Use of conceptual metaphor in Sam Omatseye's "*In Touch*" column in *The Nation* Nigerian newspaper

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Abstract

Conceptual metaphors "are abstract structures of thought that function as a conceptual frame in terms of which single lexical items are produced and comprehended" (Muller, 2008). This study is motivated by how a Nigerian newspaper columnist, Sam Omatseye, uses conceptual metaphors to aid in the comprehension of his ideas by the readers. A cognitive semantic approach to metaphor is used as the theoretical framework for this study. Using a stratified sampling method, the study chooses all the February 2015 editions of "In Touch" by Sam Omatseye in The Nation to drive home its point. The study found that Mr Omatseye deploys conceptual metaphors and uses metaphors from several source domains to express his target domains clearly. The paper concludes that studying conceptual metaphors throws additional insights into the transactional function of language and provides a helpful tool for understanding how language can be effectively manipulated to attract readers' attention.

Keywords: Conceptual metaphor, primary and complex metaphors, source domain, target domain, cognitive semantics

1.   Introduction

This work examines the conceptual metaphors used by Sam Omatseye in his column "In Touch" in *The Nation*, one of Nigerian's leading national newspapers. The column is written every Monday with focus on contemporary national issues.

The columnist, who is the Chairman of the Editorial Board of *The Nation* Nigerian Newspaper, has practised journalism in Nigeria and the United States. He has won several awards, including the Nigeria Media Merit Award (four times), Diamond Awards for Media Excellence in the Informed Commentary category (three times), the maiden winner of the Gordon Fisher Fellowship for journalists in the British Commonwealth (1991), the features prize for the Association of Black Journalists in Colorado, etc. All this indicates how sound he is as a journalist.

A few things are informed on the choice of the column. The first is that, according to a 2009 survey, the newspaper is adjudged the second most widely read newspaper in Nigeria (www.thenationonlineng.net). Thus, it is believed that the column must have had a lot of influence on the newspaper reading populace of the country. Another reason is the fact that it targets an elitist audience, the educated and the upwardly mobile, who are currently shaping the affairs of the nation. In addition, it discusses contemporary issues in Nigeria ranging from politics to education, from health to security, etc. and this bears consonance with the column's title, "In Touch" as the columnist keeps his readers abreast of crucial and current issues. Lastly, the column is significant to the nation because of its impact on the 2015 Nigerian General Elections which the opposition party won for the first time in the history of the nation's democracy.

Using all the four editions that make up the February 2015 editions as data, this paper starts with a brief examination of metaphor as well as conceptual metaphor. It discusses the three aspects of metaphor, the four characteristics of metaphor, as well as conceptual metaphor. There is also an insight into source and target domains in conceptual metaphor. It proceeds to explain the cognitive semantic perspective of conceptual metaphor, an approach which serves as the theoretical framework for this paper.

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2.   Literature Review

According to Lorenzetti (2010, p. 585), recent developments in conceptual metaphor has "led to the significant observation that metaphor, far from being a decorative tool or a rhetorical device, plays a central and primary role in people's thought and imagination". Thus, metaphor "involves the apprehension of concrete, familiar areas of experience to construe more abstract and unfamiliar experience" (Hart, 2007, p. 79). The familiar areas have been tagged as source or basic domains while the abstract or unfamiliar experiences have been referred to as the target or abstract domains (cf. Charteris-Black, 2004; Danesi, 2004; and Muller, 2008). In essence, metaphorical expressions reflect and reinforce the way we think about given phenomena around us. This is made possible by how metaphorical expressions condition our thought. This function of metaphor is reinforced by Lakoff when he observes that: "What metaphor does is limit what we notice, highlight what we do see, and provide part of the inferential structure that we reason with" (Lakoff, 1992, p. 481).

Similar to the foregoing, Koller and Semino (2009, p. 12) have noted that in the mental operation known as metaphoric transfer, knowledge about a source domain is mapped onto a target domain so that the listener or reader will have a basis for a better understanding of the speaker's or writer's message. Thus, the major contribution of metaphor to communication is that of making our thoughts clear about a phenomenon.

