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CONCEPTUAL BLENDING PATTERNS IN SELECTED NIGERIAN TELEVISION TALK SHOWS

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Abstract

Several studies on Nigerian television talk shows have examined the interactions of participants by investigating turn-taking patterns, paralinguistic cues, interactional patterns and communicative strategies, and mental and context models of the discourses. Scant attention has been paid to the conceptual blending patterns that can be found in television talk shows with a view to highlighting how mental spaces are created in the minds of the participants and are reflected by their use of metaphors. This paper seeks to fill this gap by examining the conceptual blending patterns observable in selected television talk shows in Nigeria so as to show how thought processes, as revealed by utterances, lead to the formation of strong opinions and positions by change agents. The conceptual blending framework is utilised to identify how several inputs blend to form an emergent structure that is most times revealing of ideology. Processes such as ‘Theme-Event-Process-Action’, ‘Theme-Action’, and ‘Theme-Process/Action-Process’, were realised by participants’ contributions to the discourse and helped to show how they really viewed the matter on hand. Their striking uses of metaphors showed that positions adopted in the interactions held in television talk shows are indeed conceptualised. Several argumentative moves and framings were deployed to create mental spaces using metaphors such as the following: The *BringBackOurGirls* campaigners are charlatans; Nigeria is a disputed project; the Nigerian Constitution is an apartheid constitution and a slave master; and Senator Sani Yerima is same as Shekau, the Boko-Haram terrorist leader. These go a long way in showing how participants on the selected Nigerian talk shows conceptualised the happenings discussed.

Key words: Metaphors, Conceptual Blending Theory, Television talk shows, Ideologies, Cognition

1. Introduction

Talk shows are speech events where a host(s) guides a participant(s) through a pre-determined topic. Television talk shows in Nigeria abound, with hosts and their participants discussing issues revolving around the economy, security, education, politics, and other matters arising. Talk show hosts in Nigeria often have to employ different strategies that help them achieve their aim for the discourse. They moderate the interaction, regulate turns by means of asking questions and selecting the person that gives the response, and sometimes perform repairs that aid the discourse to be channelled in the right direction. Participants, on the other hand, often attempt to engage with the discourse using strategies that help them maintain their own preferred topic, mitigate the threat to face, and contribute to the success or otherwise of the discourse. Several scholars have attempted to describe some of these happenings on the Nigerian television talk shows. Olutayo (2010) examines the role of turn-taking by hosts and their participants on the talk show. Sunday and Oji (2015) investigate the place and usage of paralinguistic cues by both hosts and participants in some Nigerian talks shows, and the effects on both parties. Oji (2019, 2018a, 2018b) focuses on how to account for expressions of ideology in talk show discourses, the mental and context models employed by participants in the talk show discourse, and the interactional patterns and communicative strategies interactants employ in the speech event. It is, therefore, pertinent to examine television talk shows in Nigeria with a view to highlighting how conceptual blending patterns are formed through examining how mental spaces are created in the minds of the participants and are reflected by their use of metaphors. To properly interrogate this phenomenon, the critical discourse analysis framework is a veritable tool.

The use of the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) in the examination of ideologies and their impact on the society have been considered from various perspectives. One of such perspectives is the socio-cultural approach, prominently illustrated by Fairclough. His approach to CDA is based on a three-dimensional framework, namely, description, interpretation and explanation. In this model, he showed that “the connection between the text and social practice is seen as being mediated by discourse practice” (Fairclough, 1995). Another perspective to the study of CDA is the socio-cognitive approach. This socio-cognitive approach whereby discourse and social structure are mediated by social cognition, is, according to van Dijk (2002), defined as “the system of mental representations and processes of group members”. The socio-cognitive approach to CDA is well supported, given that scholars believe that the creation of knowledge about social

objects, identities, and processes, which are in turn brought to discourse, are actually constructed in the minds of the individuals engaged in the interaction (van Dijk, 1995; Chilton, 2004, 2005). However, as Hart (2007) observes, conceptual approaches to discourse have not been featured in the socio-cognitive approach to CDA. He therefore suggested that since Cognitive Linguistics (CL) has tools with which CDA can effectively deal with issues of conceptualisation, there should be a merger of the two with appropriate conceptual framework. The reason for this is that “CL like socio-cognitive CDA, explores the relation between language, cognition and society. This is an important framework for this study; hence a conceptual approach to socio-cognitive CDA, namely, the Conceptual Blending Theory (CBT) is utilised to show the role of conceptualisation by the use of metaphors in the promotion of ideologies and inequalities in selected Nigerian TV talk shows.

Hart (2007) shows that CBT is a theory of meaning construction which accounts for some of the conceptual operations performed during discourse. The theory is also known as Conceptual Integration and derives from two traditions within cognitive semantics, namely, Conceptual Metaphor Theory and Mental Spaces Theory, which were principally initiated by Gilles Fauconnier. Evans (2006) holds the view that the main thrust of CBT is that ‘meaning construction typically involves integration of structure that gives rise to more than the sum of its parts’. He adds that the process of conceptual integration or blending is a general and basic cognitive operation which is central to the way we think. Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner developed the blending theory as a consequence of their research programs. In accounting for this origin, Evans (2006) argues that Fauconnier had developed the Mental Spaces Theory in order to account for a number of traditional problems in meaning construction, while Turner approached meaning construction from the perspective of his studies of metaphor in literary language. Since frameworks developed by either of them could not fully account for some of the linguistic phenomena observed, they both decided to come up with a theory that could adequately account for why in many cases, meaning construction appears to derive from structure that is apparently unavailable in the linguistic or conceptual structure that functions as the input to the meaning construction process. That gave birth to the CBT by the both of them in order to tackle this problem of not being fully able to account for mental spaces that are constructed during discourses.

Hart (2007) observes that ‘in the case of metaphor, mental spaces constructed during discourse undergo a specific conceptual blending operation whereby they are manipulated in an integrated network, producing inferential structure. The blending theory, therefore, makes it possible to fully account for the workings of metaphors in discourses.

The importance of metaphor to CDA is seen in Hart's (2007) take on what its function is. He notes that 'metaphors are linguistic and conceptual phenomena which should be of particular significance in CDA.' He further observes that some scholars contend that 'ideology involves a systematically organised presentation of reality' and on the basis of that, metaphors are to be regarded as ideological in so far as they 'define in significant part what one takes as reality'. Therefore, since CDA has as one of its concerns, the formation of a coherent view of reality, it suffices that metaphors be examined, as they help in promoting the understanding of reality. To achieve this, the blending theory serves as a reference point for fully accounting for how metaphors contribute to the construction of mental spaces wherein the expressions, whether explicit or implicit, would aid the understanding of ideological propositions by participants in the talk show event. When talk show hosts ask questions, participants likely create mental spaces in their cognitive domains, constructing frames that lead to the use of metaphors in their responses. This study, therefore, examines how it is possible to account for the use of metaphors by participants, as a result of the cognitive activity of the construction of mental spaces during the interactions.

