

Conceptual Metaphor Blending and the Projections of Selective Ideologies in a Sermon by Bishop Matthew Hassan Kukah

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Abstract

This paper examines how conceptual metaphors blending deployed in religious discourse project selective ideologies that critique political inadequacies. The objectives are identification of the mental spaces constructed in religious sermons and examination of the inference structures of the blending processes. The study is premised on Turner and Fauconnier's (1998) conception integration model. The data was purposively selected from Bishop Matthew Hassan Kukah's 2020 Christmas sermon titled: *The middle grounds of optimism have continued to shift and many genuinely ask, what have we done to the gods? Does Nigeria still have a future?* The method of analysis is qualitative descriptive content analysis. The findings reveal the topos of composition process by the conceptual juxtaposition of the elements of two conceptual alignments in the input space, and the completion process emergent structure of the blended space upon which the inference process of elaboration made relates the ideologies of blend operations to discourse participants and events. The paper concludes that the use of conceptual metaphors strengthens persuasive texture of religious discourse as a window for inculcation and indoctrination of ideologies which are viable constructive mechanism for applauding good acts, correcting the ills in the society or even instigating acts of insubordination or violence.

Keywords: conceptual integration, blended space, input spaces, emergent structure, composition completion and elaboration.

Introduction

One means through which preachers shape public opinions, projections of certain ideologies about events, people and things in the world is through religious sermons. In recent times Nigerian religious clerics, expressing political opinions attempt to assert certain political influence on their audiences through sermons, homilies and speeches. Such presentations, which may or may not be couched in plain literal language accessible to all, could transcend the domain of religion to address political, socio-cultural and economic issues that plague the society. The clerics exercise their cognitive mechanism on the audience by allowing one thing or area of experience that is usually more abstract, complex or unfamiliar to be understood in terms of more concrete, less complex or experientially closer terms (Silvestre-Lopez, 2020). This mechanism of language use is known as conceptual metaphor. Thus, the audience is persuaded to reach a deeper understanding of the discourse and attain a contextualized as well as de-contextualized understanding of the message conveyed.

In Nigeria, religious sermons and homilies are sometimes full of metaphorical expressions and serve a means to arouse the audience's self-inquiry to connect or disconnect with the socio-political and economic happenings in the society. Such is the case with Bishop Hassan Kukah's 2020 Christmas day homily to the Catholic faithful of Sokoto diocese. This paper investigates how the Bishop uses conceptual metaphor blending of elements and scenarios of different background assumptions to encode and strategically project ideologies that are meant to persuade the audience politically and to criticize the government in certain fashion. What underlines this study is the understanding that the use of language by renowned religious leaders can influence the minds and actions of their followers.

Conceptual Clarification

Conceptual metaphor (CM) is a term in cognitive linguistics defined by Lakoff (1993) as "a cognitive mechanism that allows one thing or area of experience that is usually more abstract, complex or unfamiliar (the Target Domain (TD)) to be understood in terms of another that is more concrete, less complex or experientially closer to us (the SD)" (Lakoff, 1993 as cited in Silvestre-Lopez, 2020, p. 36). It is therefore a phenomenon that materializes in language through the use of metaphorical expressions. Metaphor in this sense is not an ornamental device used for aesthetic purposes in literary texts; rather, it is a way of thinking and understanding expressed through the use of metaphors. Hence, the metaphor is not only a matter of words or language use, it is fundamentally conceptual, and not linguistic, in nature because the "the whole system of human concepts has a metaphorical structure and is metaphorically defined" (Kuczok, 2010). Metaphor, as language, is only a surface realization or manifestation of conceptual metaphor.

The conceptual domain from which the metaphors required to understand another conceptual domain are drawn is called the source domain. The source domain provides explanations to the target domain where the interpretation is done. Meaning therefore involves both the conceptual content and the construal imposed on the content. Conceptual metaphors are drawn largely from collective cultural understanding and they become linguistic conventions that can be deployed in any discourse (Langacker, 2008; Nordquist, 2023).

Blending simply means combining some things of different types in an attractive or effective way in order to produce something different. As a cognitive linguistics term, it refers to the process of combining elements from familiar conceptualizations into new and meaningful one (Langacker, 2008). The meanings of linguistic items reside in conceptualizations which are dynamic, interactive, imagistic, imaginative, which may involve combining metaphors in mental space constructions. The semantic content of the combined metaphors is not evoked in a neutral manner. Rather, through the choice of words, images and scenarios evoked, certain ideologies are construed and projected to the target domain. Conceptual metaphor blending therefore is a set of cognitive operations for combining metaphorical expressions in a network of mental spaces to create meaning (Nordquist, 2019). As religious discourse aims at having effect on its target audience, the use of conceptual blending is a possible discourse strategy.

Previous Literature on Religious Discourse in Nigeria

Studies on religious discourses of Nigerian clerics bifurcate into non-linguistic and linguistic studies. The current study belongs to the latter. A plethora of linguistic studies of religious texts, ranging from core formal linguistic to functional analyses, abound. Ude (2021) and Idowu, Owuye, Kalejaiye, and Soyombo (2019) investigated the salience of cohesive devices in selected Pentecostal sermons using Halliday's SFG model. Idowu, et al (2019) revealed that the cohesive devices are deployed as linguistic resources to mark religious affinity, while Ude (2021) categorized the cohesive devices into their functional types, such as reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction. Ayansola's (2021) study of the speech acts features of sermon discourse using Austin and Searle's model revealed the predominant use of commissive speech act forms for purposes of predictions and prophecies. For Michael (2021) the speech acts of the sermons realized hate speech contents in the form of innuendos, name-calling and co-opting of audience in sermons. Obioma's (2018) analysis of the use of coinages in sermons using Wodak and Reisigl's (2005) discursive strategies framework revealed that coinages used in sermons serve didactic function of teaching materialism and socio-economic issues. Esimaje and Orife's (2017) investigation of the attitudinal meanings of the lexis of Christian sermons so as to facilitate their correct usages and understanding using the lexical pragmatics framework revealed that some collocations patterns retain formal meanings while others did not.. Ajayi (2017) probed the pragmatic strategies that realize pain-relief functions in funeral sermons using Adegbija's pragma-sociolinguistics model. His findings revealed that the pragmatic strategies served the function of pain relief for the bereaved and other well-wishers, while Owulabi's (2012) stylistic analysis of rhythmical, rhetorical and memorable discourse patterns realized in the lexis and sentence structures of sermons indicated that the structures of the English language used in sermons reflect the linguistic patterns of Nigerian English. Babatunde and Aremu's (2016) study of the pragmatics of conceptual metaphors in Nigerian Christian tracts revealed that the shared contextualized backgrounds between participants, presuppositions, politeness principle, implicature and indirect speech acts are useful tools for pract warning, rebuking, requesting, promising, admonishing and exhorting and that ontological mapping of source domain to target domain facilitates the interpretation of the cognitive meaning in the metaphors used.