There are three aspects of metaphor; these are vehicle, tenor and ground (Cruse, 2000, p. 202). The vehicle refers to the item(s) used metaphorically, i.e. the linguistic expression used by either the speaker or writer. The tenor means the meaning of the vehicle, i.e., the meaning of the linguistic expression. The last aspect, which is the ground, refers to the basis for the metaphorical extension i.e., the relationship between the vehicle and the tenor. The ground must indirectly relate the vehicle to the tenor before there can be successful metaphor.

Apart from the three aspects of metaphor, there are also four characteristics of metaphor. These are conventionality, systematicity, asymmetry

and abstraction (Saeed, 2009, p. 361). Conventionality of metaphor deals with the level of novelty of the metaphor used. Before a metaphor can function properly, it has to be new and catchy. Systematicity means that a metaphor does not only set up a single point of comparison but gives different ways of comparison so that the metaphor can be extended. Asymmetry is another characteristic of metaphor, and it means that a metaphor should be able to stimulate the listener or reader to compare between two concepts. The characteristic of abstraction permits metaphorical language users to comprehend ideas and concepts better. In this case, the less familiar concept is understood through the more familiar concept.

The idea of conceptual metaphor theory was popularized by Lakoff and Johnson in their many publications. Hence, the theory focuses on the analysis of concepts brought together as a particular unit or entity, having a different meaning from the meanings of the individual items.

Charteris-Black (2004, p. 9) says that "conceptual metaphor represents the conceptual basis, idea or image that underlies a set of metaphors." It manifests in different forms, and such forms may not be in words alone but also in the grammar of a language, dressing and their cultural view of people, as well as other non-verbal modes of communication like gesture, kinesics, proxemics, etc. In essence, it can be said that "conceptual metaphors are not conceived of as simple projections of verbal metaphors, or systems of verbal metaphors, into the cognitive system. Rather, they are abstract structures of thought that function as a conceptual frame in terms of which single lexical items are produced and comprehended" (Muller, 2008, p.63). The comprehended idea is what the listener acts upon in any communicative context. Also, it is important to add that the comprehended idea may vary from one context to another or from one person to another, and this determines how the person will react to the information given to him/her.

2.1   Source and Target Domains in Conceptual Metaphor

There is the notion of 'domain' in conceptual metaphor. According to Croft (1993, p. 339), domains refer to "semantic structures that function for the base of at least

one concept profile (typically many profiles)". A domain may either aid the understanding of another or be understood in the light of another. Charteris-Black (2004, p. 15) differentiates between basic domains and abstract domains. Basic domains originate from human experience of temperature, space, growth, etc. while abstract domains are those that presuppose other domains. In essence, Charteris-Black's (2004) categorisation of basic and abstract domains is synonymous to source and target domains respectively (see Danesi, 2004; Muller, 2008; Kövecses, 2010).

The source domain is the domain that helps us understand another domain. The understanding is made possible because the source domain often draws from phenomena, ideas, concepts, etc. that are really close to human activities or experiences. The other domain is called the target domain. For instance, "LIFE IS A JOURNEY" presents 'life' as the target domain and 'journey' as the source domain. Thus, journey helps us understand how life is, because it relates life to different 'destinations' one gets to in a journey. This makes it possible to think about the different stages one passes through in life in the light of destinations. In fact, the expression 'pass through a stage in life' is, in itself, metaphorical since it likens life to a journey.

Kövecses (2010, p. 17) identifies some common source and target domains. The source domains are as follows: the human body, health and illness, animals, plants, buildings and construction, machines and tools, etc. A look at these items indicates that they are very close to human beings, so people experience them very easily. On the other hand, some target domains include emotion, desire, morality, thought, society/nation, politics, economy, human relationship, communication, time, life and death, etc. Because the concepts highlighted here are abstract in nature, according to Charteris-Black (2004), they need to be explained and understood in terms of other concepts that are more concrete in nature. Thus, the source domains help the speakers or writers to express their minds, ideas, intentions, etc. better and also help the listeners or readers to understand such ideas, intentions, etc better. In all, the source domains help in explaining the target domains better and clearer.

