A Systemic Functional-Multimodal Discourse Analysis of Some Cartoons Connected with Nigeria's 2015 General Elections

Amore, Kehinde Pedro
Tai Solarin University of Education, Ijebu-Ode
&
Atoloye, Lekan
Tai Solarin University of Education, Ijebu-Ode

Abstract

This paper analyses some cartoons connected with Nigeria's 2015 General Elections with a view to identifying the way verbal and non-verbal meaning is communicated through them. Data for the study comprises fifteen purposively selected online cartoons. The cartoons essentially focus on the key actors in the elections – Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) and its Chairman; the two prominent political parties (All Progressive Party and People's Democratic Party) and their candidates. The data collected were analysed with the use of Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) Social Semiotics Theory, a model of MDA within the purview of Hallidayan Systemic Functional Linguistics, to uncover the ideology behind choosing various verbal

and non-verbal resources in political discourse. A systemic functional approach to multimodal discourse analysis allows for analysis of "meaning arising from the use of multiple semiotic resources in discourses which range from written, printed and electronic texts to material lived-in reality." Expansion of meaning which occurs as result of a combination of linguistic and visual forms is captured through an inter-semiotic mechanism and system. The analysis shows that social semiotic reference is pivotal in the relationship between political discourse and ideology. It confirms O'Halloran's (2008) position that metaphorical constructions of meaning take place across linguistic and visual elements.

Keywords: Linguistics, Semiotics, Discourse analysis, Election, Cartoons

Introduction

Political cartoons are entertaining visuals that comment on political events in the society with the use of caricature, allusion, metaphor, irony, etc. They harness both linguistic and non-linguistic devices to reflect social practices. They are one of the principal means by which the public accesses and participates in the society-wide spectrum of debate about a particular event or social phenomenon. Political cartoons uncover the reality of events in society. Political cartoonists find cartoons handy in expressing their thoughts and ideas concerning an issue at a specific period in a playful way. They employ various icons within

a frame or panel. The panel represents a single moment; a slice of life put in mid-pose, much like a photograph (Jimoh, 2010).

Darwawan and Pilang (2015) submit that political cartoons portray political events with symbols that have wide and deep meanings. They add that political cartoons embody the thoughts of the cartoonists through visual shapes; the message of which is full of criticism. Political cartoons, like "time capsules", provide readers with a slice of life of the time in which they are created. Though they seem to be addressing specific events in a given era, their themes are often universal, transcending time and space. Changes in society and culture do not in any way make political cartoons outdated. Instead, "their editorial nature and mass appeal… provide a wealth of information about public sentiment and opinion, information often missing in scholarly accounts of historical events" (Wintz, Karaca, & Lang, 2015, p. 16).

In Nigeria's 2015 General Elections, the use of cartoons, especially online, played a significant role in the sensitisation of the electorate. Those cartoons were used to satirise political matters in the country. They offered subtle or direct criticism, creatively coated with humour. Blending both linguistic and non-linguistic resources, they created humorous effects on the readers. The cartoons used a wide range of semiotic resources to construct meaning. This paper, therefore, analyses some online cartoons connected with the Nigerian 2015 General Elections with a view to unpacking their verbal and non-verbal meanings. It draws insights from Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) Social Semiotics Theory and Hallidayan Systemic Functional Linguistics.

Previous Studies on Political Cartoons

Political cartoons have received considerable attention in academic research. This is largely due to their potentials to express opinions succinctly in a way that several words cannot

(Peñamarin, 1998). Adejuwon and Alimi (2011) analyse selected political cartoons from Nigerian dailies exploring how they illustrate the socio-political and economic issues pertinent to the country's political process. They observe that the cartoon as a visual communication genre played a prominent role during the struggle against colonialism in Nigeria as it received a weighty mandate within the nationalist media espousing anti-colonial interests and sentiments. Adejuwon and Alimi's work is more of a Political Science research than a linguistic one. As interesting as their analysis is, it is not tied down to any particular theory.