From the perspective of rhetorical strategies, Okafor (2016) examined the persuasive functions of rhetorical forms in pastoral letters written by clerics to their congregants. Anchored on Aristotle's rhetorical theory, the findings revealed that the discourse and linguistic structures of the pastoral letters featured more of logos-based rhetorical elements and the exclusive use of pathos and ethos building elements to communicate theme of faith, repentance, love and loyalty. Similarly, Okpeh's (2020) study of the pragmatic imports of rhetorical elements in Dr. Paul Enenche's sermons revealed that that he strategically deployed rhetorical elements for indoctrination and persuasion of the target audience. Akinwotu and Ogundele (2021) studied the rhetorical resources that realize appeal function in Christian Tract sermons based on Aristotle's rhetorical model. Their findings identified four categories of appeal, namely, intimacy appeal through direct address, introspection appeal through question and answers, beliefs and actions appeal through conditional clauses and faith appeal through declarative clauses.

From the prism of metaphoric rhetoric, Okpeh's (2017) study of the contextualization of metaphors in selected Nigerian Pentecostal Christian sermons found that the use and interpretations of rhetorical metaphors were contextually sensitive to some factors, while Ekeoha's (2015) examination of the persuasive functions of rhetorical forms in Pentecostal sermons showed that metaphors, rhetorical questions, and proverbs were the mostly featured rhetorical forms in the sermons. The former adopted Cameron's discourse dynamic model and Chateris-Black's critical metaphor analysis (CMA), while the latter was premised on triangulation of theoretical tenets from Halliday's SFG and Lakoff's conceptual metaphor.

Obuasi (2013) adopted ethnography of SPEAKING approach to investigate the contextual, communicative features that guided appropriation of diction in Christian sermons. The findings revealed that preachers could not actualize the intention of the message due to inappropriate delivery method and linguistic incompetence through the use linguistic of forms that were not appropriate for the socio-cultural environment of interaction. Agu, Agu and Liman's (2018) syntactic analysis of selected Islamic sermons in Yola, with insights from Bresnan and Kaplan (1970) Lexical functional model demonstrated that the sermons follow conventional Islamic sermon patterns consisting of functional-sensitive sentence variation, simple diction, simple compound and complex sentence.

The above review shows little or no attention on the cognitive perspective of conceptual blending of metaphors in religious sermons. Given the use of metaphors in religious discourse and its vital contributions to the sociological basis of religious discourses to realize ideological indoctrination, persuasion and attitudinal changes among target audiences, this paper fills this gap by examining how the strategic use of conceptual blending mechanism of metaphors in Bishop Hassan Kukah's 2020 Christmas message projects selective ideology about entities and people in Nigeria and what possible influence to be actualized. The objectives, therefore, are to identify the mental spaces constructed in the metaphors deployed in Bishop's Kukah's 2020 Christmas message; and analyse the inference structures deduced through the composition, completion, and elaboration processes of the emergent structure in the blended space.

Theoretical Framework

Turner and Fauconnier (1998) conceptual blending theory (CBT) is the framework of this study. The thrust of the theory is that daily human interactions are loads of metaphors containing blend of mental spaces or small conceptual packets that are constructed on-line during thinking and conversation and strategically implored for ideological and action-oriented persuasion (Hart, 2008). These mental spaces form intersect or network of meaning primitives inherent in the unfolding of discourse and thought. The major assumption of conceptual blending is that linguistic expressions are compendium of juxtaposed mental spaces or scenarios, with counterpart relations in the blended spaces that evoke different assumptions in the input spaces and projection of shared common relations between elements of the input spaces in the generic space. The juxtaposed mental spaces enact emergent structures through the conceptual blending processes of composition, completion, and elaboration, which serve as the interpretation frames for local understanding of the why, what, who and how of an action and ideology encoded in the conceptual metaphor blend.

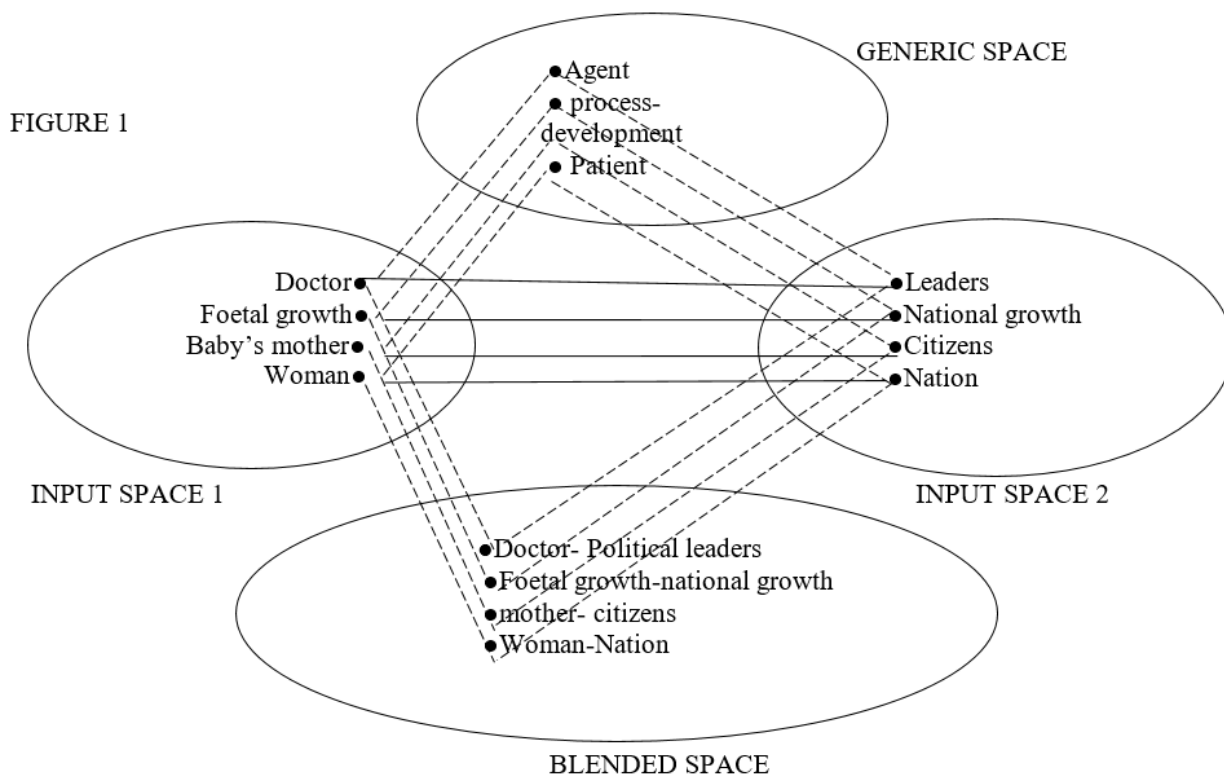
Contrary to Lakoff and Johnson (1980) conceptual metaphor theory (CMT) which adopts a unidirectional mappings from source to target domain and entrenched meaning phenomenon, CBT treats metaphor as linguistic elements that feature four interconnected mental spaces and online-meaning building processes (Coulson & Oakley, 2000). The interpretative frames which constitute the basic processes of blending consist of composition process that deals with projection of elements of the input spaces into the blended space to form the emergent structure (Coulson & Oakley, 2000), the completion process that aligns evokes counterpart relations of elements from the input spaces with its corresponding long term memory information(Coulson & Oakley, 2000) and the elaboration process that interprets the speaker's selective ideology projected in the blending process of the metaphors. CBT therefore sees language as a culturally entrenched means of creating and transmitting blending schemes. Thus, through the use of some linguistic forms and patterns, language users can construct meaning through conceptual integration and thereby influence the reactions of the target domain. The primary thematic focus of CBT is metaphorical expressions and the often controversial reactions generated by them as driven by the user's social status and influence (Al-Tahmazi, 2017). This informs the suitability of this theory for this study.