2. Methodology

This study utilised four talk show excerpts from three television talk shows, namely, Focus Nigeria on Africa Independent Television (AIT), Head to Head on Silverbird Television (STV), and Kakaaki on AIT. These shows and particularly the excerpts were purposively selected for having interactions that reflected the creation of mental spaces during the discourse. They also possessed some linguistic categories that are metaphorical in nature. The excerpts were taken from shows aired between 2014 and 2015 – a crucial time in Nigeria's history, given the rise of insurgency and other unrest at the time – and were downloaded from the television stations' website. The excerpts were transcribed using transcription notations of Conversation Analysis (Ten Have, 1999). Afterwards, using the principles of the Conceptual Blending Theory (CBT) that would show what mental spaces are created, the blending process achieved, the emergent structure and the process of elaboration that leads to making an inference or conclusion on the basis of the metaphors used by participants in their interaction, a cognitive/critical discourse analysis was carried out on the data. Diagrams, using the CBT framework, were drawn to represent the mental spaces and how the blending pattern resulted to the positions adopted by the participants, given their use of metaphors. These help to show how participants conceptualise ideologies or form very strong opinions and communicate them.

3. Theoretical framework

The Mental Space Theory holds that words do not refer directly to entities in the world but rather prompt for the construction of mental spaces, which contain certain elements. This is further defined by Fauconier and Turner (1996). They view mental spaces as ‘small conceptual packets constructed as we think and talk, for purposes of local understanding and action. They are interconnected, and can be modified as thought and discourse unfold.’ Those packets which are constructed during discourse as we think and talk apparently include whatever entities, objects, actions and processes that are referred to explicitly or implicitly in discourse. And in any stretch of discourse, a number of interconnected mental spaces may be constructed, where, according to Fauconier (1994), “linguistic expressions will typically establish new spaces, elements within them, and relations holding between the elements.”

Here, the Conceptual Metaphor Theory cannot fully account for those spaces that are implicitly referred to, since only two inputs are provided for and without being present in the text, there cannot be an accounting. In order to tackle this problem of not being fully able to account for mental spaces that are constructed during discourses, the blending theory is brought in. Hart (2007) observes that, ‘in the case of metaphor, mental spaces constructed during discourse undergo a specific conceptual blending operation whereby they are manipulated in an integrated network, producing inferential structure. The blending theory therefore makes it possible to fully account for the workings of metaphors in discourses.

The importance of metaphor to CDA is seen in Hart’s (2007) take on what its function is. He says that ‘metaphor is a linguistic and conceptual phenomenon which should be of particular significance in CDA.’ He goes further to observe that some scholars contend that ‘ideology involves a systematically organised presentation of reality’ and on the basis of that, metaphors are to be regarded as ideological in so far as they ‘define in significant part what one takes as reality’ (Weiss and Wodak, 2003). Therefore, since CDA has as one of its concerns, the formation of a coherent view of reality, it suffices that metaphors be examined, as they help in promoting the understanding of reality. To achieve this, the blending theory serves as a reference point for fully accounting for how metaphors contribute to the construction of mental spaces wherein the expressions, whether explicit or implicit, would aid the understanding of ideological propositions by participants in a talk event. The blending theory stipulates that blends arise in networks of mental spaces. However, unlike the Metaphor theory that has just two inputs – the source and the target

domains, the basic blending network consists of four mental spaces: two input spaces, a generic space, and the blended space. Fauconier and Turner (2006) also note that “a blended space can have multiple input spaces.” In addition to these, there are also background frames recruited to build these mental spaces. Each of these input spaces are further discussed below.

3.1. Input space

That ‘a new space is set up when utterances concern objects or events that require different background assumptions’, is the view of Coulson (2000). Hart (2007) argues further, stating that, ‘metaphorical utterances in discourse are of precisely this kind; they involve spaces which contain elements belonging to two different (potential) scenarios with different background frames or assumptions. As metaphorical discourse unfolds, then, a space is created for each scenario. These spaces are input space1 and input space2.’ He adds that during the process of integration, the two-input space share counterpart connections between elements, which are represented in the notation by solid lines.

3.2. Generic space

Fauconier and Turner (2006) note that there is a generic space which maps onto each of two inputs. They postulate that ‘the generic space contains what those two inputs have in common at any moment in the development of the conceptual integration network’. In further elaborating on this, Hart (2007) mentions that the generic space may also be projected back to from the blended space and not just the elements in the generic space projecting onto the counterpart elements in the input spaces. He argues that structure in the generic space should thought of in terms of theta roles, that is, semantic categories, which structure the ideational representation in discourse of a given scenario. The focus of the generic space then would be in relation to ‘who did what to whom, where, and how’.

3.3. Blended Space

However, the number of inputs a blend has, they eventually get to be projected into the blend space. The two typical inputs are therefore mapped onto a single slope by means of conceptual blending operations (Fauconier and Turner, 2006). This is highlighted by Fauconier and Turner (1996) in these words: “In blending, structure from two input spaces is projected to a separate space, the ‘blend’. The blend inherits partial structure from the

input spaces, and has emergent structure of its own.” They also inform that ‘generic spaces and blended spaces are related because blends contain generic structure that was captured in the generic space. (Fauconier and Turner, 2002). Hart (2007) explains that emergent structure is unique to the blend. This is so because “the blended space contains structure which is not copied there directly from the input spaces but which rather is a product of blending operations.”

3.4. Emergent structure

There are three blending processes by which the emergent structure is constructed. They are composition, completion, and elaboration. These processes make it possible for elements not in the two inputs to be generated at the blend space.

3.5. Composition

“Composition of elements from the inputs makes relations available in the blend that did not exist in the separate inputs,” notes Fauconier and Turner (2006). Adding further insight to this process, Hart (2007) opines that, “counterpart elements can be composed to produce two separate elements in the blended space...in the case of metaphor, a special kind of composition occurs, referred to as fusion. Here, counterpart elements in the input spaces get projected into the blended space creating a single compound element.”

3.6. Completion

Completion is said to bring additional structure to the blend (Fauconier and Turner, 2006). Fauconier and Turner (2006) observe that “blends recruit a great range of background conceptual structure and knowledge without our recognizing it consciously and in this way, composed structure is completed with other structure”. However, only relevant structure gets projected or recruited onto the blend. This is what is referred to as selective projection. It is selective in that only structure that is relevant to the speaker’s intention is projected onto the blend while leaving out other extraneous structures which may be there but not useful for the context. Hart (2007) categorises selective projection as that which contributes to the ideology of metaphor. In his words, “where selective projection in conceptual blending networks is a pragmatic phenomenon, integration networks are constructed according to speakers’ communicative (and rhetorical) intentions. In other words, ideologically, speakers may choose to recruit particular structure in order

to promote a certain perception of reality.” This study explores the ways by which speakers’ structures are selectively projected to account for ideologies in discourse.

