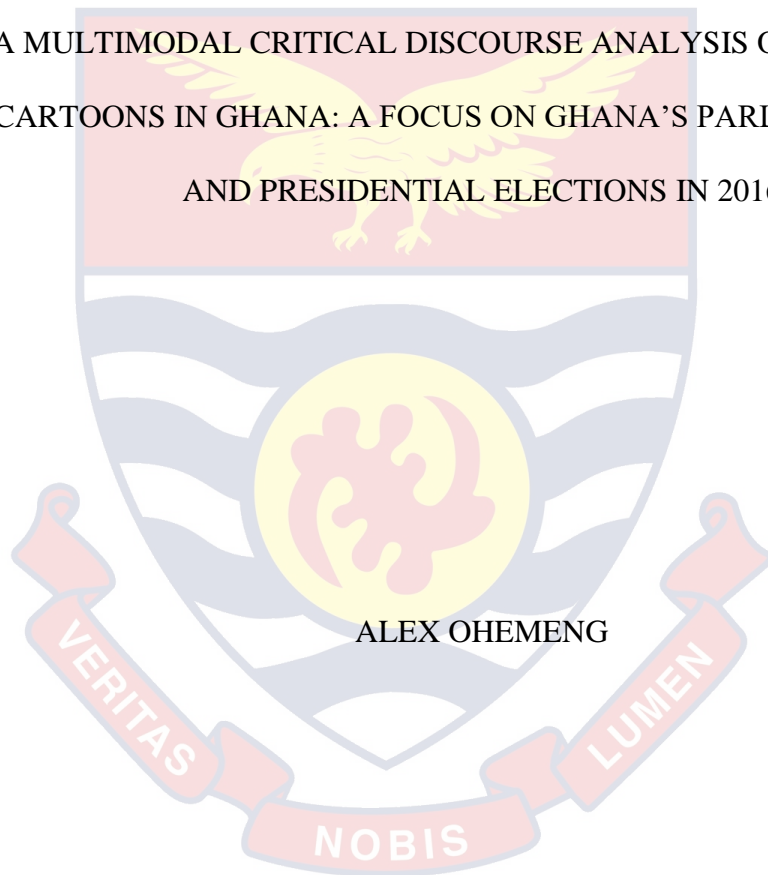


UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

A MULTIMODAL CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF POLITICAL
CARTOONS IN GHANA: A FOCUS ON GHANA'S PARLIAMENTARY
AND PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS IN 2016



ALEX OHEMENG

2020

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AND PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS IN 2016

BY
ALEX OHEMENG

Thesis submitted to the Department of English of the Faculty of Arts,
University of Cape Coast, College of Humanities and Legal Studies, in partial
fulfilment of the requirements for the award of a Master of Philosophy degree
in English Language

NOVEMBER 2020

DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original work and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Candidate's Signature..... Date.....

Name: Alex Ohemeng

Supervisors' Declaration

We hereby declare that the preparation and supervision of this thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

Principal Supervisor's Signature..... Date.....

Name: Prof. Joseph Benjamin Archibald Afful

Co-Supervisor's Signature..... Date.....

Name: Prof. Kwabena Sarfo Sarfo-Kantankah

ABSTRACT

Communication has, over the years, taken new trends to suit how people interact because the creation of meaning is increasingly becoming multimodal across different contexts (Ademilokun & Olateju, 2016). This study sought to investigate the ideologies of political cartoons in Ghana with *Akosua*, a political cartoon published in the *Daily Guide*, as the focus. Specifically, it explores what the artist (*Akosua*) projected in the (political) cartoons prior to Ghana's December 2016 Parliamentary and Presidential Elections (PPEs). The study employed a multimodal critical discourse approach (MCDA), as pioneered and championed by the works of Kress and van Leeuwen (1996, 2006), to explore the issues engraved in one hundred and fifty (150) cartoons of *Akosua*. This study found six (6) themes based on common issues that dominated the discourse in Ghana. Unsurprisingly, the theme of electoral process dominated since the period chosen for the study marked the peak period in the elections as several issues were published in the media that bordered on preparations and organisation toward the elections. The study revealed that some of the political actors were represented in the cartoons in a way that projected them as more appealing to win the elections over others. The study has implications for studying critical multimodal discourse analysis and political cartoons (PCs), especially, taking into consideration, the Ghanaian context.

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DEDICATION

To my mum, Mrs Cecilia Ama Brayie,

For her *love*



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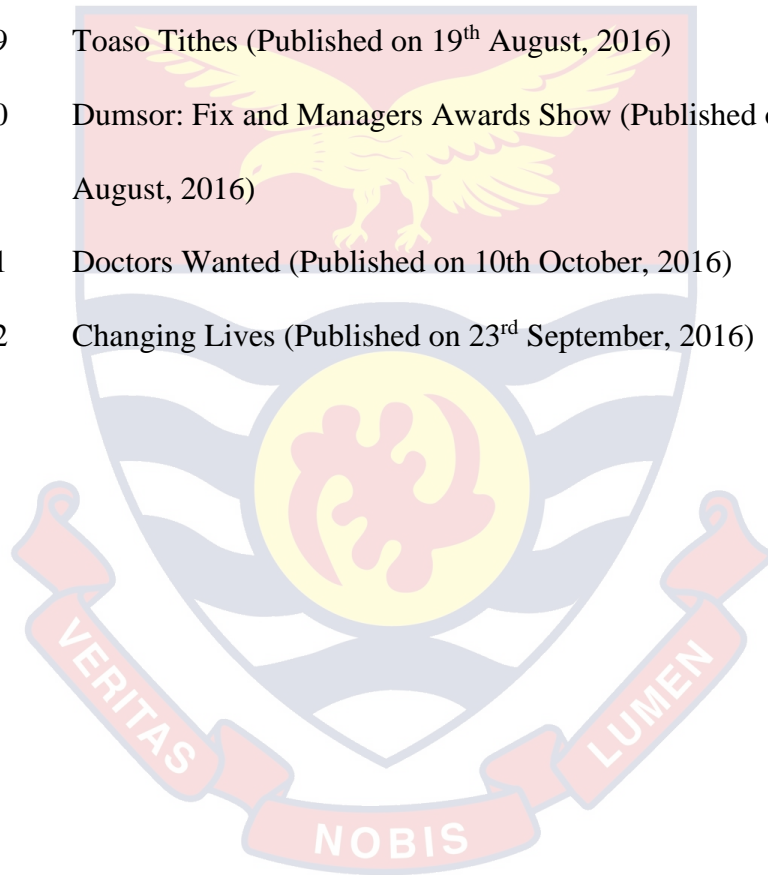
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LIST OF ACRONYMS

CC	Christian Council
CID	Criminal Investigation Department
CJ	Chief Justice
CLA	Critical Language Awareness
CLS	Critical Language Studies
CPP	Convention People's Party
CS	Council of State
DA	Discourse Analysis
DT	Donald Trump
EC	Electoral Commission
ECG	Electricity Company of Ghana
EIU	Economic Intelligence Unit
GPE	Ghanaian Pidgin English
GPS	Ghana Police Service
GTG	Generative Transformational Grammar
HC	Hilary Clinton
IOB	Isaac Owusu Bempah
JDM	John Dramani Mahama
JDM	John Dramani Mahama
MB	Mahamadu Bawumia
MMT	Metro Mass Transit
NADAA	Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo
NDC	National Democratic Congress
NDP	National Democratic Party

NP	Nsawam Prison
NPP	New Patriotic Party
PC	Political Cartoon
PKBAA	Paa Kwesi Bekoe Amissah-Arthur
PNC	People's National Convention
PNDC	Provisional National Defence Council
PNDC	Provisional National Defence Council
PPEs	Parliamentary and Presidential Elections
SADA	Savanna Accelerated Development Authority
SC	Supreme Court
TBJ	Temitope Balogun Joshua



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

This chapter serves as the foundation on which the subsequent chapters rest. This is achieved by setting the background to the thesis, providing the research problem and the purpose of the study. The Chapter also presents the research questions that guide the study, the significance, delimitation and the organisation of the thesis.

Background to the Study

Communication has, over the years, taken new trends to suit how people interact. In recent times, the means of communication is increasingly becoming multimodal across different contexts since producers of texts draw on a wide range of semiotic resources to create meaning (Ademilokun & Olateju, 2016). Most issues in our societies are also presented in digital forms because of globalisation and the wide access to digital space with its high influence on how humans communicate. Usually, the meanings that characterise works through this medium are multi-layered and can only be interpreted and apprehended beyond their literal meanings. El Refaie (2009, p.5) posits that these meanings operate on two levels: “on one level, they tell an imaginary story about a make-believe world, while on a second, more abstract level, they refer to real-life events and characters”. Thus, some literary artists have, with time, raised issues on some social cankers such as corruption, leadership incompetence, mismanagement of public funds, etc., utilising visual and semiotic resources as can be found in artworks such as cartoons, plaques, editorial pictures, sculptures, art paintings, and short animated videos.

Cartoons are seen in contemporary times as a vital medium through which public opinions are formed on important issues that affect our daily lives. Caswell (2004, p.14) posits that (political) cartoons can be regarded as “both opinion-moulding and opinion reflecting” and they give subtle frameworks within which to examine the life and political processes of a nation (DeSousa & Medhurst, 1982). One of the aims of this genre is to transform social events as well as situations that are regarded as complex and opaque into easy and accessible visual depictions to facilitate understanding. Sani et al (2012), therefore, intimate that political cartoons (PCs) are pictorial representations which depict political and social issues and events in an immediate and condensed form. They are characterised by the humorous depiction of events, exploiting the ability of irony and satire to unravel, ridicule and attack in a playful, witty, and artful fashion. They enlighten readers on public issues while exposing wrong practices and projecting a distinct point of view (Akande, 2002; El Refaie, 2009). Through political cartoons, the media comment on current socio-political issues in order to transform people and keep them informed and abreast of topical issues that affect their lives.

Research on PCs has been on the rise in recent years and this has made political cartoons “a potent interdisciplinary research field crossing different boundaries such as education, sociology, sciences, psychology, health research, pragmatics and communication” (Sani et al, 2012, p. 9). What this genre then seeks to do is to “construct practical criticisms and provide political commentary aimed at reorienting the public” (Walker, 2003, p.6). Giarelli and Tulman (2003) contend that PCs are a form of media message that harnesses linguistic and non-linguistic devices used not only as vital instruments of

information dissemination, reflecting not only social practices but also a principal means of public access by which the public participates in the wider societal spectrum of debate about a particular event or social phenomenon. In view of this, the present study focuses on what the cartoons of the artist (Akosua) projects in the cartoons *Akosua* prior to Ghana's Parliamentary and Presidential Elections (PPEs) in 2016.

'Akosua', as a personality, holds a Bachelor's degree in Art from the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi and a Master's degree from Royal College of Art, Kensington (Oduro-Frimpong, 2012). Oduro-Frimpong asserts that, through "two credible personal sources", 'Akosua' is a male but chooses to represent himself as a female in public; hence, *Akosua*- an Akan¹ name given to any woman born on Sunday. It is further revealed by Oduro-Frimpong that the artist has appeared in public on just a single occasion during a TV interview with Kwaku-One-on-One² in June 2008. Akosua appeared on the current affairs programmes dressed as an adult female. Furthermore, in the few cartoons that supposedly depict her, Akosua appears as a female child with spiky, plaited hair, sometimes with a sceptical look or a mischievous smile. A defining feature in *Akosua*'s works is the use of a particular public communicative strategy in Akan that is termed *akutia* (innuendo). It is an indirect communication style, stereotypically assigned to women, involving speakers' insinuated reproofs without specifically identifying a target because such a person "is expected to be aware of the subliminal frame of interpretation" (Yankah, 1995, p.52). This strategy is employed by

¹ Akans comprise the largest ethnic group and are located primarily in Southern Ghana. Principal members are Asante, Fante, Brong, and Akuapem who speak various dialects of the language 'Akan' and number more than seven million (Agyekum, 2008).

² A current affairs television programme aired on TV3, Ghana.

communicatively competent interactants who seek to prevent being branded as having malicious intent (Yankah, 1995). Thus, in view of the sensitive topics that are highlighted in *Akosua*, “visually framed in ‘akutiabo’ (the communicative act of ambiguous innuendo use), it can be deduced that perhaps s/he wants her fictive identity to be consistent with two things” (Oduro-Frimpong, 2013, p.8). The first is with Akan (stereotyped) ideologies of the female indirect communicative style in the public domain that is particularly indirect and witty, and second, “traditional association of women with wit, fertile memory and traditional wisdom in Africa” (Yankah, 1995, p.76).

According to Oduro-Frimpong (2013), another reason for *Akosua*’s fictive gender identity can be related to the political environment of Ghana. He opines that

in spite of the constitutional guarantee of free speech, there still lingers the spectre of lawlessness from the military era under the Provisional National Defense Council (PNDC) (1979–1992). One notable example during that period is the alleged political murder of the political cartoonist Joe Mini in the 1980s (p. 13).

There have been attempted assassinations of political opponents, over the years, as well as various incidents where party functionaries and public officials physically break into radio stations to interrupt programs and beat up political opponents. *Akosua*’s guarded identity is to be expected since Ghana’s “constitutional democracy appears not to have completely shed off its rhetoric of the muscle” (Yankah, 2011, p.9). The cartoonist’s continued anonymity and gender identity is perhaps also a necessary response to the personality cult around leading Ghanaian politicians, like Jerry John Rawlings, whose

supporters handed out “lessons” to those who dare to publicly criticize their leaders.

Overview of Ghana’s Presidential and Parliamentary Elections (PPEs) in 2016

Ghana’s Parliamentary and Presidential Elections (PPEs), which were held on 7th December 2016 constituted the Seventh (7th) elections (1992, 1996, 2000, 2004, 2008, 2012 and 2016) since the restoration of multi-party democracy in 1992. The elections were initially scheduled for 7th November 2016 but the date was later rejected by Parliament when the two-thirds majority needed by Parliament of Ghana to give legal backing to the amendment of the 1992 Constitution for the new date could not be reached. Prior to the event, the electoral landscape of Ghana had been dominated by the two major political parties; the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and the New Patriotic Party (NPP). The two parties had previously won the seat of the president and majority of parliament seats in successive elections. Notably, the elections of 2004, 2008, 2012 and 2016 resulted in alternation in power from one political party to another, where the NPP won the first two (2000 and 2004) with the NDC winning the last two editions (2008 and 2012) prior to the elections in 2016. Seven (7) candidates from six (6) different political parties, as can be found in Table 1, competed for the 2016 presidential seat.

Table 1: Presidential Candidates with their Respective Running Mates in the 2016 PPEs

Presidential Candidate	Running Mate	Political Party
Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo	Alhaji Mahamadu Bawumia	New Patriotic Party (NPP)
Papa Kwesi Nduom	Bridgette Dzogbenuku	Convention People's Party (CPP)
John Dramani Mahama	Paa Kwesi Amissah-Arthur	National Democratic Congress (NDC)
Nana Konadu Agyeman Rawlings	Kojo Mensah Sosu	National Democratic Party (NDP)
Edward Mahama	Emmanuel Amenuvor Anyidoho	People's National Convention (PNC)
Jacob Yeboah	Daniel Wilson Torto	Independent Candidate

Source: Electoral Commission of Ghana (2016)

Prior to the elections in 2016, the NPP had wrestled power from the incumbent NDC in 2000, while the NDC came back to power after winning the 2008 elections. In 2016, however, the NPP soundly defeated the ruling NDC. The NPP polled 5,716,026 million votes representing 53.85%, to beat the incumbent President John Dramani Mahama (NDC) who had 4,713,277 million votes representing 44.40% (Electoral Commission, January, 2017). According to Aye (2017, p.3), two reasons account for the uniqueness of the 2016 elections:

The first is the appointment of a new chairperson for the Electoral Commission (EC) and the perception of her being inexperienced for the role and, therefore, subject to manipulation. The second is that it has been emphasised that the 2016 elections took place in a more challenging context than the past six elections.

Ayee further asserts that the political stakes were widely perceived to be higher than in previous presidential elections, as the incumbent president seeking re-election after his party had been in office for two terms and, conversely, the main opposition candidate pursued his third and perhaps final run for office. Public confidence in election administration was greatly tested during the protracted petition challenging the 2012 presidential results, and the EC had its first new chairperson since 1993. In this highly charged political environment, the need for inclusion, transparency, and accountability was heightened, especially as procedural disputes became politicised, further fuelling tensions and raising fears of election-related violence. At the end of the elections, the NPP emerged victorious in the presidential seat. Also, they won more parliamentary seats (169) than the NDC (106). According to The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) report (2017), the elections constituted one of Ghana's most credible organized elections.

Statement of the Problem

Researchers such as van Leeuwen (1999) and Kress (2010) have explored multimodal texts utilizing the Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis (MCDA) theory to reveal implicit meanings in these texts. The theory (MCDA) was developed in Europe and has, thus, been applied to various semiotic modes in the European context. For instance, van Leeuwen (1999) applied it to the

resources of speech, sound, and music; Kress (2010) applied it to layouts; and Bezemer and Kress (2015) applied the theory to how signs are able to make meaning through touch. Other researchers such as Danjoux (2006) and Connors (2007) have also adopted the MCDA theory in analysing political cartoons in the European context. These studies agree that PCs utilise several semiotic resources that are embedded in them to project various levels of meaning in a concise manner for readers of PCs and the general public.

In Ghana, a few studies on PCs such as Rockson (2012), Oduro-Frimpong (2013) and Amankwah et al (2016) adopted a multimodal approach only in arriving at their findings which suggests that PC is replete with various levels of meanings. These studies utilized theories such as Dell Hymes' Ethnography of Communication (EOC) as can be found in Oduro-Frimpong (2013), the construction of reality and ethnomethodology found in Rockson (2012) and the theory of agenda setting found in Amankwah et al (2016). It must be noted that these studies did not consider the issue of 'criticality', hence, the theory of MCDA was not employed to reveal hidden meanings and ideologies in the cartoons used for these studies.

This presents a gap for the need to consider the concept of 'criticality' in multimodal analysis in exploring political cartoons in Ghana. It is in this vein that the present study adopts the MCDA (theory) in examining key issues as well as how some political actors were portrayed in *Akosua* during Ghana's 2016 elections. Specifically, the research explores how the cartoons of *Akosua* combine images and text in representing the social practices and social actors (van Leeuwen, 2005) to reflect the socio-political situation of Ghana prior to the elections.

In effect, the study will stimulate further research on analysing PCs in Ghana. Although there is an emerging scholarly interest in PCs in Ghana (e.g. Oduro-Frimpong, 2012; 2013; Rockson, 2012; Amankwah et al, 2016), studies on PCs that employ MCDA exploring (political) cartoons in the Ghanaian context, hitherto, have not been given much attention.

Purpose of the Study

This research seeks to examine the interaction of semiotic and linguistic elements employed in *Akosua* cartoons prior to Ghana's PPEs in 2016. The primary aim of the study is to utilise a multimodal critical discourse analysis (MCDA) approach to examine the various social issues raised and how they are treated in the cartoons. In essence, this study employs a theory (MCDA) which has not been explored in the Ghanaian context, to reveal implicit meanings and ideologies in a Ghanaian cartoon. Political cartoons (PCs) are selected as a medium for examining the 2016 PPEs in line with Hoffman and Horward's (2007) study. First, cartoons provide a format within political communication in which complex messages can be expressed through a single image. Secondly, PC, as a genre, simplifies the complex political situation and, therefore, helps people to understand current events.

Research Questions

The following research questions are formulated to guide the study:

1. How does the artist present the themes found in the cartoons of *Akosua*?
2. How are the political actors portrayed in the cartoons of *Akosua*?

Significance of the Study

This research examines the interaction of semiotic resources employed in *Akosua*'s cartoons prior to Ghana's elections in 2016. The study utilises the

theory of Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis (MCDA) to examine the various social issues raised and how they are treated in the cartoons. Primarily, it will add to the growing literature in the field of political cartoons as well as MCDA, especially in Ghana where researchers who tow this path will take into consideration the social practices and norms of Ghanaians which is a core issue in Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Therefore, this research serves as a guide to people who are interested in interpreting and understanding hidden ideologies in cartoons, especially taking into consideration, the Ghanaian context.

Delimitations of the Study

The data used in this research is limited to *Akosua* cartoons, as found in the *Daily Guide* (prior to Ghana's 2016 elections). These cartoons are chosen rather than other political cartoons such as *Tilapia (Young Blazers)*, *Politics and Politriks (The Enquirer)* and *T'Spoon (Chronicle)* because of its nationwide coverage in Ghana; hence, its widely-known attribute makes it the best source of data since the majority of people are able to access it more often. According to Rockson (2012), the *Daily Guide* can be found in nearly every district in Ghana; thus, the publication of the cartoons in the newspaper serves as an effective means of reaching the wider population of Ghana.

Also, the data for the study (*Akosua* cartoons) are limited to the period between 1st June to 7th December 2016. This period marked the peak of events that characterised the discourse of the elections, therefore, most issues that were likely to have an impact on the elections were mostly discussed by Ghanaians.

Organisation of the Study

This study is organised into five chapters. Chapter One gives a general overview of the research. It discusses the background of the study, statement of the problem, research questions, significance and purpose of the work. The delimitation of the study is also discussed in this chapter. The next chapter, Chapter Two, gives a detailed discussion of the literature review. Chapter Three describes the methodological approach used in the study. This includes the research design, the population sample, sampling method and method of analysis. Chapter Four presents the results and discussion of the results. The final chapter, Chapter Five, provides summary, conclusions, and recommendations for the research.

