of metaphor studies to all those who have contributed to its advancement. The discussion encompassed the theoretical concepts of conceptual blending and conceptual metonymy, along with the insights of other scholars on these concepts and their contribution to data analysis. The chapter further expounds on the visual metaphor identification procedure elucidated by Šorm and Steen (2018).

In Chapter 3, the methodological approaches adopted in the study were examined. The theoretical principles that underpinned the data collection and analysis were explained. The chapter under review also allocated the source of the data, the methodology of data collection, and the theoretical framework for analysis.

The fourth chapter was dedicated to discussing and analysing the cartoons, which were categorised according to various domineering themes.

In Chapter Five, the study's findings were summarised, and recommendations for future research were proposed.

5.2 CONCLUSION FROM THE STUDY

The final section of this dissertation is dedicated to presenting its primary findings. The findings are then discussed in the context of their practical ramifications and potential applications in cognitive approaches to discourse. Thus, Ghanaian cartoonists employ metaphors and metonymies in their works, focusing on socio-political and economic issues and trends as expressed visually and extending this to how these cognitive devices facilitate understanding of the message conveyed by the cartoonists.

This section aims to address the research questions posed in the introduction.

- (I) How do Ghanaian cartoonists use images and symbols as semiotic and metaphorical devices to construct messages on economic issues?
- (II) How do Ghanaian cartoonists employ health and hospital imagery as metaphorical resources to convey implied socio-political meanings?
- (III) In what ways do Ghanaian cartoonists draw on sports concepts to construct socio-political commentary?
- (IV) How are journey elements mobilised in Ghanaian political cartoons as symbolic strategies for shaping socio-political messages?
- (V) How do Ghanaian cartoonists make use of biblical allusions as metaphorical devices to communicate socio-political messages?

The answers to the research questions have been formulated through a meticulous examination of the selected cartoons, encompassing the diverse thematic categories under scrutiny. Each section is dedicated to the thorough discussion of a specific theme.

Section 4.2.1 focuses on how both cartoonists conceptualised economic issues in their respective works, drawing upon familiar concepts. As a result of the discussion and analysis of economy-related cartoons, it became apparent that cartoonists employ a variety of domains, which I have broadly categorised as living and non-living organisms. Regarding the categorisation of living organisms, both cartoonists used many elements that fall under this category and have breath. In particular, both cartoonists relied heavily on personification to portray the issues surrounding the Ghanaian economy. The dominant use of personification stemmed from the fact that economic issues are best understood and described in human terms because of their relatability to the general public. Apart from the relatability of personifying

economic issues, the state of the economy, whether strong or weak, was depicted in this medium, which resonates with the population. With the living organism categorisation, these conceptualisations were identified: THE ECONOMY IS A SICK PERSON, THE ECONOMY IS A BLOATED LEG, THE ECONOMY IS A FRAIL PERSON, THE ECONOMY IS AN EMACIATED PERSON, THE ECONOMY IS A MALNOURISHED CHILD, THE ECONOMY IS A BURDENED BEAST, etc.

Regarding the categorisation of non-living organisms, these were elements that have no breath, which the cartoonists used to depict the state of the Ghanaian economy. Both cartoonists used these familiar source domains to depict the state of the Ghanaian economy, which most Ghanaians can relate to, thus enhancing the understanding of the cartoonists' message.

The identified conceptual domains with this category include "ECONOMY IS A BROKEN VEHICLE," "ECONOMY IS WAR," "ECONOMY IS SCIENTIFIC EXPERIMENT," etc.

Of these familiar concepts, both cartoonists often illustrate the dysfunctional economy using broken cars, which reflects how well the themes align. The car that once worked now represents an economy that does not function, just like the cartoonist's car.

Section 4.2.2 addresses the use of health and illness concepts to represent socio-political and economic issues. It is established that cartoonists use different units of health concepts depending on the severity of the situation. Health metaphors rely on the idea that the experience of the body serves as the primary foundation for thinking about and describing different things. This is based on our knowledge about how our bodies operate and function. The identified conceptual metaphor within this theme includes GOVERNMENT POLICY IS A SICK PERSON IN ICU, ABROGATING A GOVERNMENT POLICY IS PERFORMING AN ABORTION, INJECTING THE ECONOMY IS INJECTING A SICK PERSON, etc. Using these hospital domains helps to understand the implied meaning behind these cartoons. The study demonstrates that the most critical scenarios are predominantly depicted within the Intensive Care Unit (ICU), emphasising the circumstances' gravity. The utilisation of these health concepts signifies the despondent state of specific government policies and initiatives, thereby indicating an urgent need for immediate intervention to rectify the present circumstances. Also, the employment of health-related themes by cartoonists is attributable to the fact that such themes are characterised by their capacity to transcend geographical and

cultural boundaries, consequently facilitating a universal comprehension beneficial to their intended global audience.