3.7. Elaboration

Of the three processes, Elaboration is the most significant, as it is the running of the blend (Hart, 2007). It however utilises imaginative mental simulation according to principles and logic in the blend. It is usually characteristic of cognitive work performed within the blend according to its own emergent logic. For Hart (2007), this process of elaboration shows the importance of conceptual blending for CDA in the sense that metaphor, as a function of emergent structure in the blended space, gets to be seen as ‘cognitively real’. It therefore becomes obvious how metaphors that surface at the blended space can be accounted for as well reveal ideologies in discourse. In the analysis for this study, it is seen how these cognitive structures are revealed through the blended theory by means of emergent structures in the blended space.

It is important to note that the seven steps above, which form the basis for a conceptual blending, are similarly presented as rhetorical steps by Quintilianus in *Institutio Oratoria* and other traditional rhetoricians. They apply with equal force to television talk show events, where participants negotiate meaning through their discourses.

4. Analysis

4.1. Conceptual blending patterns in the Nigerian TV talk shows

Conceptual blending patterns are observable in the selected Nigerian talk shows. Using talk shows as *Kakaaki* and Focus Nigeria – both on African Independent Television (AIT), and Silverbird Television’s (STV) *Head to Head*, the selected episodes are analysed critically. In an episode on *Kakaaki* that features Dr. Oby Ezekwesili and her partner Ms. Wonu Folami, the act of abduction of the Chibok girls in Nigeria by the Boko Haram insurgents is metaphorically described as a tragedy. Dr. Ezekwesili is represented as P(E) and Ms. Wonu as P(W).

Excerpt 1

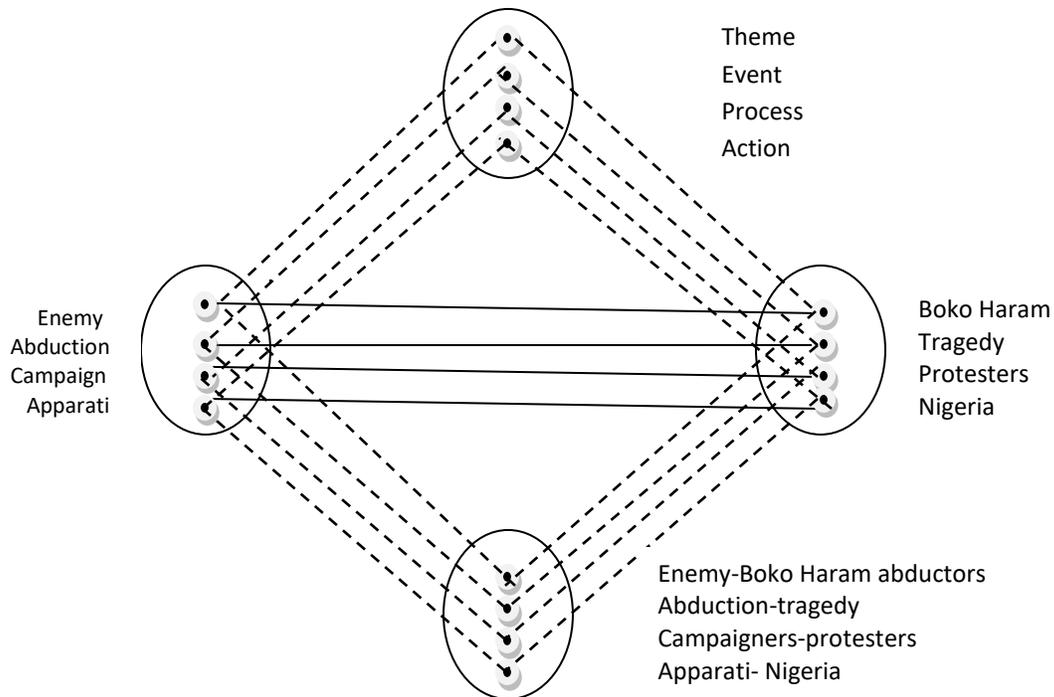
P(E): ...I believe in Nigeria (.) I believe that this nation will overcome this tragedy but it requires every one of us standing together in purpose and using our Chibok girls as the symbol of that new Nigeria.

Nigeria is also portrayed as ‘not being a weakling’ that cannot stand up to the insurgents’. Rather than view the campaigners as enemies, they suggest that the government join forces with them to fight the ‘common enemies’, the terrorists.

Excerpt 2

P(E): ...If we encourage citizens to go pleading with terrorists what are we doing↑ We must show that we are a strong nation. Nigeria is not a weakling (.) Our government possesses the apparati to be able to go against our common enemies...I want the enemy taken out↑ and our girls brought back↑

Fig. 1 Conceptual blending network for Excerpts 1 and 2



Going by the expressions made by Dr. Ezekwesili, four mental spaces are constructed which enter into a conceptual integration network, as shown above. At the base of the network is the emergent structure which has been realised as a result of the fusion of

the four counterpart elements in the two input spaces. The emergent structure of this process creates a scenario where the abduction of the Chibok girls is to be seen as a tragedy that has befallen Nigeria and is an ongoing event as long as they have not been rescued. The perpetrators of the dastardly act are perceived as terrorists and the common enemy; and they are the Boko Haram insurgents. As such, there arises the need to continue protesting, putting up a fight as it were, by the BringBackOurGirls campaign, thereby creating the process through which the event is to be tackled.