Chapter Summary

This chapter served as the introduction to the entire study. The background to the study which gives an overview of PCs in relation to *Akosua* cartoons was provided. The problem was articulated, followed by the purpose of the study. Again, the research questions, as well as the significance of the study, were presented. The delimitation of the study and the outline of the entire thesis were also presented.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter of the study presents an overview of some literature on the topic of study. It provides a review of related literature in order to position the research within the larger context of research on the topic. The chapter also highlights key aspects of the Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis (MCDA) theory and some research on Political Cartoons (PCs) in the Ghanaian political context.

Conceptual Review

The conceptual review of this study defines the main ideas and how they are related to the aim of the study. In this regard, this section grounds the study in the relevant knowledge that lays the foundation for the problem statement and the research questions.

Political cartoons

Conceptually, cartoons are regarded as illustrations in the form of a non-realistic style that seeks to convey messages. They have become a familiar medium of art in our contemporary world. Mateus (2016) observed that, from comics and graphic illustrations to the editorial cartoons found in most newspapers around the world, cartoons can make people laugh and provide social observations on key aspects of reality. Political Cartoons (PCs) are now regarded as possessing a strong communicative influence on our general discourse.

The concept of ‘cartoon’, according to Akande (2002), emerged as an initial blueprint for a large fresco painting or picture in mosaic. Gocek (1998,

p.2) opines that cartoons serve as pictures which are the essence of truth, messages as to what ought to be done, and moods created through artistic techniques and allegorical images of how viewers ought to feel over what is happening. It is in this regard that Horn (1980) established that drawings which have complete thoughts in them can be referred to as cartoons. Similarly, Sir David Low, one of the eminent people in the production of English cartoons, as quoted by Harrison (1981, p.43), intimates that cartoons are “drawings representational or symbolic that make satirical, witty or humorous points”. They may or may not have captions and may comprise more than one panel. In this regard, a cartoon connotes expressions related to fun or entertainment. Cartoons can, therefore, be viewed as drawings which can equally “distil” and “distort” and, as Harrison (1981, p.80) suggests, they are “historically both political comment and humour.”

Political cartoons (PCs) have been in existence for decades. Harrison (1981, p.16) intimates that ‘cartoon’, as a distinct term can be traced to Italian and French words for ‘card’ and ‘paper’ respectively. Initially, a ‘cartoon’ was referred to as a “preliminary, full-sized sketch for a work of art that was done on paper” (Algezzy, 2017, p.1). This sketch was then transferred to the wall, ceiling, or large canvas where the final work of art was to be completed.

The origin of PCs has been debated by scholars over the years. Nevertheless, there seems to be a consensus on the social status of the originators of the various accounts credited with this witty art. According to Burns (2007), the origin of PCs is credited to Benjamin Franklin when he published the famous “Join or Die” editorial cartoon (as found in Figure 1) in

The Pennsylvania Gazette that depicted an image of a snake dissected and labelled into the different colonies of America.

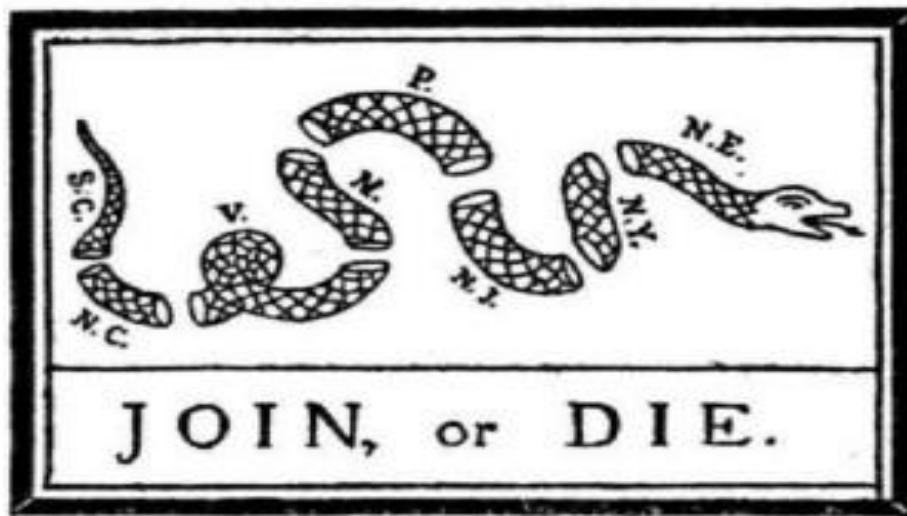


Figure 1: Join, or Die. The first political cartoon published in America by Benjamin Franklin in *The Pennsylvania Gazette*. Source: Heitzmann (1986)

This marked the birth of this genre, after which several studies focusing on different variables have emanated. Studies such as Walker (2003), Connors (2007), Mateus (2016) and Dugalich (2018) focused on the capabilities of political cartoons to communicate social and political messages effectively.

PCs assumed notable importance during the civil war of America when the artist, Thomas Nast, created some images that have had an impact on U.S. politics; they include Uncle Sam, the Republican elephant and the Democratic donkey (Burns, 2007). According to Connors' (2007) research on the US elections in 2004, most American voters were influenced in their final decision on who to vote for during presidential campaigns as a result of the various cartoons that were published prior to the elections.

Willett (2005) explains that PCs date back to ancient Egypt's culture in 1360 BC where human and animal caricatures were painted on walls before this

genre appeared in Europe and other parts of the globe. The researcher revealed that the first known PC had Ikhnaton, the father in law of Tutankhamon, lampooned. According to Danjoux (2007), rudimentary forms of PCs have also been found in Ancient Greek pottery depictions, ridiculing political leaders and lauded Olympian gods.

The rise of PCs could be attributed to the invention of the printing press. Algezy (2017, p.1) asserts that with the emergence of the printing press, “cartoons took on another meaning. They comprised sketches which could be produced in mass quantities and images which might be transmitted widely”. This is because it led, in Renaissance Europe, to the emergence of the broadsheet (Danjoux, 2007). The broadsheets helped in circulating editorial loose-pages to the masses by providing a summary of current issues. Danjoux (2007), opined that cartoonists offered cartoonists professional careers complemented with decent income and a wide-ranging distribution while accepting editorial scrutiny and production deadlines with the gradual incorporation of broadsheets in the 19th century American and European newspapers. As a result, creativity was, by then, restricted to the serial production of graphical representations as artistic freedom fell under the influence of larger newspaper editors (Press, 1981). Consequently, as cartoonists conquered their profession, they became intellectual workers who were expected to consistently produce social satire.

Classification of political cartoons

The universal appeal of political cartoons (PCs) is to serve as a medium through which social realities are represented. PCs can be generalised as possessing specific characteristics which are universally mutual that address

issues. These issues are presented in forms which can be grouped and categorised according to their purpose to help in understanding their hidden messages.

A pioneering study by Medhurst and DeSousa (1981) outlines “four major inventional topoi” of classifying PCs. Medhurst and DeSousa (1981) proposed four principal themes to aid in understanding these artworks. They serve as the basis for categorising the cartoons under various themes:

1. Political commonplaces
2. Literary/cultural allusions
3. Personal character traits
4. Situational themes

“Political commonplaces”, according to the researchers, encompasses cartoons that border on issues of economy, foreign affairs, elections, terror, war, etc. With “Literary/Cultural allusions”, they opined that it refers to references in cartoons that draw from “mythology, popular culture, literature or folklore, and fictive characters” (Senem, 2014, p.6). “Personal character traits” encompasses cartoons that relate to morals, age, and ability to lead, etc. Lastly, “Situational themes” refer episodes that occur during a campaign which serve both as an “inventional storehouse” (p. 204) of rhetorical material for artists to create drawings and “a toolbox” (p. 205) for the audience in interpreting cartoons.

Again, Medhurst and DeSouza (1981), as cited in Shaikh et.al (2016, p.79), proposed a two-level classification scheme to investigate the various methods used in graphic persuasion that are seen in a PC. They posit that elements that make a particular PC persuasive must first be analysed. The

second scheme constitutes the fact that cartoons persuade or project communication.

Dugalich (2018, p.2) also intimates that issues presented in PCs in our contemporary world usually relate to the following set of themes: “political leader as a person, political leader and his politics; economic reforms; pre-election struggle; military conflicts; shadow politics and economics; the reputation of the country; domestic policy of the state”. Contemporary events, according to Fiankor et al. (2017), are used as window dressing to establish the view and validity of a cartoonist’s assumption(s) about how life should be lived. Therefore, a cartoonist interested in students’ riot on a university campus could portray vandalising of campus property as a result of the repressive and strict rules established to curb this campus canker.

The impact of PCs on readers has been, for many years, a focus for many researchers. Onakpa (2014, p.18) confirms that “the treatment of political cartoons as fictions suggests that the drawings may function as an archetypal example, giving us pretended insight”. Readers must be able to make connections between the timely subject at hand and any literary or cultural allusion by which cartoonists explain the situation figuratively. Thus, readers or viewers of PCs are given active roles in interpreting the implicit message(s) of cartoonists.

Another feature of PCs that attract the attention of communication experts is its simplicity. Han (2006, p.46) explains that “perhaps the most glaring feature of all of them is simplicity. They are hand-drawn sketches containing short sentences and captions in simple” texts. Such sketches are

devoid of abstractions, and they are naturalistic in outlook. The drawings are usually made of simple illustrative lines with shading.

Roles of political cartoons

Political Cartoons play significant roles in our societies. They serve as comments, in the formation of public opinion, on vital social and political issues; hence, they are regarded as “both opinion-moulding and opinion-reflecting” (Caswell, 2004, p.14). Streicher (1965) argues that visual messages present a much clearer and more succinct summary of an event. He explains that PCs help the audience to read and scan through the meaning of an issue with ease. In essence, the capability of PCs to comment on social and political issues with their easy understanding makes them a distinct medium that contributes significantly to social commentary by facilitating effective communication.

DeSouza and Medhurst (1982) reveal four basic functions of PCs, as shown in Figure 2: entertainment, aggression reduction, agenda-setting, and framing.

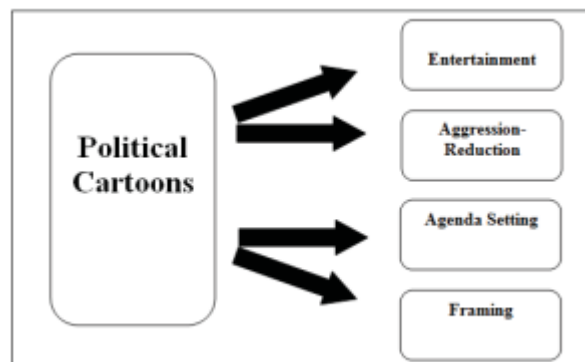


Figure 2: Functions of political cartoons. Source: De Sousa and Medhurst (1982)

According to De Sousa and Medhurst (1982), as cited in Ashfaq and Bin Hussein (2013, p.8), a political cartoon can evoke laughter on various events

and personalities portrayed. PCs also provide an avenue for people to find themselves and relate their personal experiences to reduce stress and frustrations in life.

De Sousa and Medhurst, further, argue that these functions enable people to easily comprehend vital themes that are presented in PCs and reflect topics of political discourse as well as make a collective record of these discourses and the social imagination associated with them. Hence, PCs can serve as a lens through which historical and political events are viewed and interpreted. Goguen (1999) supports that these cartoons or images serve as artefacts that reflect the record of events in the form of an imaginative weave of its creator's perspective.

In addition, Edwards (1993, p.26) explains how cartoons function rhetorically by arguing that “a cartoon's power lies in its intentionally persuasive nature as a form of satiric commentary and in its use of myth to appeal to its audience and invite meaning”. Although historically, the cartoon's primary function has been debunking, it also serves such rhetorical functions as framing, condensing and agenda-setting according to communication scholars such as Cahn (1984), Conners (2007), El Refaie (2009; 2015), and Iyenger (1991).

In his view on the roles that PCs play, Cahn (1984) posits that cartoons can be used as agents to project the relationships between people, events and different power structures. In this regard, DeSousa and Medhurst (1982), while describing the sociological function of PCs, claims that (political) cartoons serve as culture-creating, culture-maintaining and culture recognition artefacts and reveal social assumptions and prejudices. He, further, argues that these PCs

also promote consciousness which collectively helps in maintaining a sense of self, others and society as a whole.

Living/non-living things serve as reference points when issues about our daily lives, academic issues, culture, politics and ongoing situations are discussed. Any idea about any walk of life can be delivered through this genre. Specifically, the cartoon is a weapon in the cartoonist's hands, who can hit whatever and whenever s/he feels like which is backed by freedom of speech (Morris, 1992). Published cartoons are not ordinary in their nature; they change minds, make beliefs, transform ideas, guide both directly and indirectly. Hence, PCs may portray voters' perceptions of politicians and vice versa (Lamb, 2004).

PCs may generally be seen as a source of distraction to mitigate the effect of how sensitive an issue is rather than information. It's dissimulated' message that softens the impact of the satire may, as well, hinder a PC's effectiveness and this may not guarantee the message's endorsement. However, PCs may be an incredible source to assess the political climate of a society at a given period and instigate public opinion. Thus, PCs may gain momentum due to their optimal ambivalence. Walker (2003) opines that PCs are visual inscriptions of a particular time and ephemeral political situation that can surpass texts. Cartoons, then, "figure as graphic editorials much more than mere illustrations to tickle public opinion" (Mateus, 2016, p.4).

Further, Greenberg (2002) intimates that PCs serve as drawings that project different phenomena by setting the problem within a particular context while exploring the universal value of an image and its intended message or meaning engraved in the art. Hence, Greenberg (2002) sought to project that

cartoons can be used to identify and define social groups, communicate values, attitudes, and beliefs.

Streicher (1965, cited in Benoit et al., 2001) indicated that visual messages employed in PCs are much more succinct and provide a clear summary of an event or issue at hand and as such, these messages are given much preference over conventional media news. He claimed that cartoons help audiences to read the news and to scan through the meaning of an issue or an event, particularly those audiences who give much preference to visual news and those who have little time. He contended that the capability of PCs to comment on social and political issues make them a distinct medium that contributes significantly by facilitating effective communication. PCs are regarded as a means to divert public attention since cartoon artists employ less written texts. There are, therefore, fewer words in PCs than other mediums of presenting information because most cartoonists think that the depth of messages presented in cartoons is not as a result of the amount of ink used in writing these messages.

Presenting their views on the humour that PCs present, Edward and Winkler (1997) argue that though cartoons are usually amusing in their form, they rely on the kind of perspective a reader may have towards the particular issue a cartoonist intends to address. Thus, a PC may generate both anger and laughter simultaneously when they are used as a medium of amusement to address current situations.

Having highlighted some roles played by PCs in various contexts, the next section gives an overview of discourse analysis (DA) and its relationship with PCs.

Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis (DA) is a general term that is used to refer to the various ways in which researchers and scholars use language, whether written, spoken or computer-mediated. So, what does the concept 'discourse analysis' connote? What constitutes its object(s) of study? And, what can it tell us about the relationship that exists between political elections and political cartoons (PCs)? Addressing these questions requires addressing the prior question of how DA has been conceived by practitioners or experts in the field. This section of the discussion first highlights what constitutes 'Discourse' as a concept and its relation to the use of PCs as a medium of communication, after which I explore DA as a concept.

The concept of discourse was introduced as a way of thinking about how ideology functions in culture and institutions, although 'discourse' has proved to be a much more flexible concept than 'ideology' (Lemke, 2012). A useful definition of discourse is provided by Kress (1985, p.7) who states that discourses are

systematically organised sets of statements that give expression to the meanings and values of an institution. Beyond that, they define, describe and delimit what it is possible to say and not possible to say (and by extension what it is possible to do or not to do) with respect to the area of concern of that institution, whether marginally or centrally.

He, further, asserts that discourse explores how statements are used, organised and presented when discussing certain topics. Fowler (1991) agrees to Kress' claim and argues that discourse provides descriptions, rules, permissions and prohibitions of social and individual actions. Upon careful observation of these

claims, it can be deduced that the concept of discourse has varying definitions and interpretations.

In their attempt to resolve this difficulty, Bloor and Bloor (2007) explained that discourse constitutes the highest unit of linguistic description (phonemes, morphemes, words, phrases, clauses and sentences used in speech). In essence, discourse constitutes how speech is used in a communicative event. Wodak and Meyer (2009) argue that this notion of discourse can be traced to three different trends: the German and Central European tradition, where the idea about discourse constitutes text linguistics; the Anglo-American tradition, in which discourse can be said to be written and oral texts; and the Foucauldian tradition, where any form of knowledge which is comprehended as cognition and emotions is equated to discourse (Jager & Maier, 2009).

Gee's (1999) distinction of discourse as 'd' and 'D' sums up the submission made above. Gee refers to the small-d-discourse as actual language: talk and text. On the other hand, the big-D-discourse comprises knowledge "being produced and circulation in talk; to the general ways of viewing, and behaving in the world; to the systems of thoughts, assumptions and talk patterns that dominate a particular area; and to the beliefs and actions that make up social practices" (Tenorio, 2011, p.4).

In his view, van Dijk (1993) professes that discourse is a proposition that comprises linguistic, cognitive, and socio-cultural definitions. In essence, discourse must be viewed in relation to the people involved in the communication processes, the processes involved in the production of the discourse and the reception and understanding among the interlocutors. This feature leads to why (political) cartoons constitute a rich medium of highlighting

social issues or events and its relationship to the context in discourse. van Dijk argues that, socially, discourse is seen as a “sequence of contextualised, controlled and purposeful acts accomplished in society, namely, a form of social action taking place in a context” (p. 18). This comprises the physical setting, temporal space, and participants involved. He proposes that contexts regulate a particular kind of discourse and each distinct discourse relies on a particular type of context since context is usually cognition that talks about our ideas on social institutions and the way language is used in those institutions. Similarly, Gee (2011) defines ‘context’ to include “the physical setting in which the communication takes place and everything in it; the bodies, eye gaze, gestures, and movements of those present; what has previously been said and done by those involved in the communication; any shared knowledge those involved have, including shared cultural knowledge” (p. 6). Gee argues that discourse is defined by its effect as text in context, therefore, discourse “is the pragmatic process of meaning negotiation whilst text is seen as its product.

In Fairclough’s (2001) view, the approach towards the use of DA can be seen as a socio-semiotic approach. This notion has its antecedent in Halliday and Hassan’s (1976) position that language is a social activity and its role is performed in a socio-cultural structure. Apart from serving as a medium of communication between people in a socio-cultural environment, language develops, maintains and determines the associations, connections and relationships between people. This accounts for the reason why texts are seen as having meaning beyond their grammatical and syntactic features. As, Fairclough (2003) opines, texts may influence the actions of people, their social relations and the material world at large.

In organizational settings, discourses dictate how members of organisations, objects or activities, are defined, what values are ascribed to them, and the kind of sets of options that might apply to them in a specific situation. In part, the theory of discourse suggests that much of our experience of most organisations have already been pre-ordained, therefore, members of organisations will already be locked into specific courses of action, which are already in part predetermined if they comply with the available discourses. In effect, the members actively get themselves involved in a kind of ‘collective’ and unacknowledged blindness to the entire course(s) of action of the particular organisation. This collective blindness is inscribed in the discourses that circulate within institutions, predisposing but in no way determining, what constitutes appropriate institutional behaviour. It is important to note, here, that the concept of discourse, in relation to the present study, is crucial since it informs texts which, in turn, are ‘read’ by members of organisations or others in specific organisational contexts. This makes participants a crucial factor in order for discourse to function, therefore, the various issues and events, as well as how some participants are portrayed in some (political) cartoons constitute an important aspect of discourse in Ghana.

Moreover, analysing discourse encompasses the study of different modes in discourse that help to make a meaningful whole. This takes into consideration, various linguistic texts, images, sounds, etc in language use in texts and its contextual meaning. In relation to the current study, the issue of ‘criticality’ by text and talk in the socio-political context is taken into perspective. Thus, critical discourse analysis (CDA) becomes a vital concept to explore. The next section, therefore, discusses the concept of CDA.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a general term that examines and reveals ideologies, issues of dominance, powerplay and abuse in texts. The fundamentals of CDA research has its origin from text linguistics, classical rhetoric, social linguistics, pragmatics and applied linguistics (Weiss & Woodak, 2002). CDA was nurtured by some social theorists such as Foucault (1972) and social linguists such as Pecheux (1975) who aided in successfully explaining the relationship between ideology and discourse. Thus, knowledge has been the basic instrument through which ideology is transmitted, enacted and reproduced. This can be seen in Foucault's concern that bordered on the representation of knowledge and the context within which these representations are assigned form and meaning (Elsharkawy, 2016).

According to Fowler et al. (1979), the current concentration of CDA on discourse and language started with the development of Critical Linguistics (CL) in Australia and the United Kingdom during the 1970s. Halliday (1978, p.23) showed that CL "is a means of representing patterns of experience ... It enables human beings to build a mental picture of reality, to make sense of their experience of what goes on around them and inside them". This served as one of the bases for what became known as Functional Grammar (FG). Halliday's concept of functional grammar introduced two ideas to formal grammar; patterns of experience and patterns of ideologies. For instance, different ideological interpretations may be attributed to the use of different grammatical structures of active and passive voice. According to Halliday, scholars of CL view language in use as simultaneously performing three functions: interpersonal, ideational and textual functions. These (meta) functions can be

equated to the concepts of register variables (that is mode, field, and tenor) and lie behind the various functional approaches to language (Eggins, 1994; Halliday & Hasan, 1985). Droga and Humphrey (2002, p.11) state that the metafunctions; textual (clause as a message), ideational (clause as a representation), and interpersonal (clause as an exchange) are embedded in the structure of a clause; the structure as a whole construe, or realises the meaning”. The textual metafunction corresponds to the mode in the register variable. Nominalisations and thematic structures help to realise textual metafunction. Muir (1972, p.98) proposes that “the thematic element in a clause is the first element which results from choice” and, according to Halliday (1981), theme includes the message in a text, indicating the identity of text relations. The ideational metafunction, according to Halliday (2007), serves as the “content function of language”. Bilal (2012, p.1) argues that “it is realized in transitivity and serves to represent situations and events in the world and the entities, actions and processes involved”. It is in the ideational function that the text-producer embodies in a language their experience of the phenomena of the real world” (Halliday, 1973, p.106).