Kondowe, Ngwira and Madula (2014) investigate the verbal and non-verbal features of Malawi newspaper political cartoons on President Joyce Banda with the use of Grice's Conversational Implicature. They draw their data from *The Nation* newspaper from October, 2012 to May, 2013. The results of their analysis indicate that Malawian political cartoonists do not adhere to the conversational maxims by flouting, suspending and opting out. The study concludes that the cartoonists intentionally provide vague information to indicate precision, rather than show confusion or lack of authoritative knowledge. Kondowe, Ngwira and Madula's research seems adequate since it has its theoretical underpinning in Gricean Pragmatics. However, this pragmatic theory is limited in that it cannot handle non-verbal features of political cartoons effectively.

Sani, Mardziah, Afida and Abdullah (2012a) examine the role of humour in the construction of satire in Nigerian political cartoons, drawing their data from two newspapers – *Vanguard* and *Daily Trust*. Their study unfolds the nature and function of humour in the Nigerian political cartoons with use of three communication theories – relief theory, superiority theory and incongruity theory. Their findings show that Nigerian political cartoonists use humour in cartoons to relieve their readers of stressful situations and persuade them to make opinion on

contemporary issues in society. They submit that Nigerian political cartoonists creatively employ aggressive and afflictive styles of humour deliberately to construct criticisms against political leaders and comment on current socio-political matters so as to "initiate social reforms." Sani, Mardziah, Afida and Abdullah's (2012a) study dwells on the content analysis of political cartoons, neglecting their ideological undertones. Moreover, the communication theories adopted in the study cannot unpack the non-verbal meanings of the cartoon texts.

Sani, Mardziah, Afida and Abdullah (2012b) studied "linguistic analysis on the construction of satire in Nigerian political cartoons" with data collected from *Daily Trust* and *Vanguard* newspapers. The researchers combined two analytical frameworks: Perceptual Theory of Satire (a communication theory) and Critical Discourse Analysis (a linguistic analytical framework) to argue their case. The results of the study show that linguistic and non-linguistic elements are used in Nigerian political cartoons to initiate positive social and political reforms in the country. Though Sani, Mardziah, Afida and Abdullah's (2012b) study attempts to pay attention to both linguistic and non-linguistic elements embedded in political cartoons, it gives more attention to the linguistic elements. This is because it is Multimodal (Critical) Discourse Analysis, not Critical Discourse Analysis which the study has adopted, that can treat multimodality of texts.

Mari´n-Arrese (2008) investigates cognition and culture in political cartoons. She observes that the creation and interpretation of humour in cartoons draws on such cognitive mechanisms as conceptual metaphor and metonymy, conceptual integration or blending, and cognitive and cultural models. She examines "humour in political cartoons in relation to the Referendum on the European Constitution, held in France on May 29, 2005, and the various perceptions and representations of the results in the English and Spanish press" (Mari´n-Arrese, 2008, p.

1). She sets out to explore the cognitive mechanisms involved in the construction of meaning, in particular metaphoric and metonymic reasoning and conceptual blending; and to reveal the common or contrasting features of cultural models in political cartoons in English and Spanish, and the role that these cartoons play in reinforcing or challenging social, cultural and political practices. The analysis reveals that humour is used as a weapon to criticise the dominant ideology of French political elite and to attack, especially in the Spanish press, the government. Mari´n-Arrese's (2008) study is an interesting intercultural pragmatics research; however, little or no attention is paid to unpacking the cartoons' non-verbal messages.

Medubi (2003) explores the interrelationship between language and ideology in Nigerian political cartoons applying Fauconnier and Turner's Conceptual Integration Theory. Her data consists of 150 political cartoons dealing with the underlying tension in the country's multi-ethnic environment. She studies how verbal cues and imageries interact in the cartoons to present a nation lacking a distinctly defined ideology but manifesting group ideologies. Medubi's (2003) analysis shows that Nigeria is marked by ethnic and political allegiance. She observes that Nigerians consider their individual social identities and economic interests more important than their loyalty to their nation-state as a result national life in Nigeria consists of a struggle to obtain as much advantage as for one's socio-political and ethnic group. She adds that the "emerging stereotype of Nigerian leader, as shown in her cartoon analysis, is that of a callous, deceptive and self-serving individual while the populace is portrayed as helpless and pseudo-stoic" (Medubi, 2003, pp. 159-169). Medubi's (2003) study is similar to the present study in two ways: its data comprises of selected Nigerian political cartoons and it pays attention to unpacking both verbal and non-verbal messages of the cartoons. They are also different in many ways: the political cartoons constituting Medubi's (2003) data which deal with the underlying