Methodology

This study is purely descriptive. The primary data used are thirteen (13) purposively selected expressions that feature conceptual metaphor in Bishop Kukah's 2020 Christmas sermon sourced from the 30th December, 2020 online publication of Sahara Reporters. The analysis is qualitative content approach. For ease of analysis, the data are numbered and diagrammatically analyzed for illustration of the conceptual blend mechanism in each expression. The bold interconnected lines connect the input spaces 1 and 2, while the dotted lines interconnect all the spaces. The interpretation frame adopted for the basic blending processes were composition, completion and elaboration.

Data Analysis and Discussion

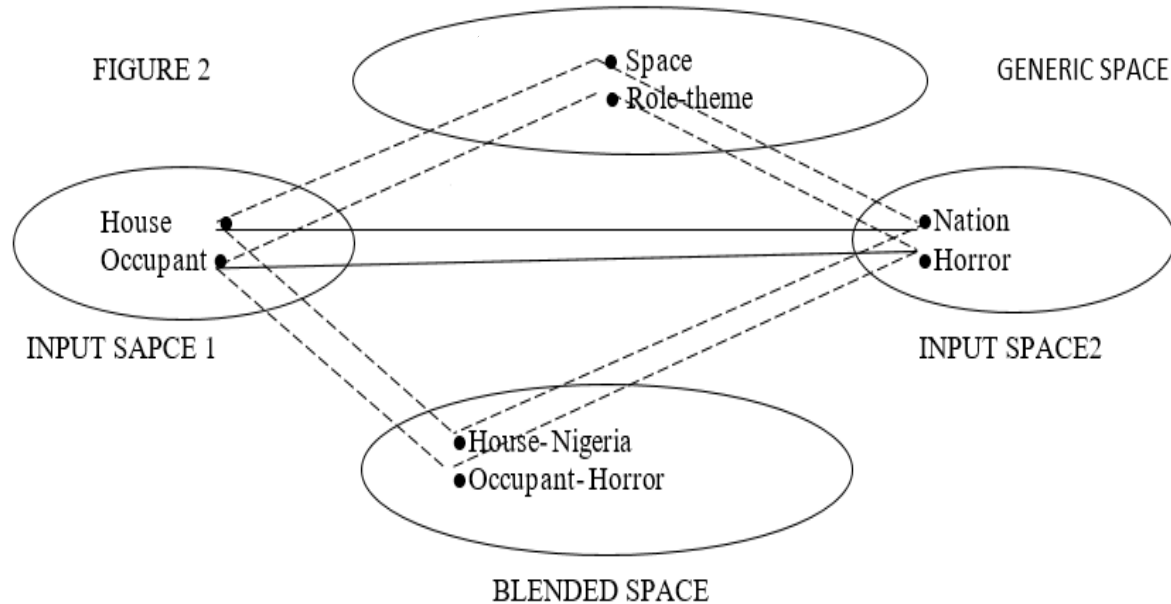
EXCERPT 1: The Nigerian dreams have been aborted.



The conceptual metaphor of abort in the excerpt 1 evokes the topos of obstruction and truncation of a development process of an entity before maturity. It integrates two independent scenarios comprising of medical and political scenarios and projects into the generic space, common thematic relations of agent (doctors-political leaders) and patient (baby's mother-Nigerians) in material actions of termination of development process of baby (national growth) before time of maturity. It also enacts common thematic relations of process (development) and patient role and gender identity (feminine) between elements of input space 1 and 2. The composition process blends elements from input 1 and 2 scenarios into the blended space that results to an emergent structure as a consequence of completion process which portrays Nigerian politicians' obstructions/obstacles to national development just like a doctor involved in abortion (medical procedure) obstructs foetal growth before birth or maturity period of delivery. Just as doctors in medical procedure of abortion has the ability to immaturely truncate the growth of a foetus in a woman's womb, and just as it is the exclusive attribute of women to conceive babies in their wombs, so is bad leadership portrayed as capable of immaturely truncating the thought of national growth and development conceived in the mental womb (the minds) of citizens of a nation such as Nigeria. Through the conceptual metaphor blending the

speaker projects the obstructionist ideologies that flesh out the consequences of bad leadership on national progress and development. The interpretation mechanism of elaboration informs the kind of reactions this elicits from the target audience.

EXCERPT 2: Nigeria is a house of horror.



Predicated on the topos of containment and territorial occupation, the conceptual blending process in Figure 2 spells out a conceptual juxtaposition of the scenario of human occupation and events occupation of a space or territory. The space and theme role elements of the generic space reveal the common properties between elements of the input space 1 and 2. The composition process initiates an integration of elements of two scenarios of human occupation and event occupation in input space 1 and 2 respectively. This blending process aligns human occupation/containment role of a function of a house with event occupation in a national territory. As a house is to be legally owned and occupied by human dwellers, so has the speaker ascribed such capacity to the horror events of killings and bloodshed that have occupied national space, and thus, have owned the activities and events in the nation. The completion process juxtaposes elements in input space 1 and 2 that result into an emergent structure that conceptually aligns house space to Nigerian space and human occupant to Horror event occupant. These blending alignments portray Nigeria as a space that is under the territorial control and ownership of horrific events.

Drawing from inference process of the elaboration, the speaker played down the protectionist ideology to a house and instead selectively projects the containment/ownership ideological aspects of a house for the purpose of emphasizing the deteriorating level of the wanton killings going in the Nigerian space and to spotlight the level of irresponsibility of government towards security control and ownership of its territory. The elaboration process

reveals the speaker's critical stance and indictment of the government in the event of insecurity in Nigeria.