3.   Theoretical Framework

Cognitive semantics is a semantic approach that adopts a situation-categorisation perspective on meaning and reference (Lobner, 2002, p. 192). Yu (2008, p. 247) says, "Cognitive semantics maintains that our minds are embodied in such a way that our conceptual systems draw largely upon the peculiarities of our bodies and the specifics of our physical and cultural environments". This means that the human mind finds it much easier to comprehend ideas or concepts close to it than those far away from it. Thus, the use of conceptual metaphors from different source domains will help humans to understand ideas in the target domain. Since cognitive semantics opines that language is part of a more general human cognitive ability, it describes the world as it is organised within the people's conceptual space. Charteris-Black (2004) identifies three tenets of cognitive semantics.

The first tenet is that figurative language creates a relationship between meaning and linguistic units which cannot be accounted for through syntax and lexicon. Figurative language, like metaphor, has the potential of enhancing meaning negotiation better than grammar and lexis. It does this by drawing comparison between an object, an idea, etc. and another for the purpose of clarity. The second tenet is that the knowledge of language is not only acquired but also contextual. So, language users must be familiar with the context in order to use their knowledge of language appropriately. For instance, the expression 'long leg does not matter in this game', in the Nigerian context, means 'nepotism' does not matter in the game. Thus, the phrase 'long leg' does not refer to the physical quality of one of the contestants. Anyone who does not understand this expression in the Nigerian context will find it difficult to interpret its meaning correctly. The third tenet is that the ability to use language draws upon general cognitive resources and not a special language module. For instance, there are some source and target domains that are universal in nature. These can be regarded as general cognitive resources. Examples of such domains include food, seeing, people, etc. Accordingly, "several of the source domains… are relatively understandable across cultures" (Danesi 2004, p. 126), and this makes them universal.

All these tenets make cognitive semantics meaning-based or meaning-focused. However, it does not only focus on meaning and meaning negotiation but also on many other areas that deal with cognition generally. There is no doubt that cognitive semantics is important to conceptual metaphor. This is why Saeed (2009, p. 360) indicates that "an important characteristic of cognitive semantics is the central role in thought and language assigned to metaphor." The central role assigned to thought is based on the power of metaphor to influence thought, and since cognitive semantics itself focuses on human thinking and meaning sharing, metaphor becomes an important tool.

Another area that makes cognitive semantics important to conceptual metaphor is that "the cognitive nature of metaphor involves the fact that it is not a purely lexical phenomenon, situated superficially at the level of the language, but is instead a deep-seated conceptual phenomenon that shapes the way we think" (Geeraerts, 2010, p. 204). This makes it experientially grounded, and the experience of either the speaker or writer on one hand and listener or reader on the other will go a long way in determining how meaning is negotiated.

The relevance of cognitive semantics to conceptual metaphor can also be justified from the perspective of image schemas (Saeed, 2009, p. 366). According to Lakoff and Johnson (2003, p. 177), image schemas are largely unconscious mental outlines of recurrent shapes, actions, dimensions, etc., derived from human perception and sensation. Types of image schemas include containment schema, path schema, link schema, force schema, etc. Containment schema is derived from the experience of the human body as a container. Path schema is derived from the everyday experience of human movement from one place to another while force schema refers to the force that is applied to objects before movement can be possible.

The relationship between cognitive semantics and conceptual metaphor shows that while cognitive semantics focuses on human cognitive ability generally, conceptual metaphor deals with the conceptual basis that underlies human experience. Thus, cognitive semantics helps to understand conceptual metaphors.

4.   Methodology

This study has selected the column "In Touch" from *The Nation* newspaper because of its significance to the nation. The data size consists of all four of the column's February editions dated February 2, 9, 16 and 23. The paper uses the qualitative mode of analysis to explore the conceptual metaphors found in the data selected.