Finally, the interpersonal function constitutes “the participatory function of language” (Halliday 1973, p.106). It enables evaluations and attitudes to be expressed, and it is completed by mood and modality. The interpersonal metafunction also helps to realise a relation setup that exists between the text-producer and text-consumer (Halliday & Mathiessen, 1999). Hence, from the discussion so far, we can observe that Halliday takes a stance that language does more than just words that have been strung together to mean something; language is a “social act”

The view of Halliday that sees language as a “social act” is primary to the works of many CDA scholars (Fowler et al., 1979; Fairclough, 1993). Fowler et al. (1979, p.185) opine that CL shows that “there are strong and pervasive connections between linguistic structure and social structure”. Hence, CL primarily explains grammatical categories as potential traces of ideological mystification and developed the foundation on which CDA emerged (van Leeuwen, 2009). To Halliday (1973, 1978), it gave an insight into a linguistic analysis that goes beyond the formal description and uses it as a social critique.

Fairclough (1989) again opines that CDA can neither be classified as a linguistic system such as *langue and parole* by Ferdinand de Saussure (1959) nor as a theory such as the Generative-Transformational Grammar (GTG) by Chomsky. However, CDA is determined by social structures and social differentiation. Also, CDA is a changeable system which does not produce a single theory. Wodak (2001) agrees that CDA is a multidisciplinary approach towards discourse, developed from theories of different backgrounds and oriented towards different data and methodologies. In van Leeuwen’s (2006) view, CDA is grounded on the assumption that text and talk play an important role in issues of inequality, injustice and oppression in various societies. He further establishes that CDA uses various methods of discourse analysis (DA) to explain how this is done and realised, and it seeks to create the awareness of this use of language to cause a change in our societies. In essence, CDA deals with pressing social issues and hopes to better understand them through DA.

CDA projects that the messages in most texts are encoded beyond their grammatical representations. Thus, texts may represent disguised attempts at control and dominance (Fairclough, 2001a; van Dijk, 2008; van Leeuwen, 2008;

Wodak & Meyer, 2009). Wodak (2001) states that CDA is “fundamentally concerned with analysing opaque as well as transparent structural relationships of dominance, discrimination, power and control as manifested in language” (p. 2). Any document can be persuasive as it may present a “certain viewpoint as fact, but on closer examination, that viewpoint is something that may be ideologically contested” (Hill, 2009, p.32).

Eggins (1994) proposes that CDA is a critical perspective that allows researchers to carry out social research to investigate how language is systematically used to construct ideologies or shape attitudes that serve the interest of the political elites in power. Critical discourse analysts are concerned with how language is used by the elites in power to promote or maintain ideas that will serve their own political interest. The core assumption is that society is characterized by imbalanced hegemonic power structures which are systematically constructed through the skilful exercise of language by people in power along a vertical hierarchy.

CDA has been a prominent theoretical approach to many studies on political cartoons (PCs). Mazid (2008) believes that CDA provides a framework of examining cartoons to express information, ideologies, and properties capable of effectively conveying implicit and explicit meaning to a target audience. This supports Chouliaraki and Fairclough’s (1999) claim that PCs have in them certain linguistic features that help in constructing social identities and ideologies that reflect real-life events of a particular political society. Therefore, meanings in PCs can be analysed ‘critically’ looking at the different modes they have been presented, hence, multimodality becomes a vital concept to explore in this study.

Multimodality

The foundation for research in multimodal analysis can be attributed to Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) and O’Toole (1994) who were inspired by Halliday’s (1978; 1985) social semiotic approach to language which modelled the ability of words, sounds and images to make meaning as sets of inter-related systems and structures (O’Halloran, 2011).

In their seminal work *Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design*, which is an adaptation of Halliday’s (1978) framework, Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) adopt the three metafunctions, namely; ideational, interpersonal and textual, to show how images make meaning in combination with writing. They discuss the various resources in which visual texts can “represent something about the world, their authors and addresses and influence cohesion, information structure and different truth-values toward what is represented” (p. 23). O’Toole (1994) also applies the three metafunctions by Halliday (1978) to the study of visual art. Other scholars have done the same: van Leeuwen (1999) applied them to the resources of speech, sound, and music; Martinec (2000) applied to the metafunctions to colour; Burn and Parker’s (2003) the moving image kineikonic mode; Kress (2010) on layouts; as well as Bezemer and Kress (2015), who applied the metafunctions to how signs were able to make meaning through touch to examine the defining criterion of touch as a mode as well as a sense.

Further, Kress (2001) argues that the concept of mode, as seen in Halliday’s (1978) distinction between speech and writing in a language, is extended to every resource that can be used for representation. Their study uses

instances of texts that combine images and writing but abandon frames and terminology tightly-bound to linguistic traditions. They aim to:

[e]xplore the common principles behind multimodal communication.

We move away from the idea that the different modes in multimodal texts have strictly bounded and framed specialist tasks.... Instead, we move towards a view of multimodality in which common semiotic principles operate in and across different modes; and in which it is therefore quite possible for music to encode, or images to encode emotion. we want to create a theory of semiotics appropriate to contemporary semiotic practice (p. 2).

Harrison (2003) intimates that the concept of multimodality, as developed in the last two decades, seeks to examine and discuss how meaning can be expressed using different semiotic resources or modes. Adami (2016, p.3) points out that it is a concept that explains the “phenomenon of human communication” and to critically point out an emerging and developing field of research. The term seeks to explain how different semiotic modes have been combined to portray meaning in texts and other communicative events.

Multimodality concerns itself with the development of theories, analytical tools and descriptions that examine how modes serve as an organising factor in communication and representation. O’Halloran and Smith (2012) posit that multimodality is studied through varied theoretical approaches; nevertheless, these different approaches border on four basic propositions:

1. Every communicative event is multimodal.
2. Analyses that are basically focused on language adequately account for meaning.

3. Every distinct mode comprises particular affordances that emerge from their materiality and social background which defines its resources to satisfy its communicative needs.
4. Modes agree together but each of them has distinct modes which are vital in comprehending the communicative purpose of any given communicative event.

The concept of multimodality, according to Adami (2016), proposes that representation and communication depend on different modes which are developed by various societies to make meaning. For instance, modes like image, colour, and gesture, are seen as resources developed distinctly by societies in meaning-making processes. These resources help to project ideologies, values and power relations. Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) assert that every communicative event is and will always be multimodal because all instances of communication depend on many modes to effectively make intended meaning effective.

In sum, multimodality, according to Harrison (2003), assumes that communication primarily depends on the interaction of several communication resources. It concerns the modalities of communication within a given context and takes into consideration how issues of 'criticality', as enshrined in CDA, influences meanings of visuals. This gives rise to the concept of multimodal critical discourse analysis (MCDA).

Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis (MCDA)

Scholars around the world have demonstrated the use of linguistic as well as non-linguistic resources to reveal the communicative value of meanings engraved in various linguistic resources for making meaning. As discussed

earlier in the previous sections of this chapter, the framework guiding this work, Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis (MCDA), is grounded on studies based on discourse and pays particular attention to CDA. This is because MCDA goes beyond interpreting meaning in a particular piece of work using the interplay of various modes. It pays particular attention to how the interplay of various resources help reveal ideologies, issues of dominance and abuse in a piece of work. This makes CDA a crucial aspect of MCDA. Fairclough and Wodak (1997, p.258) argue that “CDA sees discourse as language use in speech and writing - as a form of ‘social practice’”. Describing discourse as a social practice implies a dialectical relationship between a particular discursive event and the situation(s), institution(s) and social structure(s) which frame it. A dialectical relationship is a two-way relationship: the discursive event is shaped by situations, institutions and social structures, but it also shapes them. Jenkins (2007) supports this view that discourse is socially constitutive as well as socially shaped. She further asserts that both the ideological loading of particular ways of using language and the relations of power which underlie them are often unclear to people. In this regard, CDA aims to make more visible these opaque aspects of discourse.

In present-day communication, language is usually intermeshed with a variety of other modes of communication; hence, the need for an integration of the tools of CDA with those of multimodal communication. Iedema (2003) opines that there is a need to revisit the blurring traditional boundaries between roles allocated to language, image, page, layout, document design, etc. Studies such as Kress and van Leeuwen (2002, 2006), Iedema (2003), Cheong (2004), Lim (2004) and Hagan (2007) are among many attempts that investigate how

meaning is construed utilising multiple semiotic resources in print media. Thus, in this present study, I look at *Akosua* in the *Daily Guide* newspaper. I adopted the tools offered in Kress and van Leeuwen (1996, 2006), specifically, the narrative process of the representational metafunction with a blend of interactive and compositional metafunctions, to demystify discourses engraved in the cartoons by decoding ideologies. The study also examines, according to Fairclough and Wodak (1997), how power relations are exercised and negotiated in discourse; (political) cartoons. It also analyses how political actors are represented and described, as well as how the media can shape the content of news in Ghana in terms of prominence. Hence, the MCDA theory is utilised in realising and interpreting the findings from the data.

Analytical Framework

This section discusses the theory that underpins the research. The main theory that guides the study is Kress and van Leeuwen's (1996, 2006) theory on multimodality, that is the Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis (MCDA). The theory, which can be equated to Halliday's metafunctions, comprises the visual systems of Representational (ideational), Interactive (interpersonal) and Compositional (textual) meanings. These are discussed below.

Representational Meaning

Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) intimate that representational meaning relates to the way semiotic systems exhibit objects and relations between them outside the representational system or in the context of culture. This relates to the internal relations between the represented participants, things, the action(s) they perform as well as the setting of the circumstance. Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) identify narrative and conceptual processes when presenting their views

on how structures are represented in visual transitivity systems. The narrative and conceptual processes are used to project the kind of pattern(s) of experience and phenomena then determining terms of sequences of process configurations, configurations of processes, circumstances, participants, objects, quantities and qualities. According to Kress and van Leeuwen (1996), these visual resources are used to project the conceptual relations and interactional representation that exist among people, places and things in the art (visual).

Narrative processes

Narrative processes relate to how actions and events are developed, the processes of change and impermanent spatial arrangement. In all of this, the paramount feature is the existence of a vector. Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) claim that vectors are usually developed by an oblique line which is created by the elements being represented. Usually, vectors are displayed using a strong diagonal line. In the case of naturalistic pictures, diagonal lines are usually shaped by bodies, tools or limbs whereas abstract graphic elements shape abstract pictures. Within narrative processes in visuals, Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) recognise two major kinds: actional and reactional processes.

Actional processes project how represented participant(s) are related by physical action. The processes can be non-transactional, where there is only one participant and, therefore, no action directed towards anyone or anything; or transactional, where there are two or more participants and something is, in a sense, exchanged. In this situation, there is an actor, as well as a goal and a beneficiary. El Refaie (2009) observes that transactional and non-transactional action relations approximate the transitive and intransitive verb distinction in language, and are realised by a vector, a line that can be visually projected from

the actor (the most prominent of the participants) and extended towards the other participant(s) or some goal. Also, the actor's prominence can be realised by relative size, place in the composition, contrast against a background, colour saturation or prominence, sharpness of focus, and the 'psychological salience' which the human face has for viewers. There may also be more than one actional process in one image which is referred to as secondary transactional processes.

Reactional processes are processes in which the represented participants are characterised by a reaction which is realised by the direction of the glance of one of the participants; the reactor. In other words, this process occurs when the vector is formed by the eye line of the represented participants. Walker (2003) argues that since a reaction to something is necessarily a trait of living beings, the reactor should be human, or a human-like animal (with visible eyes and the ability to produce facial expressions). The direction or focus of this reaction (a look or gaze) follows a vector to the receiving participant or whole process and the nature of this reaction is encoded in the way that the reactor looks at the phenomenon.

Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) also recognise that there are secondary participants in many images, identified as Circumstances, which are defined as "participants which could be left out without affecting the basic proposition realised by the narrative pattern, even though their deletion would, of course, entail a loss of information" (p. 71). Circumstances may be minor represented participants who are not related to the main participants by vectors. Also, circumstances provide some basic information of an event such as time, the place and the cause. Following Halliday (1994), Kress and van Leeuwen recognise three forms of circumstances: locative circumstances, circumstances

of accompaniment and circumstances of means. These circumstantial participants are not related to each other by vectors, but via aspects of location; thus, the setting becomes a participant, or by simply co-occurring together in the same visual with no obvious relationship other than being with one another in the frame (a relation of accompaniment), or by being used by a participant in some action (a relation of means) where there may be an absence of a clear vector between the user and the tool, but which may often assist in the formation of vectors between the most salient ‘Actor’ and the ‘Goal’ (El Refaie, 2009).

Conceptual processes

Chen and Gao (2014, p.3) define conceptual processes as “more stable and more general, and they represent participants in terms of types, structure and meaning”. Conceptual processes can be classified into three sub-processes: classification process, analytical process and symbolic process.

Classificational processes are those which relate the participants in a ‘kind of’ relation, in terms of a taxonomy of types of things or classes of things. Each of the participants is presented as a typical (subordinate) member of a particular overarching (superordinate) category or class of things, and this can be either a covert taxonomy or an overt taxonomy. The covert taxonomy is realised by a symmetrical spatial arrangement of the participants, such that any similarity between them as members of a particular superordinate class is enhanced by the symmetrical arrangement in their placement on the page.

Analytical processes, on the other hand, relate the participants in an image in terms of part/whole relations, where one participant represents the ‘whole’, referred to as the Carrier, and the other participants (of any number) are the ‘parts’, termed the Possessive Attributes. This relation may be

structured, where the Carrier and the Possessive Attributes are shown, or they may be unstructured, where only the Possessive Attributes are depicted, and the viewer is left to deduce the nature of the Carrier.

Within the structured analytical processes, however, Kress and van Leeuwen identify six other categories of processes which can be spatially or temporally organised.

These six categories are:

- (1) the Temporal,
- (2) the Exhaustive and Inclusive,
- (3) the Conjoined and Compounded Exhaustive,
- (4) the Topographical and Topological,
- (5) the Dimensional and Quantitative Topography, and
- (6) the Spatio-temporal.

Symbolic processes constitute what a participant means or is. In other words, these processes are connected to the symbolism or messages conveyed by the participant relations portrayed. There can be either two participants in the relationship or only one. Where there are two participants, the participant whose meaning is established in the relationship is the ‘Carrier’ whereas the participant which represents the meaning or identity itself is the “Symbolic Attribute”. This is the Symbolic Attributive process, where objects in images (such as in artworks) are made significant or prominent by such things as being foregrounded, having an exaggerated size, being well-lit, or containing strong colours. Mateus (2016) opines that attributive symbolic processes are also pointed out by some kind of gesture or posture which can only be interpreted by the viewer as the action of pointing out the attribute to the viewer. They can also

look slightly incongruent (or out of place) in terms of the whole of the visual, and they may have some kind of conventional symbolic value, as in a wire fence as a conventional symbol of imprisonment, or barrier to entry.

Where there is only one participant, also termed as the 'Carrier', its symbolic meaning can be established in another way which suggests an interpretation. This is the 'Symbolic Suggestive process', which is characterised by a de-emphasising of image detail in favour of 'mood' 'or 'atmosphere'. The focus is of the main participant as being the only primary participant, and there is a sense of an indirect, suggestive attempt to give to the carrier some attribute.

In summary, in the classificational process, the represented participants are related to each other in terms of taxonomy, among which several participants play the part of subordinates while at least one other acts as the superordinate. Secondly, the analytical process relates represented participants within a part-whole structure. There are two kinds of participants: a carrier which acts as the whole and possessive attributes as the parts. Thirdly, the symbolic process relates to what a represented participant means or symbolizes. The represented participant whose nature or significance is demonstrated in the symbolic relations is called the carrier, while the one who represents the meaning or identity itself is termed as the attribute. The visual representational processes are summarised in Table 2:

Table 2: A Summary of Representational Visual Structures

	Narrative Representations	Processes	Action (Actor + Goal) Reactional (Reactor + Phenomena)
		Circumstances	Processes Speech & Mental Setting Means Accompaniment
Representational	Conceptual Representations	Classificational Processes	Covert Overt Unstructured Structured
		Analytic Processes	Temporal Exhaustive and inclusive Conjoined and compounded Exhaustive Topographical and topological processes Spatio-Temporal Attributive Processes · Suggestive

Source: Kress and van Leeuwen (1996)

Interactive Meaning

Discussing interactive meanings in their *Visual Grammar*, Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) recognise that visual forms of communication also utilise resources which both constitute and maintain interaction between the producer(s) and viewer(s) of a visual. Kress and van Leeuwen posit that reading (or viewing) a visual involves two kinds of participants, the interactive participants, and the represented participants. The former are the participants who communicate with each other via visual means (the photographer and the viewer(s) for example), and the latter are what is actually depicted in a visual

(the people, places and things shown). As it is between speakers/writers and listeners/readers, the interpersonal metafunction in relation to visual communication is also concerned with the representation of social relations, in this case between the visual and the viewer. This is important because the placement of the viewer and the visual, socially, has a significant influence on how the visualised is read and used. In other words, their relative social placement affects what may be represented, the ways that it is represented, as well as how it may be read and put to use. Thus, viewing a visual involves “being located in a particular social way by and in relation to the image” (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996, p.23). This happens even though the producer of the visual is more often than not absent physically from the communicative situation. Even though there is this disjunction between the context of production and the context of reception, Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) believe that the “two do have elements in common: the image itself, and a knowledge of the communicative resources which allow its articulation and understanding, a knowledge of the way social interactions and social relations can be encoded in images” (p.120).

Kress and van Leeuwen emphasise again that these visual dimensions should be considered as “simultaneous systems” in that “any image must either be a ‘demand’ or an ‘offer’ and select a certain size of frame or select a certain attitude” (p.124).

The interactive function of images concerns the relationship between (i) producers of the image (ii) readers of the image and (iii) represented participants. According to Kress and van Leeuwen (2006), the communicative function of images is depicted through three types of systems: the system of

image act and gaze which makes a distinction between demands (visual contact with the viewer) and offers (no visual contact), the system of social distance that is related to the degree of intimacy “determined by how close the represented participants (RPs) appear to the viewer in an image” (p.129). Guijarro (2010) asserts that long shot signifies impersonal relation, close up signifies intimacy and medium shot signifies objects being within viewer’s reach. The system of involvement and power involves the way RPs are positioned along the horizontal and vertical angles. The horizontal angle shows involvement or detachment, (frontal angle signifies maximum involvement, oblique angle signifies minimum involvement or maximum detachment). The vertical angle expresses power relations, (high angle signifies power, low angle signifies vulnerability, and eye level signifies equality). These power relations may be between the represented participants and the viewer or between the represented participants within an image. These perspective techniques impart subjectivity to the images. The removal of perspective signifies objectivity and is employed in scientific images. Further, the resemblance of an image to reality as well as the cultural standards of real and unreal in a particular social group establish the modality of any image. Table 3 gives a summary of the interactive meaning.

Table 3: A Summary of Interactive Meanings

			Offer (Information)
	Contact	Image Act	Demand (Goods/Service)
		Gaze	Direct (Degrees of Engagement)
			Indirect (degrees of Disengagement)
Interactive Meanings	Social Distance	Size of Frame	Close (Intimate / Personal)
			Medium (Social)
			Long (Impersonal)
	Attitude	Subjective Image	Horizontal Angle (degrees of Involvement & Detachment)
			Vertical angle (degrees of Power to the viewer, to the represented participants, or a relation of equality)
		Objective Image	Action Orientation (frontal angle)
			Knowledge Orientation (top-down angle)

Source: Kress and van Leeuwen (1996)

Compositional Meaning

Kress and van Leeuwen, in *Reading Images*, develop a model on *The Grammar of Visual Design*. They explain the meaning of an image’s composition in terms of three (3) principles: information value, salience, and

framing. Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) opine that the three systems are interrelated. This means that considering just one of the terms in isolation will not be sufficient for any analysis.

The concept of information value, according to Kress and van Leeuwen (1996), describes “meanings that can be ascribed to individual elements in visual compositions based on their alignment with other elements. Information value comprises three axes or dimensions, which Kress and van Leeuwen refer as “the dimensions of visual space” (p. 197). They argue that every composition should be described as being “structured along” any one or more of these three dimensions: from the far left of the composition to far-right; from top to bottom, and from the centre of the composition to its edges or margins.

The left-right dimension is utilised in compositions to “make significant use of the horizontal axis” (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996, p.180). In this model, particular kinds of meanings are ascribed to elements based on their alignment to the horizontal centre of the composition. According to Kress and van Leeuwen, if an element is aligned to the left of the centre, it represents Given information, something “common sensical” with which readers can familiarise themselves. They also refer to such elements as “a familiar and agreed-upon point of departure for the message” (p. 181). If, on the other hand, an element is aligned to the right, it represents New information, something “contestable” or “problematic” with which readers do not (yet) agree. It represents “the message”. As for the realisation of the elements themselves, both image and text can assume the position as Given or New information.

