

# Use of Conceptual Metaphors in Miguna Miguna's Political Commentaries on Facebook in Kenya: A Conceptual Metaphor Perspective

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## ABSTRACT

This paper examines Miguna's political commentaries on Facebook, which have become a potent force in Kenya's socio-political discourse. Known for his incisive and metaphor-laden commentaries, Miguna, popularly called "Double M", has sparked a surge in online political discussions, evoking both admiration and ire from the public. However, his style has also raised concerns about slander and libel in pursuing justice, secularism, and democracy. The gap in this study lies in the limited understanding of how conceptual metaphors, as utilized in Miguna's political commentaries on Facebook in Kenya, impact power structures, government policies, and communication practices. The study uses the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) by (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980) and the Deconstruction Theory (Derrida, 1967) to analyze the data collected from Miguna's Facebook page using a web scrapping tool, Octoparse. The Metaphor Identification Procedure Vrije Universiteit (MIPVU) was utilized to identify the conceptual metaphors in Miguna's commentaries. The analysis revealed seven metaphorical conceptualizations of politicians: despots, conmen and cartels, orphans and cows, corruption monsters, socialite bimbos, and human rights violators, with politicians as the source domains and despots, conmen and cartels, orphans and cows, corruption monsters, socialite bimbos, and human rights violators as the target domains. This study shows how metaphors contribute to political commentary, their impact on power structures, and their relevance in the digital age, specifically in Kenya. The findings have broader implications for freedom of speech, defamation, and responsible communication, guiding policymakers, educators, and media practitioners.

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## 1. Introduction

The Kenyan Constitution, promulgated on August 27, 2010, following approval by 67% of the voters in a referendum, marked a significant milestone in the nation's democratic journey (Constitution of Kenya, 2010). The constitution introduced a novel framework for governance, delineating the roles, responsibilities, and term limits for various elective offices. Notably, the six elective positions in Kenya were slated to hold a tenure of ten years, encompassing two terms of five years each. This constitutional amendment garnered widespread support from human rights activists and the majority of citizens, who perceived it as a positive step towards enhanced democratic governance.

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However, the laudable intentions of the constitution have at times been undermined by certain incumbent leaders who seek to manipulate its provisions for political gain. This has resulted in a growing discourse surrounding how individuals discuss and analyze political matters.

In light of these developments, the theoretical framework presented by Brown and Levinson in their seminal work on politeness strategies proves insightful (Brown & Levinson, 1987). The rise of political strategists, analysts, and their proxies has brought political commentaries to the forefront of public discourse. However, the nature of these commentaries has shifted, encompassing both literal and figurative expressions. Figurative political commentaries have gained prominence as individuals employ indirect language and nuanced metaphors to navigate the complex web of political implications, often fueled by the need to maintain a delicate balance between political criticism and diplomatic communication.

In the application of Brown and Levinson's politeness theory to categorizations of politicians, it is evident that strong negative politeness strategies are consistently employed. The categories assigned to politicians are characterized by direct accusations and "harsh" language, creating a negative impression of these individuals. For instance, in the categorization of "Politicians as Despots," the use of terms like "despot" and "tyrant" reflects the imposition of negative politeness strategies. These labels frame the politician in an extremely negative light, emphasizing the need for responsible communication and challenging the use of such terms. Similarly, in the categorization of "Politicians as Conmen and Cartels," the use of phrases like "conman" and "cartel" directly accuses these politicians of corruption and unethical behavior, reflecting a lack of positive politeness.

Furthermore, the categorization of "Politicians as Political Orphans and Cows" utilizes "dehumanizing" language like "orphans" and "cows," which implies neglect and exploitation, negatively framing politicians and their supporters. The employment of such language reflects a lack of positive politeness and emphasizes the negative portrayal of these individuals. The application of Brown and Levinson's politeness theory in these categorizations reveals a consistent use of strong negative politeness strategies. Miguna Miguna employs direct accusations, "harsh" language, and "dehumanizing" terms to categorize politicians negatively, highlighting perceived wrongdoing and negative behavior. These linguistic strategies create a stark and unfavorable impression of politicians in the provided excerpts.

The selection of Miguna Miguna's political commentaries stemmed from his active engagement on Facebook, where he frequently shares his insightful political analyses using metaphorical expressions. He has amassed an impressive following of 683,000 individuals by August 2023, spanning various genders and age groups. The majority of his followers are ardent political enthusiasts who regard him as a beacon of human rights advocacy and a source of political enlightenment. A comprehensive study and analysis were conducted on 500 Facebook posts authored by Miguna Miguna and his ardent followers.

The discourse surrounding political commentaries in Kenya underscores the significance of politeness strategies as elucidated by Brown and Levinson. The power dynamics inherent in political discussions necessitate individuals' awareness of both the content and the manner of their speech. The evolving landscape of political analysis, with its blend of explicit and allegorical commentary, reflects the intricate dance of maintaining face and social harmony, as outlined by Brown and Levinson. These strategies become especially pertinent as political discourse becomes a pivotal means of shaping public opinion and influencing policy decisions. The Kenyan Constitution's adoption in 2010 was a pivotal moment, heralding a new era of democratic governance. Nonetheless, the subsequent evolution of political commentaries, marked by a balance between direct and indirect expressions, underscores the relevance of politeness strategies proposed by Brown and Levinson. In navigating the ever-shifting political landscape, effective communication is not only about the message but also about the diplomatic finesse with which it is conveyed.