According to Lakoff and Johnson (1980, pp. 456-457), expressions like "you are wasting my time", "I don't have enough time to spare for that", "how do you spend your time these days", "you need to budget your time", etc. give us the conceptual metaphors TIME IS MONEY, TIME IS A LIMITED RESOURCE, TIME IS A VALUABLE COMMODITY. The expressions given above as examples are used in everyday conversation by language users but they are metaphorical in nature. The conceptual metaphors arrived at from the expressions show that a particular expression can give us different conceptual metaphors but these conceptual metaphors will be related. In a similar way, this study has identified conceptual metaphors in the data analysed based on the concepts expressed by the columnist as well as their meanings.

5.   Data Analysis

The data analysis for this work is divided into three segments: the first highlights and explains the different conceptual metaphors found in the data; the second draws attention to the source domains used by the columnist; and the last highlights the target domains which the columnist tries to explain. It should be noted that the analysis does not identify the metaphors found in the data but the conceptual metaphors since the latter is the main focus of the study. However, how the conceptual metaphors are arrived at has been clearly stated in the Methodology. According toLakoff (1992, p. 481), "Reality exists. So does the unconscious system of metaphors that we use without awareness to comprehend reality". This assertion by Lakoff (1992) is quite evident in the data as the analysis reveals.

5.1.   Conceptual Metaphors Used by the Columnist

POLITICAL RELATIONS ARE FAMILY RELATIONS: This is one of the conceptual metaphors used by the columnist, and it can be found in different ways. What is done here is to use family (i.e. biological) relationship that everyone is familiar with to explain how political relationship works. For instance, the columnist used father-son relations to explicate the concept of political relationship. According tothe columnist, things work out well when the relationship is intact but when the relationship turns sour, things will never work out well. Specific examples of this can be found in the following excerpts from the column:

> "President Goodluck Jonathan once had a father." (paragraph 1, February 9, 2015);
>
> "Quietly he divorced his father." (paragraph 4, February 9, 2015);
>
> "...father and son no longer hugged or backslapped." (paragraph 7, February 9, 2015);
>
> "...he visited his father recently" (paragraph 8, February 9, 2015); and
>
> "Later he seemed to adopt the son" (paragraph 8, February 9, 2015).

In the first two examples, the columnist refers to the former president as 'father' while President Goodluck Jonathan is referred to as the 'son'. This becomes clearer when one considers the impact of the former president on his 'son's' election.

INSURGENCY IS A BABY: This is another conceptual metaphor used by the columnist. Thus, if insurgency is nurtured into maturity, it will lead to a countless number of problems in the society, just as Nigeria is experiencing now. However, all the problems could have been averted if insurgency had been killed from infancy. This conceptual metaphor is taken from the domain of human biological or physical development. Just as a human baby will be taken care of, loved and shown affection for proper growth and development, the concept of insurgency

can also be nurtured. Its importance lies in the fact that everyone knows how human beings develop, though to varying degrees. This conceptual metaphor makes it possible for the readers to comprehend the concept of insurgency from the perspective of human development, and this obviously aids the understanding of the concept. Also, it shows that babies wouldn't easily be born where they cannot be nurtured, i.e., procreation would not have been possible without an enabling environment. This can be exemplified in the quotation below:

> "Boko Haram could be born in Nigeria because politicians nurtured it in its infancy." (paragraph 13, February 23, 2015).

The columnist suggests here that there are people in the country who aid Boko Haram insurgency. Thus, they nurture insurgency.

DIFFERENT PEOPLE FORMING A POLITICAL GROUP ARE PARTS OF THE HUMAN BODY: They all make a single whole. Thus, there must be unity before there can be progress. Most importantly, every part of the body must be in good condition before the entire body could be considered as being well. For instance, the columnist has used the word "whitlow" to show the discomfort and great pain one of the political allies is causing. This is because whitlow can cause a lot of discomfort for the entire body even though it affects just a finger. This can be found in expressions like:

> "The whitlow of the west" (paragraph 11, February 9, 2015);
> "the whitlow of the west" (paragraph 3, February 16, 2015);
> "he no longer can hide the colour of his teeth" (paragraph 3, February 16, 2015); etc.