Section 4.2.3 focuses on utilising sports and games-related domains to conceptualise happenings in Ghana. The study reveals that the two cartoonists under scrutiny both employ a range of sports disciplines, including boxing, wrestling, track and field, high jump, hurdling and football, amongst others. It is apparent that the competitive nature of politics, coupled with its winning mentality, has resulted in the utilisation of sports and games-related domains, which bear a striking resemblance to the characteristics of politics. In this particular conceptualisation, the boxing scenario has historically been employed to conceptualise the outcome of elections, whereby electoral winners are invariably depicted as triumphant in a boxing match. In the event of boxing matches, the winners are predicted to be those who remain upright in the ring, while the losers are predicted to be those who fall to the floor. Similarly, the election results are conceptualised as outcomes of races in which electoral winners are depicted as winners in their respective races. Within the context of the race, the eventual winners of the election consistently remain at the forefront, while the losers tend to lag. To illustrate a task that appears both daunting and insurmountable, both cartoonists employ the use of high jump or hurdling, with the bar set at an elevated level. This symbolises the necessity for additional effort to be invested to complete the task. The use of a horse race stands out as a powerful visual representation of the rapid increase in utility pricing, where the rapid rise in utility prices is compared to the speed of a horse race. In football, the cartoonists employ the metaphor of player substitutions to symbolise government reshuffling or the change of government appointees. This visualisation resonates with the public, enhancing the comprehension of the envisioned message. Furthermore, the heated debate or encounter between two factions, notably the majority and minority members in the Ghanaian parliament, is presented through wrestling. This is due to the confrontational nature of the argument and the physicality involved. This and numerous other messages are conveyed through sporting and games-related concepts. The conceptual metaphors identified within this domain include POLITICS/ ELECTION OUTCOME IS BOXING OUTCOME, WINNING AN ELECTION IS WINNING A RACE, OVERCOMING A CHALLENGE IS CLEARING A HURDLE, CHANGING GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL IS FOOTBALL SUBSTITUTION, HEATED ARGUMENT IS WRESTLING, MAINTAINING A

NON-PERFORMING MINISTER IN GOVERNMENT IS KEEPING AN INJURED PLAYER IN A TEAM, among others.

Section 4.2.4 focuses on utilising the journey or travel metaphor in depicting socio-political and economic issues. Both cartoonists employ diverse transportation methods, including vehicles such as cars and trucks, watercraft such as ships and boats, and aircraft such as aeroplanes, to convey their respective messages. According to Forceville (2016: 8-9), every transportation option has defined pathways with unique obstacles, such as roadblocks, rivers, train derailments, and sinking. A typical journey metaphor contains three fundamental components representing the starting point (source), the chosen path, and the final destination (goal), thus SPG. The employment of journey metaphors by cartoonists is conventionally associated with the depiction of progress attained in the process of achieving a desired destination. In particular, the link between the perceived success of politicians and the effectiveness of government actions. It considers the hardships of starting a new project to be similar to those faced by politicians in advancing their careers. The cartoonists invariably attribute failure to reach a destination to impediments that obstruct progress. It is acknowledged that the obstacle may result from either natural or artificial causes, or indeed a combination of both. The identified conceptual metaphors include “GOVERNANCE IS A JOURNEY,” “POLITICS IS A JOURNEY,” “DEATH AS A FINAL JOURNEY,” “THE NATIONAL BUDGET IS AN OVERLOADED VEHICLE HEADING TOWARDS A FINANCIAL DITCH,” and “ILLEGAL MIGRATION IS A PERILIOUS JOURNEY WHERE SURVIVAL IS UNCERTAIN,” among others. The cartoonists’ use of the journey and travel concepts gives the message a global touch as the images of journey elements transcend cultural boundaries due to their universal nature. This enhances the understanding of the implied message. Despite the universality of journey metaphors, the study revealed that cartoonists draw on prevalent elements from their immediate environment. For instance, both cartoonists, knowing that trains do not constitute a significant means of transportation in Ghana, avoided them in their works. Prominent, recognisable elements represent fundamental elements for successful communication because they improve user understanding of message meaning.