When individuals are social, they enable the creation of connections and the setting of boundaries within systems (Khder & Moiad, 2021). When individuals click, share, or comment on posts, they start a relationship with other people. The connection gradually becomes bigger and the people are united. Metaphorical expressions enhance the creation of positive images of politicians or rotten images of other politicians (Wilson, 1990). Metaphor awareness aids vocabulary learning (Beréndi, Csábi, & Kövecses, 2008). Metaphor variation is based on two-dimensional differences happening within

cultures and across cultures (Kövecses, 2010). Metaphors cannot only be termed as a tool to express ideas through language but also as a tool for thinking about something (Nirmala, 2011). Political commentaries speak volumes and it is, therefore, agreeable to acknowledge that the citizenry relies on less involved avenues to lead them in making political decisions (Snideman et al., 1991). Metaphors are methodological literary devices that will merit alertness in future studies (Bougher, 2012). The book *Metaphors We Live By* (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980) defines metaphors as the experience of understanding one thing in terms of another. The study comes from the incessant call by the judiciary, lawmakers, and enforcers on the rise of the cases of defamation when people write in quest of justice, liberty, secularism, democracy, and rights.

Numerous scholarly investigations have previously addressed this subject, producing a wide array of noteworthy studies. Notably, the research undertaken by Borcic, Holy, and Culo in 2018, titled, *An Analysis of Metaphors in Political Rhetoric in Local Elections*, probed the use of metaphors in the realm of political discourse during local elections (Borcic et al., 2018). This study, in particular, scrutinized the representation of the state as a person in the context of Bosnian-Herzegovinian, Croatian, and Serbian political television programs broadcast on N1 television, with a specific emphasis on political figures. The investigation unveiled the prevalence of metaphorical expressions within the political narratives of Serbian politicians.

An additional salient inquiry revolves around the scholarly investigation conducted by Otieno in 2019, under the title *Metaphors in Political Discourse in Kenya: Unifying or Divisive* (Otieno, 2019). Otieno's research was centered on the examination of metaphorical language's influence on the cultivation of unity and cohesiveness within the Kenyan socio-political landscape. The outcomes of this investigation revealed a continuum of inherent values within political discourse, encompassing both affirmative and adverse dimensions, albeit with the deleterious dimensions frequently eclipsing the constructive ones.

In a manner congruent with the above-mentioned scholarly discourse, Ofori and colleagues' 2021 study, entitled *The Use of Metaphors and Similes in Political Discourse in Ghana*, brought to the forefront the paramount importance of imagery, specifically the utilization of metaphors and similes, in the dynamics of communication between the citizenry and eminent political figures (Ofori et al., 2021). The research underscored the pivotal and instrumental role played by such linguistic devices in averting the denunciation and condemnation of political leaders while concurrently illuminating the broader societal influence engendered by the domain of political communication.

In a parallel academic investigation, titled, *Use of Conceptual, Linguistic, and Religious Metaphors in Political Discourse*, the focus shifted to the political milieu of Pakistan, with a deliberate examination of the deployment of conceptual metaphors within the rhetoric of political actors (Mushtaq et al., 2020). The research findings cast light upon the multifaceted character of the metaphors employed, which encompassed not only religious but also contextual and social dimensions, thereby enriching the comprehension of the intricate fabric of political discourse.

Furthermore, a study conducted by Jasim in 2018, entitled, *An Analysis of Metaphor in Selected Political Speeches*, was dedicated to the examination of the multifaceted strategies employed by politicians when integrating metaphors into their speeches to enhance communicative efficacy (Jasim, 2018). This investigation elucidated the utilization of both structural metaphors and ontological metaphors in the speeches delivered by prominent figures such as Donald Trump. Despite the considerable attention afforded to the use of metaphors in political discourse by mainstream media in Kenya, there has been a dearth of scholarly inquiry directed towards exploring this phenomenon within the context of social networking platforms. The previous research endeavors referenced herein have addressed various facets of metaphorical utilization within the domain of political discourse. Nonetheless, they have overlooked the exploration of the subsequent dimensions: firstly, the distinctiveness inherent in the examination of Miguna Miguna's political commentaries disseminated on the social networking platform Facebook; secondly, the scrutiny of metaphors embedded within the specific context of social media platforms. The antecedent investigations have predominantly fixated their inquiries upon political oratory presented in television broadcasts, political speeches, conventional media outlets, and a limited subset of political addresses.

This current study distinguishes itself by closely delving into the digital milieu of Facebook, comprehensively dissecting the metaphors employed by a solitary individual within the sphere of online

political discourse. In doing so, it ushers in an innovative vantage point, shedding light upon the role of metaphors in the realm of digital political communication.

Studies show that the connectivity people have by using the internet and the presence of smartphones, people engage in conversions and debates online (Willems & Mano, 2016). Rhetoricians define metaphors as a master trope using the schematic formula A is B. We can say, Esther is a peacock. Metaphors, as linguistic devices, draw parallels between disparate entities that share certain analogous attributes (Wahome, 2023). Metaphor variation is based on two-dimensional differences happening within cultures and across cultures (Kovesces, 2010).

This research paper incorporates two influential theories, the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980) and the Deconstruction theory (Derrida, 1967), with a particular emphasis on CMT for its profound relevance to the study's objectives. Lakoff and Johnson's Conceptual Metaphor Theory posits that the interplay between two cognitive structures, the source domain, and the target domain, is pivotal. The target domain mirrors the structural configuration of the source domain, and metaphorical mappings are delineated between these domains. The theory engages with the intricacies of abstract concepts, their inherent structure, and the mechanisms underlying structural acquisition. This acquisition process entails the mapping of structure from a more concrete or sensory-motor-specific domain to a more abstract domain. Dr. Miguna Miguna's political commentaries on Facebook are known for their prolific use of metaphors, which extend far beyond mere stylistic adornments. These metaphors serve as potent instruments for conveying intricate ideas, emotions, and perspectives that transcend their literal interpretations. CMT provides an insightful lens through which to dissect these metaphors and reveal the underlying cognitive processes shaping political discourse. By employing CMT, this study systematically unveils the metaphorical expressions in Dr. Miguna Miguna's commentaries, uncovering the conceptual mappings that inform the content and impact of his commentary.