tension in the country's multi-ethnic society is drawn from hardcopy of newspapers while the ones constituting the data of the present study are cartoons, gathered from the internet, dealing with the Nigeria's 2015 elections; while Medubi's (2003) study adopts Fauconnier and Turner's Conceptual Integration Theory as its theoretical frame work, the present study adopts Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) Social Semiotics Theory and Hallidayan Systemic Functional Linguistics.

Political Cartoons and Multimodality
Political cartoons are "enormously rich in the complexity of their evaluative meanings, and verbal and visual resources are mobilised and deployed to construct these meanings" (Lemke, 1997, p. 3). Therefore, as multimodal texts, they combine various communicative modes –verbal and non-verbal – to convey cognitive effects intended to be captured by the readers so that they can grasp the whole meaning of the communicative act (Rivas-Carmona, 2014).

Kress (2000) notes that combined use of different modes to make meaning has moved to the point that it is now possible that when making sense of a text, even of its linguistic parts alone, it is important one has a clear picture of some other features which might be contributing to the meaning of the text. Therefore, no longer can discourse be adequately studied without paying attention to its non-verbal aspects (Kress, 2010). Communicative-pragmatic approach to text analysis implies that the "perception of reality can only be done through the combination of verbal and non-verbal parameters." Political cartoons are referred to as multimodal texts because they are texts that "represent different semiotic components." Semiotic resources are presented in political cartoons by illustrations designed to convey a social or political message. Political cartoons "are characterised by the use of visual metaphors and caricatures to portray political situations and politicians **and by**

the use of humorous or emotional pictures for current events"
(Kulikova & Detinko, 2014). The analysis of such texts, taking
into consideration their verbal and non-verbal aspects of
communication, is known as multimodal discourse analysis.

The diverse ways in which a number of distinct semiotic
resource systems are both co-deployed and co-contextualized in
the making of a text-specific meaning are referred to as
multimodality (Baldry & Thibault, 2006; Liu, 2013).
Multimodality describes the grammar of visual communication
used by image designers. It deals with the rules and principles
which allow readers/viewers to understand the meaning potential
of relative placement of elements, framing, salience, proximity,
colour saturations, styles of typeface, and so on (Machin, 2007).
Multimodal discourse analysis, therefore, analyses how several or
all of the different semiotic modes intertwine to produce a unified
text or communicative event. The central idea in multimodal
discourse analysis is that "textual structure is realised, not [only]
by linguistic means, but visually, through layout, colour, and
typography both at the level of the clause and at the level of
discourse" (Liu, 2013, p. 1260).

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study is Kress and van
Leeuwen's (2006) Social Semiotics Theory, a model of MDA
within the purview of Hallidayan Systemic Functional
Linguistics, as put forward by O'Halloran (2008). The systemic
functional approach to multimodal discourse analysis is "the
theory and practice of analysing meaning arising from the use of
multiple semiotic resources in discourses which range from
written, printed and electronic texts to material lived-in-reality"
(O'Halloran (2008, p. 443). O'Halloran (2008) tags this model
"Systemic Functional-Multimodal Discourse Analysis" (SF-
MDA).

SF-MDA is considered appropriate for this study for two reasons: (1) it is capable of exploring the meaning arising through the use of language and visual imagery in printed texts, and (2) it has the meta-functional principle embedded in it. The meta-functional principle is a Systemic-Functional-Linguistics principle that provides an integrating ground for theorising the process by which semiotic resources interrelate to create meaning. The principle gives room for semiotic resources to simultaneously provide the tools for constructing ideational meaning and for enacting social relations and "these meta-functions are enabled through the organisation of the discourse, which is the textual metafunction of semiosis" (O'Halloran, 2008, p. 445).