EXCERPT 3: We all seem to have become sedated and inured with pains

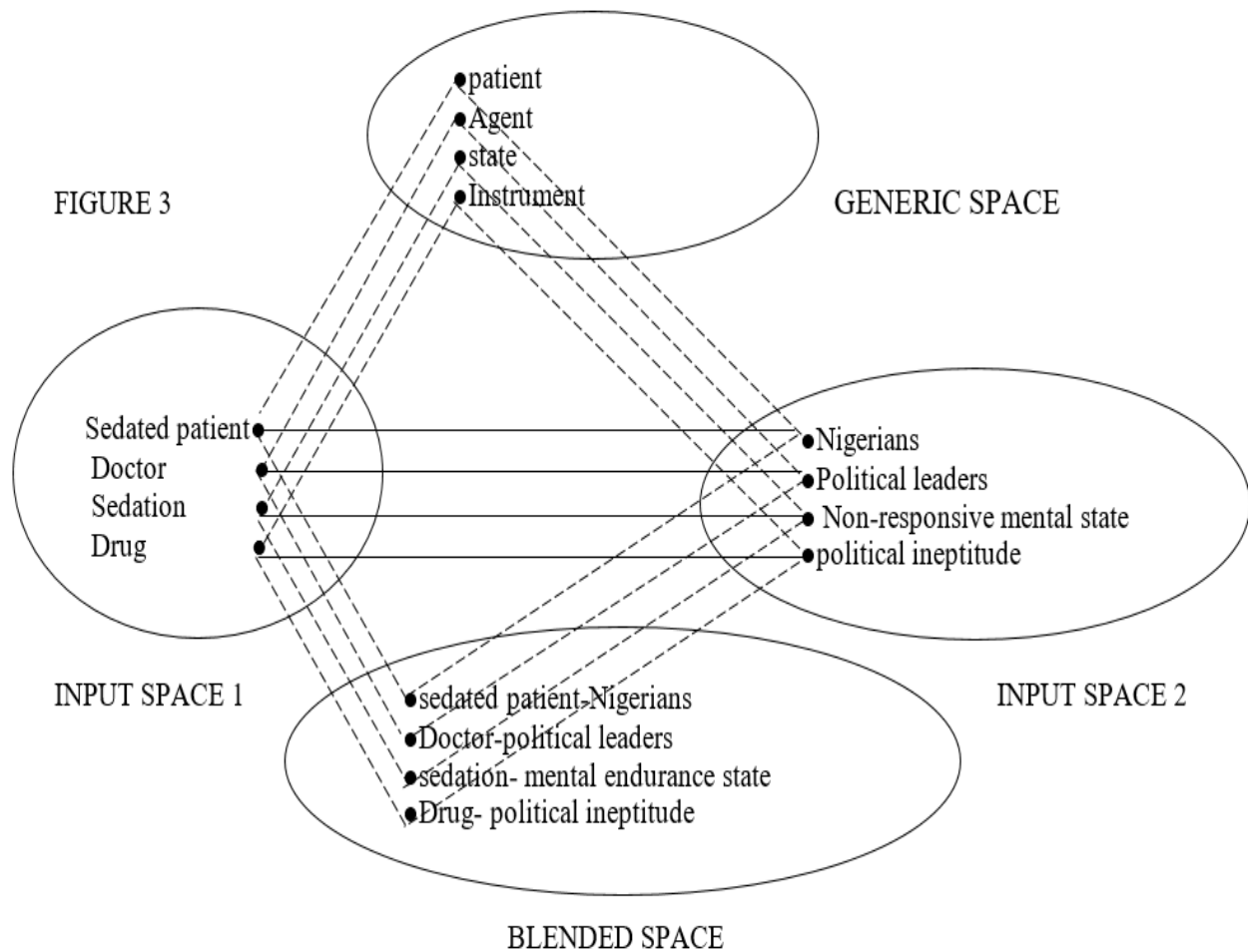


Figure 3 blending process premises the tops of mental endurance and psychological numbness of Nigerians in the face of difficulties. The generic space reveals common or shared properties between elements of the two input spaces. Such properties include patient role, agent role, state, and instrument role. The composition process enacts a juxtaposition of medical scenario and psychological/mental state of citizens of a nation scenario such that the completion process projects an emergent structure consisting of conceptual equations of sedative drug to political ineptitude, medical state of sedation to non-responsive mental state of the citizens in the face of difficulties, the medical agents/causer of the sedation (Doctors) to the political causers/agents (Nigerian politicians) of the non-responsive mental state of the citizens, and the sedated patient to Nigerians. The inference structure of the blended space shows that the speaker projects the ideology of mental surrender/resignation of Nigerians to the impact of

political incompetence. He seeks to remind them of their critical role of holding political office holders to account.

EXCERPT 4: Our cancer of Corruption has metastasized.

FIGURE 4

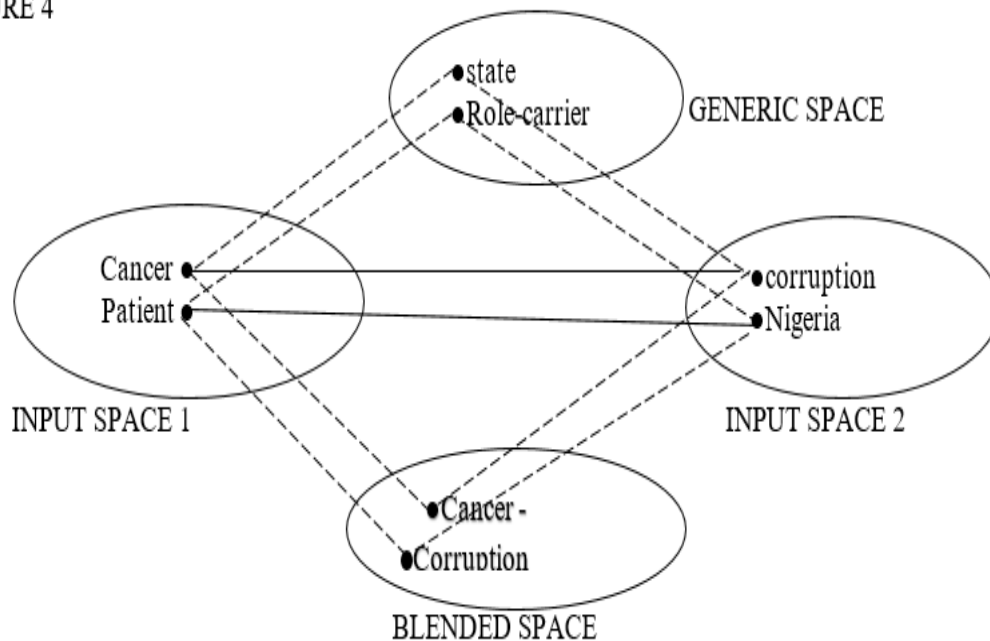


Figure 4 reveals the evocation of the topos of terminal and gradual deterioration of state of well-being of an entity. The blended space shows the existence of shared properties of state/condition and carrier role between the input space 1 (human health condition scenario) and input space 2 (national economic condition scenario). The composition process enacts conceptual juxtapositions of cancer health state of humans with national socioeconomic state of corruption in Nigeria, and cancer patient with Nigeria as nation. The consequence of these juxtaposition results to emergent structures that conceptually equates sick health condition of cancer with economic sickness of corruption and cancer afflicted patient with corruption inflicted Nigeria. The inference structure of elaboration, drawn from the emergent structure, shows that the speaker selectively intends to project the ideologies of terminal and gradual destructibility of the ailment of cancer on the gradual and terminal nature of the destructive capacity of corruptions on the economic development and progress of Nigeria. The speaker uses the plural possessive pronoun “our” to project the ideology of the endemic nature and strong rooting of the corruption in the national fabrics of an entity called Nigeria. The phrase “has metastasized”, implicates gradualness and expansive ability of corruption as witnessed in cancer sickness. These metaphor calls out the Buhari-led government’s hypocrisy towards the fight against corruption given that it purportedly campaigned with the mantra of fighters of corruption.

EXCERPT 5: Terror is a product of hate.