Moreover, in the dynamic realm of online political discourse on platforms like Facebook, metaphors are frequently employed to simplify, emphasize, or underscore various aspects of political issues. CMT offers a comprehensive framework to explore how metaphors influence and shape public perception, enabling the researchers to delve deeper into the intricacies of Dr. Miguna Miguna's commentaries. Metaphors play a pivotal role as instruments in the construction of social identities during cross-border mergers, underscoring their function in articulating symbolic or abstract meanings within the organizational framework. Serving as communicative vehicles, metaphors actively contribute to the development of shared identities among individuals engaged in or affected by cross-border mergers, a context inherently characterized by diverse cultural, organizational, and social backgrounds (Vaara et al., 2003). This choice aligns seamlessly with the study's objective of unraveling the layers of meaning behind these metaphors by highlighting the connection between language and thought. Furthermore, CMT's significance extends to its ability to illuminate the broader implications of metaphorical expressions in political communication, allowing researchers to discern the subtle ways in which metaphors can influence power dynamics, shape narratives, and contribute to broader political discourse trends. In essence, CMT's rich analytical framework is indispensable in comprehending the cognitive, linguistic, and societal dimensions of Dr. Miguna Miguna's metaphors and their profound impact on political discourse in Kenya's digital age.

Deconstruction theory (Derrida, 1967) complements analyzing metaphors in Dr. Miguna Miguna's political Facebook posts. Relevant for exploring language nuances and power dynamics, it unpacks meaning layers, enriching comprehension of political impact.

Firstly, deconstruction reveals contradictions and tensions in metaphors within Miguna's multifaceted commentaries, unveiling dualities and motivations. Secondly, it aligns with diverse interpretations, exploring conceptual metaphors' varied meanings based on backgrounds. Deconstruction analyzes personas, yielding comprehensive insights into rhetorical strategies. Moreover, deconstruction's focus on language's instability suits metaphor investigation. Miguna's metaphor-laden discourse highlights interconnected metaphors and political implications.

In the context of layered expressions on social media, deconstruction interprets beyond surface meanings, uncovering hidden messages. Semantics aid in decoding metaphoric relationships.

Deconstruction's adoption is justified by its compatibility with objectives and complexities. Paired with Conceptual Metaphor Theory, it exposes layers of meaning, enhancing political communication understanding in Kenya's digital age.

Therefore, this study will address the following research questions:

- i. How do Dr. Miguna Miguna's metaphor-laden Facebook commentaries shape perceptions of politicians in Kenya's socio-political sphere?
- ii. How do the metaphors employed by Dr. Miguna Miguna in online political discourse influence power dynamics and decision-making processes in Kenya's digital age?
- iii. To what extent do Dr. Miguna Miguna's metaphorical expressions on Facebook align with principles of responsible communication and ethical journalism, contributing to Kenya's goals of justice, secularism, and democracy?
- iv. How are politicians conceptualized using Dr. Miguna Miguna's political commentaries?

## 2. Methods

This research paper employs a qualitative-descriptive research methodology. This choice holds significant importance in delineating, analyzing, and elucidating the utilization of political commentaries within Dr. Miguna Miguna's Facebook posts. Integrating diverse data collection methods in qualitative research amplifies engagement with various participants to glean insights into their perspectives, presuppositions, and ideas (Nassaji, 2015). The data for this study were gathered from Dr. Miguna Miguna's Facebook page using Octoparse, a contemporary web data scraping software. Facebook, boasting over 2.85 billion global users, transcends its role as a social network. The advent of diverse web scraping tools has revolutionized the accumulation of extensive data for analysis in spreadsheet formats (Saurkar et al., 2018). The researcher followed specific steps to access and retrieve data from Dr. Miguna Miguna's Facebook database.

- Opened the Facebook web page
- In the search engine, I typed Dr. Miguna Miguna
- Afterward, I created a pagination loop
- Consequently, I made a loop
- Run the data for auto-detect
- Saved and run the tasks
- Exported the data on an Excel file
- The process was repeated until the data was sufficient.

Metaphor Identification Procedure Vrije Universiteit (MIPVU- John Benjamins) was used to identify the metaphors. The procedure used was as follows:

- Read Facebook posts after extracting them for peripheral messages.
- Investigating the lexemes/lexicons units used
- Putting into place the meanings of the lexicons based on the context
- Find out whether the lexicons used have a more basic meaning. In the eventuality, the meaning deviates from the cardinal meaning,
- The researcher highlights the unit as a metaphor.
- Derrida's Deconstruction Theory was used to analyze metaphors in Miguna's Facebook commentaries. This theory challenges fixed meanings, further exploring complexities within Miguna's metaphors.
- Applied Deconstruction Theory to identify contradictions in Miguna's metaphors.
- Reinterpret Miguna's metaphors by exposing them to alternative interpretations.
- Incorporate Deconstruction Theory to unveil layers of meaning and language's role in power dynamics.
- Enhance understanding of metaphor's influence on public perception, policy, and discourse.
- Contribute to responsible communication by guiding policymakers and media practitioners.

### 3. Results and Discussion

Within this section dedicated to results and discussion, the study elucidates the conceptualization of politicians as a vehicle for propagating political perspectives through metaphoric expressions. The analysis encompassed the study of 500 Facebook posts along with the subsequent examination of followers' responses. Consequently, a comprehensive exploration has unveiled and expounded upon seven distinctive patterns of conceptualizing politicians.