Section 4.2.5 explores the use of religious concepts and biblical allusions to communicate socio-political and economic issues in Ghana. Both cartoonists employ different biblical allusions from the data gathered to send their messages across. Notable biblical stories

include Jesus' Last Supper with his disciples, the crucifixion of Jesus, the baptism of Jesus Christ, and the David and Goliath story, among others. The cartoonists' deployment of biblical narrations to convey their respective messages is an exercise that commands universal appeal. This universal element fulfils two functions: firstly, it enhances the global comprehensibility of the cartoon messages; secondly, it provides viewers with a more nuanced appreciation of the messages due to their relatability. The narratives depicted within the Biblical text are of a nature that transcends geographical boundaries, extending beyond the confines of Ghana. The following are some of the conceptual metaphors that were identified within this domain: "THE ECONOMY IS A RESURRECTED BODY", "FACING CORRUPTION ALLEGATIONS IS CARRYING CRUCIFIXION CROSS", "POLITICAL SUCCESSION AS A CORRUPT BAPTISM", among others. It is essential to note that cartoons that utilise biblical narratives often highlight ethical issues or moral wrongdoings in Ghanaian society. The Last Supper in the cartoon serves as a metaphor against government officials by comparing historical Bible events with contemporary unethical behaviour. Both cartoonists demonstrate a bias towards Christianity, as neither has been observed to utilise concepts from any other religion. This observation significantly supports the stereotypical assertion that Christian religious believers are the dominant group in Ghana.

Furthermore, the cartoonist's employment of particular artistic choices allows readers to understand the messages the cartoons intend to convey. The intended messages of these cartoons are communicated through several artistic elements, including settings, colour effects, participants, posture, and accompanying linguistic elements. Combining all these elements allows a thorough review of the message, leading to a deeper understanding of it.

Certain contextual factors trigger the selection of metaphorical conceptualisations or blends. Kövecses (2015) demonstrates that instances of naturally occurring conventional and novel metaphors used by individuals cannot be elucidated without the requisite contextual knowledge of the situation. The findings of this study demonstrate that contextual factors, including the participants' roles in the cartoon, the immediate cultural context, and the immediate social setting in which the cartoon occurs, influence the production and understanding of novel metaphors and blends. For instance, cartoonists can create a new and interesting blend by imagining President Nana Addo as King Nebuchadnezzar, comparing their period of reign as leaders and the harsh treatment endured by Ghanaians and Babylonians,

respectively. Furthermore, the selection of Mr Mahama by cartoonists and his subsequent portrayal as a saviour of the ailing economy has also evoked a different blend. This is based on the cartoonist's conviction that since Mahama has assumed the presidential role from Nana Addo, he is depicted as someone with the magic wand to revive the economy.

The present study posits the hypothesis that context significantly influences the production and comprehension of novel metaphorical representations employed by cartoonists in their conceptualisation of socio-political and economic issues in Ghana. In light of the aforementioned findings, it can be deduced that the fundamental purposes of metaphors from the conceptual perspective in the context of the Ghanaian political cartoon genre are communicative and cognitive. The communicative function is characterised by an intentionality or deliberateness congruent with the findings presented in the study conducted by Steen (2011) in his paper "The value of deliberate metaphor." This function is reflected in the deliberate use of particular visual elements of a metaphorical nature by cartoonists, which facilitate understanding of these issues as they relate to Ghana. Cognitively, the utilisation of conceptual metaphors by cartoonists in this study has been shown to highlight the cultural schematic structures that influence the representation of information within Ghanaian society. To illustrate this point, consider the metaphorical representation of the president and his appointees as Jesus Christ and his disciples. This representation is influenced by a biblical conceptualisation that resonates with Ghanaians and a global audience. In this conceptualisation, the president's last term in office is equated to Jesus' Last Supper with his disciples before his betrayal, leading to his crucifixion.

Conceptual blending is a critical mental process by which Ghanaian cartoonists can create fragmented meanings that appeal to culturally based orientations of cognition. Through the appeal to already known conceptual realms, and through the fluent combination of such elements into composite visual stories, cartoonists create easily memorable forms of sociopolitical commentary, the interpretative power of which lies in the capability of the person looking at such synthesised forms to understand and process them. With respect to this, conceptual blending emerges not as a creative methodology but as a cognitive tool to arrange and integrate divergent events, subjects and ideologies into one unified frame of reference. The most common example is the strategic parallels that cartoonists draw between healthcare specialists who examine patients and government officials who solve national issues. Medical

practitioners can be depicted diagnosing, prescribing, or operating on obviously ill patients, and, next to or over the same visual, politicians or government ministers can be shown doing the same to the metaphorical body of the nation. This combination generates a convincing mental congruence: just as a physician strives to heal the physiological well-being, the political leader is portrayed as trying to heal the sick economy or is prescribing a cure to the policies that have failed. This visual convergence is not incidental; rather, it indicates a sociocultural logic where the nation is imagined as an organism, policy intervention as a type of care. The blend will depend on the level of familiarity of the viewers with both realms: medical treatment and political governance, and their ability to make the inferential link between the two. Through common diagnoses, treatments, and, in certain instances, misdiagnoses or malpractice, cartoonists highlight political accountability, policy failures, or challenge leadership abilities. Finally, conceptual blending enables Ghanaian cartoonists to make intricate socio-political statements concisely and in a more comprehensible way, converting abstract economic and bureaucratic events into a lived and empathetic experience.