Figure 5

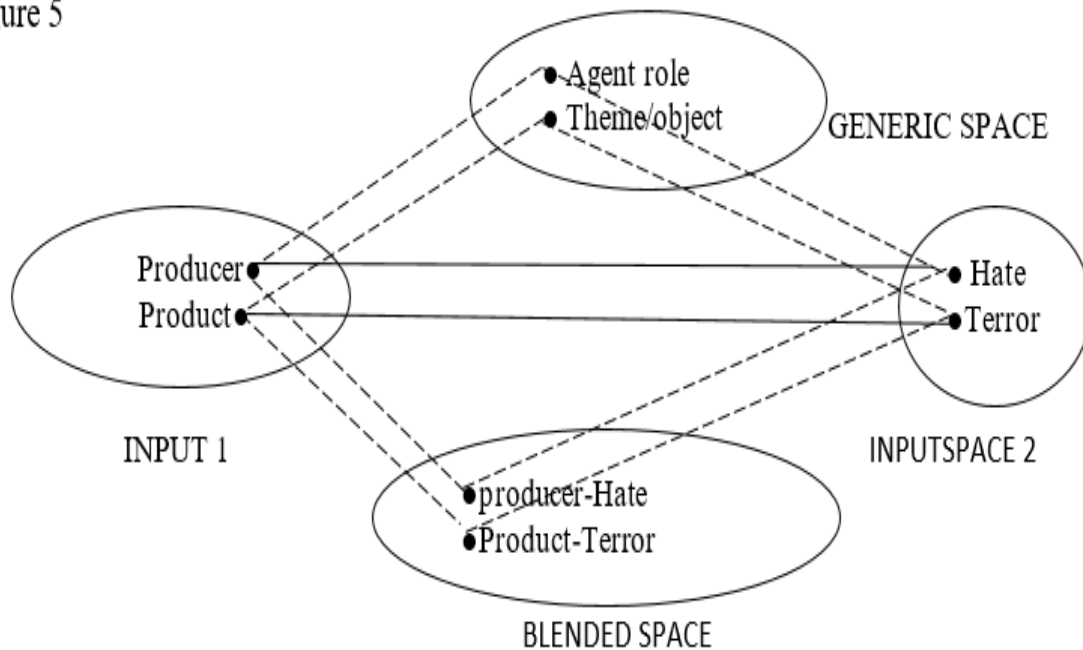


Figure 5 evokes the production topos and source to means relations. The blended space shows the existence of shared common thematic relations of agent and theme roles between elements of input space 1 and 2. The composition process in the two input spaces depicts a conceptual alignment of production scenario with mental production scenario. The completion process leads to an emergent structure that constitute the juxtaposition or equation of producer of products to hate mindset among Nigerians and the product produced by a producer to the result event of terror in Nigeria. The inductive inference process of elaboration portrays the fact that the speaker selectively projects the means-to- ends ideology to explain the creative capacity of hate mindset in Nigerians to produce a dangerous mental result or product of terror in the society and to call out the nepotistic style of Buhari’s government as the source of hate mindset among Nigerian.

EXCERPT 6: As our country drifts almost rudderless, we seem like people travelling without maps, without destination and with neither captain nor crew.