Methodology

Data for this study comprises fifteen purposively selected online cartoons that are connected with Nigeria's 2015 General Elections. Purposive sampling technique was chosen because it leads to greater depth of information from a smaller number of carefully selected cases. The cartoons selected essentially focus on the key actors in the elections – Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) and its Chairman; the two prominent political parties (All Progressive Congress and People's Democratic Party) and their candidates. The cartoons are drawn from the online versions of *Vanguard* and *Daily Mail* newspapers. The data were subjected to analysis with the use of Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) Social Semiotics Theory, a model of MDA within the purview of Hallidayan Systemic Functional Linguistics to uncover the ideology behind choosing various verbal and non-verbal resources in them.

Data Analysis

The selected political cartoons are analysed in this section within the purview of Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) Social Semiotics Theory to unpack their verbal and non-verbal messages.

Cartoon 1

Source: *Vanguard* **(October 28, 2013)**

Cartoon 1 has the image of Nigeria's Former President, Dr. Goodluck Jonathan in "Aso Rock Space Observatory Post; a question mark (?) above his head, one hand on his chin and writing with the other hand; implying that he is engaged in a deep thought. In his front is monocular labelled "vision 2020" but the "2020" is struck out and replaced with "2015." He observes the following in the space: "SECOND TERM?", "2015", "NO WAY!", "From", "the govs!." Vision 2020 is an initiative of Nigeria's Former Head of State, Late General Sani Abacha but revived by late President Umaru Musa Yar'adua. The vision was intended to harness "the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy of the Olusegun Obasanjo administration and the Seven Point Agenda of the Umaru Yar'Adua administration" together "to stimulate Nigeria's economic growth and launch the country onto a path of sustained and rapid socio-economic development and place the country in the bracket of top 20 largest economies of the

world by 2020" (Adedokun, 2013).

Being a part of the Umaru Yar'Adua administration as a Vice President, one would have expected Dr. Goodluck Jonathan to have continued with the vision but after he was elected the President in 2011, rather than focus on the actualization of the Nigeria's big economic vision, he shifted his attention to the possibility of being re-elected in 2015. This implies that he abandoned vision 2020 and concentrated on his personal political ambition. Receiving a "NO WAY" response from the governors was, therefore, not unanticipated

.

Cartoon 2

Source: *Vanguard* **(July 30, 2014)**

Cartoon 2 shows four men carrying "APC MERGER!" beside a sign post tagged "2013" and another man in boxer sportswear and gloves carrying an umbrella (which is a symbol of PDP); behind him is a sign post labelled 2015. The cartoon has an inscription under it that reads "I'm not scared… but you can't beat a CHAMPION so easily!"   The four men carrying "APC

MERGER!" represent the four political parties that merged into APC – the Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN), the Congress for Progressive Change (CPC), the All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP) and the All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA). The man carrying the PDP umbrella represents Former President Goodluck Jonathan.

The two signs in the cartoon have semantic implications – while the one tagged 2013 is not pointing to any direction, the one tagged 2015 points forward. This means that the APC merger came up in 2013 in preparation for 2015 General Election. It is also interesting to note that while the inscription in the cartoon reads "I'm not scared", the facial expression of the man carrying the PDP umbrella is that of a frightened person. This explains why the clause "but you can't beat a CHAMPION so easily!" is added. The message here is that though the Dr. Goodluck Jonathan appeared not to be bothered by the APC merger in 2013, the truth is that the merger must have sent chills down his spine.

Cartoon 3	**Cartoon 4**

Cartoons 3 and 4 complement each other in terms of meaning making. Cartoon 3 has two commercial buses painted in Lagos State colour. One of the buses is labeled PDP and the other APC. A man is shown beside the APC bus calling on those in PDP

bus; he shouts "ASO ROCK STRAIGHT! YOU CAN ENTER WITH YOUR N2015 NOTE. WE WILL BRING CHANGE." With their bags of money, the people in the PDP bus are seen alighting to join the APC bus. Beside the PDP bus is a man putting his two hands on his head. Cartoon 3 also has an inscription "IF YOUR BUS CANNOT CARRY AMBITION, CHANGE YOUR BUS" under it. Cartoon 4 shows five men with protruded stomachs (typical of Nigerian politicians) raising their brooms like umbrellas under the rainy cloud tagged "2015"; meanwhile, their umbrellas are right in their hands. The other men are shown standing under an umbrella on a hill watching the five men "'UMBRELLAIZING' THE BROOM" (an inscription under Cartoon 4). (Umbrella is PDP's symbol and broom is APC's.)