The multimodal metaphor, as proposed by Forceville, occupies a central position in the effective communication of meaning within political cartoons. Through multimodal strategies, cartoonists are able to translate complex socio-political issues into accessible visual narratives that evoke emotional responses, prompt reflection, and stimulate critical engagement from viewers. This communicative effectiveness is achieved through the careful selection and integration of distinct semiotic resources that work together to reinforce the intended message.

Concerning characterisation, key political actors such as the president, vice president, government appointees and officials, and chief executive officers are prominently featured as principal participants and are often assigned metaphorically charged roles. These roles draw upon diverse professional and cultural schemas, including physicians, boxers, drivers, wrestlers, religious figures (notably Jesus Christ), athletes, coaches, and referees. By mapping these culturally recognisable identities onto political figures, cartoonists enhance audience comprehension of political actions, conflicts, or shortcomings. The role attribution not only simplifies abstract governance processes but also frames political behaviour through familiar analogies, thereby sharpening critique or commendation.

The use of colour is also a purposeful and active aspect of multimodal metaphor-making. Cartoonists symbolically use colour to support political associations and control interpretation.

As an illustration, blue, white, and red colours are widely used to indicate the themes of the New Patriotic Party (NPP) and its leaders, such as President Nana Addo, Dr Bawumia, and other leaders. On the other hand, green, black, white, and red represent the issues of the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and its participants, including the ex-President Mahama. The palette is also sometimes extended with party colours of other countries or international organisations to allow cartoonists to comment on international relations, international tensions, or foreign influence. Political cartoons are multimodally packaged to produce a layered meaning-making which is immediate and conceptually dense.

Additionally, in terms of settings, cartoonists deploy a skilful use of various local settings in order to contextualise and support their messages. These are hospitals' emergency wards, football fields, royal palaces, athletic ovals, roads and those familiar to the general public. These settings are important in influencing the understanding by the audience, because they stir up culturally resonant knowledge that allows the viewers to draw their own conclusions about the cartoon commentary. The setting is not accidental, however, and a calculated semiotic tool utilised to place political criticism in the context of daily life.

More so, linguistic constituents (captions, titles, and speech in bubbles) are a necessary part of the multimodal discourse of cartoons. These textual elements are characterised by their brevity and little elaboration, and they can obtain their entire meaning only when they are related to the visual representations that accompany them. They not only play a vital role in being the interpretative measures that lead and amplify the comprehension of the intended message to the audience; they also summarise the central message of the cartoon and hence, enable quick and accurately understood information.

Besides visual metaphors, cartoonists employ other forms of cognitive devices like personification and visual metonymy to create meaning and to further enhance the attention of the audience. Personification, or the attribution of human qualities or goals to non-human elements or abstract ideas, is especially useful since it makes more difficult or abstract phenomena more relatable and emotionally relatable to the audience. Cartoonists promote the decoding of political and social problems in the audience by drawing upon the familiarity with human features to bring ideas to life and suggest interpersonal relationships

The same applies to the metaphor of visual metonymy, which is an influential tool of meaning-making as it enables cartoonists to express multi-layered or concealed messages cost-effectively and accurately. As an example, portraying two hands to denote the whole person will maximise space saving, besides being visually pleasing by allowing the audience to understand the desired reference without visual clutter. Similarly, using national flags as the symbolic representatives of certain nations allows recognising them instantly and increasing the perceptiveness of the interpretation, because the viewers can refer to a range of commonly accepted associations between the flag and the country, which it signifies. In such cognitive acts, cartoonists can condense complicated socio-political narratives to make them readable and effective visual messages.

5.3 THE IMPLICATION OF THE STUDY ON CARTOON DISCOURSE

The study makes an important contribution to the research on political cartoons in the Ghanaian context. It includes exclusive information about the application of visual communication methods to interact with and criticise the burning political and social problems, which further increases the perception of the importance of visuals as a potent means of reflection and comment in society. The implications of the results produced by the current research open up the possibilities for researchers to apply the same analytical models to political cartoons in the countries of West Africa to facilitate the comparative discourse and shed light on the social and cultural implications of visual satire in the region.

The discussion in this paper provides useful information to the current body of literature on political cartoons of Ghana by exploring how cartoonists can use artistic techniques to convey political and social issues in Ghana. The results also indicate that the integration of certain language items shows different cultural peculiarities incorporated in these visual writings. It is interesting to note that the application of the Ghanaian Pidgin in bubble speeches is an accommodative speech tool that cuts across the board between the educated and the illiterate, since the language is popularly viewed as a street language that cuts across societal boundaries.