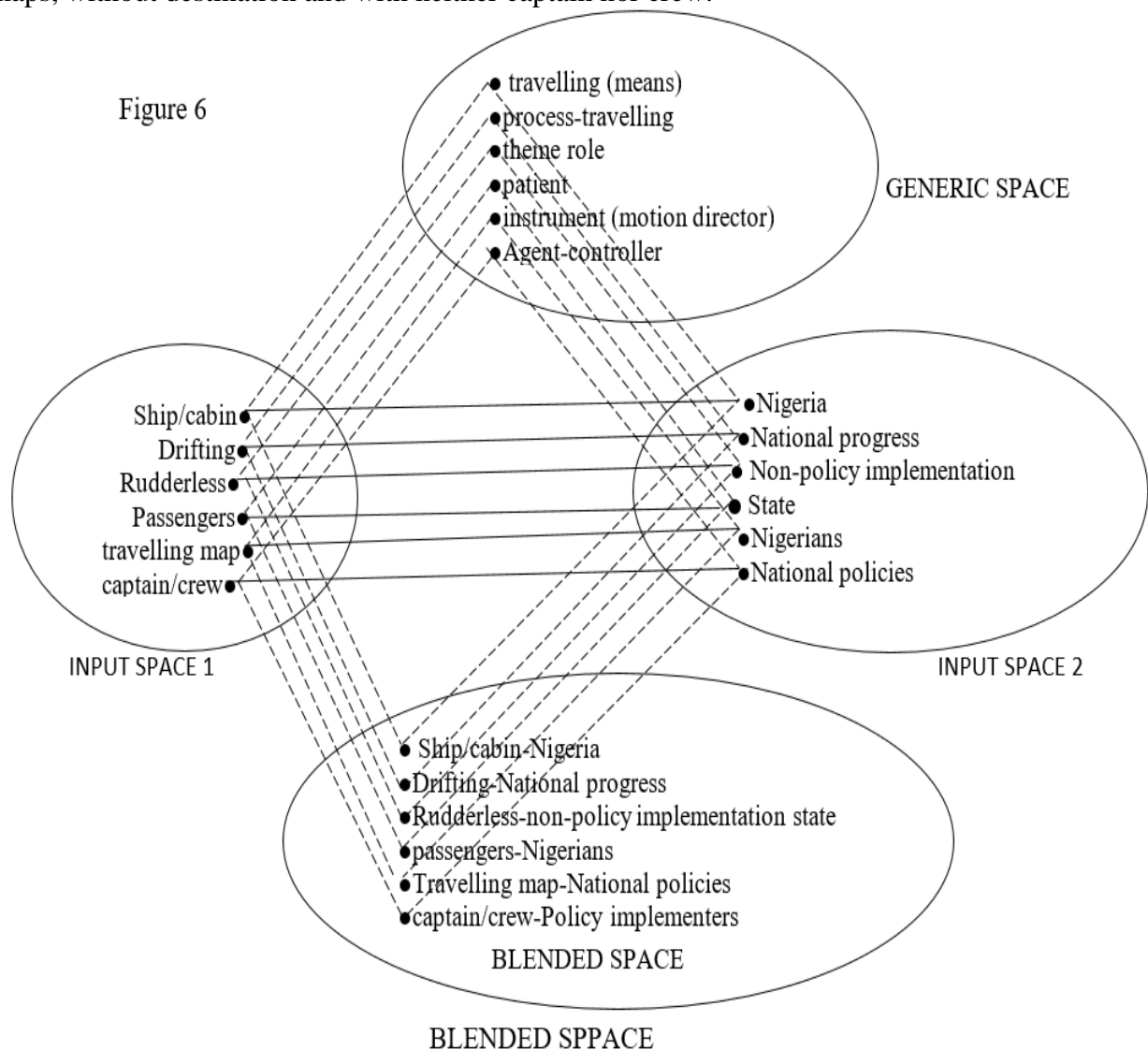


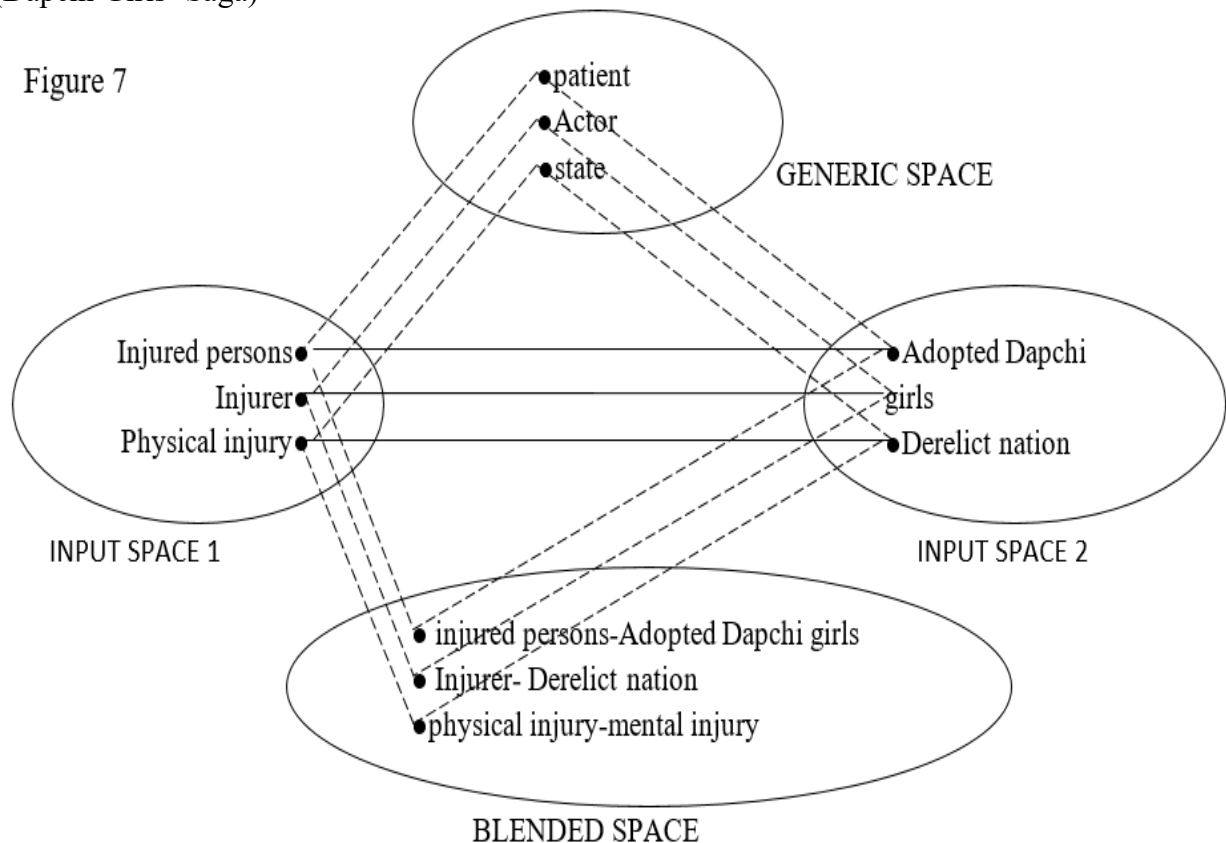
Figure 6 premises the topos of journey/transition experience to a destination path that is realized in the motion verb “drift”. This informs why the generic space indicates that elements of the two input spaces share common properties of instrument role (travelling means), process (travelling), theme role (controlling of motion), patient role (traveller), instrument role (motion director/traffic control), and agent role (driver/pilot of the travelling means). The composition process enacts the conceptual juxtapositions of the scenario of ship travelling (input space 1) and the scenario of national journey towards a desired state of national development (input space 2). The completion process leads to an emergent structure of the blended space that constitutes juxtaposed conceptual equations of elements in input space 1 and

2 that include ship/cabin-Nigeria, drifting -national progress, rudderless state -non-policy implementation state, passengers -Nigerians, travelling maps -national policies, and captain/crew -policy implementer(s). An inductive inference of the emergent structure points to the speaker's selective ideologies involving scalar relation of intensity of motion, progress of motion, direction of motion, and destination of motion. For instance, the motion verb "drift" indexes the scalar component of slowness or gradualness of motion and indicates the ideology of slow and steady developmental progression as against fast progression that can lead to unexpected catastrophe.

A rudderless state projects the political situation of anarchy and lack of rule of law where there are no enforcers of the law and government policies to bring law and order in the society. Such directionless national state is equated to the transition or drifting experience of a ship with a rudder control and the consequent dangers of ship wreck (break down of law and order), veering-off the correct path to destination (wrong path to development), and delay of arrival to the destination/goal of the journey (delay of national progress). The cabin/ship metaphor evokes the containment ideology that is equated with the unity of purpose and national goal that binds every Nigerian together as a nation on single journey to destination of a better Nigeria, while a journey without a travelling map is equated with absence of national policies (administrative path) from which the governance sense of direction and impact can be measured. The speaker's intends to equate the anxiety and uncertainty plight of travellers in a rudderless ship and travelling without map to the uncertainty and the hopelessness of Nigerians on the state of national progress. By this metaphor, the speaker indicts the policy implementation failures of past and present Nigerian government regimes.

EXCERPT 7: The challenge now is how to deal with the scars inflicted by a derelict nation. (Dapchi Girls' Saga)

Figure 7



Evoking the topos of harm and injury, Figure 7 juxtaposes the scenarios of physical and mental injury. The shared common thematic relations existing between the elements of the two input spaces are patient, actor/agent, and state. The composition process realizes a conceptual juxtaposition of elements drawn from the two input spaces projected in the metaphor of scar, while the completion process indexes an emergent structure of the blended space featuring conceptual equations of injured persons to the abducted Dapchi girls, the injurer to the derelict nation, and physical injury to mind injury (breach of trust). Through the instrumentality of inductive inference drawn from the conceptual equations in the blended space, the speaker takes a critical stance that calls out the betrayal/breach of public trust ideology of government towards their commitment to the constitutional obligations of seeing to the security and wellbeing of the Dapchi girls as citizens. The attributive adjective “derelict” that modifies the noun “nation” reveals Nigeria as an entity that failed to fulfil moral duties of security to her citizens. It also portrays the idea that just like a physical injury leaves an indelible and visible mark (scar) on the physical body so does a breach of trust leave mental incision/ mark in the form of emotional trauma and fear on the minds of the Dapchi girls.