The way the columnist uses different human body parts here indicates that coordination hasto exist among them. With the use of the word 'whitlow', it

is evident that the body part which is 'sick' is causing a lot of discomfort for the entire body.

AMBITIONS ARE VEHICLES: The columnist has used this conceptual metaphor to indicate that because ambitions are vehicles, such ambitions drive an ambitious person. Thus, people's ambition can drive them to do or undo a lot of things, especially when such ambitions are political. This can be found in:

> "the minister whose imploded gubernatorial fantasies are driving him into all sorts of public misbehaviour both in and out of tapes" (paragraph 5, February 16, 2015).

SERVICE CHIEFS ARE JUDGES AND MILITARY MATTERS ARE (COURT) CASES: This conceptual metaphor is taken from the source domain of the judiciary or justice. This is used because of the writer's awareness that most of his readers are conscious of judicial matters (since most of the readers are not just literate but also educated and many of them have been following political issues), at least, to an extent. Thus, their knowledge of the judiciary or the justice system of the country or any other country makes it easier for them to understand the roles of service chiefs in military affairs or 'military justice'. This can be found in the excerpt below:

> "Then we have service chiefs who have presided over cases of desertion in the military" (paragraph 5, February 16, 2015).

ELECTION IS A GAME: There is also the conceptual metaphor "Election is a game". Thus, while somebody or a team wins, another will definitely lose. As a result of this, different tactics are used by each side to make sure that the other is defeated. The columnist indicates this with the use of the following expressions: "...no one can say with absolute certainty that Fayose won the election" (paragraph 3, February 23, 2015);

"Some have said that Fayose won given the acclamation of the streets" (paragraph 3, February 23, 2015); and

"...how could Fayemi have lost in all local governments?" (paragraph 4, February 23, 2015).

From the quotations above, it can be seen that while a party or team wins, the other suffers the opposite fate.

WISDOM IS A PLANT: When the seed of wisdom is sown, it grows like a plant and brings forth fruit. However, the inability of the government to do what is right in the education sector amounts to failure to sow the seed of wisdom. Thus, the person at the helm of affairs is considered a failure in that respect. This can be explicated by the excerpt below:

"He was not voted in to sow the seeds for the wise men and women of the future." (paragraph 4, February 2, 2015).

5.2.   Characteristics of Metaphor in the Data

Based on the characteristics of Metaphor in the literature review of this work, the following can be discussed in the data:

Conventionality: The columnist has made use of novel metaphors in the data. For instance, we have: "Quietly, he divorced his father" (paragraph 4, February 9, 2015); "Boko Haram could be born in Nigeria because politicians nurtured it in its infancy" (paragraph 13, February 23, 2015). The expressions above fulfil the condition or characteristic of conventionality because they do not indicate the regular/popular way of indicating "divorce" and "birth" respectively.

Systematicity: This characteristic of metaphor states that a metaphor does not set up just a single point of comparison but gives different ways of comparison. This

characteristic can be found in the example: "he was not voted in to sow the seeds for the wise men and women of the future". This indicates that the person "was voted in to sow the seeds for the unwise men and women of the future" or "to uproot the seeds for the wise men and women of the future". Thus, there is a comparison between "wise" and "unwise" as well as "sowing" and "uprooting"

Asymmetry: This characteristic of metaphor means that a metaphor should be able to stimulate the listener or reader to compare between two concepts. This has been successfully done by Sam Omatseye. It is evident in the following excerpt: "... no one can say with absolute certainty that Fayose won the election" (paragraph 3 February 23, 2015). What this metaphor does is to stimulate the readers to compare between "winning" and "losing" or between Fayose (the winner) and Fayemi (the loser).