The play on the word "CHANGE" in Cartoon 3, APC slogan, is notable. APC was able to identify with the agitations of an average Nigeria with their slogan; all that Nigerians wanted was "change" in all its ramifications. However, it seemed as though it was the politicians that were changing their political parties for their political ambition. Cartoon 4 explains this further. Politicians under the cloud of 2015 General Elections were seen "UMBRELLAIZING" their "BROOMS." Of course, their umbrellas were just kept somewhere maybe to be picked up some other time. Nigerian politics and politicians are not driven by ideologies. This is why they find it quite easy to jump from one political party to another (see Cartoon 5 below).

Cartoon 5

Source: *Vanguard* **(May 13, 2015)**

Cartoon 5 shows a politician in their typical "Babariga" flying from one political party to another with one of his pair of shoes lost. He is being interviewed by a pressman. The issue is the Nigerian "POLITICIAN'S DEFINITION OF… POLITICAL IDEOLOGY." To him, political ideology "IS A SYSTEM THAT ALLOWS ME TO JUMP FREELY FROM ONE [POLITICAL] PARTY TO ANOTHER!" Little wonder, Medubi (2003, p. 1) describes Nigeria as "a nation lacking a clearly defined ideology… a conglomeration of peoples of disparate experiences and diverse tongues, socially and culturally far apart, and to all intents and purposes, ideologically confused" unlike the western world where one's ideology is one's identity, where no matter what, one cannot just change one's political party. A typical politician in Nigeria is incomparable to a ship captain who would rather die with his ship than jump into another when it is about to capsize.

Cartoon 6

Cartoon 7

Source: *Vanguard* **(March 2, 2015)   Source:** *Vanguard* **April 8, 2015**

In Cartoon 6, Professor Attahiru Jega is shown addressing a crowd and holding up a placard that has the inscription "ONE MAN! ONE VOTE!!" written on it. The symbols of the two major political parties that participated in the 2015 General Elections – an umbrella (PDP's symbol) and a broom (APC's symbol) – are carried up. The message of INEC was "WE HOPE PEOPLE

36

WILL BE DEMOCRATIC ENOUGH, SO WE WON'T BELABOUR OURSELF. YOU WILL SURELY BE RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR ACTION IF YOU RIG!" In Cartoon 7, Professor Attahiru Jega putting on a cap with the inscription "INEC" is shown addressing the Presidential candidate of PDP, ex-President Goodluck Jonathan and that of APC, Muhammadu Buhari in a boxing ring. The two candidates are dressed as boxers about to engage in the "MAIN BOUT" – the presidential election. Like a boxing referee, reads out the election rules to "BUHON" and "JONA"

<div align="center">

NO RIGGING,
THAT'S HITTING BELOW
THE BELT! NO
VIOLENCE, YOU'RE NOT
ALLOWED TO USE OTHER
THINGS THAN THE VOTES TO
DEFEAT YOUR OPPONENT
THIS IS A
SPORT NOT
WAR!

</div>

Outside the ring are the coaches of the two contestants. Buhon's coach is holding a broom (APC's symbol) and Jona's coach is carrying an umbrella (PDP's symbol). Cartoons 6 and 7 convey INEC's message to the major political parties in the 2015 General Elections. Professor Jega, the INEC Chairman, kept advocating for a peaceful, free and fair election. The election should be taken as a friendly sport not war. Cartoon 7 is rather metaphorical comparing the electoral contest to boxing.

Cartoon 8

"GENTLEMEN, WE DON'T SAY YOU SHOULD ABUSE... WE SAID LOVE HER"

Source: *Vanguard* **March 5, 2015**

In Cartoon 8, INEC chairman, Professor Jega, presents Nigeria, a pretty woman to the candidates of the two major political parties in the 2015 General Elections "FEW WEEKS TO ELECTIONS and warns "GENTLEMEN, WE DON'T SAY YOU SHOULD ABUSE… WE SAID LOVE HER." This is another cartoon intended to sensitise politicians on election violence. Instigating violence during election is not different from violating the pretty woman, Nigeria; ensuring a peaceful election is like loving her.