The results of the present study also demonstrate that the familiarity of the source domains and cultural resonance of sports and games, travel, religion, health and illness, and the

economy game have a significant impact on increasing the understanding of socio-political and economic problems manifested in Ghanaian political cartoons among the audience. This study highlights the unique effectiveness of political cartoons in the Ghanaian media industry, especially in presenting controversial or otherwise very complicated political messages that the discourse of traditional journalism is usually unable to give equal clarity and receptiveness among the general population. This can be done using a special type of communicative affordance of the cartoonists.

An example is how vivid and eye-catching colours will make the message more memorable and attract the attention of the viewers without necessarily having a literal meaning to it, but adding to the content being presented and keeping the audience's interest alive. Moreover, humour, which is part and parcel of most political cartoons, can soften or ease the increased tensions that often accompany political talk in the highly polarised Ghanaian environment. In this respect, political cartoons have served as a tactical communicative instrument in national politics, where they allow commenting on delicate issues of the socio-cultural context, making it approachable and provoking.

Moreover, political cartoons enjoy a popular populist following and attain a wide audience of both the educated and uneducated. The visuality of cartoons contributes to the fact that they do not require a high level of academic knowledge, and people of various backgrounds will be able to understand and perceive the message in the cultural and social context. Combining imagery, humour and symbolism, they can be used to capture the interest of audiences more easily, and cartoons can produce more lasting and stronger impressions than a normal newspaper editorial. Political cartoons are an effective tool of communication through these characteristics and convey messages quickly, easily, and comprehensively.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The interpretation of the obtained data provided a number of potential directions for further studies. But since these issues were not considered as the main topics of the current research, they were not examined in detail. Although the results were predominantly focused on the well-known themes which Ghanaian cartoonists use to express socio-political and economic concerns, the results also gave a strong path to the way the research will be continued in the future: the variety of semiotic instruments used to complement political cartoons. Such

resources might comprise character description, setting decisions, colour play, font size and style, and other visual and textual elements that make up meaning-making. These aspects should be examined in greater depth because they would help to gain a broader understanding of the multimodal strategies, which form the basis of political communication within the Ghanaian setting.

One more useful direction to be pursued in the future is the linguistic heterogeneity of bubble speeches that follow political cartoons. Researching this dimension would assist in shedding light on the logic behind the use of language by cartoonists and the number of times specific languages appear in the vocabulary of the communication of cartoonists. As mentioned above, additional studies may also involve the syntactic arrangements of these bubble speeches, whereby it is observed whether there is a preponderance of simple, compound or complex sentences. Moreover, sentence functions analysis would also be enlightening in how to find out whether a discourse is dominated by declaratives, interrogatives, and other forms, hence how language is strategically employed as a means to persuade, provoke, or inform the listeners or readers.

5.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Whilst the present study has its merits in relation to the existing corpus of scholarship concerning the multimodal construction of meaning in political cartoons in Ghana, several limitations cannot be ignored. The analysis was confined to a purposely selected set of cartoons created by two cartoonists in a specific period of time. Consequently, the findings of this study cannot be extrapolated to the broader context of cartooning in Ghana, nor do they offer a comprehensive representation of the West African media industry as a whole. Moreover, the research concentrated predominantly on the cognitive and semiotic dimensions of visual communication, encompassing metaphor, metonymy, conceptual blending, and multimodal strategies. Consequently, it did not address the reception of the audience, the interpretative flexibility across diverse socio-demographic groups, and the persuasive efficacy of these cartoons. Furthermore, the study did not incorporate a longitudinal analysis of the stylistic development or the manner in which digital circulation may have influenced the creation and utilisation of political cartoons. These restrictions imply that the information found here is culturally constrained. Future researchers would be well advised to consider incorporating

reception-oriented research, comparative regional research, and diachronic research that would offer a more holistic view of the communicative, cultural, and political role of the political cartoons in the discourse of African populations today.