Compared to horizontally-structured compositions, the top-bottom dimension applies to compositions that are structured along the vertical axis.

Here, elements assume particular meanings based on their alignment to the composition's vertical centre. This is the case, Kress and van Leeuwen argue when a visual composition has "constituent elements" placed in the top half and "other different elements" in the bottom half. In such compositions, the topmost elements represent what Kress and van Leeuwen call the "idealized or generalized essence of the information" (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, p.187). The bottommost elements, represent the Real, something that stands in contrast to the Ideal in that the information it conveys is more specific or "down-to-earth". In advertisement compositions especially, they note, the Ideal can also be said to represent "what might be" and the Real "what is". As is the case for the left-right dimension, both imagery and text can assume both the role of Ideal and Real.

Compositions structured along Kress and van Leeuwen's centre-margin dimension tend to place a particular element centrally to imply that this element represents "the nucleus of the information". Meanwhile, the surrounding elements, are "ancillary" and "subserving" to the central element. Often, Kress and van Leeuwen note, marginal elements are near-identical, if not entirely so, negating any sense the reader might otherwise have that the elements are divided or laid out with Given-New and/or Ideal-Real relations in mind. It does also occur, however, that Centre-Margin compositions utilise Given-New and Ideal-Real structures as well. In such cases, Kress and van Leeuwen explain, marginal elements represent the Given-New or Ideal-Real information depending, of course, on their placement in relation to the central element, which itself functions as Mediator. Figure 3 presents a visual representation

summary of Kress and van Leeuwen's dimensions of information value in visual compositions.

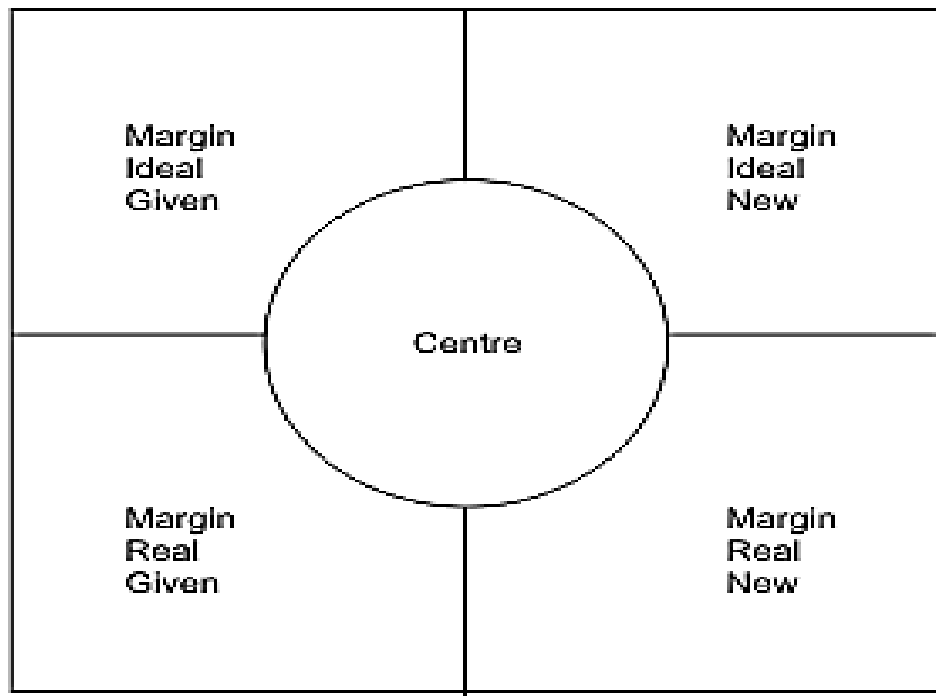


Figure 3: Kress and van Leeuwen's dimensions of visual space (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006)

In a nutshell, what Kress and van Leeuwen seem to project is that most societies tend to structure visual compositions along the left-right dimension or the top-bottom dimension. Hence, the information that such compositions convey is typically distributed among contrasting elements in terms of “Given and New and/or Ideal and Real” (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006).

Salience is another compositional structure. It is seen in elements (participants, representational and interactive syntagma) that “are made to attract the viewer's attention to different degrees, as realized by such factors as placement in the foreground or background, relative size, contrast in tonal value (or colour), differences in sharpness, etc.” (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996, p.24). This principle is manifested when different variables interact in a complex way

to develop a hierarchy of elements that attract readers' attention to the composition. In summary, salience encompasses how strongly an element is able to draw readers' attention. Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) support that readers are "intuitively able" to examine the weight of individual elements in a visual composition; thus, how important they are constituting their salience. Elements which encompass salience include size, sharpness, colour-coding orientation, perspective, etc.

Framing is the final principle in the compositional meaning system of Kress and van Leeuwen's theory. The authors posit that the degree to which elements are either connected or disconnected visually are influenced by how elements in a visual composition are framed. Hence, elements in a composition usually seem framed if "marked off from each other" rather than "joined together" (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p.203). However, this is not always the case. The elements can be "strongly or weakly framed" or anywhere in between. Expressing their view on how framing influences the meaning elements in a composition, Kress and van Leeuwen (2006, p.203) establish that "the absence of framing stresses group identity, its presence signifies individuality and differentiation". Hence, elements that are connected are usually understood as expressing meaning as a collective whole. Nevertheless, this will depend on how strongly they are framed with the strength of other frames in the composition. On the other hand, elements that are disconnected are less likely to be interpreted as common and may appear as separate carriers of information.

Criticisms of the MCDA theory

The MCDA theory is able to equip researchers to analyse the interaction of words and images together with non-verbal elements in criticising, as well as challenging social structures in texts. This places much premium on the essence of multimodality on critical discourse analysis. In contemporary times, meanings expressed are more multi-layered and complex in both social and cultural discourse practices. Iedema (2003) opines that communication using sophisticated electronic devices have an influence on global trade and popular culture. The complexities of postmodern society demand complex analysis; thus, MCDA research helps to account for the complexity in analysing social experience. The interaction of verbal and non-verbal elements that helps to convey meanings in texts needs to be comprehensively appreciated in research to enhance full comprehension of the meanings that are engraved in multimodal texts.

Another strength of the MCDA theory in research, according to Carter (2011), is the fact that it is grounded in the field of critical discourse analysis because of its theoretical flexibility, thus the theory can be combined with other theories to examine how discourse and social structure influence society. In essence, the MCDA theory is able to effectively accommodate different theoretical perspectives as a result of its practical and theoretical grounding in CDA.

Research in MCDA is not without setbacks. According to Forceville (2010), studies that patronise the theory usually lack consistency in the use of the various terms under the metafunctions. This stems from the fact that since the three metafunctions complement each other in terms of comprehensively

making meaning out a multimodal text, there is no defined terrain for authors to use. This has resulted in an expansion of “new terminologies which remains isolated and untested rather than developing and refining clear, defensible concepts” (Ledin & Machin, 2018). This raises concerns regarding the use of numerous terminologies or descriptive concepts without producing clear insights into a phenomenon.

Empirical Review

Various studies have been undertaken on political cartoons from a wide range of perspectives. This section of the study reviews studies in relation to the present study.

Political cartoons as a tool for setting social agenda

Agenda setting talks about how the mass media help in influencing and controlling public opinion and political agenda. Meijs (2011, p.12) opines that “when speaking about agenda setting, scholars refer to the idea that the media carefully choose which news issues they publish instead of informing the audience about all news happening in the world”. Over the years, researchers such as Walker (2003), Han (2006), Sani et al (2012), Ashfaq and Bin Hussein (2013) and Hussain and Li (2016) have utilised theories that help unravel cartoonists behaviour in highlighting national issues.

Sani et al. (2012) investigated the use of political cartoons as a tool for the setting of social agenda in Nigeria. The purpose of the research was to illustrate the role played by PCs in setting social agenda through highlighting topics and themes via the mass media published in two Nigerian prominent newspapers during the period 2007-2010. The research also sought to identify and explain the meaning and importance of images or visual illustrations to

depict issues and events as well as social representations of political figures, and prominent public officers in PCs. Their study concluded that PCs are used to express opinions, construct valuable arguments and provide specific knowledge on contemporary social issues. They opine that Nigerian cartoonists tend to use language to construct satire as a means that could be used perhaps to initiate positive social and political reforms in Nigeria. Also, the study established that Nigerian cartoonists used interjections frequently in the cartoon written texts to create satirical impressions about political leaders because interjections are used to express strong emotions.

In a similar vein, Hussain and Li (2016) also demonstrated how newspapers were used to set national interest agenda, using eight hundred and thirty-two cartoons published in three major newspapers from Pakistan: *The Express Tribune*, *Daily Pakistan*, and *Daily Ausaf* in 2016. The focus of the research was to examine how editorial cartoons were used as a tool to set national interest, examine the major themes of Pakistani PCs from 2015 to 2016 and account for how the media gave prominence to issues in leading newspapers in Pakistan during the study period. The study utilised the agenda-setting theory to give a theoretical insight into how newspaper cartoons depict interesting issues in newspapers as a policy of setting a national agenda to reorient and shape public opinion. According to the researchers, issues found in the data were categorised under six (6) substantive themes, namely; foreign policy corruption, democratic governance, economy, security and living standards in a high to low frequency respectively. The study showed that the three leading newspapers in Pakistan were used to control and set Pakistan's national agenda during the study period by highlighting specific issues in the media.

The study of Ashfaq and Bin Hussein (2013) explored the role of PCs in building an opinion, the expectations of readers towards the medium and the perceptions of two famous cartoonists of Pakistan whilst portraying issues raised in their cartoons. Utilising the Social Responsibility Theory (SRT), the study concluded that political cartoonists were mostly influenced by ideologies of the newspapers they represented since the editors could block their publications whenever they wanted to. Therefore, their opinions expressed in the cartoons are influenced by contemporary issues. The study revealed that political cartoonists try to highlight those aspects which may not be covered through other media content to shape public opinion.

Exploring the influence of PCs on national discourse, Walker (2003) investigated how PCs reflected political communication in the national discourse of Belgium. He argued that the cartoons were used as a powerful weapon for communicating political issues for the fact that cartoon messages could easily be absorbed by audiences and transmitted in mass circulation. His findings indicated that PCs were of social importance because they were used in setting social agenda and provided satirical commentary aimed at transforming the social and political norms of society. He concluded that though PCs seemed to be simple in appearance, they were “nothing short of a packed punch” (p. 20). The messages hidden in them were only revealed when certain theoretical tools were applied to understanding them, the circumstances of media ownership and the political regime in power. The paper concluded that PCs could, therefore, be seen as instruments of the “dominant in society” and representative of the interests of the media ownership (p.21).

From the discussion so far, it can be concluded that PCs have the potential to play significant roles in the agenda-setting process of national discourses by establishing agendum of the media through PCs and whilst soliciting public opinion. The next section reviews literature on how political actors are presented in some PCs since serves as one of the concerns of this thesis.

Representation of political actors in cartoons

Political cartoons (PCs) serve as a rich medium through which the media is able to reach the masses, especially, on presenting opinions on political leaders during elections. Connors (2005) explored the extent to which the presidential candidates of the 2004 elections were alluded to in some political cartoons. Using a sample of four hundred (400) cartoons published from July to November, 2004 in U.S. newspapers, the study employed Medhurst and DeSouza's (1981) classification of themes in PCs to arrive at its findings. The study revealed that the frequency of alluding to George W. Bush and John Kerry, the front runners and the major favourites of the American voters, in the editorial cartoons were almost equal with Bush in 38.5% of campaign cartoon images and Kerry in 39.8%. However, the political activist, Ralph Nader, was considerably absent from the cartoons with a frequency percentage of 3.4%. The researcher explained that the frequent portrayal of Bush and Kerry in the editorials during the study period visually reinforced the theme of political campaigns as well as media coverage of elections as an important activity than other political and social issues.

Utilising the theory of caricature, Bal et al (2009) investigated the nature and reactions to a controversial political cartoon that depicted former president of South Africa, Jacob Zuma. The research showed how the cartoon by one of the South African prominent cartoonists, *Zapiro*, influenced and affected Zuma's public image in South African politics. According to the researchers, though controversial, the cartoon questioned president Zuma's allegation of discrimination by the justice system of South Africa. The study, however, revealed that "the cartoonist was able to use the cartoon to further solidify Zuma's image as an embattled yet contentious and divisive leader" (p. 24).

Encoding the messages of political cartoons

Cartoonists utilise a variety of linguistic and non-linguistic resources to get a particular message across. Generally, PCs appeal to the minds of the audience whilst challenging their communicative and interpretive competence. In this regard, El Refaie (2009) investigated how the messages in PCs are understood and interpreted by readers. The study suggested that audience of political, especially the educated elites, sometimes struggle to understand all semiotic resources that cartoonists employ in cartoons. Therefore, comprehensive knowledge of contemporary events complimented with idioms, cultural context and other linguistics is needed.

Further, the study established that the interpretation of political cartoons depends mainly on the different kinds of one's exposure to the world, which comprise familiarity with conventions that underlie cartoons with a complement of contemporary issues. El Refaie (2009) argues that PCs are not easy to understand, as some people think. The findings also indicate that even the highly educated persons who are familiar with trending political issues would have to

employ a wide range of different literary resources such as idioms, analogies and metaphors to obtain a complete understanding of the messages in PCs. Morris' (1992) findings support this claim that, given their nature, PCs are mostly satirical; hence, their militant effects can be equated to the armoury that is used to attack political leaders since the drawings need many deep thoughts to grasp the whole meaning.

Further, Amankwah et al (2016) investigated how cartoonists use animated drawings to communicate their messages in the light of current socio-political developments in Ghana in three Ghanaian newspapers, namely, *Politics and Politricks* of the *Enquirer*, *Akosua* of the *Daily Guide* and *T'Spoon* of the *Chronicle*. The study revealed that the cartoonist employed techniques of language, humour, camouflage, wilful distortion and exaggeration of reality, symbolism, irony and satire to tease out the themes of the study. It emerged that the works of these cartoonists were influential as they contributed graphically to the ongoing political debate with their respective focus on corruption, the economy and other social issues.

Fiankor et al (2017) investigated how PCs as an art form and mode of communication by academics and policymakers helped to shape political agenda and social issues in Ghana. Using a content analysis approach to utilise seventeen (17) *Daavi* cartoons published in line with news items in the *Daily Graphic*, their study discussed the petition by the New Patriotic Party (NPP) to the Supreme Court (SC) of Ghana in 2013 to illustrate and present proceedings and final verdict of the petition. The study revealed that the cartoonist preferred to use “single frames to frame and set the agenda for the themes that were discussed in the public sphere during the election petition hearing” (p. 22). They

concluded that the cartoons presented the hearing in a manner which projected the whole verdict as honest, truthful and acceptable by many Ghanaians; hence, the peaceful atmosphere after the final verdict. This indicated that Ghana's democracy had matured and would resort to the use of the rule of law rather than violence to settle political issues.

Oduro-Frimpong (2013) utilised Van Dijk (2001), Wodak (2005) and Hymes' (1972) ethnography of communication to draw on Barber's (1997) work on African popular arts to explore *Akosua's* PCs as one of the many spaces where cartoonists highlight important socio-political issues for citizens to discuss and reflect on. The study sought to explore some themes that characterise Ghana's socio-political context portrayed by the artwork. He argues that "*Akosua's* political cartoons operate both as a public memory repository as well as a popular media that significantly engages in socio-political debates in Ghana" (p. 133).

In all, the review of the literature clearly shows that rhetorical analysis of PCs, in particular, investigating major issues prior to an election in Ghana from a multimodal critical discourse analysis (MCDA) point of view, specifically, Kress and van Leeuwen's (1996; 2006) theory, is largely under-researched. Unlike previous studies done in Ghana such as Rockson (2012), Oduro-Frimpong (2012), Amakwah et al (2016) and Fiankor et al (2017) that focused on exploring how meaning in PCs in Ghana such as *Daavi* and *Akosua* reflect Ghana's socio-political terrain, the current research focuses on how this was reflected in the political discourse of Ghanaians prior to Ghana's PPEs in 2016 in terms of the major issues that bordered on the elections and the representation of presidential candidates in the cartoons of *Akosua*.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has investigated existing literature that is related to the present study. Generally, the review consisted of theories and concepts that were utilised in the study together with some previous studies on the research topic. Specifically, the study has reviewed notable views concerning political cartoons (PCs). Consequently, this research has drawn on the three key aspects of Kress and van Leeuwen's (1996; 2006) model as its theoretical framework.



CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODS

Introduction

The previous chapter reviewed literature related to the present study. In this chapter, I discuss the methods applied in carrying out the research. Among other important sections considered in this chapter, the methodology comprises the research design, data source and size, sampling procedure, analytical framework, data analysis procedure, problems encountered and a summary of the chapter.

Research Design

The study employed the qualitative research paradigm. This research paradigm is chosen because it helps to give a better understanding of the underlying motives of human behaviour (Thompson, 2007). Also, it involves detailed, verbal explanation of features, settings, cases, people or systems obtained by relating with, interviewing and observing the subjects. Greenhalgh (1997) supports the view that researchers who opt for the qualitative method seek an in-depth truth or validity. The qualitative research design aims to comprehend or interpret phenomena in relation to the meanings people attach to them, and in this regard, it helped to employ a holistic point of view of exploring the cartoons by taking into consideration the complexity of human behaviour. This enabled me to decode the messages employed by the cartoonist.

Another reason for selecting the qualitative approach is that it is a method suited for describing and interpreting meaning. It must be noted that attention was also given to possible misinterpretation of messages or visual codes especially, as pointed by Halliday and Hasan (1985) and Rose (2003)

whether the choice of images employed in the data poses some as difficulties during the process of decoding in social contexts; hence political cartoons in the Ghanaian context. This is in relation to the fact that qualitative research focuses on highlighting the meaning of a situation and comprehending a particular process by exploring or assessing pictures or words. Thus, the use of this research approach, according to Cresswell (1994), seeks to investigate “how people make sense of their lives” (p.145).

The study, specifically, adopts the qualitative content analysis as an approach. According to Hsieh and Shannon (2005), this approach constitutes “a research method for the subjectivist interpretation of text and data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns” (p. 12). Given this, I was able to investigate both the explicit and implicit meanings in the cartoons utilising the MCDA theory by Kress and van Leeuwen’s (1996; 2006).

Data Source and Size

The data used for the study comprised *Akosua* cartoons found in the *Daily Guide*, which is published in print six times per week (Monday to Saturday). The newspaper, established in 1999, is published by Western Publications Ghana Limited. The paper aims “to promote democracy in Ghana through objective and creative journalism which will inform, entertain and educate their readers” (Mission Statement, *Daily Guide*). Oduro-Frimpong (2013) asserts that the African Media Development Initiative Report (2006) found the newspaper to be “the next strongest national daily [coming] a distant second” to the government-owned *Daily Graphic*. Currently, *Akosua*’s cartoons form the only established political/editorial cartoon found in the *Daily Guide*. It

is normally published at the top right-hand side of the newspaper, and in a few instances, at the top right-hand side of page three (3) of the newspaper (Rockson, 2012).

In this study, I collected the cartoons found on *Akosua*'s section on the *Daily Guide* website (<https://dailyguidenetwork.com/category/akosua-cartoons/>) from 18th to 22nd March, 2017. I opted for the online version of the images because they were always produced in high quality as compared to the ones found in the print copies. Also, the images found online could easily be inserted into the work especially during the discussion. The data for the study collected from the editions of the cartoons spanned from 1st June 2016 to 7th December 2016. The period was chosen because it marked the peak of the era in Ghana's PPEs in 2016 (UNDP, 2017); hence, several news items were published which were visualised in the artwork (*Akosua*) to reflect the socio-economic as well as the socio-political discourse of Ghana. These issues were also important matters that surrounded the elections. A total of 150 cartoons were collected and used for the study. The images were then coded with numbers ranging from 1 - 150 to correspond to the number of images collected.

Sampling Procedure

The research employed the purposive sampling method during the data collection. This means that previous knowledge of the data, as well as the purpose of the study, were considered before the data were selected. This choice was informed by Fraenkel and Wallen's (2000) assertion that the purposive sampling technique is best utilised when a researcher seeks to build a sample that will be satisfactory to the specific needs of a particular study. In all, 150 cartoons were purposively collected for the study. Published cartoons that

spanned from 1st June 2016 to 7th December 2016 on the website of *Daily Guide* were collected for the study.

Data Analysis Procedure

The present study adopts a multimodal critical discourse analysis (MCDA) approach. This approach in DA facilitates the systematic interpretation of texts through semiotic analysis and projects the intersemiotic texture between language and images used in cartoons. By utilising Kress and van Leeuwen's analytical framework for analysing multimodal resources as the basis of the analysis, I focus on the representational and interactive meanings of the theory. Where appropriate, I also employed intersemiotic textual links (van Leeuwen, 2005; Liu & O'Halloran, 2009) to reveal the relationship between verbal and visual modes.

The data were analysed in two stages. The first stage comprised frequency analyses of themes that were found in the data. For reliability and consistency in the data, Cohen's Kappa technique for calculating inter-observer agreement was employed. The technique is used to measure inter-rater reliability when observing or otherwise coding qualitative variables. The Kappa is reflected to be a development over using percentage (%) contract to compute this kind of reliability. It has a variety from 0-1.00, with greater values indicating better reliability. Usually, a Kappa > .70 is considered satisfactory. To establish Cohen's Kappa, the percentage of agreement between the researcher and other observers was needed to be computed by dividing the total number of agreements by the total number of counts. To achieve this, I sought the services three 'observers' to measure the level of reliability. The three persons comprised two researchers and a journalist at the Department of English

and Daily Graphic respectively. After collating their responses in terms of the agreement with the themes I had identified in the cartoons, the calculated Cohen's kappa (k) was 0.81. According to Cohen's Kappa, the level of agreement is measured outstanding when it is within the range 0.75 and beyond. Thus, the results proved that inter-rater reliability was adequate.