5.3   Major Source Domains Used by the Columnist

As stated in the literature review, in section 2.2, the reason why speakers or writers use source domains to express target domains is because of the proximity of the source domains to the listeners or readers. This affords the speaker or writer the opportunity to draw comparison, especially between ideas, concepts, etc. and make their expressions clearer. In line with this, Sam makes use of certain source domains close to his audience to express his intended ideas or concepts clearly. Source domains identified in the data are as follows:

Kinship terms/family relationship: The columnist has made use of several kinship terms as source domains. This is important and effective because every one of his readers belongs to a family and has a relationship with other family members, either nucleus or extended. With this close affinity, it will be easy for the reader to understand political issues in the light of family relationship used as the source domain. Some instances of this can be identified as follows:

"If our cousins or sons or fathers cannot find healing in our hospitals, we should not pour woe on the poor and ineffectual health care system." (paragraph 5, February 2, 2015);

"President Goodluck Jonathan once had a father." (paragraph 1, February 9, 2015);

"...he visited his father recently" (paragraph 8, February 9, 2015); and

"...if his master-son loses" (paragraph 7, February 16, 2015).

The first example implies that the government should be blamed for the poor health care system, and kinship terms are used to make the readers feel the impact of such failure on the health care system. In the second example above, the son is 'President Goodluck Jonathan' while the father is the former president, 'Olusegun Obasanjo'. In the last two examples, the newly adopted father is an ex-military dictator in the country whose name is not mentioned in the article but his home town is mentioned. This source domain is used to explain the target domain of politics.

Human body parts: Another source domain used by the columnist is that of human body parts. This is a source domain, the easiest for any human being to comprehend and appreciate. As a result, it has been used by the writer to explain his ideas.

"Does he have the fire in his belly?" (paragraph 11, February 2, 2015);

"When the PVC debate slipped out of the hands" (paragraph 10, February 9, 2015);

"...with a comic face...has a bitter tongue in his head..." (paragraph 1, February 16, 2015);

"...he no longer can hide the colour of his teeth" (paragraph 3, February 9, 2015);

"He placed his flawed finger in the holy of holies" (paragraph 8, February 9, 2015); and

"...the military fell into the hands of the nationalist elite" (paragraph 9, February 23, 2015).

The target domain being referred to by the columnist with the use of this source domain is still politics. He tries to make the readers understand how political matters can be related to the human body. Discussing the issue of PVC (permanent voter's card), for instance, he opines that the issues slipped out of the party's hands just like a physical object.

Agriculture: The fauna environment is close to human beings; even those who live in cities have their own share of it. Thus, the writer makes use of this source domain because the domain makes it easy to explain the importance of 'growing' the education sector, like a farmer will plant and grow crops. This can be found in: "He was not voted in to sow the seeds for the wise men and women of the future." (paragraph 4, February 2, 2015). The use of the word 'seeds' by the columnist from the source domain of agriculture helps to explain the concept of education better. This is done by comparing the gradual development in the education sector with how crops grow gradually rather than suddenly.

Military: Because of the popularity of the military and military matters, the columnist makes use of this source domain so that the readers will have a clear understanding of the concept he is discussing. For instance, the primary responsibility of any army is territorial defence. This is understood by a good percentage of people in the society. However, it is not limited to territorial defence as the army can also be used for some other purposes. The following excerpts indicate the use of military terms:

"The Caliphate's army" (paragraph 1, February 23, 2015);
"...I tried to cast the army of the June 12 era to the present" (paragraph 2, February 23, 2015);
"But this is not a Nigerian army" (paragraph 3, February 23, 2015); and

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"...the military fell into the hands of the nationalist elite" (paragraph 9, February 23, 2015).

The target domain which the columnist is discussing here is 'security'. Every one of Sam's readers is aware of the fact that the major duty of the army is territorial defence. This is a matter of security. While security itself cannot be seen, the army can be seen. Thus the columnist uses what can be seen to explain what cannot be seen.