These metaphorical categories are not directly stated in the source but have been inferred through the analysis of the metaphors used concerning politicians. This process involves identifying underlying metaphorical structures that help people understand and conceptualize politicians in various ways. The aggregate frequency of conceptual metaphors within the sample amounted to 890 instances, yielding an average of approximately 1.78 occurrences per post. The metaphors delineated politicians as despots, conmen and cartels, orphans and cows, human rights violators, corruption monsters, socialite bimbos, and blood-sucking parasites. The tabulated data in Table 1 delineates the frequency and percentage distribution, elucidating the prevalence of each metaphorical category within the dataset. This analysis contributes nuanced perspectives on the manifold ways in which politicians are metaphorically construed and comprehended within the realm of online discourse.

*Table 1: The Metaphorical Conceptualization of Politicians*

<b>N0.</b>	<b>Conceptual Metaphor</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
1.	<b>POLITICIANS AS DESPOTS</b>	158	17.75%
2.	<b>POLITICIANS AS CONMEN AND CARTELS</b>	134	15.06%
3.	<b>POLITICIANS AS ORPHANS AND COWS</b>	101	11.35%
4.	<b>POLITICIANS AS HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATORS</b>	117	13.15%
5.	<b>POLITICIANS AS CORRUPTION MONSTERS</b>	131	14.72%
6.	<b>POLTICIANS AS SOCIALITE BIMBOS</b>	123	13.82%
7.	<b>POLITICIANS AS BLOOD-SUCKING PARASITES</b>	126	14.15%
		890	100%

The table above emphasizes seven key conceptual metaphors, which are highlighted in bold capital letters. This formatting choice aims to facilitate their swift identification, positioning them as the central focus of this study. The explanations accompanying the forthcoming conceptual metaphor elucidations will solidify the rationale behind their selection. Consequently, the instances provided within each category above will contribute significantly to the subsequent results and discussion concerning each respective conceptual metaphor.

#### **3.1 Politicians as Despots**

The category “despots” has been applied to these excerpts below due to their collective portrayal of President Uhuru Kenyatta's actions and behaviors that align with characteristics often associated with despotic leadership, including alleged electoral manipulation, suppression of opposition, and potential human rights abuses. Most despots worldwide often mask themselves under the guise of being democratic leaders (Anderson, 2022). A despot, sometimes referred to as a tyrant, represents a ruler who exercises tyrannical and totalitarian control, clinging to power and governing oppressively with an iron fist. The essence of despotism lies in the retention of power without effective governance, where a single entity wields absolute authority (Diken, 2021). Deconstruction theory challenges the fixed label of “despot” applied to President Kenyatta based on allegations of electoral manipulation and human rights abuses. It encourages us to consider alternative interpretations and explore the complex layers of meaning in these allegations. Deconstruction theory emphasizes the role of language in shaping power dynamics and questions whether the use of such terms influences public perception and discourse. It

also highlights the need for responsible communication and guiding policymakers in engaging with these issues without resorting to simplistic labels. Dr. Miguna Miguna offers diverse insights that shed light on political figures, particularly Presidents, who exhibit despotic tendencies.

- President Uhuru Kenyatta *stole Raila Odinga's (opposition leader) victory in 2017, tortured, maimed, and murdered thousands of his supporters*. The president *targets* other minor leaders to quell the rebellious radical leaders. The targets on Boni Khalwale and Didmus Baraza are signs of desperation, cowardice, and impotence on Raila Odinga's part. It will not stop *despot* Uhuru Kenyatta from stealing elections, maiming, and killing again (November 9, 2019).
- Freedom fighters: Let us strategize, plan, and organize how we will *compel* Uhuru Kenyatta to hand over power because he and his merchants have decided that they will not hand over power after the defeat of Raila Odinga (His proposed candidate) on August 9, 2022.
- If it was in China, Uhuru Kenyatta would have been taken to Tiananmen Square and shot for betraying those who supported them in previous elections and for placing their selfish interests above that of their society and country (March 2, 2022).
- Moses Kuria (now a cabinet secretary) has publicly confessed that he carried salt and pepper in *the electoral stealing kitchen* of Uhuru Kenyatta and William Samoei Ruto. Kenyans want the political chefs, waiters, and busboys like Kuria to be charged and prosecuted and electoral theft to be exterminated forthwith (February 20, 2022).
- From the look of things *despot* Uhuru Kenyatta is going back to Den Haag to face charges of terror, murder, and rape- in Kerio Valley, Laikipia, Coast, Nairobi, and Nyanza. This time he will serve 50 years in jail like Charles Taylor (May 31, 2022).
- President Uhuru Kenyatta cannot be left alone for to do so would be to *institutionalize* the culture of Impunity, plunder of public resources, abductions, torture, defiance of court orders, interference with the electoral process, and the attempt to impose conman Raila Odinga are crimes that are punishable under Kenyan Statutes (September 22, 2022).

In a tableau of electoral manipulation and violence, flagrant actions emerge, casting shadows of disdain upon democratic processes and the sanctity of human rights. The term “targets” emerges as a clarion of silencing dissension, seamlessly dovetailing with despotic inclinations. Explicitly affixing the label “despot” onto President Kenyatta, his conduct takes on hues of oppression and autocracy. Through the term “compel,” a resistance unfurls against a leader reluctant to release his grip on power, unfurling the banner of authoritarianism. The echoes of China's ruthless dissent crackdown accentuate President Kenyatta's deeds' gravity. A glimpse into the “electoral stealing kitchen” unveils a manipulator of elections, fortifying the impression of a steward ready to erode democratic foundations. Again, the “despot” mantle envelops President Kenyatta, tethering him to grave allegations. As the phrase “institutionalize the culture of Impunity” unfurls, it is clear that his actions nurture a climate of lawlessness and unaccountability. These linguistic fragments converge in an artistic mosaic, depicting President Uhuru Kenyatta's conduct as a canvas where despotism's features—ranging from electoral subversion to opposition oppression, human rights transgressions, and a perceived disdain for legality—are starkly illuminated.