EXCERPT 8: President Buhari deliberately **sacrificed the dreams** of those who voted for him to what seemed like a programme to stratify and institutionalize northern hegemony

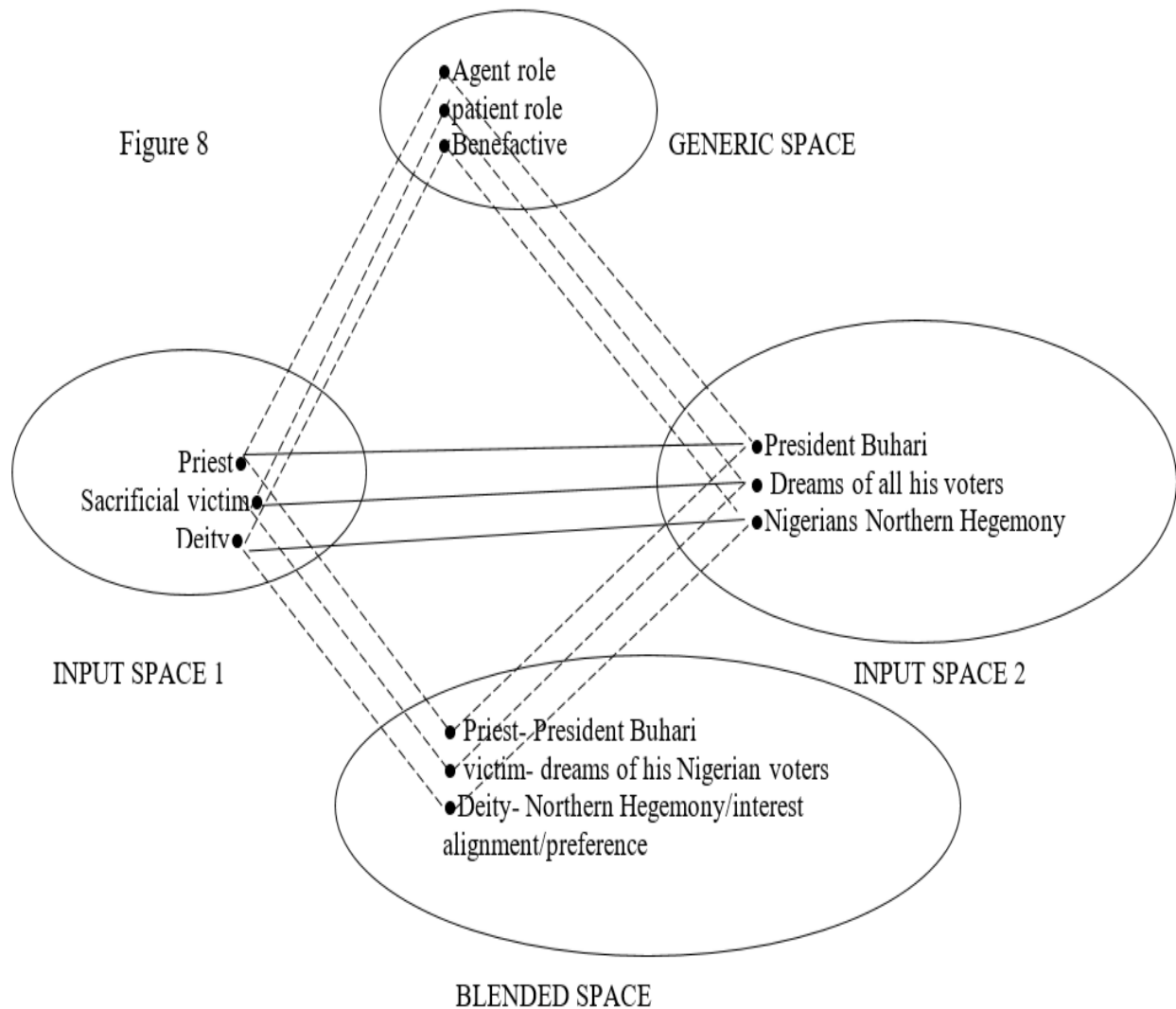


Figure 8 draws from the topos of ritual sacrifice involving an exchange between a higher being and a lower being. The generic space indicates the common thematic relations between elements of the two scenarios of ritual sacrifice and political behaviour scenario. The completion process that results to the emergent structure of the blended space indicates that the priest in the input space 1 shares common role of agent with President Buhari in input space 2, the sacrificial victims of the ritual sacrifice share common role of patient in ritual sacrifice process, while the deity and northern hegemony share common benefactive role in the process. The composition process aligns elements of two conceptual scenarios of ritual sacrifice events with nepotistic/ ethnic-bias governance. The inference structure of the elaboration process selectively projects the religious ideology of victim-hood and exchange involved in ritual process of sacrifice. For instance, as the priest kills the victim of the sacrifice in exchange for the blessings of the deity, so is the President portrayed as a sacrificer who kills the national

interests for exchange of his most desired northern interest that is detrimental to the national interest. This political scenario is similar to the ritual sacrifice scenario where a priest offers up something of lower value/preference to get something of higher value/preference from a supreme/higher being, in which case the pursuit of ethnic inclination seems to be of higher value or interest to President Buhari.

EXCERPT 9: The president may have concluded that Christians will do nothing and will live with these actions. He may be right and We Christians cannot feel sorry that we have no **pool of violence** to draw from or threaten our country.