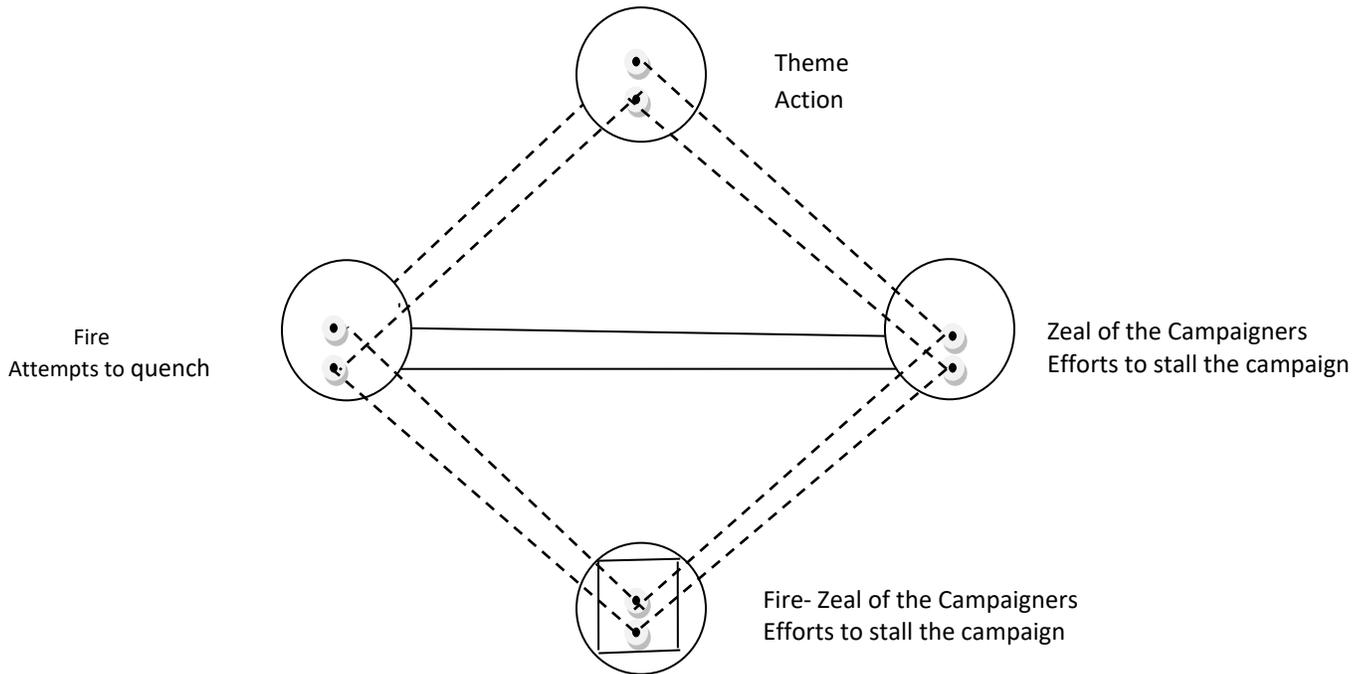
However, the process of elaboration enables one to infer that since the BringBackOurGirls campaigners' actions are limited to that of protesting, the onus lies on the government who is said to have the 'apparati', to overcome this tragedy. The conceptualisation of the government as the only one with such apparatus necessitates that it takes action to overcome the insurgents and rescue the girls. Why the action has not been taken up until 143 days of the girls' abduction raises questions as to the motive of the government, the supposed apparatus it possesses to rescue the girls, and what lies in store for the Chibok girls.

In excerpt 3, there is the construction of two mental spaces whose counterpart elements are fused through composition, and by means of elaboration, inferences are drawn.

Excerpt 3

P(E): No matter what has been attempted on us in order to quench the fire of the advocacy for these girls, it just has refused to die simply because it is borne out of compassion.

Fig. 3 Conceptual blending network for “attempts to quench the fire of the advocacy”



Two mental spaces are here created by the construct ‘attempts to quench the fire of the advocacy.’ The ‘fire’ and ‘quench’ elements in input space1 are reflective of a conceptual frame for putting out the fire of a burning item. Ordinarily, such a frame presupposes good action since people do not close their eyes to a burning house, car or person. However, a conceptual frame is here constructed where such ‘help’ in ‘quenching’ or putting out the fire is rejected; unwanted. The attempts to do so are called into question. Through the blending process of completion, the emergent structure shows that the attempts to quench the fire are actually not good-intentioned but rather, efforts to stall the campaign. Elaboration of this network therefore necessitates the inference that the campaigners who have zeal and are determined to protest till the end – when the girls are rescued – would have to buckle up, make the fire burn even more and not be easily outwitted by forces wanting to push them into silence. No wonder the fire is borne out of compassion. And that also creates a mental space that shows that as long as the campaigners

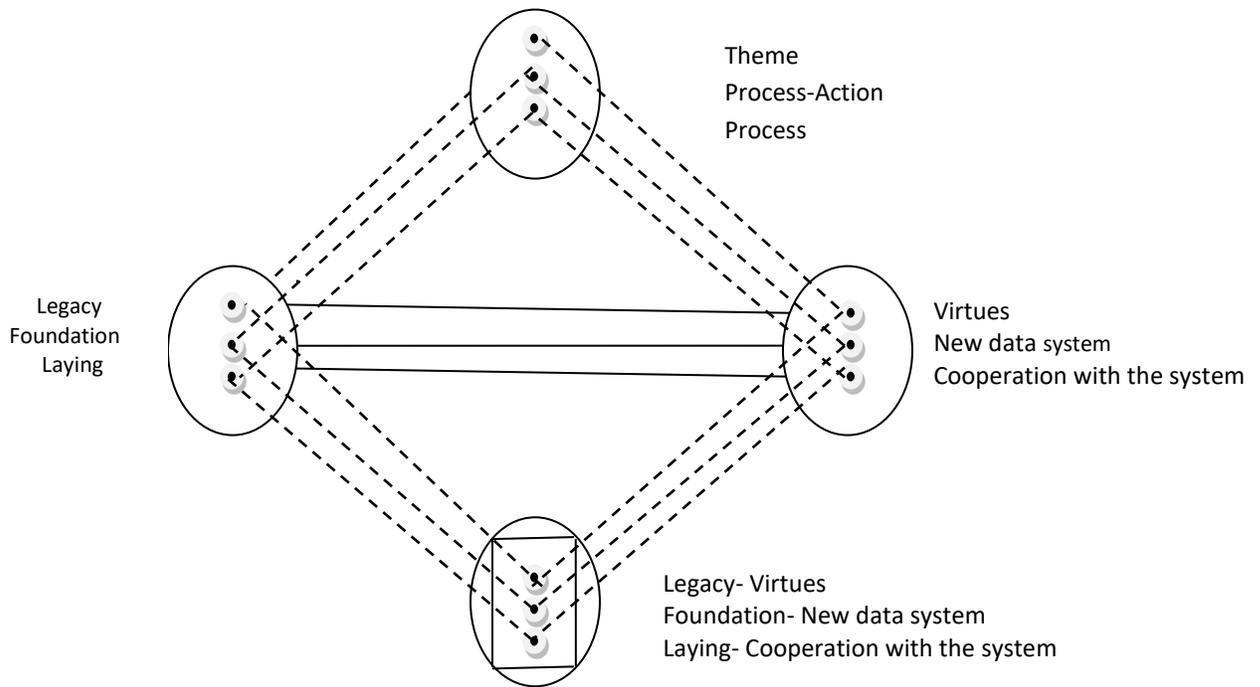
are alive their compassion remains with them, there would be no end to BringBackOurGirls campaign until the girls are rescued. Furthermore, that attempts to quench the fire are realised as efforts to stall the campaign raises questions on the genuineness of the government. Further inference would lead to the conclusion that rather than hush the campaigners, the government should be re-assuring them and working towards rescuing the girls. Otherwise, the government could be accused of being responsible for the missing Chibok girls.