After categorising the issues in the cartoons according to themes, I sought to investigate issues that characterised the Ghanaian socio-political discourse during the period under study. With this, the analysis revealed seventeen (17) themes or issues in the data. The issues were further categorised as "main themes" and "minor themes", depending on the frequency of occurrence. The "main themes" consisted of cartoons that bordered on issues that were found more than five (5) times. The issues under this category formed the analysis and discussion section of the study. On the other hand, the "other themes" comprised cartoons that bordered on issues that occurred less than five (5) times. The minor issues were, however, not included in the analysis and discussion section.

Problems Encountered

The difficulties encountered during the study are highlighted in this section. Concerning the data collection, I initially faced some challenges obtaining the cartoons from the print copies of the newspaper because the images were poor in quality, some misplaced, destroyed and unavailable for some dates. To resolve this, I used the online version on the website for easy access and recognition.

Another challenge encountered had to do with the subjectivity of the analysis. Each of the cartoons had multiple meanings because of its artistic

nature. This posed a challenge during the analysis and discussion section because I had to interpret all the meanings in the cartoons and select the ones which defined the context in which the cartoon was produced.

Chapter Summary

This chapter focused on the research procedures adopted in the present study. It considered the research design, data source and size, sampling procedure, analytical framework, data analysis procedure and problems encountered. The next chapter presents an analysis of the data and discussion of the findings.



CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

This chapter analyses and discusses the data for the research. The analysis and discussion have been divided into two sections. The first section presents distribution tables for the frequency of the themes and thematic analysis of these themes employed in selected cartoons of the data. Issues that constitute the various themes identified are grouped under major and minor themes. On the other hand, the second section investigates how the presidential candidates (social actors) of the elections were represented in the cartoons. In this study, social actors constitute stakeholders who were subjects of discussion during the Parliamentary and Presidential Elections (PPEs) of Ghana in 2016. Thus, the presidential candidates, as well as their respective running mates depicted by *Akosua* during the study period, are analysed.

Distribution of themes in the data

The frequency of occurrence for the major issues (main themes) and minor issues (minor themes) are given in Tables 1 and 2 respectively. A thorough analysis of the major themes, which forms the basis for answering Research Question 1, is also presented.

Table 4: Distribution of the Main Themes in the Data

Themes	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Electoral Process	40	26.66
Media	28	18.66
Opposing Political Personalities	18	12.00
Religious Personalities	13	8.66
Corruption	11	7.33
Utilities	10	6.66
Sub Total	120	79.97

A majority number of the issues shown in Table 1, as expected from a period where the major event on the political calendar of any nation was scheduled to take place in a few months, were mostly on the elections. The outcome of a frequency analysis of the data buttresses this claim when 120 out of the total data (150) used for the study belonged to this category. In all, the issues identified under main themes comprised six (6) topical areas; media, elections, opposing personalities, corruption, utilities and religious personalities in politics.

Table 4 shows that issues that bordered on “electoral processes” prior to the elections dominated with a frequency of forty (40) cartoons representing 26.67 per cent of the total data. This is not surprising since it was a period when the nation was preparing for the elections, thus, the activities of the EC received greater attention. The next most frequent theme was “media” with a frequency of twenty-six (26) cartoons. The media, during that period, became a focal point for the various political parties and the masses for disseminating and acquiring information. Following this are issues that bordered on politicians who directly

opposed each other’s view; hence, the theme of “opposing political personalities” had a frequency of eighteen (18) cartoons. The next theme identified comprised topical issues that had known religious personalities in Ghana at the centre. The theme of “religious personalities in politics” had a frequency of thirteen (13) out of the total data. Also, the theme of “corruption” which encompassed issues involving alleged corruption cases prior to the elections had a frequency of ten (10). At the bottom of the table is the theme of “utilities” which involved issues that bordered on public utilities.

Table 5: Distribution of Minor Themes in the Data

Theme	Frequency	Percentage
Social Amenities	4	2.72
Sports Management	4	2.72
Education	4	2.72
Employment	4	2.72
Economic Mismanagement	4	2.72
Traditional Leaders	3	2.04
Security and Crime	3	2.04
Environment	2	1.36
International Relations	2	1.36
Sub Total	30	20.04

The minor themes, presented in Table 5, were not included in the analysis and discussion section. This was necessary because a discussion on them would not have influenced the findings since the Research Question 1 focused on major issues discussed during the study period.

Analysis of main themes in *Akosua*

Akosua highlighted many social, political as well as economic issues that characterised the political discourse in Ghana prior to the Parliamentary and Presidential Elections in 2016. During the period under study, the voice of the artist was made known on contemporary issues that were mostly discussed in public spaces and on various media outlets. The frequency of occurrence of the major issues that formed the main themes of the study is given in Table 4.

Electoral Processes

In the study, the theme of Electoral Processes consists of issues or events that made headlines on the organisation of the elections prior to the parliamentary and presidential elections of Ghana in 2016. These issues comprised events that bordered on the organisation of the elections, controversies that were levelled against the EC of Ghana as well as major news items that brought the elections into perspective, thus, this theme had a major influence on the social and political discourse of Ghanaians.

The theme of electoral processes commonly referred to as the theme of Electoral Framework by Medhurst and Desouza (1982), dominated the other themes. Not only does this theme become an important aspect of the elections in 2016, but it also drives the entire discourse of the period under study. The topical areas in this theme dominated the various aspects of the discourse surrounding the elections as well as what the media projected. This can be attributed to the fact that the period for the election was looming, hence, much attention was diverted to issues bordering on the elections. In effect, these issues became very sensitive and attracted a huge audience.

Among the topical issues identified under this theme are some events that surrounded the registration exercise conducted by the EC of Ghana prior to the elections. A key feature of these events was the call by the then major opposition party (the New Patriotic Party, NPP) for a new voter's register, as can be found in Figures 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8. The NPP made several allegations against the EC, claiming that the voters register that was to be used for the elections had been 'deliberately' bloated by the EC to favour the National Democratic Congress (NDC), the incumbent political party, to win the elections. In the view of the NPP, the register had an excess of about two million names, out of which some of the names constituted duplicates from Ghana's West African neighbour, Togo. Indeed, the NPP believed that the register included names of nearly 80,000 Togolese nationals where support for the ruling NDC was strong. Also, according to a statement released by the NPP in March 2016, some voters had been deliberately prevented from registering and several errors existed in the voter's register which included an inconsistency they found between the registered names for the parliamentary and presidential elections. In their response, the EC maintained that it did not find the arguments for a new register convincing and, therefore, did not recommend the replacement of the voters' register. This decision was taken after the EC had set up an Independent Panel to look into the concerns and views of stakeholders, particularly the NPP, on the voters' register. After a further petition by some stakeholders who sought to challenge the credibility of Ghana's electoral roll, as suggested by the NPP, the Supreme Court (SC) of Ghana ordered the EC to compile a new list of the voters' register. The new electoral roll further omitted the names of all dead people and persons who used the National Health

Insurance Scheme (NHIS) to register to vote and allowed people whose names were removed because they registered with the NHIS card to register if they qualified. Figure 4 highlights the ensuing event involving the Supreme Court of Ghana and the EC.



Figure 4: NHIS Supreme Order (Published on 27th June, 2016)

The cartoon in Figure 4 presents a visual representation of how the EC was ordered by the SC to roll out new voters register for Ghana's PPEs in 2016. In Figure 3, three participants are visualised to represent the ensuing event. The three participants can be identified as Mr. Amadu Sulley (Deputy Chairperson of the EC of Ghana), Mrs. Justice Georgina Theodora Wood (CJ) and Mrs. Charlotte Osei (Chairperson of the EC of Ghana) who are horizontally placed beside each other respectively, with the CJ positioned in-between the ECs.

The central message that is beamed in the cartoon is revealed by the direction of the hands of the CJ, which symbolises the arms of the SC of Ghana, holding both electoral commissioners. This creates a vector and illustrates an action process. In a narrative process, the action process in the cartoon is

revealed by the vectors that are formed between the direction of both hands of the CJ and the two ears of the electoral commissioners. It can be noted that the action process portrayed by the hands of the CJ is issuing a strong warning to both participants (ECs) where the hands serve as a means to facilitate the vector formed among the represented participants. This research agrees with Tehseem and Bokhari (2015) on the point made that the presence of a vector, formed by some part of represented participant(s) in an image depicts a narrative process which might often be an action process; a process that expresses the fact that something or someone undertakes some action or some entity “does” something – which may be done to some other entity. Also, the narrative process identified in the cartoon is a unidirectional transaction where the vectors emanating from the “Actor” (CJ) aim at a “Goal” (ECs). The arms of the CJ are stretched towards the other two participants without any retaliation. In essence, the action process is a one-way affair where the Actor (CJ) performs a certain action (command) aimed at a Goal (ECs) through a means (hands).

Another distinct kind of narrative process that helps reveal the message *Akosua* highlights is the “Reaction Process” signified by the direction of the eye-line vectors of the represented participants. The direction of their gazes represents a vector where the reactors (participants) only come forth. In such conditions, viewers are presented with an opportunity to imagine what the participants are looking at. This invokes a sense of empathy or identification with the represented participants (Yang & Zhang, 2014). In essence, the empathy and compassion which creates a Demand - Offer relationship between the two electoral commissioners and viewers gives an impression that the

commissioners are vulnerable in the sight of the SC. Therefore, they are being commanded to perform a certain duty which they are unwilling to.

Further, the Verbal Process of the narrative emphasises the message projected by the SC in a Sayer – Utterance relationship. In the cartoon, the positioning of the verbal element “ONCE AGAIN, LIST, DELETE, REGISTER” on top of the CJ by *Akosua* signifies that the element is attached to her. The verbal element consists of two parts: the first part is an adverb of frequency (ONCE AGAIN) that reiterates the information the SC wants to pass to the ECs; a strong command which must be obeyed to avoid any delay which might have hampered the electoral process. In the second part, *Akosua* intensifies this command by employing affirmative imperative verbs – ‘list’, ‘delete’ and ‘register’. Huntley (1984, p.1) intimates that imperatives are used “to issue orders, commands, demands, requests, threats, exhortations, permissions, concessions, warnings”. These verbs leave no room for questions when used, therefore, the addressees (utterance), who is the participant within the dialogue balloon whom the utterance is aimed at, must heed and perform a certain command issued by the Sayer (from whom it emanates).

Consequently, the EC complied with the orders of the SC and sought to clean the voters' register. This led to a series of events which culminated in the high frequency of events that characterised this theme. Instances from the data illustrated in the visuals below:



Figure 5: V-Day (Published on 11th July, 2016)

The visual (Figure 5) depicts one of the settings at a polling station where Ghanaians were asked by the EC to check at their respective polling stations to ensure that they were duly registered in the new EC's voters register mandated by the SC. In the cartoon, two prominent groups of participants, complemented by the reactional process, help reveal the central message *Akosua* wants to portray. The participants include a polling official, representing the EC, on one hand, and two people in a queue to verify their details, representing the general public, on the other hand. In a reactional process, the facial expressions of the two sets of groups are in contrast. Whereas the EC official gives a satisfying smile which suggests that they believe that they are satisfying the needs of Ghanaians in their preparations towards the elections, the facial expression of the people in the queue speaks otherwise. The next figure presents a related issue to the theme.



Figure 6: Delete List (Published on 16th July, 2016)

The cartoon presents a single participant behind a tall list of texts. The texts in the list are not visible enough to recognise the characters and make meaning out of them. The glass spectacles on the ground suggest that the participant struggles to make the characters out but to no avail. He further decides to get close enough to the text to enable him to check the names but is still not able to.

In a compositional metafunction, the salience of the cartoon lies in the contrast expressed in the sizes between the object, represented by the list, and the participant. In the image, the size of the list is depicted to cover more than half of the entire space; hence, it is expected to display information in a clear lucid manner. Viewers should be able to recognise the characters to read and get the information being displayed in the list without any difficulty. However, the participant, who is depicted in a smaller size as compared to the huge size of the list, is clearer to viewers than the list of voters which is given much space

to display the information needed by the participant. Here, *Akosua* satirises the entire process of the exhibition by the EC, which in their mandate to allow people to ensure that their details have been captured in the voter's register. This suggests that, though the EC provided the platform and used state funds to organise the exhibition, they failed to make the most important aspect of the exhibition fruitful. The list contained names that were mixed up, as well as errors in the spelling of others. The participant in the image faces a similar difficulty in recognising and locating his details to check if they are accurate.

The central message in the image is further heightened by the mental process that ensues between the participant and the viewers. The thoughts and inner feeling of the participant reiterate the confusion brought up by the initiative of the EC. The participant asks “HOW? EVERYTHING MIX UP, WHERE MY NAME DEY?” DISTRICTS MIX UP, NAMES SMALL, REPETITIONS...”. The verbal element comprises interrogatives that most Ghanaians use to inquire on the list by the EC. The Ghanaian Pidginised English (GPE) structure, “WHERE MY NAME DEY (WHERE IS MY NAME)?”, indicates that a majority of Ghanaians whose names were missing from the list asked questions.



Figure 7: 'Smart' Delete Software (Published on 18th July, 2016)

There are two participants in the cartoon: a man and a woman. The gaze of the participants is fixed on a computer screen as they are depicted busily engaged in the task of working on multiple identification details of people on a computer screen. The cartoon is in relation to some views expressed by some Ghanaians after the 'cleaning' of the voters register by the EC. Various stakeholders expressed satisfaction about the aftermath of the whole process since it presented a reliable voter register to be used for the election. This is justified by the mental process of the participants in the verbal element "DEM (THEY) WANT IT, WE LIKE IT, WE LOVE IT, WE DO AM (WE HAVE DONE IT)!". In the verbal element, *Akosua* seems to project the EC in a conversation with Ghanaians in the structure below:

EC: DEM (THEY) WANT IT.

Ghanaian Public: WE LIKE IT, WE LOVE IT.

EC: WE DO AM (WE HAVE DONE IT)!

The cordial relationship expressed in the conversation indicates that the EC was able to fulfil the wish and demands of the Ghanaian public whilst upholding the integrity of the EC to organise the election.

In its quest to organise a credible election, the EC proposed expansion of the polling stations for the elections from 26,000 to 29,000 polling stations. The addition of the 3,000 polling stations, according to the Chairperson of the EC, was to prevent violence and minimise long queues which usually culminate to excessive pressure on the officials at polling stations with a high population. This proposal attracted some political debates among many Ghanaians prior to the elections. The visual below gives an account of the event by Akosua.



Figure 8: Mystery 2016 +3,000 (Published on 9th August, 2016)

The cartoon (Figure 8) is set at a cemetery with two participants who can be identified as Mrs Charlotte Osei and Mr Amadu Sulley who holds a key and a file with the tag “INDEPENDENT”. The visual metaphorically depicts the readiness of the EC to make polling centres that were far from voters

accessible to encourage many people in exercising their franchise during the elections. As a result, the two EC commissioners in the visual are shown going as far as the cemetery to create polling stations. In this sense, creating polling stations at the cemetery for “eligible voters” indicates how eager the EC was to make preparations for the elections. The participants are set in motion in an action process where they are entering into one of the graves. The message, here, is in two-folds; firstly, the EC was doing the impossible to ensure that every Ghanaian, whether active or inactive, was able to exercise their franchise. Secondly, *Akosua* suggests that the proposal for the expansion of the polling station, which received a lot of backlash from many stakeholders, could have led them to fail Ghanaians on their quest for a successful election.

The verbal text of Figure 8 expressed by the mental process of the participants (active and inactive) highlights the central message of the cartoon. Whilst a section of the ‘inactive’ participants welcomes the move by the EC with “WE LOVE IT, WE LIKE IT”, others oppose this move of expansion and rhetorically ask in pidgin “WEY TIN (WHAT IS IT)?”. The EC, on the other hand, give a reason for their proposal as “EBI (IT IS) E-FREE, FAIR AND TRUST”, an indication that their move was to ensure a free and fair election whilst winning the trust of Ghanaians and the global audience as well.

Media

The media constitutes a major stakeholder in national elections. Iyenger (1991) argues that the media is capable of influencing how people regard an event as important or not; hence, the media is able to achieve this through the subtle means of “framing”, the subtle selection of certain aspects of an issue by the media to make them more important and thus to emphasize a particular cause

of some phenomena” (Iyenger, 1991, p.11). In this regard, Price and Powers (1997) add that the understanding of a particular event by the public can be shaped by how the mass media presents and frames it. Issues under the theme of ‘Media’ comprised various events that were portrayed in the cartoons which centred on media personalities in Ghana. News items that were captured by *Akosua* involving media personalities and professionals were categorised under this theme. In this way, the study analysed how *Akosua* visualised issues that contributed to a major part of the discourse prior to the elections.

At the heart of this theme, as found in the data, is an event that surrounded allegations of nepotism involving the then president John Dramani Mahama and some journalists from an Accra-based radio station, Montie FM (100.1 MHz). Figures 9, 10, 11, and 12 give an account of how *Akosua* presented the issue:



Figure 9: Radio Pirates (Published on 7th July, 2016)

The cartoon presents four participants depicted as pirates. This is revealed by their eye patches as well as their deadly weapons which could be

used to harm others. In addition to this are the numerous human skulls scattered on the ground, which suggests that they have carried out attacks on some people which had resulted in the numerous deaths. The participants can be identified, from left to right, as Harry Zakour (owner of Montie FM) and the three journalists: Alistair Nelson, Godwin Ako Gunn and Salisu Maase (alias, ‘Mugabe’), who were charged with contempt by the SC of Ghana. The three journalists, who were panellists on one of Montie FM’s radio political programmes (Pampaso) in Accra on June 29 2016, threatened some judges of Ghana’s SC to tread with caution on a case involving the EC and Mr Abu Ramadan concerning the credibility of the electoral roll prior to the elections. The three journalists claimed that the judges wanted to foment trouble in the country and that if the 2016 elections turned violent, they had information about some of the judges (as displayed in the list) and would besiege their respective residences. The journalists further warned the judges not to provoke their (journalists) anger on the issue or else they risked suffering the same fate of the three judges who were murdered on June 30, 1982, during the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) era.

In an interactive metafunction, the mindsets of the three represented journalists are revealed in their gaze through the vectors formed between them and the viewers. The vectors connect both parties at an imaginary level where the three participants’ gaze demands viewers to enter into some kind of an imaginary relation (Ly & Jung, 2015). According to Kress and van Leeuwen (1996, p.122), in a “demand” gaze, “one or more represented participants get into direct visual interaction with the viewers; hence, demands some kind of response from the viewer”. In this visual, this kind of relationship depends on

the facial expression and gesture of the three participants. Therefore, viewers are able to assume, from the facial expressions of the three journalists, that they are planning something lethal. This assertion is emphasised by the sheet in which certain information they will require to complete their mission is displayed. On the sheet titled “OPERATION 2016”, the journalists boast that they have investigated “WHERE THEY (the judges) 1. LIVE, 2.EAT, 3. GO, 4. PLAY, 5. SUCK, 6. WORK, 7. SLEEP, 8. CHILL, 9. FLY, 10. LADDER”. This allegation was found to be contemptuous by the affected SC judges where the journalists were punished as projected by *Akosua* in Figures 10 and 11.



Figure 10 Supreme Contempt (Published on 12th July 2016)

The cartoon (Figure 10) presents a visual representation and supports how the issue involving the judges and contemptuous comments made by the three journalists were portrayed by *Akosua*. The comments, which constituted views on a court case that challenged the validity or legality of the voters register to be used during the PPEs in 2016, were found by the SC and High Court judges as threats on their (judges) lives. According to the judges, it was

alleged that the journalists had threatened to rape the CJ Georgina Theodora Wood and kill other judges. With this, the SC sentenced the three accused people to four months imprisonment and a fine of Ghc10,000 each. The owners of the Montie FM Network Broadcasting Company were also fined Ghc30,000 and were obliged to provide measures that would prevent such inflammatory comments on the radio station.

There are seven (7) participants identified with objects such as headphones, gavel, a sheet of paper containing a list of items and a scale of law. As such, we can infer that, on the horizontal x-axis, the represented participants in the cartoon constitute the three judges and the journalists with their Station Manager. The locus of attention in the cartoon at a first glance is the over-sized gavel which is aimed at the journalists. This gives an impression, as revealed in the subsequent paragraphs, of the superiority of the laws of Ghana (as represented by the judges) over anyone if found guilty of any crime regardless of their social status or profession.

Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) intimate that “any semiotic mode has to be able to represent aspects of the world as it is experienced by humans. In other words, it has to be able to represent objects and their relationships in a world outside the representational system” (p. 42). This involves the internal relations between the represented participants, things, the action(s) they perform as well as the setting of the circumstance, therefore, “the sizes of both participants and objects they may utilise in achieving a set target constitute a key feature in analysing the issue of power in visuals” (p. 44). Here, a key feature that helps decipher the message of the visual is ‘saliency’ (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996; van Leeuwen, 2005). Concerning ‘saliency’ and positioning, each group of

participants has been placed side by side. van Leeuwen (2005) establishes that ‘salience’ attracts a reader’s attention through the semiotic resources of position, size, tonal value or colour, sharpness, and so on. Therefore, *Akosua* positions the participants to describe their social power and influence on the horizontal Left-Right (Given-New) positioning where the horizontal left of the cartoon contains participants who constitute “Given” and are thus, made negligible by the cartoonist. This confers on them the quality of being familiar to the viewer. On the other hand, the participants placed on the horizontal right axis of the cartoon are given the quality of “Newness”. The cartoonist’s idea is projected through them because they represent the law- the focus and active participant of the cartoon, which is a reaction to the news that the laws of Ghana cannot be taken for granted. They are the more important of the two groups, hence, their placement on the right.