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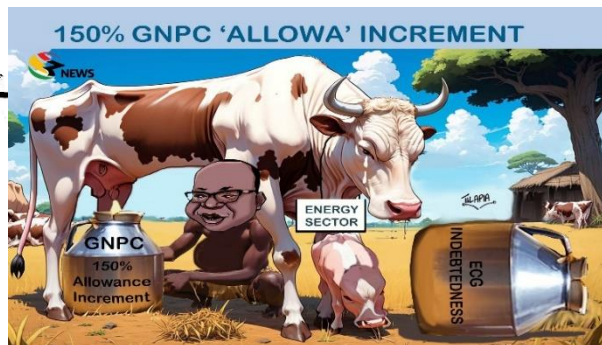
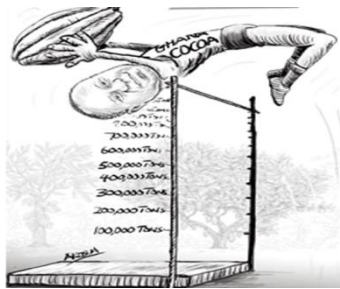
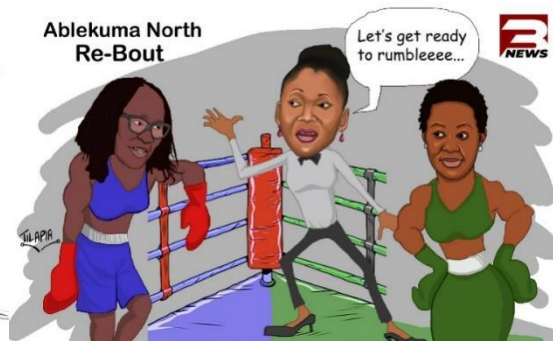
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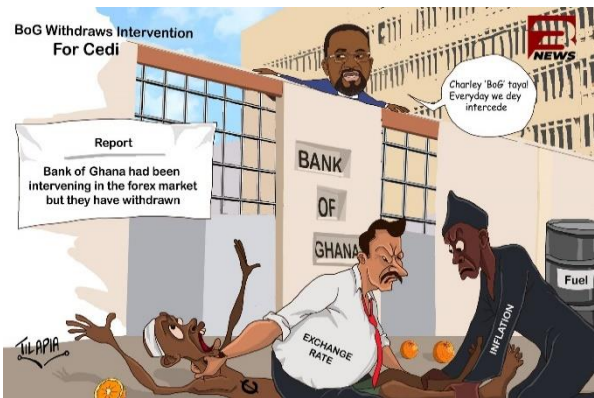
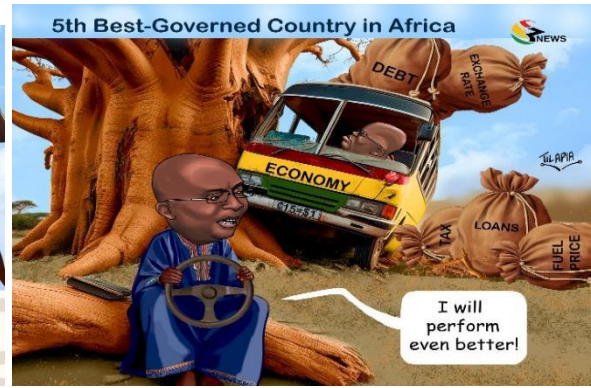
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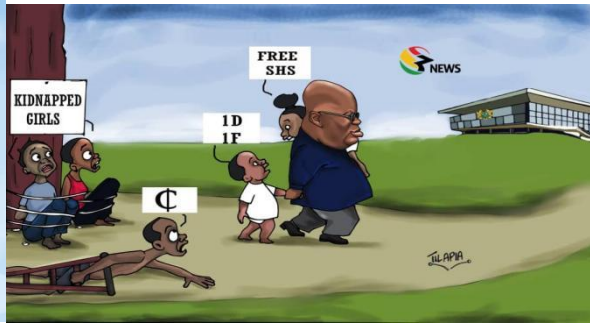
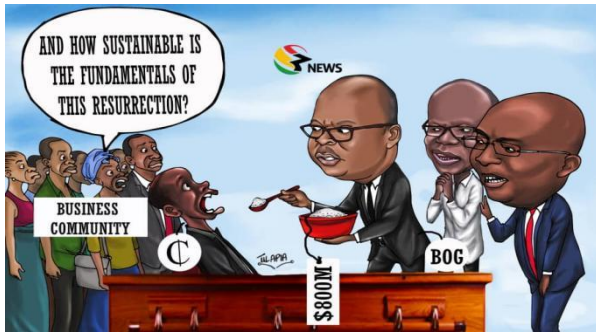
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APPENDIX

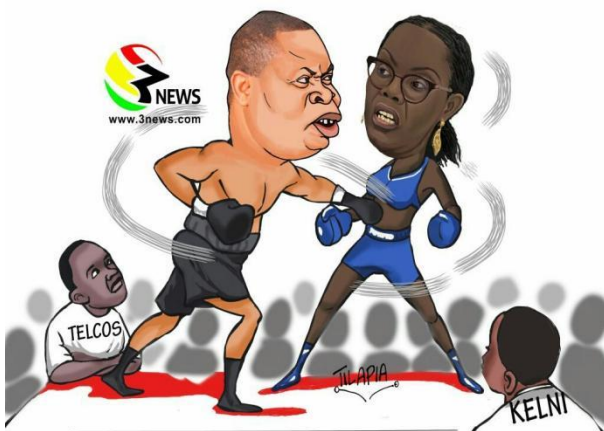
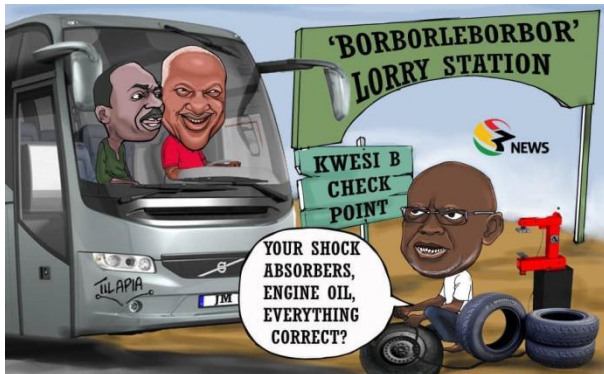