### 3.2 Politicians as Conmen and Cartels

One can identify distinct linguistic elements that collectively contribute to the categorization of “Politicians as Conmen and Cartels” from the excerpts below. These linguistic components encompass evaluative language, metaphors, and concrete examples, all working together to craft a representation of politicians, particularly Raila Odinga, exhibiting behaviors that align with conmen and cartel members. The leader of the opposition (Raila Odinga) has been pilloried as a conman, cartel, charlatan, and a dreadful betrayer. Cartels are cabals that work collaboratively with powerful political mandarins monopolizing markets playing a big role in the inflation of countries due to their influence on the prices of goods and services in countries (Fellman & Shanahan, 2016; 2018). The expressions used here are:

- In 2017, Raila Odinga *correctly* called President Uhuru Kenyatta *a looter and a murderer*. He sacrificed Jacob Juma in the “fight against Eurobond thieves.” Raila accused Kenyatta of stealing billions of public money through the National Youth Service (NYS) and other crooked

conduits. The question Kenyans are asking is this: when and where did Raila Odinga discover that President Uhuru Kenyatta became clean? (March 8, 2019).

- Raila Odinga was Prime Minister for 5 long years. For that period, he and James Orenge *spent colossal sums of money on Brioni, Giorgio Armani, and Gucci clothes imported directly from Italy*. Why didn't they think of local textile industries then? (June 8, 2022).
- In December 2018, Caroli Omondi evicted Raila Odinga's ODM party from Orange House. *ODM begged him for an extension of the lease until March 2019*. March came and went but ODM recently received KES. 3 billion public funds still can't pay the rent. They are used to theft and exploitation (September 4, 2019).
- Raila's ODM party collected a bill from the 2017 Presidential re-run pay bill number yet families of ODM supporters whom President Uhuru maimed and killed haven't received a cent in support because Raila Odinga is *eating big* (September 4, 2019).
- President Uhuru Kenyatta and William Ruto both *stole Odinga's victory in 2017 and killed his supporters* but Raila Odinga now supports Uhuru, claims that President Uhuru is an angel while Ruto who was Uhuru's deputy in Jubilee Party and at the Presidency is *a devil incarnate* (May 22, 2019).
- Raila Odinga and his ODM party brigade were *noisily running* all over the country with Kirinyaga governor Ann Mumbi Waiguru and other *rotten political cartels/cabals*. When some of us reminded them about the political looting, they abused us and praised her for her "poise, beauty, and cleanliness". They must now shut up (January 25, 2022).

The application of Derrida's Deconstruction theory to these excerpts reveals a deconstruction of the concept of "Politicians as Conmen and Cartels." The analysis challenges fixed meanings by illustrating the fluidity of political alliances and moral judgments. It encourages the reinterpretation of metaphors used to describe politicians and exposes the layers of meaning within accusations and descriptions.

The evaluative language "correctly" solidifies Raila Odinga's accusation as true, enhancing credibility. The portrayal of President Uhuru Kenyatta as a "looter and a murderer" aligns with conmen or cartel members involved in illicit activities. Raila Odinga's spending on luxury brands like "Brioni, Giorgio Armani, and Gucci" contrasts with ethical behavior, emphasizing opulence and incongruity with Prime Minister responsibilities. The depiction of ODM's extension plea as "begging" suggests dependence and ethical concerns. Raila Odinga's prioritization of personal gain by "eating big" parallels cartel-like exploitation and implies supporters' neglect. Metaphorical expressions "stole Odinga's victory," "killed his supporters," and "devil incarnate" create a narrative of moral reprehensibility, akin to conmen and cartel actions. Shifting alliances and characterizations highlight inconsistency, resembling conmen's manipulation. Describing figures as "noisily running" evokes chaos similar to cartel activities. Depicting alliances as "rotten political cartels/cabals" associates them with corruption. The call for figures to "shut up" underscores perceived hypocrisy. Through evaluative language, metaphorical comparisons, and instances, the text categorizes "Politicians as Conmen and Cartels." It emphasizes negative attributes, paralleling politicians with conmen and cartel members.

### 3.3. *Politicians as political Orphans and cows*

The categorization of politicians and their supporters as "political orphans and cows" relies on the use of metaphor and "dehumanizing" language. By metaphorically comparing them to orphans and cows, it evokes feelings of abandonment, powerlessness, and exploitation, while the "dehumanizing" language reinforces the perception of these individuals as objects or commodities, emphasizing the exploitative nature of the political system. An orphan is a child who has lost both parents through death, or, less commonly, one parent (Hanks, 1979). Cows are a female domesticated breed of ox, kept to produce milk or beef. Party followers, voters, and a section of politicians are seen as "cows" who are maintained because of their votes and money they offer to the parties in exchange for "peanut developmental reciprocity" after political mandarins pilfer the public coffers. Ladd, a former Republican acknowledges that Republicans love fetuses and hate kids because that's the shape of their political agenda. Republicans are the party of an American Fascism more potent than this country has ever faced. They will hurt you with a smile. We have a narrow window in which to exercise electoral power before that era ends. Use it while we can and prepare for what comes after (Ladd, 2022). Political



orphans are created by a selfish, autocratic regime that has no citizenry's interests at heart. A mongrel system of governance that treats citizens as children of a lesser God. The expressions below used in Dr. Miguna Miguna's commentaries serve the rightful purpose:

- Martha Karua ran for President and got a total of 43, 881 votes from the entire country. Her choice as a deputy president was magnificent for those people who wanted *to retire the opposition leader who happened to be the people's con man* (May 16, 2022).
- Building Bridges Initiative (BBI) has unleashed *ferocious divisions, instability, and partisan parochial political contests* among KANU (Kenya African National Union) orphans aimed at institutionalizing impunity
- To conman Raila Odinga and *his cows. Please don't cry. Don't yell at me. I will continue delivering pure and bitter truth* (May 20, 2022)
- *Conman Raila Odinga's cows* (followers) *said that I swore him to inherit him by force. I did not know that Raila Odinga was a Luo widow* (October 12, 2022)
- Raila Odinga has *used the Supreme Court without any success to claim his "stolen" presidency* more than any other Kenyan. He is *a political orphan*
- To *Kuzimia [ODM (Orange Democratic Movement) supporters/politicians] orphans: You don't have to win in court for the court's verdict to be just. Stop yelling and crying* (September 13, 2022).
- Loyal party followers, voters, and politicians are *portrayed as orphans* who have been *deserted for good*.