Cartoon 9	Cartoon 10

"THE MACHINE THAT WILL DECIDE OUR VOTES"

WHO IS AFRAID OF CARD READER?

Source: *Vanguard* **(March 18, 2015) Source:** *Vanguard* **(March 27, 2015)**

Cartoons 9 and 10 deal with the introduction of card readers in the electoral process of Nigeria. In Cartoon 9, INEC boss is seen introducing the card reader thus "THIS IS MY SON IN WHOM I TRUST." He raises one of the card reader's hands up and on its other hand is a whip. Under Cartoon 9 is inscribed the statement "THE MACHINE THAT WILL DECIDE OUR VOTES." In Cartoon 10, the card reader is unleashed by a hand (INEC) to chase after a man tagged "RIGGING." Cartoon 10 has an inscription "WHO IS AFRAID OF CARD READER?" under it.

The introduction of card readers into Nigeria's electoral process generated a lot of controversies. Some politicians campaigned against it saying it was unconstitutional while others were in support of it. INEC, however, insisted that:

> …the use of the card reader for the purpose of accreditation of voters is an innovation by the commission to improve the integrity of the electoral process and it is legally permissible. It does not violate the Electoral Act 2010, as amended, or the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, as amended. It adds value to the process in line with the yearnings of Nigerians for credible elections, and in accordance with international best practices. Whereas the Electoral Act prohibits the use of electronic voting, the card reader is not a voting machine and is not used for voting. The card reader is used only for accreditation of voters, and only accreditation (and not voting) data is transmitted by it. (*This Day Live*, March

16, 2015)

Cartoon 9 makes use of intertextuality; it alludes to the biblical verse that states where God introducing Jesus Christ stated that "this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matthew 3:17). As shown in Cartoon 10, the one who could have been afraid of the card reader was a politician who intended to rig the elections.

Cartoon 11
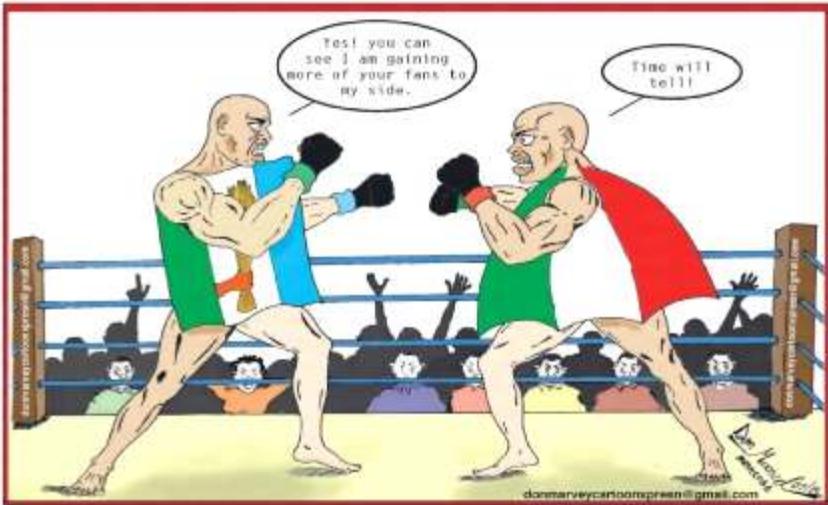
Source: *Daily Mail* (March 17, 2015)

Cartoon 11 shows two boxers fighting in a ring; one wearing APC's logo and the other PDP's. The APC boxer says "Yes! You can see I am gaining more of your fans to my side" and the PDP boxer replies "Time will tell!" The meaning conveyed through this cartoon is that in the "electoral contest" the APC began to win more supporters to itself which assured it of victory in the General Elections but the PDP still has hope believing that time would judge which party would be the winner.

Metaphorically, the electoral contest is likened to boxing.