In another episode, that of the Corp Marshall of the FRSC on AIT’s Focus Nigeria, two mental spaces are also constructed in the promotion of ideologies. Despite the hassles that Nigerians face in obtaining the new number plate and especially the new driver’s license, the Corp Marshall insists that it is for their own good, unless they prefer mediocre service. But he would not oblige them that.

Excerpt 4

P: The legacy I’m laying is a foundation I sincerely believe will be a game changer for Nigeria.

Fig. 4 Conceptual blending network for ‘The legacy I’m laying is a foundation’



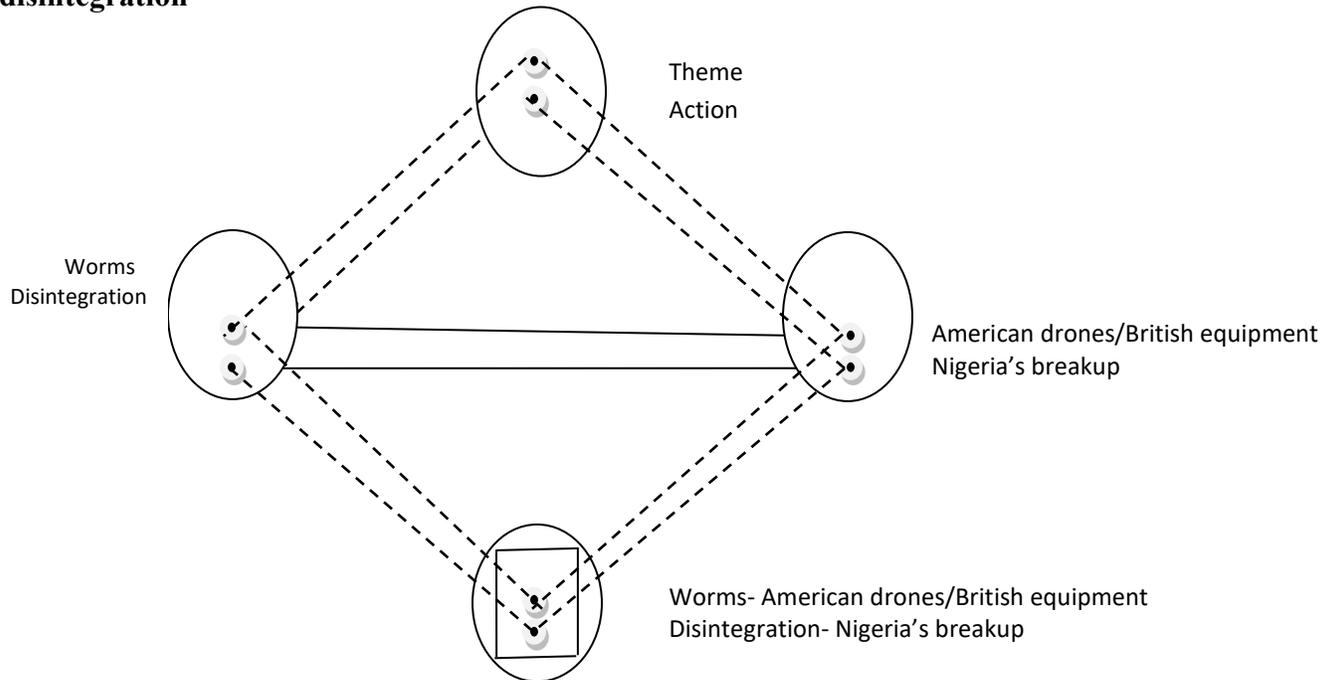
In this blending network, the emergent structure realises ‘legacy’ as virtues, ‘foundation’ as the new data system, and the act of ‘laying’ as cooperation with the system. The conceptual frame of building a house is employed here. The frame of dutifully accomplishing a task and receiving honour and a reward for legacies left afterwards is also constructed. With these frames in mind, it is known that building a house takes time, effort and resources. The metaphor of foundation and the new data system therefore interact cohesively. The process of laying a foundation is rigorous, articulate and time-consuming, given that it has to be gotten right at that point, for a beautiful house to be the end product. Correspondingly, the new data system is constructed as that foundation which must be built, though with care, but through many rigours. Hence, Nigerians must be part of the laying of the foundation. Here, elaboration provides for a measure of reasoning. Therefore, Nigerians are expected to be reasonable and give their support and cooperation to this all-important stage of the building process. One implication is that it would cost their time, however, for the virtues to be reaped, not only by the Corp Marshall when he exits the stage, but also by Nigerians. Then comes the need for patience in obliging and cooperating with the FRSC system since in the long run, Nigerians would not have to spend so much time queuing to obtain a driver’s license. Should Nigerians want to operate contrary to the supposed legacies, the Corp Marshall implies that they prefer mediocre services which he is unwilling to oblige them. He therefore leaves them no choice but to cooperate with him.

Max Gbanite, a participant on ‘Focus Nigeria’s – Abducted Chibok Girls, Matters Arising’, creates two mental spaces that depict his ideological scheme and perceived notion of the supposed help to be rendered Nigerians in their fight against insurgency. The excerpt below depicts this position.

Excerpt 5

M: People coming to help us is OK but the most important thing is that our security agencies and those in Government must shine their eyes to make sure that *these people coming in to help us do not insert worms in our system that can bring about disintegration that has been already projected.*

Fig. 5 Conceptual Blending Network for ‘worms in our system that can bring about disintegration’



From the mental spaces constructed as shown in the two input spaces, Max conceptualises the actions of the American and British governments in a negative light. Worms are known for causing disintegration. The ideology of Max here expressed in this conceptual blending network is that the foreign governments are not here to help but to bring about the breakup of Nigeria that they have been projecting. The worms they are capable of inserting are therefore the equipment they have brought into Nigeria – the drones by the American government, and other unspecified equipment by the British. Such a frame presupposes a destructive intent rather than the supposed ‘help’ that they want to render.

The emergent structure in this network is therefore realised as American drones, and the British equipment are capable of causing disintegration which would ultimately lead to the breakup of Nigeria as a country. He therefore advises ‘our security agencies and those in government to shine their eyes’, that is, be very careful and more observant of the activities of these foreign bodies in our environment.