Deconstruction theory challenges the fixed meanings of metaphors like “political orphans and cows,” emphasizing their constructed nature and lack of universal consensus. It questions binary oppositions, encouraging exploration of the blurred lines between politicians and supporters. Deconstruction fosters multiple interpretations of these metaphors, exposing their capacity to convey both dehumanization and essential roles, while also highlighting the power dynamics within language and their effects on political narratives.

The excerpts employ metaphoric language to vividly portray political figures and their followers. For instance, “opposition leader who happened to be the people's conman” characterizes the opposition leader as deceptive, aligning with negative traits. Similarly, the metaphor “KANU (Kenya African National Union) orphans” depicts neglected and powerless KANU members, accentuating abandonment through “ferocious divisions, instability, and partisan parochial political contests.” Raila Odinga's followers are characterized as “his orphans,” implying dependency and helplessness, reinforced by the plea “Please don't cry. Don't yell at me.” “Conman Raila Odinga's cows” portrays his supporters as passive, paralleling them to easily influenced cows. “He is a political orphan” categorizes Raila Odinga as powerless due to repeated unsuccessful attempts, evident in “used the supreme court without any success to claim his 'stolen' presidency.” “Kuzimia (ODM supporters/politicians) orphans” likens ODM supporters to helpless orphans, echoed in the plea “Stop yelling and crying.” Finally, “portrayed as orphans who have been deserted for good” characterizes loyal supporters as permanently abandoned, marked by “deserted for good.” The text's adept use of metaphoric language captures nuanced roles, perceptions, and attributes of political figures and followers, fitting the theme of “Political Orphans and Cows.”

### **3.4 Politicians as Human Rights Violators**

The categorization of “Politicians as Human Rights Violators” is substantiated through the skilful use of linguistic elements that highlight the transgression of human rights by political figures. Every Kenyan citizen is constitutionally allowed to exercise their rights without facing fear or intimidation from governmental entities. Therefore, everyone is entitled to their rights and freedoms which is not a favour from the government because the statutes of the land state so. Freedom of expression is enshrined in the Kenyan constitution and the persecution of people because of their political affiliations and allegiance is unwarranted. According to the current Constitution of Kenya, individuals, regardless of their origin, religion, race, sex, or language, must be allowed to enjoy their rights without discrimination. Derrida's Deconstruction theory is used to scrutinize Miguna's Facebook commentaries, particularly focusing on the categorization of “Politicians as Human Rights Violators.” By challenging fixed meanings and identifying contradictions in Miguna's metaphors, the analysis unveils layers of

meaning and highlights language's role in power dynamics. These expressions conceptualize politicians as violators of human rights:

- William Ruto (Former Deputy president) *was right to apologize to Hanin Aydin for the abuse of his human rights by despot Uhuru Kenyatta*. However, Ruto must apologize to me for violations of human rights and citizenship rights by Uhuru Kenyatta, Raila Odinga, and him. (August 10, 2021)
- *Despot Uhuru Kenyatta is abusing his despotic deputy William Ruto*. Anyone who is genuinely and honestly a champion of democracy, the rule of law, and constitutionalism and respects basic human rights cannot support how William Ruto's rights are being violated
- *Revolt! Rise! Fight for your rights!* The despots are coming for you! They have declared war on all fearless and progressive freedom fighters!
- On March 26, 2018, when I arrived at the Jomo Kenyatta International Airport in compliance with numerous court orders, *Uhuru Kenyatta once again ordered heavily armed goons to assault, detain, and torture me in a toilet room reserved for people with disabilities*
- *Leaders supporting disobedience of court orders, subversion of the constitution trying to dismember the constitution of Kenya* must respect Kenyan's basic rights

The excerpts above accuse and acknowledge human rights abuse in Ruto's apology to Hanin Aydin for Uhuru Kenyatta's actions. The characterization of abuse is seen in "Despot Uhuru Kenyatta is abusing his despotic deputy William Ruto," implying Ruto's rights violation. The imperative "Revolt! Rise! Fight for your rights!" urges action against rights infringements. A personal experience highlights individual rights violation: "On March 26, 2018, when I arrived at the Jomo Kenyatta International Airport...assault, detain and torture me." The assertion "Leaders supporting disobedience of court orders, subversion of the constitution trying to dismember the constitution of Kenya must respect Kenyan's basic rights" links subversion to neglecting citizens' rights. These elements label politicians as human rights violators, categorizing them as such.

### **3.5 Politicians as Corruption Monsters**

The categorization of politicians as "Corruption Monsters" can be substantiated by their alleged actions and behaviours that contribute to and perpetuate corruption. Corruption is a cancer whose cure is punishing those involved mercilessly to deter potentially corruptible persons with the same motives and intentions. When power gets into the heads of rulers, it kills trust and the involved rulers can do anything to be in power. When corruption becomes the norm, it impoverishes the masses, harbours rebellious critiques, and throws merit into a precipice. Monsters are ugly, gigantic, fictitious creatures that instill fear of sight and co-existence.