Judiciary: Since the judiciary is close to Sam's readers, he makes use of the source domain to express his idea more clearly to the readers. Although some people may not have full knowledge of the workings of the judiciary, certain important things are understood by the readers. For instance, most (if not all) of the readers are aware that a court will always have a presiding judge, cases will be brought before the court, etc. Thus, this source domain is close to the readers and has been used to express the concept of justice in the country, especially in the military. In this case, the columnist is reiterating the injustice done to some soldiers. This is represented by the use of words or expressions that relate to judicial or court matters, e.g.:

"Then we have service chiefs who have presided over cases of desertion in the military." (paragraph 5, February 16, 2015)

The excerpt above gives the notion that military matters are court cases, and they must be presided over by people who are designated to do so. He chooses the judiciary domain because the service chiefs have presided (just like judges) over military matters. And what the service chiefs have done has been considered as injustice to the soldiers being court-martialed as well as many Nigerians.

War: Another source domain used by the columnist is that of war. There are several instances which are used to indicate that diverse issues in life can be

considered as war or war-like situations. This accounts for the use of linguistic elements that either directly or indirectly deal with war. For instance, there must be a defence in war, and soldiers will fire gunshots at their enemies or be fired at. The excerpts below indicate some of the instances of this domain:

> "...their failure to defend democracy on February 14 is a desertion in chief" (paragraph 5, February 16, 2015);
> "He is expecting Jega to be fired" (paragraph 8, February 16, 2015); and
> "...before firing the general" (paragraph 7, February 23, 2015).

The excerpts above indicate, for instance, that the INEC chairman can be fired as if he is on the battle field. Similarly, the military is expected to defend democracy as if it is defending the territory of its country.

5.4 Major Target Domains Used by the Columnist

Economy: The possibility that the economy may not be easy for many of Sam's readers to understand makes him use certain concepts to express the target domain of economy. If things are going on smoothly then the economy is good, but if things are not going on fine the economy is bad. The columnist makes use of the following expressions to convey this concept:

> "So if in a few years the naira slides to N250 to a dollar" (paragraph 6, February 2, 2015); and
> "It was sheer volcano, ripping apart the budget" (paragraph 8, February 2, 2015).

The target domain of economy is better understood by the way it is expressed because a slide in the economy is negative, so it is undesirable. Also, there is nothing good about volcanic eruptions because they cause a lot of havoc wherever they occur. So when it occurs in the economy, it rips the budget apart.

Politics: The columnist also makes use of certain ideas to explain the target domain of government and politics. Since politics has a lot of phases, types, etc., the writer has only described the aspect he wants the reader to comprehend as manifested in the following examples:

> "...but in the majesty of the democratic process. Democracy is the voice of the people..." (paragraph 2, February 2, 2015); and
>
> "...the minister whose imploded gubernatorial fantasies are driving him into all sorts of   public misbehaviour both in and out of tapes." (paragraph 5, February 16, 2015).

Education: One of the things that can never be joked about in the discussion of modern education is the concept of 'school' which is a subset of education. Instead of mentioning the state of Nigerian education directly, the writer has simply used the following expressions:

> "...schools for the minds of the future." (paragraph 6, February 2, 2015); and
>
> "We did not vote for him to tackle the dangerous slide in education." (paragraph 4, February 2, 2015).

Security: Another concept that may be difficult to quickly understand by the reader is that of security. Thus, the columnist makes use of a popular and common source domain to express the target domain of security. This is used to depict the spate of insecurity in the country. This is evident in the following excerpt:

> "Boko Haram could be born in Nigeria because politicians nurtured it in its infancy." (paragraph 13, February 23, 2015).

Health Care System: Although the healthcare delivery of any nation is more than important to its success, the Nigerian situation is a sorry case. This can be found in the following:

> "If our cousins or sons or fathers cannot find healing in our hospitals, we should not pour   woe on the poor and ineffectual health care system." (paragraph 5, February 2, 2015).