The four participants on the horizontal left axis of the cartoon have their backs turned towards the viewers. These participants have the inscription “M3” at the backs which, in the real world, is an abbreviation of “Montie 3”; hence, they can be identified as the three journalists. The three journalists, noted for this infamous catchphrase, are distinguished by an object which typifies their profession – headphones. People in the media, especially radio show presenters, are noted for using this device. This sets them apart, in relation to the fourth person, who is without a headphone, thus, can be identified as the Station Manager. On the other hand, the participants on the right side of the horizontal axis of the image constitute the three judges. Their professional identities are identified by their wigs, the gavel they carry together and the law scale of justice.

Each group stands away from each other with no contact but at the same time, looking at each other intently. The eye lines from both parties form a vector because when participants are connected by vectors of eyelines, they are represented as doing something to or for one another (Moya & Pinar, 2008). The vector creates a reactional process in which the two represented groups form a bi-directional reaction process as “Reactors” and “Phenomena” interchangeably. The bi-directional reactional process is formed by a diagonal vector which emanates from the gavel of the judges to the journalists. Why, then, does *Akosua* choose such a manner to present the two groups in the cartoon? A careful look at the sizes of the represented participants in both groups will provide a clue.

In the cartoon, the action of the vector emanating from the judges can be seen as acting on the journalists. This is revealed by the movement direction of the judges and the gavel aimed at the journalists. The diagonal vector formed by the direction of the gavel from the judges towards the journalists helps to reiterate the superiority of the judges, and in this case the laws of Ghana, over the journalists. Here, the gavel becomes the ‘Actor’ in a transactional action process in which the journalists are ‘Goal’. In Halliday’s transitivity system, this might be represented as “The gavel aims at the journalists” where the whole angle of the direction of the gavel forms a strong vector between the two represented participants (that is, the judges versus the journalists). This process “The gavel aims at the journalists” then becomes the ‘Phenomenon’ of a reactional structure in which the judges become ‘reacters’, as a result of the vector formed by the gaze of the judges towards the journalists and the angle of their arms which extends to the gavel, thereby, aiming to act on the journalists.

Hence, the represented participants with their gavel represent ‘Actors’ whereas the journalists become the ‘Goal’, as explained above. The narrative, then, reads as *The “Actors” (judges) seek to use a “means” through a tool (the gavel – the laws of Ghana) to act on a particular “Goal” (journalists).*

Moreover, the transactional process by which the gavel is directed at the goal is unidirectional. With this, the vector formed by the gavel is a one-way affair; without an action return from the goal. This suggests that the gavel, which symbolises the power of the judicial system of Ghana, has the legal mandate and authority to act on anyone without fear, favour or retaliation since the judicial arm of the government of Ghana must ensure that laws of the land are adhered to or followed strictly.

In relation to gaze in an interactive metafunction, the represented participants do not create affinity with the viewer. All the gaze emanating from the represented participants are ‘Offers’ (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006) since they (the judges and journalists) continually look at each other or at something (e.g. the gavel) within the image without any demand on the viewer to be involved in any way beyond accepting or rejecting the offers of information being made by them. Therefore, the represented participants become objects of contemplation for the participants viewing the cartoon, since no eye contact is established with the viewers.

Again, concerning the interactive metafunction, the social distance that exists between the two groups of participants can be seen as impersonal. This is espoused by the power relations that are revealed in the interactive meaning, according to van Leeuwen (2008). Horizontally, the two groups are placed on opposite sides; the journalists on the left axis and the judges on the right axis.

The wide distance that is created by their positions further reiterates the impersonal relationship between them because a close relationship in a picture is determined by how close the represented participants are positioned in an image (Guijarro, 2010).

Akosua's message engraved in the cartoon is also revealed as indicated by the difference in the sizes of the groups of participants as revealed in the Saliency. In compositional metafunction, Saliency implies "the degree to which any element in that composition draws the viewer's attention to itself due to its size, ..." (Tehseem & Bokhari, 2015, p.4). According to this feature, the larger the represented participants, the greater the importance. It can then be inferred that since the sizes of the judges are much bigger as compared to the journalists, *Akosua* suggests that people who represent the law have so much legal power to enforce the law over any individual.

The following visuals (Figures 11 and 12) further give an insight into the theme.



Figure 11: M3 Cry for Freedom (Published on 4th August, 2016)

The cartoon in Figure 11 shows three participants who are locked in a cage. The setting depicts a prison where the three represented participants are

wailing whilst pleading to an unknown audience to be released. The central message in the visual, as revealed in the discussion below, is about the punishment meted out to the three journalists by the SC of Ghana on the issue of the contemptuous comments by the said journalists. The locus of the message is a combination of the verbal and reactional processes where the verbal process consists of a line in Lucky Dube's *Prisoner* "I AM A PRISONER". The reactional process revealed by the gaze of the three journalists which demands sympathy from the viewers and the judges, in general, complements the plea for the mercy shown by the journalists. This plea yielded a fruitful result when the then-president intervened and issued a presidential pardon for their freedom. This was visualised by *Akosua* in the cartoon (Figure 12):



Figure 12: Freedom for Toaso (Published on 24th August, 2016)

The cartoon (Figure 12) is set in the entrance of Nsawam Prison where the three journalists were being held. The visual has four represented participants where prominence has been given to two of the participants by

virtue of their sizes. The two prominent participants can be identified as President John Mahama and Madam Cecilia Johnson, Chairperson of the Council of State (CS) which advised the president to pardon the journalists. In the cartoon, the two prominent represented participants hold a huge battering ram which is aimed at the prison's door, indicating that they intend to gain access to the facility by breaking down the door at the expense of using keys to unlock it. The intentions of the participants (actors) are revealed by an action process in a narrative metafunction. The action process, formed by the vector between the two actors and the battering ram sets their intention in motion where the prison door becomes the 'goal' of the process in a transactional structure (van Leeuwen, 2006).

Corruption

Corruption has generated huge uproars in Ghana over the years. Sarfo-Kantankah (2018) posits that it is seen as highly prevalent in Ghana's public and private sectors. This canker, as suggested by Flt. Lt. Jerry John Rawlings who is the founder of the NDC and a former president of Ghana, caused the defeat of the then incumbent president during Ghana's PPEs in 2016³. Ghana's fight against corruption seems to have plunged so profoundly into the country's socio-economic fabrics, especially during election periods, in such a way that it creates a negative impression about Ghana as one of the world's most corrupt nations. Factors that encourage corrupt practices in Ghana during the election period may include greed and obsession with materialism. In Africa, particularly Ghana, this issue is prevalent because of how it plays a vital role in

³ Flt Lt John Jerry Rawlings made the assertion during an address to mark the 35th Anniversary of the 31st December Revolution on 31st December, 2016 (Citifm News).

the minds of voters during elections. Therefore, political parties capitalise on this social canker to defame their opponents; a political party with several of its key members accused of corruption is perceived as a potentially corrupt government if given the nod to lead. Some of the prominent political personalities were accused of engaging in this social canker prior to the 2016 elections in Ghana. *Akosua* visualised these issues involving corrupt practices and some of them are analysed and discussed below.



Figure 13: Foundations for Take Off (Published on 14th September, 2016)

The cartoon (Figure 13) above has one represented participant who is situated on top of a bus that is surrounded by some guinea fowls and tree plants. In the visual, a helicopter has also been placed side by side with the participant on the bus with which the represented participant is seen warmly smiling at it with his hands stretched towards it. A careful look at the cartoon indicates that the represented participant is John Dramani Mahama, who has been placed amid four projects undertaken by his government. These projects were alleged to have been involved in corruption. To begin with, one-hundred and sixteen (116)

Metro Mass Transit (MMT) buses were rebranded at a cost of GH¢3.6 million. The then-Attorney General saw the cost of rebranding the buses as inflated and demanded a refund. Also, in the cartoon is an alleged \$15 million Savanna Accelerated Development Authority (SADA) project on the rearing of guinea fowls to provide employment and other benefits for the people of the North. The birds were alleged to have been flown to neighbouring Burkina Faso. The visual further comprises an allegation by the then major opposing political party on the use of a helicopter for campaign tours by the president at the expense of the nation.

In the cartoon, the smile and gesture of JDM show a high degree of satisfaction with the items around him. The verbal text of Figure 16, made up of three (3) sentences with each sentence complimented by an adjective; “**BRIGHT FUTURE**”, “**SMOOTH TAKE OFF**” and “**SOLID FOR TOASO**” mainly confirms this. According to him, despite all these allegations of corruption levelled against him, he is optimistic of gleaming days ahead and predicts “(a) BRIGHT FUTURE 2017 ASSURANCE”. The year should take off smoothly; hence, he is hopeful that the elections will be a “solid” win for his party. The three adjectives inspire hope. The central message *Akosua* illustrates in the visual is that, despite all the allegations of corruption levelled against the JDM-led government, he had hoped to win the elections and improve the economic situation of Ghana.

In another cartoon, *Akosua* projects how some stakeholders pursued justice on alleged corruption cases. An instance is shown in Figure 14.



Figure 14: Citizen Vigilante (Published on 8th November, 2016)

Figure 14 shows two participants in a tussle where one of the participants has been grabbed by his shirt. The two participants look similar to Martin Alamisi Burnes Kaiser Amidu (MABKA) (a former Ghana's Attorney General and Minister for justice) and Alfred Agbesi Woyome (AAW) (a former Honorary Vice Consul of Austria to Ghana and a leading member of the NDC) who are placed in a left-right position respectively. The focus of the cartoon lies in how the participant on the horizontal left axis holds the participant on the horizontal right side. This also emphasised by the reactionary process in the form of the gaze emanating from MABKA to AAW. This creates a vector which affects AAW by the actions of MABKA. The action emanating from MABKA is in relation to an approval given to MABKA by the SC of Ghana to orally examine AAW in an attempt to divulge how a GhC51m judgement debt, won by AAW, was wasted. This is reiterated in the verbal element:

GHANA MONEY, OUR MONEY..., NOT OVER UNTIL ITS OVER

The sentence above has been presented in two parts: the first part contains noun phrases with an antecedent of the second person plural pronoun ‘our’ which indicates possession. The antecedent lays a claim to an amount of ‘money’ embezzled by some state officials in 2016 of which AAW was the major beneficiary. MABKA, as an advocate of corruption justice, vowed to retrieve all monies paid to AAW by declaring that retrieving the money from AAW is “not over until it’s over”.

Similarly, the next cartoon highlights corruption levelled against JDM during his term of office.

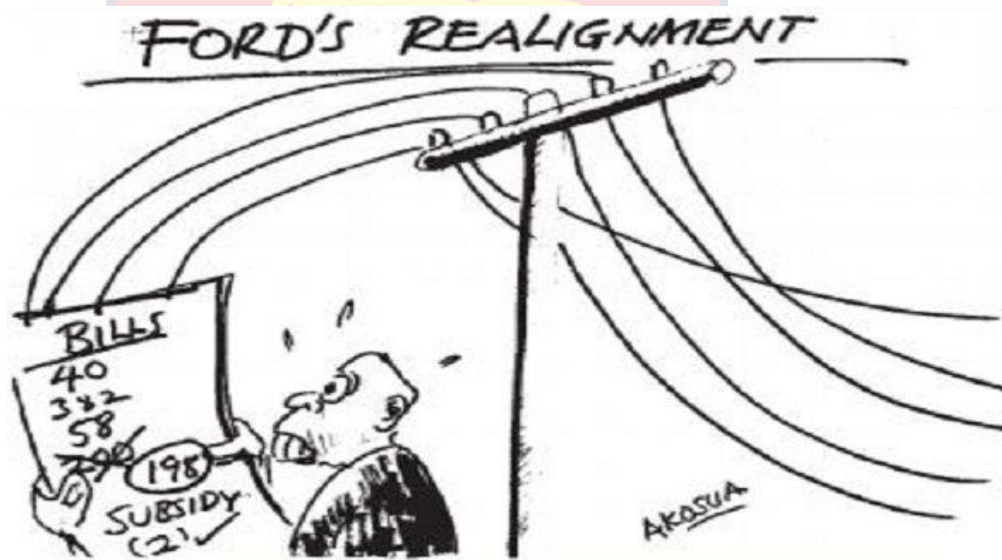


Figure 15: Ford’s Realignment (Published on 9th July, 2016)

In this cartoon, there is only one participant whose attention is caught up in a sheet of paper with some information on it. The facial expression of the participant reveals that he is shocked and surprised about the information. On the right side of the image, there is an electricity extension pole which is connected to the sheet via wires or cables of the pole. This indicates that the information on the sheet is an expression of bill account of the electric extension

pole. The visual is in relation to an allegation that some public officials were manipulating figures for their benefit in 2016.

At a glance, viewers' attention is caught by the shock and surprise on the participant's face. This reaction, which becomes the focus of the message in the cartoon, is revealed by a "reactional process" in the narrative metafunction. In this sense, the phenomenon that is created by the vector formed by the gaze of the actor towards the sheet of paper with information becomes non-transactional because the goal (a sheet of paper with information) can only receive the gaze without any reciprocal. This affirms Hu and Luo's (2016) investigation into how producers of advertisements are able to psychologically manipulate viewers using facial expressions of participants represented on some products. According to Hu and Luo, facial expressions in visuals lead viewers to see what the represented participants see and feel the way they also feel; hence, viewers are able to relate to the surprise and shock in his eyes. The next cartoon, further, contributes to the issue of corruption during the study period.



Figure 16: Bribing Bishop (Published on 7th September, 2016)

Figure 16 is presented on two panels which have been placed side by side of each other in a horizontal left-right structure. In this structure, "the left

element signifies ‘Given’ that is something the viewer already knows, something that is evident and the right element signifies ‘New’ that is something yet to be known by the viewer, something that requires special attention and is problematic and debatable” (Tehseem & Bokhari, 2015, p.5). In each of the two panels is a door gate which brings contrast in the two visuals. Whilst the visual on the horizontal left presents a well-secured environment with a zero-tolerance for intruders, its gate is closed with a warning sign. On the other hand, the visual on the horizontal right shows an environment with poor security measures; the gate is wide open with the padlocks scattered on the floor. This indicates that any intruder is welcomed to pursue his or her intentions and serves as an invitation to such people. The cartoon is in relation to allegations that some ministers of God were partaking in national politics and accepting bribes from politicians. This issue generated huge public interest, especially when Rev Prof Emmanuel Martey, a Former Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana, alleged that some politicians tried to buy his silence on speaking against corrupt practices by some government officials with a bribe which he consequently rejected. The contrast in the behaviours of the ministers of God then becomes the central message in the visual.

The contrast in the two panels is highlighted in their verbal elements. In the left panel, the verbal elements consist of imperatives used as a warning. Intruders, represented here as “BRIBE GIVERS”, metaphorically refer to politicians who tried to bribe some prominent religious figures in Ghana prior to the elections, in a bid to influence them on airing their views on national discourse, an act which was vehemently criticised by the clergy of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana. This is in sharp contrast to the visual on the right

panel which seems to welcome the idea of a bribe. Metaphorically, the welcome gesture of inviting bribes from politicians is espoused by the wide openness of the gates and emphasised by the dejected key and padlock on the floor. In addition, the verbal element “COME YE 24/7, YES OR NO? FREE BONTO? REVELATIONS?” reiterates the idea of inviting bribes.

Opposing Political Personalities

Different views on a particular issue by different people may result in a clash of personalities. In a similar vein, different institutions may also clash on certain issues due to varied views, and this will consequently result in factions where each faction will oppose the other. National issues may also take the same trend. Political parties compete for votes by strategically emphasising some policy issues while downplaying others (Klüver & Sagarzazu, 2015), thus, they oppose each other to make their claims and views to be heard by the electorate.

In the data, *Akosua* captured how some political parties, as well as some political personalities, opposed each other in terms of views and policies. This comprised different views and concerns expressed by people who were usually from different political parties, especially between the NPP and the NDC. A total of eighteen (18) cartoons were found concerning this theme. Out of this, seven (7) were cartoons that bordered on oppositions between the running mates of both NPP and NDC. The running mates, Mr. Paa Kwesi Bekoe Amisshah-Arthur (PKBAA) and Dr. Mahamadu Bawumia (MB), clashed on several occasions on the management of Ghana’s economy where the latter occasionally challenged the former to answer questions which were prevalent to the Ghanaian economy. Again, the cartoons revealed opposition between the presidential candidates of the NPP (NADAA) and the NDC (JDM). They were

seen on numerous occasions opposing one another in their campaigns and other platforms. For instance, in Figure 17, *Akosua* depicts an instance where the two presidential candidates of the NPP and the NDC are engaged in a basketball contest.



Figure 17: Game Point (Published on 7th December 2016)

Figure 17 gives a pictorial representation of the opposition that existed between the presidential candidates of the two major political parties in Ghana. The cartoon is set on a basketball court with two players playing against each other. As expected, one player plays as the defender who tries to prevent his opponent from scoring and achieving a particular goal (target) whilst the other plays offensive and tries to score points to achieve a goal (target). The cartoon is a revelation of the 2016 general elections in Ghana where NADAA of the NPP and JDM of the NDC were the main opposing figures. Apart from their facial resemblance, the two presidential candidates' identities are also revealed by their kit's numbers where JDM has the number 3 on his shirt with NADAA

wearing number 5. This is symbolic to their positions on the ballot papers during the elections where the NDC was placed 3rd with the NPP being 5th.

In the cartoon, the eye-line vectors emanating from the two represented participants emphasise the notion of competition between them in a bi-transactional process. Kress and van Leeuwen (2006, p.64) argue that vectors can be “eye-lines or gestures indicating a line of force in a particular direction”: therefore, the eyes of the two presidential candidates create vectors with the basketball and the basket respectively. The first part of the vector formed by NADAA who becomes the “Reactor” conveys the spirit of attack in a competition through his facial expression and the direction of his glance at the basket which becomes the “Phenomenon”. It also portrays that he is keen on achieving his goal with his eyes set on the basket. Kress and van Leeuwen (2006, p. 67) establish that in reactional processes, “the vector is formed by an eye line, the direction of the glance of one or more of the represented participants”. Therefore, viewers are invited to follow the direction of the look to see what he is seeing, aim at what he is aiming and believe in what he is believing. *Akosua* establishes that the elections were the last opportunity that NADAA would get to be the president of Ghana. Therefore, he had to channel all his focus on competing with JDM and utilise any available means to reach his goal.

Similarly, the direction of JDM’s look also creates a vector with the basketball. The reactional process created by the vector signals defending one’s territory in a competition. His gaze is fixed on the opponent with particular attention to the basketball. It can be realised that JDM was defending himself as the incumbent president doing his best to retain his seat.

In another cartoon (Figure 18), *Akosua* gives an account of a clash between PKBAA and MB on Ghana's economy.



Figure 18: Economy Reply Shadow Boxing (Published on 19th September, 2016)

The visual is set in a boxing ring where two participants are depicted engaged in a boxing match. The participants are placed side by side of each other in the boxing ring to fight in a match where each of them tries to overcome the other in front of a cheering crowd. The cartoon is in relation to a clash of personalities between PKBAA and MB on best economic practices to handle the Ghana economy in 2016. The opposition party, led by MB had constantly accused the ruling government of lacking expertise and knowledge that would have helped ensure that the economy of Ghana boomed. Such accusations, on many occasions, infuriated the ruling government, especially, PKBAA, who had served as the Governor of Bank of Ghana and prior to becoming the Vice President. Therefore, he served as the right person to reply to the accusations. As a result, a series of clashes in the media ensued between these two economics

giants in which *Akosua* sets this cartoon in a boxing ring for them to settle their differences in front of their supporters.

In a similar vein, *Akosua* sets a swimming contest to project this theme as found in Figure 19.



Figure 19: Heptathlon (Published on 3rd October, 2016)

The cartoon (Figure 19) presents some participants engaged in a heptathlon swimming contest where prominence has been given to two of the participants in terms of size. The two participants, who can be recognised as JDM and NADAA, seem to be ready for the contest by their posture. Both of them have their gaze fixed on their respective lanes in the pool. This creates a vector between the direction of their gaze and the pool where the participants become the 'actors' whilst their lanes of the pool are the 'goal' in a transactional structure. Here, the transactional structure indicates that they are highly focused on the task ahead with each of them aiming to win the contest since there is no vector emanating from the goal to give them divided attention.

Based on the depth of the water levels of the pool for the two participants, *Akosua* seems to suggest that the participant on the left side has been favoured by the organisers of the competition to win it. This stems from the fact that the depth of the water is high on the right side as compared to that of NADAA. This is emphasised by the verbal elements where JDM seem satisfied (I LIKE IT, I LOVE) with the conditions provided whereas NADAA is optimistic about his chances of winning the contest. He looks to a higher being for inspiration (THE BATTLE IS STILL THE LORD'S). This served as a slogan during the NPP's campaign in 2016.

The next cartoon, set on an athletic track, gives further reiterates this theme.