Derrida's Deconstruction theory deconstructs the metaphorical representation of politicians as "Corruption Monsters," revealing contradictions and alternative interpretations. This process highlights the complexities of language and its impact on power dynamics, deepening our understanding of how metaphors influence public perception, policy, and discourse. The excerpt's negative language, such as "terrorized," "abused," "stole," "murdered," and "robbed Kenyans dry," paints a grim image of politicians involved in corruption and abuse of authority, ultimately guiding responsible communication in the analysis of political rhetoric for policymakers and media professionals. Miguna's expressions conceptualize corruption as a monster that impedes development and a meritorious society.

- Martha Karua *terrorized the judiciary* when she was Minister of Justice and Constitution Affairs. She *abused power, tortured and persecuted* Justice GBM Kariuki, and *misused Kenyan Police and Courts*. After *helping Mwai Kibaki steal elections*, Kenyans have said NO MORE. (May 16, 2022)
- Con man Raila Odinga is excited over the support of 150 defanged UASU (Universities' Academic Staff Union) colleagues of Francis Atwoli when 2 million frustrated University students and 8 million unemployed youth are voting for Ruto (March 30, 2022)
- Uhuru Kenyatta *stole elections* in 2013 and 2017. From 2013 to 2018, despot Uhuru Kenyatta *murdered more than 10000 ODM (Orange Democratic Movement) supporters* (May 19, 2022).

- Conman Raila Odinga cannot campaign on good governance, human rights, and anti-corruption platforms because the money, helicopters, planes, and vehicles he campaigns with *are supplied unlawfully by those stealing public resources and violating human rights*
- In 2002, dictator Moi *illegally used state resources and institutions* to impose Uhuru Kenyatta as the ruling party's chairman, KANU. He then used public resources to try to impose Kenyatta as president (January 30, 2022).
- Cyrus Jirongo's first name is corruption. He is *filthier than a pit latrine*. He *robbed Kenyans dry* in the 1990s. He *printed KES. 500 notes like a tabloid* (January 28, 2022).

These linguistic elements italicized above contribute to portraying the politicians as ‘Corruption Monsters’ by highlighting a range of allegations involving unethical, illegal, and corrupt conduct on the part of the mentioned politicians. The employment of strongly “negative” terminologies, such as “terrorized,” “abused,” “stole,” “murdered,” “illegally,” “filthier than a pit latrine,” and “robbed Kenyans dry,” effectively creates an extremely unfavourable impression of these politicians and links them to corrupt and injurious actions. The accusations offered in the excerpts depict these politicians as individuals who are engaged in different forms of corruption, misuse of authority, and disregard for the welfare of the people they are meant to serve.

### 3.6 Politicians as Socialite Bimbos

The excerpts below categorize politicians as “Socialite Bimbos” based on linguistic units that highlight perceived negative attributes and behaviours associated with both female and male bimbos. The term is used metaphorically to convey the idea that certain politicians exhibit attention-seeking behaviour, engage in questionable alliances for personal gain, lack competence or integrity, and prioritize superficial traits like beauty over meaningful qualities of leadership. The author employs “derogatory” language and sarcastic remarks to emphasize their criticism of these politicians, framing them as inadequate and self-serving individuals. A female bimbo has eye-catching characteristics but most of the time she is perceived as an attention seeker, trading sex willingly for political or job favours, and often, she is an irredeemable socialite. On the other hand, a male bimbo is a clumsy man, an imbecile who is good for nothing and has no skills whatsoever to tackle any obstacle ahead of him but keeps on whining and repeating the same annoying mistakes. Miguna, a prominent commentator on Kenyan political affairs, vehemently asserts, “Socialite bimbos masquerading as TV presenters shouldn't bother discussing succession of the despot. We are plucking him out by right or might. 5 years of economic rape, corruption & tribalism. *Liweliwalo*, Uhuru Kenyatta must not sit pretty.” The following expressions by Dr. Miguna Miguna conceptualize politicians as socialite bimbos. The construction of identities has been evident in various forms of mainstream media, including newspapers, television, radio stations, and magazines (Gichohi & Nirmala, 2022).

- At the moment, *Esther Passaris is with Uhuru Kenyatta over the Atlantic Ocean* (June 5, 2019)
- *Esther Passaris believes that she is so beautiful that everyone wants to rape her...*
- Whether conman Raila Odinga picks the “Mzungu” Peter Kenneth or socialite bimbo Sabina Chege, *Kenyans are going to match, chant, and vote against the conman...*
- *Leadership is not about beauty*. It is not about how much money anyone has. It is about integrity, vision, programs, and manifesto.
- *The women and men occupying and abusing power in Kenya belong to the same ideological “gender” and orientation- slay queens and socialite bimbos*
- *I don't have time to entangle with bimbos. I am a married man with self-respect. Charlatans must be ignored at all costs*
- *A socialite bimbo whose only claim to fame is because she is looking for billionaire sponsors*
- *Esther Passaris is not a feminist but a socialite bimbo*. She and others like her are not fighting for justice. They are looking for opportunities to extract money...

Deconstruction theory reveals a challenge to fixed meanings by metaphorically labeling politicians as “socialite bimbos,” prompting a reevaluation of political competence. The excerpt's contradictions, including negative attributes and sarcasm, emphasize its complexities. Deconstruction encourages alternative interpretations, shedding light on criticism of the broader political culture. It underscores language's role in power dynamics and promotes responsible communication, urging

readers to question traditional narratives about political leadership.

Passaris with Kenyatta on ‘a leisurely journey’, signals a shift from politics to personal relaxation. Passaris's inflated self-perception is evident in the phrase "Esther Passaris believes that she is so beautiful that everyone wants to rape her...", highlighting a sense of being a target for attention. The statement “Whether conman Raila Odinga picks the 'Mzungu' Peter Kenneth or socialite bimbo Sabina Chege, Kenyans are going to match, chant, and vote against the conman...” reflects the public's rejection of political figures, labelling one as a “conman” and the other as a “socialite bimbo,” suggesting a lack of seriousness. The assertion that “Leadership is not about beauty. It is not about how much money anyone has. It is about integrity, vision, programs, and manifesto,” distinguishes essential leadership qualities from superficial attributes, indirectly criticizing politicians who prioritize personal image and wealth. Referring to those in power, the sentence “The women and men occupying and abusing power in Kenya belong to the same ideological 'gender' and orientation - slay queens and socialite bimbos” highlights alleged abuse while categorizing politicians based on appearance and social pursuits rather than effective governance.