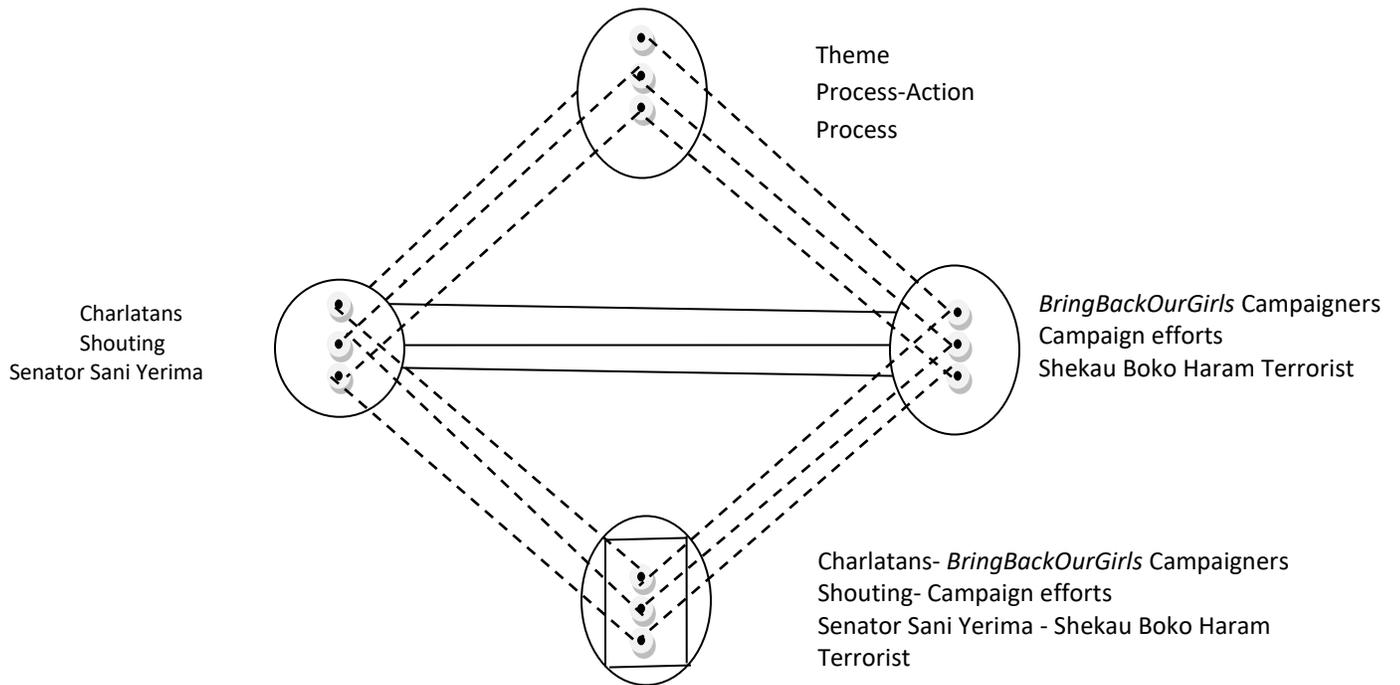
On ‘Head to Head’s National Conference - the Way Forward’. The participant Mr. Tony Nnadi equally conceptualises his ideology of the happenings in the country. He opines that issues bedevilling the country have not been genuinely looked into and as such holding a National Conference without addressing those, would be futility. He condemns the actions of the BringBackOurGirls’ group, labelling them ‘Charlatans’. The next excerpt conveys his position.

Excerpt 6

P: Those *Charlatans who are going about shouting bring back Chibok girls* did not see any correlation between what *Sani Yerima* (.) *Senator of Federal Republic* is doing and what *Shekau* that went to Chibok to take girls he was advertising on CNN for sale (.) for marriage (.) The two were pursuing Sharia (.) one chopping off hand (.) the other chopping off head (.) one buying 13 year old (.) the other taking 16 year old.

The network that follows describes the conceptual blending processes derived from this participant’s interaction.

Fig. 6 Conceptual blending network for ‘Charlatans who are shouting bring back Chibok girls correlation between Sani Yerima and Shekau’



The three mental spaces that the participant constructs fuse to realise an emergent structure that portrays his ideology. First, the BringBackOurGirls Campaign group is seen as Charlatans - a group that is nothing short of fraudulent and unrealistic in their bid to help Nigeria become better. Despite all that the group does to impress Nigerians as to their devout calling to the call of the Chibok girls, the participant dismisses their effort as mere charlatanism. He therefore conceives their campaign effort as 'shouting' – making noise in the ears of people. The frame of shouting depicts an unserious activity and that is what he aptly likens the activities of the campaign group. Furthermore, he attempts to justify his position by stating that the group should have called into question the move made by a Senator of the Federal Republic in 'taking' a 13-year-old as wife. He wonders why the group does not 'shout' about that. The process of elaboration in this conceptual blending network enables us to infer that the participant is awfully displeased with the Senator's action that he likens him to the Boko Haram terrorist leader- Shekau. He presupposes that they both are in the action of 'abducting' girls without a legal backing or right and as such should both be dealt with, rather than the campaign group focusing attention on what seems unrealistic.

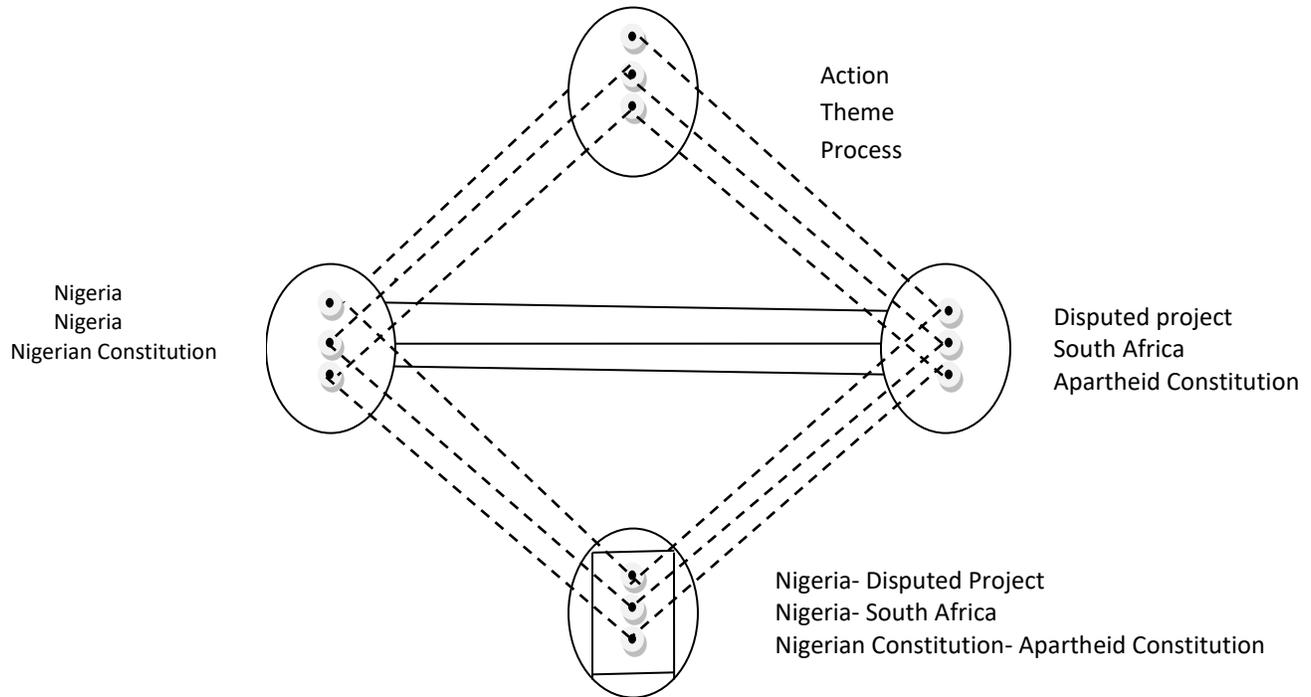
The participant, Tony Nnadi, creates another mental framework for describing and comparing Nigeria to South Africa in their then apartheid state, his focus being on the ills of the Nigerian constitution. The next excerpt shows this:

Excerpt 7

P: What to do is simply to have that knowledge that *Nigeria is a disputed project* and to call a meeting of those who are working to leave the union so that they could recommit to the union and *South Africa was confronted with that kind of a situation under their apartheid constitution* that was imposed by a minority to seize the assets of the majority for a long time. *The only way left for Nigeria now is to acknowledge that this constitution cannot carry us to the next bus stop* especially the election that has been advertised for 2015. So because South Africa suspended elections for the period it took them to discuss complete *replacement of their apartheid constitution* and it took them 5 years from where they had the 1994 elections that brought Mandela. What were they trying to solve? An apartheid that confiscated the assets of a majority in the hands of a minority. *Nigeria is exactly in that situation...*

The participant reels out a number of similarities between the Nigerian constitution and the then South African constitution. He endeavours to make a vivid portrayal of his ideology regarding his view that Nigeria has an apartheid constitution. He even describes Nigeria as a disputed project, thereby invoking the frame of a project that should be delivered upon but chaotic in nature. The following conceptual blending network depicts the process for an emergent structure for this excerpt:

Fig. 7 Conceptual Blending Network for Excerpt 7:



From this blending network, Nigeria is seen as a disputed project. The frame of a project suggests that more effort is required to make its deliverability succeed. Team work cannot be downplayed for a project to be truly successful. The participant therefore hints that the state of the country with each region seeking its own interests disallows the success of this project called Nigeria. It is therefore a disputed project, and unless definite steps are taken by its citizenry to correct matters, there would be no way forward for the country. He

also creates a mental space of Nigeria as South Africa. South Africa used to be governed by an elite few and had the majority of its people in want. Nigeria is also seen as governed by a few hands that have channelled its vast resources to some quarters, made decisions for the entire populace without recourse to their concerns and real needs. That was exactly the case in South Africa. The participant also goes on to create a mental space of the Nigerian Constitution as an apartheid one. Having compared the Nigerian situation to that of South Africa, he conceives the problem to be with the constitution. He says Nigerians should acknowledge that the constitution cannot carry us to the next bus stop. Since South Africans had to make a complete replacement of their apartheid constitution before things started to turn out well, it follows that Nigerians have to get rid of their apartheid constitution as well for their ‘project’ – the country, to get going right.

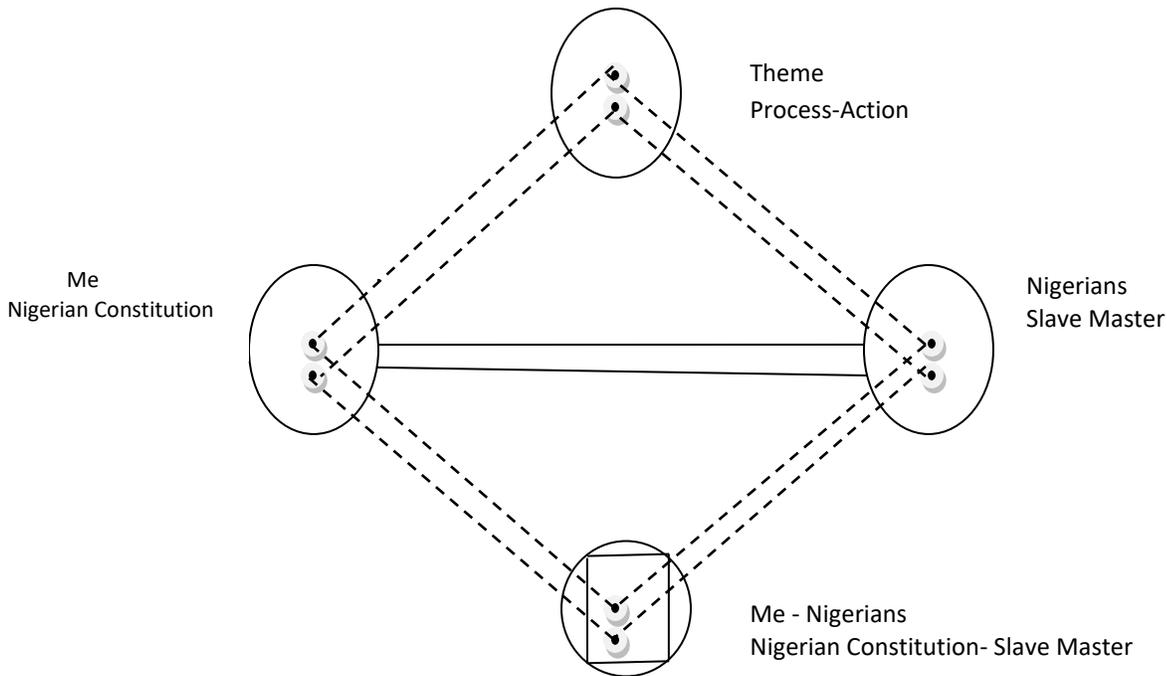
The participant in another argumentative move projects the ideology that the Nigerian Constitution is a slave master. This reasoning is explicit in the following excerpt upon which the next conceptual blending network is drawn.

Excerpt 8

H: Are you aware that there is not part of this country that is not richly blessed in terms of natural resources?

P: That makes the matter worse because if being so richly blessed↑ they sat over my head to define what belongs to who without my participation because it was between Gowon and Murtala Mohammed and er: all of the succession of those who made all of the decrees they compounded in 1979 and 1999 to call constitution. What we are saying simply is that they have imposed their will and *enslaved me* in black and white.

The participant metaphorically represents Nigerians as ‘me’, that is himself. Since there was no convergence of a National Conference before the Nigerian Constitution was created and amended in 1979 and 1999 respectively, he presupposes that the ruling lords and their succession of rulers made all of the decrees and compounded them to serve as constitution. Of note, though, is the fact that he assumes that the constitution is an imposition on ‘him’, that is, Nigerians, and as a result is enslaving. A conceptual blend for this is created by fusing the inputs and selectively projecting them into an emergent structure.