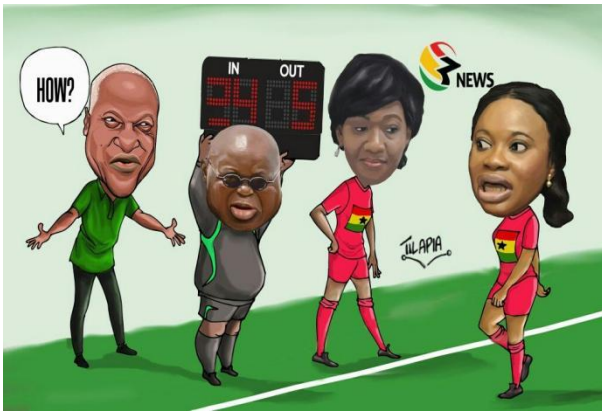


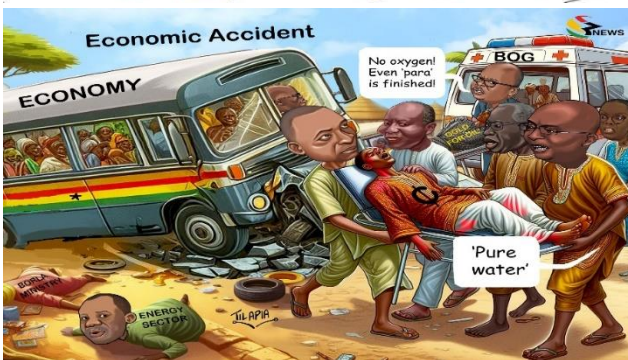
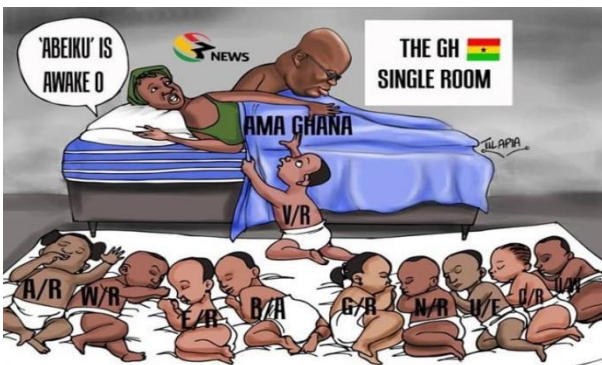
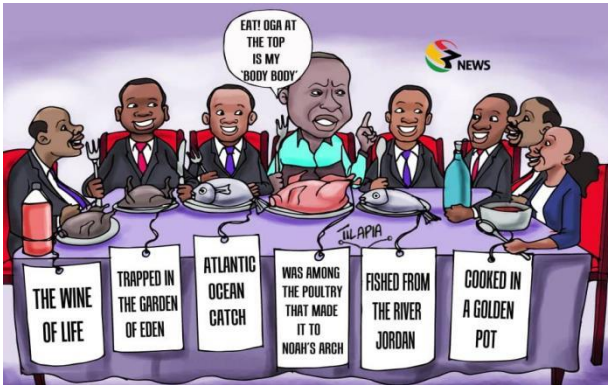