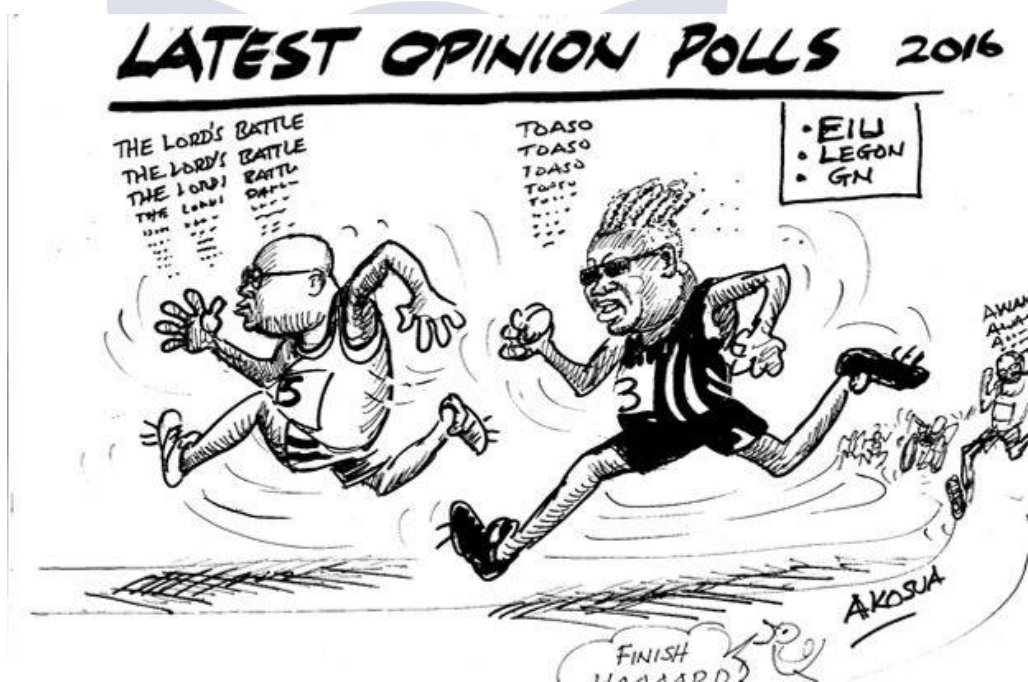


Figure 20: Latest Opinion Polls (Published on 25th November, 2016)

The cartoon (Figure 20) presents some participants in a race where prominence is given to two of them according to their sizes. In the race, the two participants appear to be the forerunners to win the race as the other participants lag behind them. The figure is a visual representation of some opinion polls that

emerged prior to the elections. In this cartoon, *Akosua* presented three of such opinion polls which predicted victory for the NPP, namely: research by the University of Ghana and London-based Economic Intelligence Unit (EIU). Based on their positioning, NADAA has been placed ahead of JDM and Papa Kwesi Nduom who occupy second and third positions respectively. This was a reflection of the opinion polls by these professional bodies who predicted victory for the NADAA led NPP before the elections.

Utilities

The energy sector of every nation serves as the engine for socio-economic growth. The provision of energy, particularly, electricity has become vital for our day to day activities in our contemporary world. Therefore, people tend to be very concerned about the provision of energy. In Ghana, this was evident when the nation experienced a prolonged power crisis between 2012 and 2016, eventually resulting in the collapse of many companies, hampering economic growth, and rendering Ghana's economy uncompetitive. On February 25, 2015, the Bank of Ghana announced that the country's GDP growth had slowed from 7.3% in 2013 to 4.2% in 2014, due largely to energy supply constraints and rising inputs. The statement revealed the country's persistent energy crisis, colloquially known as 'Dumsor' had a negative impact on Ghana's economy. The term 'Dumsor' is a famous Ghanaian catchphrase that refers to persistent, irregular and unpredictable electric power outages. It is derived from two separate words from the Akan language 'dum' (to put off or quench) and 'so' (to turn on or to make light); thus, it is literally translated as "off-and-on". In this regard, most Ghanaians tend to measure the performance of the government with the corresponding performance of the provision of

utility, especially, electricity. Ghana experienced a series of ‘dumsor’ prior to the elections. Ghanaians, thus, reiterated calls for a timetable for the load-shedding that plunged many parts of the country. Some Ghanaians argued that the Electricity Company of Ghana (ECG) needed to publish a schedule to enable Ghanaians to incorporate it into their daily activities to help people in planning. Nevertheless, the call for the timetable was fruitless as no such arrangement was provided by the Electricity Company of Ghana. Figure 21 below shows how Akosua represented the issue.

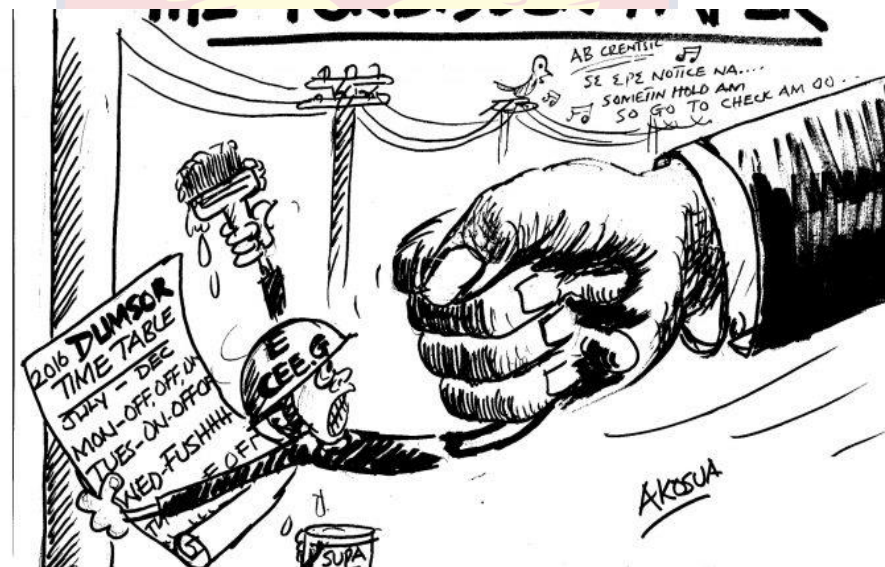


Figure 21: The Forbidden Paper (Published on 26th July, 2016)

The cartoon displays two participants in a struggle where the participant on the left, represented by an oversized arm, is preventing the other participant on the right from undertaking an action. Akosua, in this cartoon, illustrates the inability of the ECG to publish a substantial schedule in 2016 to regulate the intermittent power outages faced by Ghanaians. Prior to this, a section of ECG workers blamed the then President JDM for their inability to publish a load-shedding timetable for consumers to enable them to plan their activities because the president had maintained that the country was not back to the protracted

energy crisis that was experienced some years back, hence, the alleged move by the president to prevent ECG workers from publishing the timetable.

In a representational metafunction, the outstretched unknown hand on the left side of the cartoon creates a vector with the lower body part of the participant on the horizontal right side. The vector created projects an action process where the hand, which acts as the “Actor”, is identified as performing an action which affects the ECG worker (Goal). According to Kress and van Leeuwen (2006), vectors are formed by bodies, limbs or tools in action when participants are represented as doing something to or for each other, and in this case, the hand is seen as acting upon or doing something to the ECG worker (Goal). The process can be identified in Halliday’s transitivity system as a material process because material transitivity processes are processes of action, generally physical and tangible. Halliday calls them action clauses that express the reality that something or someone is taking some action or “doing” something – something that can be done to some other entity (Nguyen et al, 2013).

Also, *Akosua* emphasises the claim that the government was responsible for preventing the publication of the timetable by ECG through salience. In compositional metafunction, “salience is where certain features in a composition are made to stand out to draw the viewer’s attention” (Machin, 2007, p.130). In essence, the elements or participants in an image are made to attract viewers’ attention through several factors such as placement in either foreground or background, relative size, and differences in sharpness. (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). In the cartoon, this is achieved by the sizes of the represented participants. At a glance, one realises that the size of the unknown

hand is exaggerated, as compared to the whole figure of the ECG worker. The impersonal hand is more prominent in terms of “size” than the other represented participant in the cartoon. *Akosua* highlights the social power ascribed to the government. By projecting the hand as larger and more visible than the whole figure of the ECG worker and placing it in a position which takes about half of the image’s space, the artist portrays the hand as being the most dominant of the participants; thereby, highlighting dominance on the part of the government over civil servants or public workers. Cast against the central message of the cartoon, the salience of the hand serves as a force that draws back the progress that the ECG workers had made in achieving their target – publishing the schedule, and this gives an impression that seems to support the claim made; the interference of political leaders in the works of some public institutions in Ghana.

Surprisingly, the main participant in the cartoon who can be identified fully by viewers only takes up less than half of the frame; in contrast, the other participant with only the hands visible takes up almost half of the frame. In essence, whilst the whole figure of the ECG worker is shown to fit in the cartoon frame, the government has only its hand being visible, prompting or signalling several implications. The size of the hand, as depicted to be much larger than that of the ECG worker (salience), highlights the helplessness or vulnerability of the ECG workers in front of the government, hence, the government becomes a hindrance to publishing the timetable. Again, the fact that just the hand is depicted without an identifiable person makes it a generic one, so that it refers to leadership at all levels. It introduces political leaders as interferers. Further, the fact that the owner of the hand is not seen shows an emotional disconnect

between the masses and the leaders during a situation like this and this forms the nucleus of the cartoon's overall theme.

In a reactional process, the eyeline vector created by the eyeline direction of the ECG worker with the unknown participant represented by the hand encompasses the tension that was created between Ghanaians and the government which was alleged to have prevented ECG from publishing the schedule. This process which conveys the impression of a struggle between the two entities plays a decisive role in giving a visual representation to the theme of the cartoon: restraining or interference of the government in the works of civil servants.

To illustrate further, the facial expression and direction of the glance of the ECG worker (Reactor) convey vulnerability, causing viewers to obtain a sense that he is being prevented from expressing what he wants to do by the government (phenomenon). The function of the "Phenomena", here, is important for the cartoon because it forms the transactional reaction, which is quite prominent in the recreational processes and presents the concrete and easy-to-comprehend imagery to the viewer.

Akosua projected one of the causes of the intermittent power supply in Ghana in Figure 22.



Figure 22: Akosombo today. Published on 25th July, 2016.

Figure 22 is set in a dam, specifically, the Akosombo Dam of Ghana which supplies a major percentage of the nation's electricity needs. The visual, with one represented participant, illustrates the cause of intermittent power supply experienced by Ghanaians prior to the elections as this issue became a public outcry and attracted a huge audience during debates on it. The facial expression of the participant in the visual express disappointment towards the water level needed to power the dam. His disappointment is emphasised in the mental process which reveals the thoughts and inner feelings of represented participants in visuals. In the mental process, the textual element uttered by the participant (sayer) "EBI (IS IT) ACT OF GOD OR GOD WEY E VEX (WHO IS ANGRY)?" directly voices the intention of *Akosua*.

Religious Personalities in Politics

Religion plays a key role in Africa, with Ghana being no exception. Most Ghanaians tend to be highly influenced by religion; hence, the situation has led to a rise of influential people in politics who are highly regarded in matters of religion. These people can influence the Ghanaian political terrain

since they have large followers and are regarded as people of high moral values. Some governments have tried to prevent the influence of religious leaders in politics but have failed over the years, especially in Africa, because of the importance that the majority of the people place on religion. For instance, Tamney (1992, p.47) noted that during the Conservative government in Singapore, the government declared that “it did not want religious leaders straying beyond the religious realm”, signalling an attempt by the government to restrain the interference of religious leaders in politics. However, some of the religious leaders paid no heed to this declaration.

Similarly, in Ghana, during the era of some leaders who were regarded as “firm”, such as former President Jerry John Rawlings, most people were discouraged to voice their grievances on national issues. Asimeng (1981, p.142) remarked that the situation became severe to the extent “that only established bodies such as the Christian Council (CC) of Ghana were capable of expressing condemnation”. In contemporary Ghana, some religious leaders have been active in politics to the extent of publicly declaring support for a particular political party. Among the issues highlighted by *Akosua* include an allegation made by a reverend minister of a plot by some assailants to murder NADAA in 2016 as shown in Figures 23 and 24.



Figure 23: Prophecy Invite (Published on 24th October, 2016)

The cartoon shows two main participants placed by the side of each other. Both participants seem to be engaged in a conversation, where the participant on the right side is passing on information to the participant on the left side. The cartoon depicts a scene that sought to investigate a prophecy by Rev. Isaac Owusu Bempah (IOB), the founder and leader of the Glorious Word Power Ministry, on a plot attempt by some members of a political party on the life of NADAA. The pastor was identified to be a staunch supporter of the NPP despite his religious duties. He was interrogated by the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) of the Ghana Police Service (GPS) to substantiate his claim. Figure 24 gives further insight into this issue.



Figure 24: Prophecy Investigations (Published on 28th October, 2016)

The cartoon is set in a police station where the police have invited an individual for questioning and clarification on an issue. The individual is presented as a religious figure, specifically, a pastor because of the cross he holds. As revealed in the previous cartoon, this visual relates to an invitation sent to IOB on some allegations he had made concerning a plot to murder NADAA during one of his campaigns prior to the elections. The central message in the cartoon is given in the mental process revealed in the discourse of the represented participants.

Interrogating the reverend minister, the police inquired the basis for his claim and asked him to present evidence to support it. One officer asks, “WE FIT GO (CAN WE) SEE WHERE YOU SEE THE PROPHECY?”. The verbal element is a yes/no interrogative (Can we see) of a direct question with the structure: modal/auxiliary verb + subject + base form of the main verb

CAN WE SEE

In his response, IOB plays down the demands of the question and reacts with “WHAT IS WRITTEN IS WRITTEN”. The statement is an analogy to Pontius Pilate in the Bible (John 19:20) in response to the Jewish priests who had objected to his writing on the sign that was hung above Jesus at his crucifixion.

In other issues involving religious figures in politics, some religious personalities predicted the outcome of the United States of America held earlier in November 2016 before Ghana’s election. The results of US election were seen by many Ghanaians as a prelude to Ghana’s election. As a result, many religious personalities predicted the outcome of the US elections as visualised by Akosua in Figure 25.



Figure 25: Prophecy: Before Nov 7 (Published on 18th November, 2016)

The cartoon (Figure 25) presents two participants placed side by side of each other. On both the left and the right margins of the visual, the two participants present two different ideological stances. Displayed in equal sizes and performing the same action, each participant displays a picture that contains one of the front runners of the US elections in November 2016. The two participants can be identified as Prophet Temitope Balogun Joshua (TBJ), a Nigerian religious leader popularly referred to as Prophet T. B. Joshua, and Rev.

Isaac Owusu Bempah display images of Hilary Clinton (HC) and Donald Trump (DT) respectively. The visual is in relation to a prediction by both religious figures where TBJ predicted victory for HC whilst IOB went for a win for DT. The two participants have been placed in a left-right position where elements placed on the left signifies “given information”; that is, information concerning what the public expects; hence, it came as a surprise to many when DT won the elections. On the other hand, the elements in the right panel present “new information” which connotes reality; what is real and happening.

Representation of Political Actors in Ghana’s 2016 Elections

This section of the chapter analyses and discusses how the political actors were represented in *Akosua* prior to the elections in 2016. The cartoons published by *Akosua* prior to the parliamentary and presidential elections (PPEs) in 2016 were not only to inform the public about topical issues that characterised the discourse of the elections, but the main actors (presidential candidates) were also represented differently to project particular messages. In this section, I interrogate some linguistic resources used in conjunction with Kress and van Leeuwen’s (1996; 2006) toolkit for Critical Multimodal Discourse Analysis (CMDA) to analyse how these actors were ideologically represented.

Politicians as Political Enemies

From the data, *Akosua* portrayed some politicians as enemies in Ghana’s political terrain. These political personalities were mostly found in the media opposing each other’s ideas and views. As expected, the period called for a clash of personalities on views and policies because the various political parties had different agendas in achieving their set targets.

One of the political personality clashes that were mostly found in the Ghanaian media prior to the elections was the clash between the two running mates of the two major political parties (NPP and NDC) on how Ghana's economy was to be managed. According to the running mate of the NPP, Dr. Mahmudu Bawumia (MB), the incumbent party were under-performing in their management of Ghana's economy. They accused the government of lacking the required expertise to spur Ghana's economy on the right path; hence, they constantly referred to the government as 'incompetent', a term which infuriated the then-president. On his part, the running mate of the NDC, Paa Kwesi Bekoe Amissah-Arthur (PKBAA), always countered that the government had been performing better as compared to the NPP. The cartoon below gives an account of one of such encounters.



Figure 26: Bawumia Respondents (Published on 13th September, 2016)

The cartoon (Figure 26) shows one participant in a furious mood. The furiousness can be read from his facial expression as he tore a sheet of paper with an inscription "INTEREST RATE DEBT". The setting of the cartoon is a boxing arena since a punching bag and a boxing ring are seen in the background.

Added to these is the presence of the media who give him the platform to address his audience. From there, it can be noticed that *Akosua* portrays a boxing arena where a boxing match has been scheduled to take place. Metaphorically, the cartoon satirises an ideological clash on Ghana's economy between MB and PKBAA of the NPP and NDC respectively. A platform was set for these two personalities to wrestle one another to demonstrate that they were capable of handling the Ghana economy.

The sole participant who also serves as the focus of attention stands alone beside the boxing ring whilst tearing the sheet of paper apart. Viewers get the impression that the content of the sheet is the reason behind his furiousness. This can be attributed to the constant reference made by MB on Ghana's high-interest rate which cumulated to a high debt incurred by the incumbent government. Here, an action process is created by the vector of the hands of PKBAA and the sheet of paper; the vector, therefore, becomes the focus of attention in the cartoon. The 'actor' (PKBAA) strangles the 'object' (a sheet of paper which contains allegations by MB) to cause it to tear apart. This emphasises the enmity that seemed to have existed between the two running mates.

Akosua also reiterates the impression that the two politicians were enemies in the reactional and speech processes. In the cartoon, PKBAA looks spitefully at the allegations on the paper and throws a challenge to Dr. Bawumia. He rhetorically asks, "WEY, WEY-TIN BE DIS (WHAT IS THIS)?" and emphatically admonished the media to "TELL HIM... I – AM – READY TO FIGHT!!! WOAARRRRRRR!" In the verbal element, *Akosua* portrays PKBAA

as someone who lacks confidence and is not prepared to face his opponent; hence, he hesitates in his response to his opponent.

Politicians as Friends/Associates

Politicians from different political parties are usually shown in the limelight as opponents who clash on their different views and policies about a particular situation. This situation is not alien in most African countries; hence, politicians from different political affiliations are usually depicted as enemies in the eyes of the public, as highlighted previously. However, there are instances when these political actors are represented in the media as colleagues. With this, they are portrayed as people with diverse opinions on a particular situation but competing for a common cause. An instance is exemplified below:



Figure 27: Campaign Password (Published on 27th October, 2016).

The cartoon below shows two participants heading towards opposite directions. They are placed in a top-down position where the participant at the top is in a helicopter heading towards the horizontal right axis whereas the participant positioned down is swimming towards the horizontal left axis.

In a compositional metafunction, the Salience of the cartoon becomes the main focus in which *Akosua* presents the central message. The Salience of the cartoon is structured in a top-bottom structure. Compared to horizontally-structured compositions, the top-bottom dimension applies to compositions that are structured along the vertical axis. Here, the participants assume particular meanings based on their alignment in relation to the composition's vertical centre. In this sense, Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) argue that when a visual composition has “constituent elements” placed in the top half and “other different elements” in the bottom half, the topmost elements represent “Ideal”, the “idealized or generalized essence of the information” (p.187). Sandbjerg (2015) adds that the “Ideal” can also be said to represent “what might be” and the Real “what is”. The bottommost elements, on the other hand, represent the “Real”, something that stands in contrast to the Ideal in that the information it conveys is more specific or “down-to-earth”. In the cartoon, even though both participants are headed in the opposite direction, they exchange pleasantries through their facial expressions and the warm greetings revealed in the verbal element. The participants in the cartoon can be identified as JDM and NADAA of the NDC and NPP respectively who are placed in a top-bottom position respectively. JDM is depicted riding a helicopter (an act which was heavily criticised by the NPP during the campaign period of the 2016 elections) whilst pleasantly waving at his opponent at the bottom. At the bottom is NADAA who is swimming towards the right horizontal axis whilst appreciating the pleasantry by his opponent in the helicopter at the top half of the cartoon. *Akosua*, in this cartoon, tries to highlight that despite the difference in opinions and views of the two front runners of the elections, they still saw themselves as colleagues,

rather than enemies, who were rooting for a common course. The contradiction in the direction of their movements does not become a barrier to their communication and this emphasises the impression that even though they are aware of their opposition, they have something in common which after the elections, they have to come together and fight for.

The cordial relationship between the participants is also highlighted by the speech processes of the representational metafunction in the cartoon. The protruding speech balloons that reveal the thoughts of the participants consist of cordial and friendly statements that project a healthy relationship between the two people. At the top position, JDM offers that “TOASO (CONTINUE) OOO ..., AFTERNOON BRO” whilst Akuffo Addo responds that “EBI (IT IS) THE LORD’S BATTLE OO, YAA ONUA (THANK YOU MY BROTHER)”. It can be noticed from both statements that, even though there exists a cordial and friendly relationship between them, they still hold on to their rivalry in “TOASO” and “EBI THE LORD’S BATTLE” respectively which were their slogans during the campaign for the 2016 elections. In essence, *Akosua* established in this cartoon that the two political actors still held each other in high esteem despite their political difference(s).