Fig. 8 Conceptual blending network for ‘constitution...enslaved me’

In this blend, two different scenarios in Input spaces one and two are fused to become a compound element – assuming the same meaning. ‘Me’, that is, the participant as an individual, is to be understood as the entirety of Nigerians. The participant employs the argumentative move of victimisation to make Nigerians see that he is representing their interests and him, them, have been enslaved by virtue of not being consulted before the compounding of the constitution. The Nigerian constitution which is a booklet is also given the frame of a hard, harsh and imposing slave master – attributes of an animate to an inanimate object. By virtue of the leaders’ decrees and self-will imbedded in the constitution, it therefore serves as good as a slave master. The imaginative and logical process of elaboration in the blend allows the inference that since the slave trade era is long gone, Nigerians should join in the fight to disregard the current constitution while being dogged in their quest for a change of the constitution through the National Conference.

On ‘Kakaaki’s Ember Month Campaign - Driving Behavior and Issues of Safety’, the participant talks about the enlightening campaign as a preaching work. He invokes the imagery of a devoted gospel activity where what is preached is not about the Koran or the

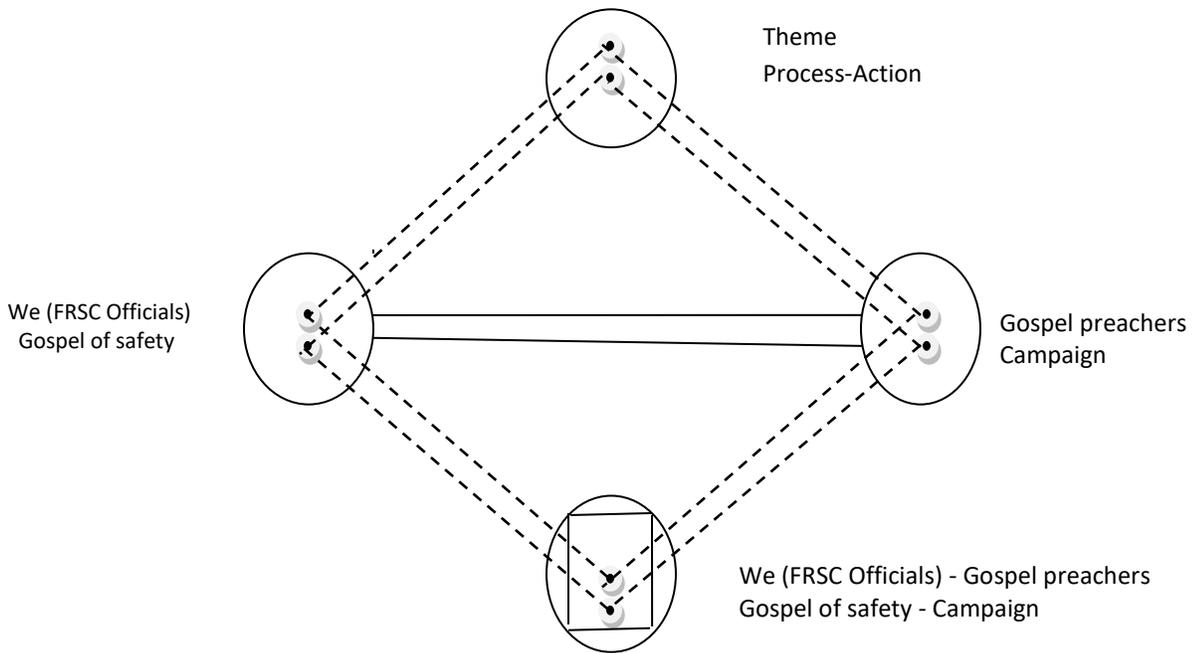
Bible but the gospel of safety. He thereby emphasises the road safety ideology by painting the lifesaving nature of this gospel and showing that the FRSC would be dedicated to its course as do preachers of the gospel of God.

Excerpt 9

P: The advocacy has to do with motor park rallies *we* do. It has to do with visits to er: religious houses (.) churches (.) mosques. It has to do with visits to government departments and private departments (.) large organisations for the purpose of er: *preaching the gospel of safety*.

A blend for this can be represented thus:

Fig. 9 Conceptual blending network for ‘preaching gospel of safety’



The scenarios created of the FRSC officials as gospel preachers implies that the road safety men are determined in their desire to get to as many people as possible, as gospel preachers endeavour to do. The gospel of safety thus is the campaign message which

they would doggedly preach to motorists all over the nation. As the gospel about God as written in the Holy Books, and proclaimed by his preachers have the possibility of bringing salvation to those who hear and take heed, so the gospel of safety as written in the FRSC codes and proclaimed by the FRSC ‘preachers’ would bring safety, avoidance of accidents and loss of lives and vehicles to motorists who would hear and take heed. These two different scenarios are thereby fused to become a linking component- the saving of lives, although achieved through different means - to project the road safety ideology.

5. Findings

From the foregoing analysis, it can be seen that that the selected episodes of the different talk shows Kakaaki, Focus Nigeria, and Head to Head all contained conceptual blending patterns as a result of the mental spaces conceptualised by the participants on the programme. In Kakaaki, for example, four mental spaces are created that represents the Boko-Haram as a tragedy. Two mental spaces are also created that equated the zeal of the BringBackOurGirls campaigners to fire. Following this, the effort by the government to stall the campaign is equated with quenching a fire.

Furthermore, in Focus Nigeria, the FRSC officials – in an episode – are metaphorically represented by the participant as gospel preachers, and their road safety campaign is represented as a gospel of safety, in two mental spaces. Additionally, the discourse of the chief of the FRSC brought about a creation of two mental spaces where the new data system is viewed as a foundation, and legacies – those he sought to leave behind – are virtues.

In Head-to-Head episodes, a greater number of mental spaces were created – about 11 – compared with the other two talk shows, Kakaaki and Focus Nigeria. The participant in one of the episodes considered the BringBackOurGirls campaigners as charlatans; Nigeria is a disputed project; the Nigerian Constitution is an apartheid constitution and a slave master; Senator Sani Yerima is same as Shekau, the Boko-Haram terrorist leader, among other framings. Several argumentative moves and framings were deployed to create these mental spaces that have been identified and go a long way in showing how participants on the selected Nigerian talk shows conceptualised the happenings discussed.

6. Conclusion

Nigerian television talk show participants in the selected episodes are found conceptualising ideologies by use of metaphors, as shown in the blended patterns. This

shows that a lot happens in the cognitive domain before they play out as words, as has been argued by scholars (van Dijk, 1995; Chilton, 2004, 2005; Hart, 2007). Recognition of this fact should help media practitioners, especially those that anchor talk show programs, in their management of the issues raised. Knowledge of how conceptual blending is applied during interactions can help them realise the need to craft questions that would enable them get to the root of their discourse and adequately inform their audience. It also should help them avoid pitfalls of making unnecessary comparisons through the use of metaphorical expressions. This study has helped to show what leads to positions taken and adopted at such speech events.

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