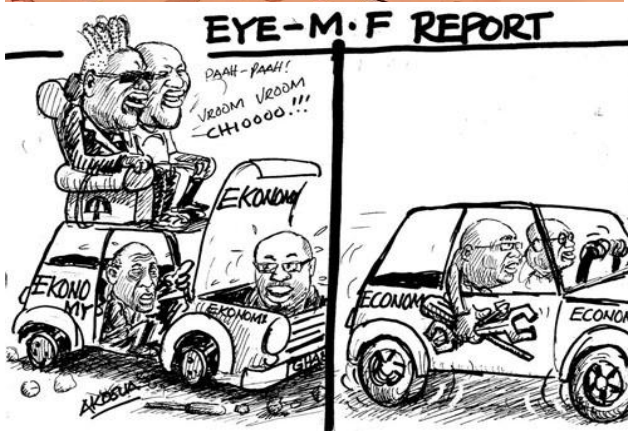
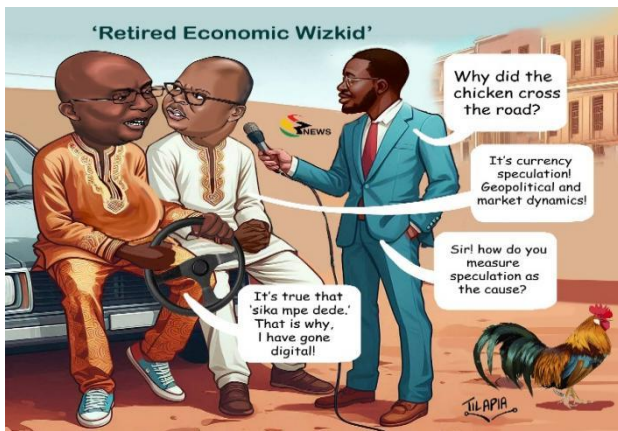


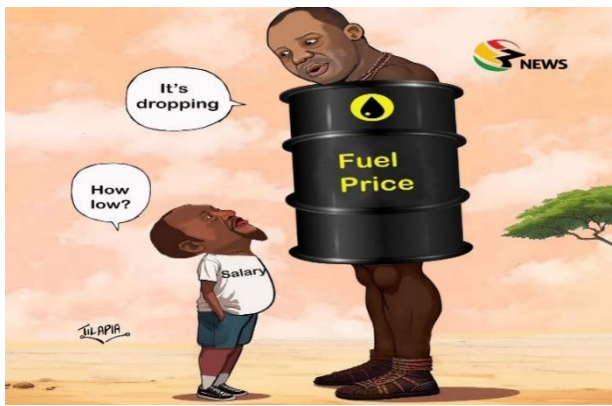
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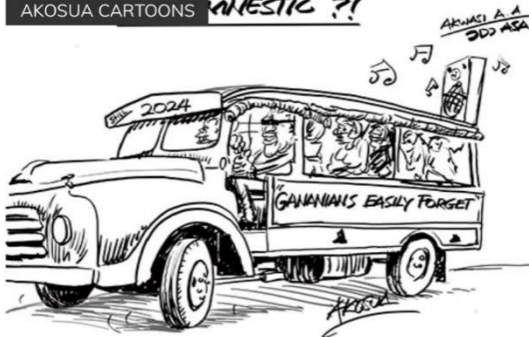


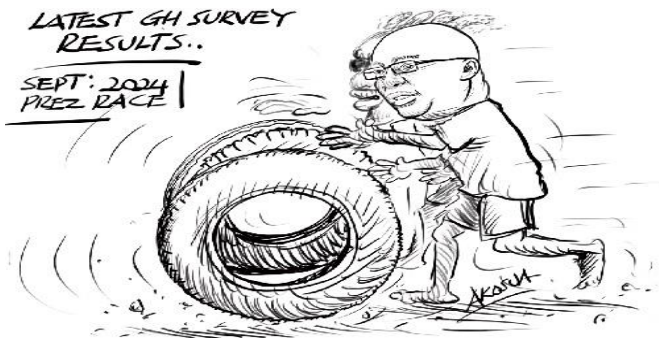
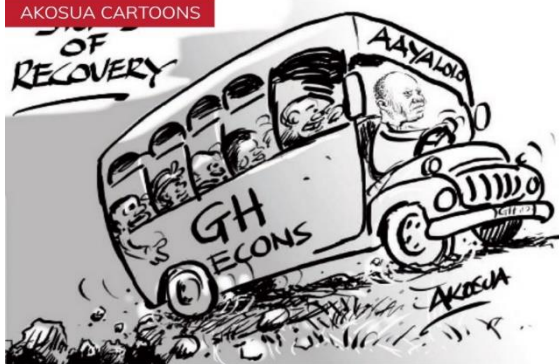


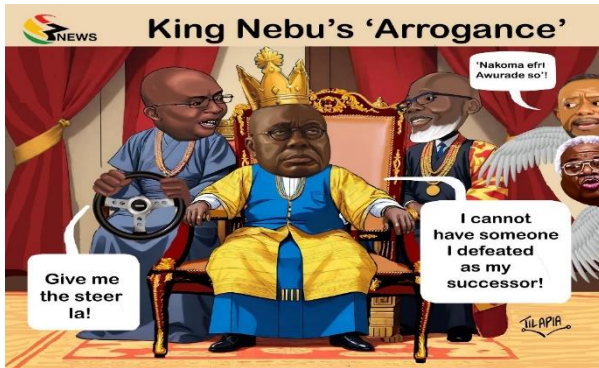
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