Cartoon 12   **Cartoon 13**

Source: *Daily Mail* (March 17, 2015) Source: *Vanguard* (January 30, 2013)

Cartoon 12, more of propaganda, shows a participant (ex-President Goodluck Jonathan) holding a tattered umbrella tagged PDP with one hand and a glass cup containing "PDP TONIC WINE" (looking like blood) with the other hand. Hung on the umbrella are "CORRUPTION", under which is "PENSION FUND", and "BOKO HARAM", under which is "NGF CRISIS". A fly is about to perch on the wine. Littering the floor are pieces of paper that have "CRISIS" written on them. The participant invites everyone to "… MY PARTY… IRRESISTIBLE PDP!" The cartoon has two inscriptions: "2015: NO PARTY CAN UPROOT PDP – FG…" on top at the left hand and "TIME SHALL TELL" beneath. In Cartoon 13, ex-President Goodluck Jonathan is being pulled with a rope that carries the label "OPPOSITION" and he tenaciously holds on to an armchair labelled "ASO ROCK".

The two cartoons above have a complementary meaning. Their core message is that despite the crises and decadence brought about by PDP-led government, the party represented by ex-President Goodluck Jonathan,   still believed tenaciously that no party, not even the opposition party, could hauled them out of power.

Cartoon 14

Source: *Daily Mail* **March 17, 2015**

Cartoon 14 has two participants on a football pitch – one is tagged PDP and the other APC. Their aim is to score goals in the football net labelled 2015. The PDP player gets confused while the APC player aims for the net. The score reveals why the PDP player must have been confused. APC has 55% ball possession as again PDP's 45%. PDP has a yellow card (ASUU Strike) and a foul (Corruption Oil Theft). For free kicks and corner kicks, APC has five governors and thirty-seven parliament members from PDP respectively. The PDP, however, still has 18 goals (states), while the APC has 16 goals (states). This cartoon shows how competitive the preparation toward the General Elections had become in 2014. The APC began to quickly put together all its verve to win the 2015 General Elections. The party was already winning to its side prominent members of the PDP.

Cartoon 15

Source: *Vanguard* **April 6, 2014**

Cartoon 15 shows three participants in a boxing ring – two boxers and their referee. One of the boxers represents ex-President Goodluck Jonathan and the other represents President Muhammadu Buhari. The referee represents the INEC Chairman, Professor Attahiru Jega. In the cartoon, Goodluck Jonathan has just been defeated by Muhammadu Buhari and Professor Attahiru Jega is seen urging him to "SMILE" for "CHAMPIONS DON'T REIGN FOR EVER." A signpost behind them reads "PRESIDENTIAL CHAMPIONSHIP FOR PEACE." This cartoon subtly presents one of the greatest events in the political history of Nigeria; an acceptance of defeat by an incumbent President. The event was remarkable because it was the first time in the history of Nigeria for an incumbent President to accept defeat from a candidate of an opposition party. It was indeed a "PRESIDENTIAL CHAMPIONSHIP FOR PEACE." While Nigeria was still expecting the presidential election results from Borno State, it was reported that Goodluck Jonathan called and congratulated Muhammadu Buhari on his victory.

Conclusion

This paper analysed some political cartoons connected with Nigeria's 2015 General Elections. The cartoons selected were those that focused on the key actors in the elections – Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) and its Chairman; the two prominent political parties (All Progressive Congress and People's Democratic Party) and their candidates. Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) Social Semiotics Theory, a model of MDA within the purview of SFL was adopted for the analysis. The ideology behind choosing various linguistic and non-linguistic resources in the cartoons was examined. The analysis shows that there is an expansion of meaning when linguistic and visual forms, captured through an inter-semiotic mechanism and system, are combined. The analysis also reveals that social semiotic reference is pivotal in the relationship between political discourse and ideology which is in agreement with O'Halloran's (2008) position that metaphorical constructions of meaning take place across linguistic and visual elements.

References

Adedokun, N. (2013, September 13). The Mirage Called Vision 2020. *News Dairy*. Retrieved from http://newsdiaryonline.com/mirage-called-vision-2020by-niran-adedokun/

Adejuwon, A &Alimi, S. (2011).Cartoons as Illustration: Political Process in Nigeria. *The Journal of Pan African Studies*, 4(3): 57-76.