Justice System/Injustice: Another target domain expressed by the columnist is that of justice. He tries to make his readers more aware of the fact that injustice has been done to some junior officers in the army. The officers had stood before a court-martial and had been found guilty before the article was written. The columnist as well as many other people perceived this as injustice. The source domain used to express this idea is 'judiciary' which has been discussed above.

6.   Findings

Going by Brown and Yule's (1983, p. 1) classification of the functions of language into transactional and interactional, this paper has found out that conceptual metaphor assists in how language is used to perform transactional function, i.e., the expression of content. Effective communication loaded with lots of information is thus the core of conceptual metaphor.

An appraisal of the use of conceptual metaphor by Sam Omatseye has revealed a numberof things. For instance, it shows that with an appropriate use of conceptual metaphors, writers or speakers are able to express their ideas quite clearly. For instance, quotations like, "President Goodluck Jonathan once had a father", "...he visited his father recently", etc. indicate the relationship between President Goodluck Jonathan and the "father" in question. This use of kinship terms or family relationship (as source domain) makes it easier for the columnist to express his mind to the readers. So, this aligns with the third tenet of cognitive

semantics identified on page 5-6 of this work, because the columnist has drawn upon the general cognitive resources popular among Nigerians.

The analysis has also revealed that the world knowledge of both the writer and the readers informs the use of certain conceptual metaphors as well as specific source and target domains. This is made possible because these domains are well-known to the participants, i.e., the writer and the reader. Although the writer might have used some of them unintentionally, their use does not hinder effective communication; rather, it aids its effectiveness because both the writer and the readers have or share the same values.

Still complementing the appropriate deployment of conceptual metaphors, it has been discovered that conceptual metaphor has been used to communicate to the readers that there is an abnormality in the relationship between President Goodluck Jonathan and his "father". Thus, the columnist says: "Quietly he divorced his father". This inappropriate circumstance draws the readers' attention to the situation at hand. This is because a father is not the same as a husband. Only a husband is supposed to be divorced by a wife or vice versa. However, the case here is different. The choice of the word "divorced" hinges on the fact that divorce is not considered appropriate in any traditional Nigerian society; consequently, it is generally detested. This is cognitive in nature because the word "divorced" has conditioned the thinking pattern of the readers (cf. Geeraerts, 2010, p. 204) by emphasizing its negativity. This negativity is brought into the political situation to show that there is a serious problem between the 'father' and the 'son'. The father and son here are President Goodluck Jonathan and former president Olusegun Obasanjo.

Another thing that is evident in Sam Omatseye's use of conceptual metaphor is that since he is using it to discuss national issues, conceptual metaphor affords him the opportunity to use and address issues directly. This is possible because the contexts in which the metaphors occur and the evidence of the speaker's intentions that these contexts provide in using the metaphors, as Charteris-Black (2004, p. 13) asserts, are made manifest since most of the readers have good knowledge of the context. The knowledge of the context helps the

readers to comprehend Sam Omatseye's message without any problem because most of the readers are quite aware of the political and other happenings in the country which have led to Sam's discussions. In addition, one major reason behind Sam's choice of the identified Conceptual Metaphors is their closeness to the Nigerian people in their everyday experiences. Similarly, it is based on existing political circumstances of the nation at the time the column was written.

7.   Conclusion

This paper has examined the conceptual metaphors used by Sam Omatseye in his column entitled "In Touch". The findings of this study could go a long way in extending the frontiers of linguistic studies by shedding more light on the communicative significance of conceptual metaphor. From the foregoing analysis of four issues of "In Touch", it can be inferred that the columnist uses conceptual metaphors that are largely contextual, and represent a veritable tool for affecting and effecting desirable thought. Similarly, he uses materials from source domains that are capable of having a deep-seated conceptual phenomenon that shapes the readers' thinking. Examples of this include the use of materials from the source domains of agriculture, kinship terms, etc. The effective deployment of conceptual metaphor is thus not just a question of using the appropriate source domains, but of an effective use of such to capture the necessary target domains. Therefore, in line with our theoretical framework as well as findings, cognitive semantics is important to conceptual metaphor in a number of ways.

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Appendix

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