### 3.7 Politicians as Blood-Sucking Parasites

Employing vivid metaphors, Minton illustrates her view on politics (Minton, 2006). She likens politics to a realm of betrayal and deception, often characterized by monotony and the recurrence of the same politicians. In her analogy, recycling these familiar figures is akin to placing soiled diapers on a baby already laden with fecal matter. Minton goes further to cite that the term “politics” itself is a combination of “poli,” signifying “many,” and “tics,” denoting “blood-sucking parasites,” thus leading to the interpretation of politics as “many blood-sucking parasites” (Minton, 2006). Furthermore, she amplifies this sentiment by asserting that politicians surpass mere worthlessness, venturing into the domain of peril. She describes them as numerous and akin to blood-sucking parasites, emphasizing the gravity of their impact.

Dr. Miguna Miguna's commentaries align with this portrayal, as they vividly encapsulate politicians as blood-sucking parasites, adding potency to the metaphorical description. Analyzing Dr. Miguna Miguna's metaphors, such as “politicians as blood-sucking parasites,” through Derrida's Deconstruction theory is a valuable approach to uncovering the intricacies in his language. Deconstruction aids in identifying contradictions, encouraging reinterpretation, exploring power dynamics, assessing their influence on public perception and policy, and promoting responsible communication. This method deepens our understanding of the multifaceted nature of language in political discourse.

The following expressions from Dr. Miguna Miguna's commentaries conceptualize politicians as blood-sucking parasites:

- We appeal to you to send the deceased President Moi to hell so that he can burn forever for all his sins that include but are not limited to *stealing millions of acres of land, trillions of shillings* belonging to Kenyans, *torturing and destroying the lives* of hundreds of thousands of people
- Mechanisms of control: *impoverish and brutalize* the people. Weaken them with diseases, whips, batons, and hunger. Turn them into slaves begging for handouts from the trillions of shillings you have stolen from them through their taxes, public land, and natural resources
- They promised "*National Cohesion*" but they gave Kenyans *national disharmony*. They promised peace but they unleashed teargas, batons, and bullets on innocent and peaceful civilians. They promised prosperity but they have delivered Hunger, poverty, and starvation.
- *BBI fraud* used more than 18 billion Kenya shillings while most Kenyans died of *starvation and hunger*
- President Uhuru Kenyatta made *looting, murder, torture, over-taxation, electoral theft, and abuse of power* the DNA of the government.
- "*Huduma namba*" and *the billion- billion-dollar* Politicians snagged the tenders of printing the "*Huduma*" cards

The categorization of politicians as “Blood-Sucking Parasites” is accomplished through the strategic use of various linguistic units in the provided excerpts. Accusatory language plays a significant role by employing terms like “stealing,” “torturing,” and “looting” to ascribe negative actions to politicians, thereby creating a sense of moral condemnation. Enumeration further reinforces this categorization by presenting a list of alleged wrongdoings, emphasizing the extent of their negative actions and

contributing to a cumulative effect. Metaphorical language is another crucial linguistic unit utilized to portray politicians negatively. Phrases like “impoverish and brutalize” and “*the billion-dollar eaters*” employ metaphor to vividly describe the detrimental impact of politicians' actions, reinforcing the perception of them as parasitic figures. Contrasts are employed to juxtapose promised outcomes with the actual outcomes, creating a stark disparity that highlights disappointment and betrayal. Additionally, specific examples, such as the mention of “*huduma namba*” and tender snags, provide tangible instances of alleged corruption, further reinforcing the negative categorization of politicians. In conclusion, the categorization of politicians as “Blood-Sucking Parasites” is achieved through a combination of accusatory language, metaphors, contrasts, enumeration, and specific examples. These linguistic units play a crucial role in conveying a strong negative sentiment, emphasizing perceived exploitation, broken promises, and alleged corrupt practices associated with politicians.

#### 4. Conclusion

This research paper thoroughly investigates how metaphorical expressions shape political conversations on social media, with a specific focus on Dr. Miguna Miguna's Facebook commentaries. The study demonstrates how Dr. Miguna Miguna's metaphor-laden Facebook commentaries actively shape public perceptions of politicians within Kenya's socio-political sphere, shedding light on political discourse's cognitive and rhetorical dimensions and emphasizing the profound influence of metaphorical language in constructing the narrative surrounding political figures.

Additionally, the study has illuminated the substantial impact of metaphorical expressions on power dynamics and decision-making processes in Kenya's digital age, showcasing language's role as a driving force in shaping government policies, influencing public opinion, and affecting the functioning of the political system. Furthermore, this research underscores the importance of responsible communication and ethical journalism by evaluating the alignment of Dr. Miguna Miguna's metaphorical expressions with these principles, offering guidance on how metaphorical language can be employed conscientiously to contribute to Kenya's goals of justice, secularism, and democracy. Lastly, the study reveals how politicians are conceptualized using Miguna Miguna's political commentaries, emphasizing the pivotal role metaphorical language plays in constructing diverse conceptualizations of political figures. Ultimately, this research contributes to broader conversations concerning freedom of speech, responsible communication, and ethical journalism. It emphasizes the potential of metaphorical expressions to sway public opinion and decision-making, offering valuable guidance for policymakers, educators, media professionals, and the general public in comprehending the intricate nature of political discourse and its implications for a democratic society.

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