Baldry, A &Thibault, P. J. (2006). *Multimodal Transcription and Text Analysis*. London: Equinox.

Darmawan, F. & Piliang, Y.A.(2015). Assess Irony Communication of SusiloBambangYudhoyono through Political Cartoon. *Arts and Design Studies*. 28, 11-16

Halliday, M.A.K. (2004) *An Introduction to Functional Grammar*, (3rd ed., Rev. by C.M.I.M.Matthiessen). London: Arnold.

Jimoh, G.A. (2010). The Role of Editorial Cartoons in Democratisation Process in Nigeria: A Study of Selected Works of Three Nigerian Cartoonists. (Unpublished M.A Thesis) University of Lagos, Akoka.

Kondowe, W., Ngwira, F.F. & Madula, P. (2014) Linguistic Analysis of Malawi Political Newspaper Cartoons on President Joyce Banda: Towards Grice's Conversational Implicature. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science. 4.7(1), 40-51.*

Kress, G. & Van Leeuwen, T. (2006) *Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design* (2nd ed). London: Routledge.

Kress, G. (2000). Multimodality. In B, Cope & M, Kalantzis (Eds.). *Multiliteracies: Literacy Learning and the Design of Social Futures*. London: Routledge.

Kress, G. (2010) *Multimodality: A Social Semiotic Approach to Contemporary Communication*. London: Routledge.

Kulikova, L.V & Detinko, I.I. (2014). Construction of Political "Others" Through Multimodal Texts (Cartoons) in British Press. Journal of Siberian Federal University. Humanities & Social Sciences. 8, 1381-1391.

Lemke, J.L. (1997). Visual and Verbal Resources for Evaluative Meaning in Political Cartoons. A Paper Presented at the Faculty of Linguistics and Applied Linguistics, University of Vienna. Retrieved from http://static1.1.sqspcdn.com/static/f/694454/12422362/1306510620083/Evaluative+Meaning+in+Political+Cartoons.pdf?token=pM5KF4PVTfKOm1NGVvXs0uulcr4%3D .

Liu, J. (2013). Visual Images Interpretive Strategies in Multimodal Texts. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*. 4(6),1259-1263.

Machin, D. 2007. *Introduction to Multimodal Analysis*. London: Hodder.

Mari´n-Arrese, J.I (2008). Cognition and Culture in Political

Cartoons. *Intercultural Pragmatics*. 5(1), 1-18.

Medubi, Oyin (2003). Language and Ideology in Nigerian Cartoons. In R. Dirven, R. Frank & M. Puetz (Eds.), *Cognitive Models in Language and Thought: Ideology, Metaphors and Meanings* (pp. 159-198). Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

O'Halloran, K.L. (2008). Systemic Functional-Multimodal Discourse Analysis (SF-MDA): Constructing Ideational Meaning Using. *Visual Communication*. London: Sage 7(4), 443-475. Retrieved from

Peñamarin, C. (1998). Polemic images: Metaphor and Index in the Language of Political Cartoons. *Quaderni di studisemiotici*.

Rivas-Carmona, M.M. (2014). 'Cartooning for Gender Equality: A Multimodal Expression of 'Humour' and 'Vindication'. *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences*. 4(24), 8-19

Sani, I, Mardziah, H.A, Afida, M.A. & Abdullah, F.S. (2012a). Linguistic Analysis on the Construction of Satire in Nigerian Political Cartoons: The Example of Newspaper Cartoons. *Journal of Media and Communication Studies*. 4(3), 52-59

Sani, I, Mardziah, H.A, Afida, M.A. &Abdullah, F.S. (2012b). "The Role of Humor in the Construction of Satire in Nigerian Political Cartoons". *Online Journal of Communication and Media Technologies*. 2(3), 148-165

This Day Live (2015, March 16). The Card Reader Controversy. Retrieved from www.thisdaylive.com.

Wintz, T.N., Karaca, C. & Lang, K. (2015). *Understanding the World of Political Cartoons for Educators.* Washington: Seattle Post-Intelligencer.