Politicians as Cowards

The data revealed that some political actors were represented in the media as lacking the courage to confront issues at times. These political actors made excuses to avoid confronting certain situations they were required to. An instance is given below.

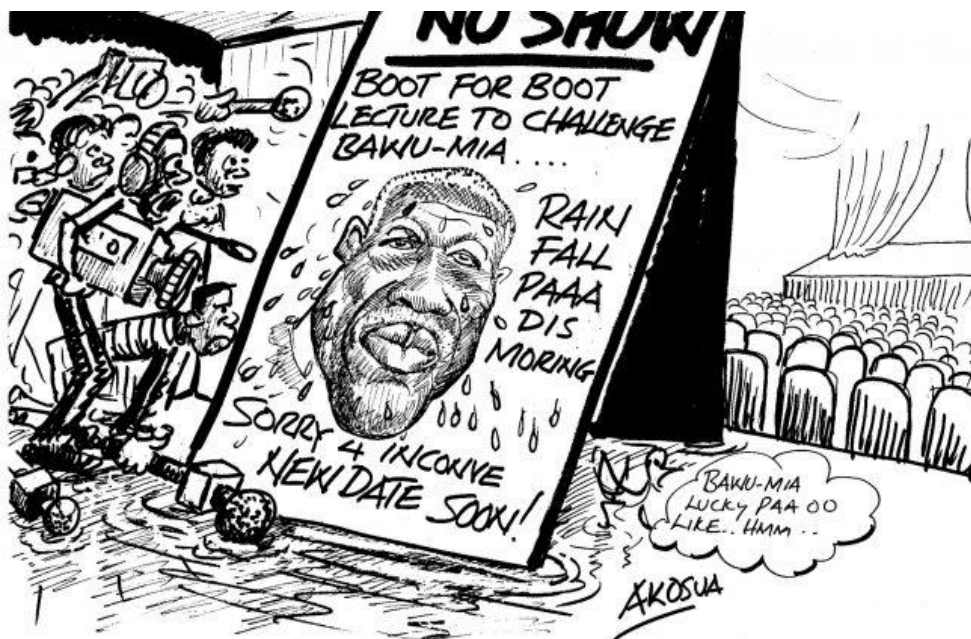


Figure 28: No Show (Published on 16th September, 2016)

The cartoon is set at the entrance of an empty auditorium. The facial expressions of the audience give an impression that they are disappointed, and this might be as a result of the postponement of the said programme. The audience for the programme comprises media personnel and individuals who had come to witness what would have been a compelling programme, however, the main speaker for the programme could not make it as indicated on the giant notice board. The cartoon depicts the postponement of a public lecture that was expected from the NDC with PKBAA as the headline speaker. The lecture was a response to allegations made against the NDC, and to some extent PKBAA, by MB that he (PKBAA, who was an economist and the then head of the Economic Management Team of the government) had succeeded in throwing Ghana's economy into disarray. MB's lecture which was titled, "The State of the Ghanaian Economy – A Foundation of Concrete or Straw," rubbished the NDC's economic performance, claiming that the then ruling party was rather taking Ghana backwards with its policies. This infuriated the ruling government

who organised a team of NDC propagandists to ‘correct’ the ‘untruths’ being ‘peddled’ by MB in their “Setting the Records Straight” encounter (peacefmonline.com). Therefore, most Ghanaians were anxious to know the counter-arguments to be raised against the claims by MB. Also, the lecture had attracted a huge public interest because PKBAA had earlier warned that he was ready to match the NPP boot for boot and challenge any false claims peddled against the then government.

At a first glance of the cartoon, viewers’ eyes are caught by the giant notice board which displays information about the public lecture, hence, the notice becomes the main medium through which *Akosua* presents the message. In a compositional metafunction, the information is displayed in a vertical top-down position with the centre as the focus of attention. As explained earlier, the vertical dimension “differentiates information from the top to the bottom; the top is considered to give idealized information and presents “ideal” while the bottom is considered to give specific, practical information and presents the “real” (Baykal, 2016, p.11). At the vertical top position, the attention of the audience is caught in what appears to be the subtheme of the public lecture “BOOT FOR BOOT LECTURE TO CHALLENGE BAWU-MIA (BAWUMIA) ...”. The caption gives an impression of a boast by the NDC, led by PKBAA, in their bid to challenge the “lies” peddled by MB. However, at the vertical bottom position, an excuse is given to have the lecture postponed. They post, “SORRY 4 (FOR) INCONVE (INCONVENIENCE) NEW DATE SOON!”. This, in the minds of the public, served as a coward move by the NDC often to avoid the public lecture. Similarly, the NDC gave excuses when they were given opportunities to disprove allegations by MB on Ghana’s economy.

For instance, Mr. Seth Terpkker (the then Minister for Trade and Finance) failed to provide figures to contradict MB's claim of the supposed debt to GDP ratio by the government claims by making an excuse that he was travelling and would provide it on his return, which never came. Also, Casiel Ato Forson (the then Deputy Minister for Trade and Finance) who also tried to pour cold water on MB's revelations when given the chance to provide figures to contradict MB's figures, gave an excuse that he was yet to leave his house for the office; hence, he was not prepared. All these excuses culminated to depicting members of the ruling party as cowards who shied away from intellectually wrestling with their opponents.

Further, the central message is emphasised in the verbal element in the central position. Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) assert that the central position is the crucial element of the composition. Thus, the excuse given by the NDC that called for the postponement of the lecture has been presented here. It becomes the central information on the notice board, citing the failure of the public lecture as "RAIN FALL PAA (REALLY) DIS (THIS) MORNING". *Akosua* satirises the reason for the postponement of the lecture by playing it down since the lecture could have been held later in the day if it had rained earlier.

Politicians as Schemers

Political promises are always common in newspapers and various media outlets during election periods. Every political party launches its electoral platform with promises that will better the conditions of the electorate. Elinder et al. (2015) indicate that election promises have a significant effect on

influencing voters on the choice of candidates, especially on election days. This situation has led many politicians to use various means to lure voters.

In Ghana, political parties try to gain an advantage over their political rivals to enable them to win the polls. As a result, they resort to sharing and distributing items freely to the electorate; thereby, becoming schemers in achieving this. The cartoon below portrays politicians as schemers.



Figure 29: Toaso Tithes (Published on 19th August, 2016)

In Figure 29, there are two participants who are giving out equipment. The equipment, stashed in a truck, comprise outboard motors, sewing machines, hairdryers, spades, masonry pan, etc. The beneficiaries are in a joyous mood as some of them are seen jubilating. The cartoon is a depiction of a four-day campaign of the NDC led by JDM in Sekondi-Takoradi where JDM distributed outboard motors to some fishermen in the community to help improve upon their working conditions. Also, the cartoon captures an allegation that the president, through Lordina Mahama (LM), former Ghana's First Lady, distributed trading pans, sewing machines, hairdryers, cloth, some cash, etc. to some people in Kumasi. These moves were seen as an abuse of incumbency by

the major opposition political party as well as some political think tanks in Ghana such as the Ghana Integrity Initiative (GII). In the cartoon, JDM becomes the centre of attraction since he is positioned in the middle. Viewers' attention is caught at a first glance on the outboard motor that he holds. On a top-bottom positioning, the participants (JDM and LM) who are depicted as donors are positioned above the beneficiaries. In an interactive metafunction where power relations come to bare, information placed at the top often becomes the most important part of an image whilst information placed at the bottom, on the other hand, represent the generic or the irrelevant (van Leeuwen, 2005). In relation to the cartoon, JDM and LM, ironically, become more important than the electorates who are going to vote and select a winner for the elections.

Politicians as Braggarts

The analysis of the data revealed that some political actors were usually seen as people who boast about their achievements. Boasting of one's achievement during elections can help convince the electorate. Nevertheless, when such tactics are outdone, it presents a candidate as a self-publicist. The cartoon below gives an account of how JDM was represented when his government claimed that they had solved Ghana's intermittent electricity problem. Figure 30 gives an account of how *Akosua* presented the issue.



Figure 30: Dumsor: Fix and Managers Awards Show (Published on 21st August, 2016)

The cartoon depicts a musical concert or an award show with performers and audience. The lead performer is happily performing whilst involving his audience in his performance. He carries an electric pole at his back as one of his stage props. The cartoon is in relation to a boast by JDM on his claim that his government had been able to find solutions to the intermittent power outages (dumsor) in 2016.

Concerning their positioning in terms of salience, the participants are placed in a top-bottom structure where JDM who serves as the leader of the band is placed above the audience. From the vertical angle perspective, the audience of the concert is viewed from a low angle which indicates that the power relation between the performer (John Mahama) and them (audience) unequal.

Politicians as Cunny

The data also revealed that some political actors were portrayed as cunny when presenting themselves to Ghanaians. Campaigning in an election requires that a candidate spells out his or her intended policies and visions that will help achieve a set target of a particular group. Most candidates take advantage of this to present their messages convincingly to persuade voters. Similarly, the major opposition political party made several allegations concerning Ghana's economy prior to the elections in 2016. They claimed that the Ghanaian economy was incompetently managed by the incumbent government, hence, they sought an opportunity from Ghanaians to fix it. The cartoon below gives an account of how *Akosua* represented the issue.



Figure 31: Doctors Wanted (Published on 10th October, 2016)

The cartoon, set at a hospital room, shows three represented participants – two men and a human skeleton on a hospital bed. The healthy human skeleton is depicted as a patient lying down whilst receiving water infusions administered by a health official to aid its recovery. Unlike medical water infusions which contain treated water to boost the health of patients, the three water infusions, ironically, have a watch, a car and a guinea fowl as their contents to help

improve the health of the skeleton. On the horizontal left axis can be seen two men cunningly smiling toward the patient. They are attempting to persuade it to give them the opportunity to treat it by offering promising better health conditions for it. The men in the cartoon can be identified as the presidential candidates of the NPP, NADAA and MB respectively who are depicted in an attempt to help save the Ghanaian economy (represented by the skeleton) in 2016.

The central message in the cartoon is revealed in the reactional process of the represented participants. In a representational metafunction, the vector formed by the reactional process which portrays what *Akosua* wants to project constitutes the eye line direction of the three represented participants. The facial expression of the two presidential candidates emphasised by the direction of their glance towards the skeleton conveys that they are cunningly trying to convince the depicted state of Ghana's economy in 2016. This is emphasised in the mental process where NADAA advocates that the Ghana Economy (represented by the skeleton) "TRY ME AND BA-WU-MIA". In this sense, the participants proposed, as portrayed by *Akosua*, that they were capable of improving the 'health' of Ghana's Economy when given the nod by Ghanaians.

Politicians as Embezzlers of State Funds

Financial embezzlement was a prominent topical area in *Akosua* during the period under the study. The situation is not surprising since embezzlement, as well as financial mismanagement of public funds, constitute the most common area of cartooning when it comes to politics and national discourse in editorial cartoons (Dugalich, 2018). Dugalich adds that embezzling state funds, one of the most sensitive topics in the media and press, is considered a

dangerous threat to government policies and the welfare of its citizens. Prior to the elections in 2016, the incumbent government was alleged, on several occasions by opposition political parties, to have embezzled funds meant for developmental projects to support its bid to retain the presidency. The cartoon below gives a pictorial representation of the allegations.



Figure 32: Changing Lives (Published on 23rd September, 2016)

In the cartoon, there is a vehicle full of money being shared among people. There are three participants who distribute the notes to the beneficiaries who can be seen jubilating to the “miracle”, as exclaimed by one. The cartoon gives an account of an allegation levelled against JDM for indiscriminately sharing money to traders in Abbassey Okai, one of Ghana’s vibrant markets, on one of his campaign tours. In the cartoon, the vehicle with the notes of money serves as the main focus which attracts viewers’ attention at a first glance of the image. The inscription on the back of the vehicle “HAMA PAPER” is in reference to “Mahama Paper”, a song composed by one of Ghana’s popular dancehall musicians, Charles Nii Armah Mensah (also known in showbiz as Shatta Wale). The song was composed for JDM for his campaign tours in the 2016 elections. Therefore, the vehicle serves as a symbolic attribute in a

conceptual process. Chen and Gao (2014) intimate that symbolic attributes relate to what a represented person, object or place means or symbolizes in an image. Here, the vehicle becomes the attribute whereas JDM serves as the carrier. Thus, JDM becomes the represented politician in the cartoon in a conceptual process.

Further, the notes of money in the vehicle are stuffed in every space available in the Mahama-Paper-Vehicle to the extent that there are no spaces for passengers; hence, the passengers resort to finding alternate spaces at the outer section of the vehicle. This prepares viewers for the central message in the cartoon which is revealed in the speech and mental processes of the represented participants. The attitudes of the beneficiaries towards the gesture vary. Whilst a section sees the act as uncalled for and embezzlement of state funds (OUR MONEY), others welcome it with open arms by describing it as a divine intervention (WHAT A MIRACLE, GOD IS GOOD).

Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the analysis and discussion of the data in relation to the research questions. The first part focused on Research Question 1, where the various topical issues found in the cartoons were analysed. To achieve this, the issues were categorised into major and minor themes. The major issues comprised topical issues that were identified more than five (5) times in the cartoons. On the other hand, the minor issues constituted topical issues that occurred less than five (5) times in the data. The second part of the chapter dealt with how the political actors were ideologically represented in *Akosua* prior to the 2016 parliamentary and presidential elections in Ghana.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The previous chapter focused on the analysis and discussion of the data to answer the research questions. The present chapter offers an overview of the research and summarises the findings from the analysis and discussion. This is achieved in three sections, where the first section gives a summary of the entire study, followed by highlights of the findings as well as conclusions drawn from the analysis. The final section presents some implications and recommendations for further studies.

Summary

The main purpose of the study was to explore the message employed by *Akosua* in reaching Ghanaians. Specifically, the study focused on revealing meanings in the political cartoons (PCs) on its commentary on events prior to the presidential and parliamentary elections (PPEs) in 2016. The study was grounded in the theory of Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis (MCDA) as championed by Kress and van Leeuwen (1996; 2006) with three key concepts: the narrative, interactive and compositional metafunctions. Using a data set of 150 cartoons from *Akosua*, the study investigated how linguistic and non-linguistic resources in the theory of MCDA aided in interpreting issues that were given prominence during the study period as well as how some major political stakeholders (presidential and vice-presidential candidates) of the 2016 PPEs were represented in the cartoons to reveal the ideological stance of the cartoonist.

Findings

To achieve the aim of the research, two research questions were, thus, set:

1. How does the artist present the themes found in the cartoons of Akosua?
2. How are the political actors portrayed in the cartoons of Akosua?

In relation to research question 1, the study found six (6) main themes that were categorised based on issues that dominated the discourse in Ghana prior to the 2016 Parliamentary and Presidential Elections. The themes comprised Electoral Process, Media, Opposing Political Personalities, Religious Personalities, Corruption and Utilities. The presentation of these themes was underpinned by contemporary issues that made headlines in the study period. From the analysis of data, the theme of Electoral Process unsurprisingly dominated since the period chosen for the study marked the peak period in the elections. These themes typified most Ghanaians' social discourse during election periods.

Concerning the second research question, the analysis of data revealed that the presidential candidates of some political parties were projected as favourable candidates than others. For instance, taking into consideration the two forerunners of the elections, each of the presidential candidates of the New Democratic Congress (NDC) was represented in a way that portrayed negative connotations. Thus, John Dramani Mahama (JDM) and Paa Kwesi Bekoe Amissah-Arthur (PKBAA) of the NDC were mostly represented in the cartoons as corrupt, incompetent, cowards, and abusers of power. On the other hand, the presidential candidates of the New Patriotic Party (NPP) were represented in a manner that portrayed them as favourable in the eyes of the public. This is in

line with the claim that though the *Daily Guide*, claim to be “objective in its journalistic practices, the newspaper can be said to be sympathetic to the NPP” (Oduro-Frimpong, 2013, p.3).

Conclusions

The study has revealed that the application of Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis (MCDA) to analyse political cartoons (PCs) renders visual images as linguistic tools that are rich in meaning for easy interpretation and understanding, especially, when sensitive issues, such as political issues related to elections, are discussed. This confirms the findings of some studies (Sani, et al, 2012; Shaikh et al, 2016; Ariyo, 2017) which profess that political cartoons (PCs) are used to convey messages that are important to Ghanaian citizenry.

The study has also demonstrated that in order to describe and interpret PCs such as *Akosua*, it is necessary to analyse the socio-political context, as opined by Ademilokun and Olateju (2016) in affirming Fairclough’s (1992, 1995) view that cartoonists utilise semiotic resources based on the culture and symbols of a particular society to comment on contemporary issues.

This study, thus, shows that in a multimodal analysis of PCs, knowledge of linguistic and visual resources to convince viewers of the viewpoints presented in cartoons is a requirement. As indicated by Connors (2005), “editorial (political) cartoons use a wide variety of symbols to convey messages concisely for readers. Audiences must comprehend those symbols to understand and potentially get the viewpoint of the cartoonist” (p. 26).

Implications of the Study

The study has implications for pedagogy. It will enable students of arts, especially Arts Education students, to be familiar with the features of (political) cartoons. This will enhance their understanding and comprehension of important features of producing a cartoon to fit a particular context.

Also, the study provides some useful techniques for cartoonists in Ghana to improve ways of presenting issues in PCs. This is in regard to utilising the theory (MCDA) by Kress and van Leeuwen (1996; 2006) in the Ghanaian context where researchers may consider features such as the use of Ghanaian English Pidgin, transliteration of some English phrases, famous catchphrases that depict contemporary issues as well as the ideologies of cartoonists on presenting issues that involve certain political figures. These will enhance the full comprehension of cartoons.

Recommendations

It is recommended that further studies be carried out by paying attention to other Ghanaian cartoons such as *Tilapia*, *Makaveli*, *Daavi*, *Vinnie*, *Andan* and *PolyTriks* in relation to the PPEs in 2016 which this study did not cover and the common issues raised in them to ascertain the general viewpoints of cartoonists during PPEs in Ghana by paying attention to the use of other semiotic resources such as colour, tone, hue, and saturation which were not of interest in the present study but which have been identified as key features in multimodality, especially utilising Kress and van Leeuwen's theory of multimodal critical discourse analysis (MCDA).

A similar study can also be conducted to verify the outcome of the study, specifically, the public's view of political cartoons in Ghana on certain social

issues relating to elections. This kind of research may incorporate a quantitative analysis to investigate the extent to which the issues presented in the cartoons are accepted or rejected by the general public. This will help to ascertain the extent to which the ideologies of cartoonists expressed in PCs reflect the general views of the public.

Also, future research can be conducted on how the cartoons of some Ghanaian cartoonists such as *Tilapia*, *Makaveli*, *Daavi*, *Vinnie*, *Andan* and *Polytricks* comment on the various levels of Ghanaian elections such as primaries of political parties' elections and district assembly elections.

Finally, comparative research can be conducted to ascertain similarities and differences between the works of cartoonists in continents such as African and European countries on national and local elections. This study can examine how the messages in these cartoons from different cultural and regional backgrounds reflect the socio-political and economic situations in both regions. The study can also ascertain or not if there are specific pattern(s) in the visuals.

Chapter Summary

This chapter served as the conclusion to the entire study. It provided a summary of the entire study, the main findings and the conclusion. Implications of the study were also discussed and the recommendations for future research were also given.

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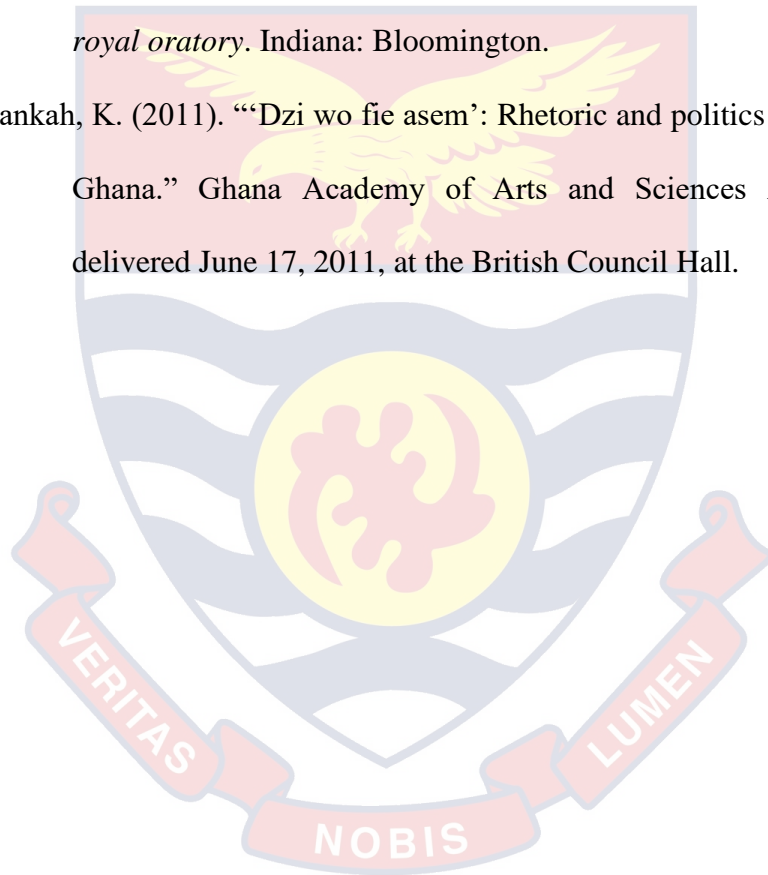
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APPENDICES