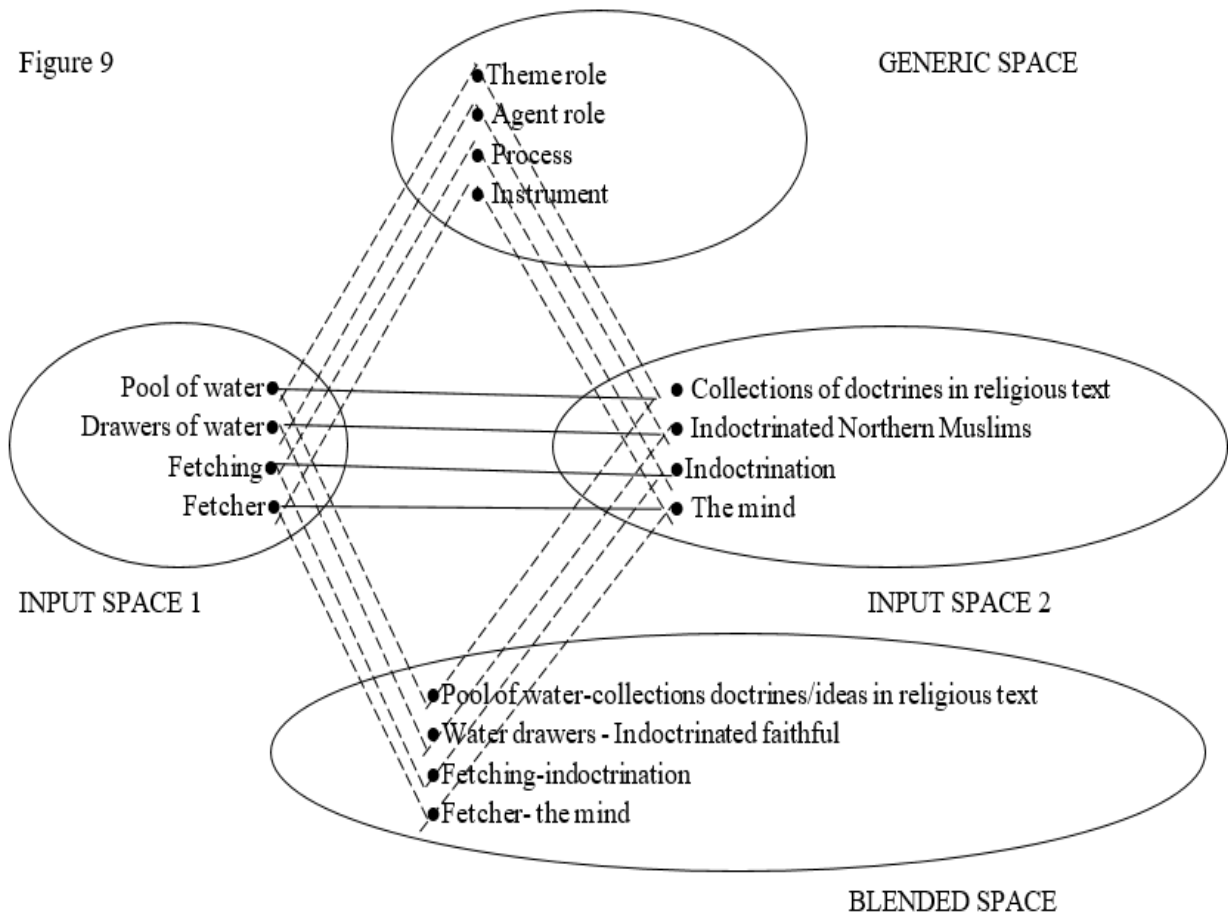


Figure 9 premises the topos of containment, withdrawal, utilization of reserved resources. This conceptual metaphor involves the juxtaposition of two different scenarios: collection/reservoir of still water and doctrinal and ideological collections in religious text. The common thematic relations between elements of the two represented scenarios in input space 1 and 2 include theme role, agent role, process and instrument role. Composition process of the blending process results to the conceptual alignments of elements in the two input spaces, while the completion process culminates into the emergent structure of the blended space that indexes

the conceptual equations such as collection/pool of still water-collections of religious doctrines, water drawers-indoctrinated/fanatical faithful, fetching process-indoctrination process, and fetcher- the human mind. Drawing inference system of elaboration, the resultant emergent structure of the completion process reveals that the speaker portrays the selective ideologies of religious rigidity/inflexibility, availability of ideas and ideological stagnation and lack of adaptation of doctrines to social change in society in order to portray the potency of religious doctrines in shaping human behaviour towards others. The dogmatic and rigid nature of certain Islamic doctrines are placed on the spotlight for its radicalization effect on the mind of religious faithful and also the lack of openness and accommodations of issues of societal change into the teachings/doctrines equates with the stagnancy/stillness and foreclosed nature of the pool of water.

EXCERPT 10: The northern elites claimed that the protests were part of a plot by Christians to overthrow a northern, Muslim government.... However, it turned out to be **the lull before storm. The Dam soon broke** as the bandits tightened their grip on the region as the spiral of kidnappings, abductions and killings of innocent citizens intensified.

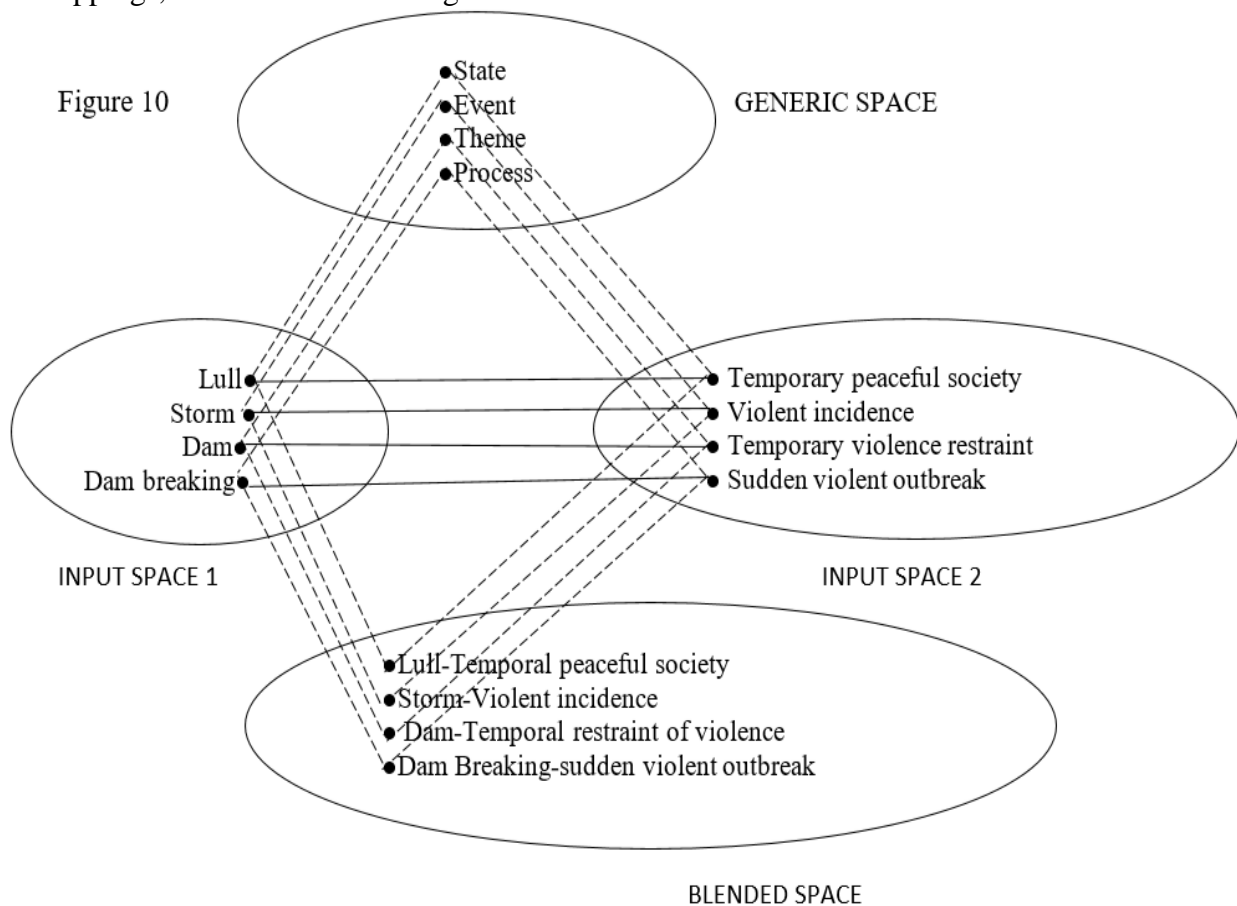


Figure 10 foregrounds topos of crisis and hypnotism. The elements of the generic space indicate that elements of the two input spaces share common thematic relations of state of being, event, theme and process. The composition process of the blend operation juxtaposes the scenario of ecological/environmental crisis to crisis among people of a society and also human state of being to society's state of being. On another note, the completion process of the blended space results to emergent structure that conceptually equates lull human state-temporary peaceful state of the society, storm event -violence event, Dam -temporary violent restraint, and dam breaking -sudden violent outbreak. Drawing inference from the conceptual equations in the emergent structure, the speaker portrays the Northern Oligarchs as having the ideologies of politics of nepotism and divide-and-rule with respect to the EndSars event. The Bishop also selectively equates the destruction and corrosive consequences of the sudden outbreak of violence with the environmental effects and consequences of sudden outflow of water from a Dam to human life and properties. With the expression, "the dam soon broke", he also selectively projects the intensity and uncontrolled nature of the movement and flow of water into the dam-breaking process by equating it with the suddenness and the speed of spread of violence in the society. The hypnotic influence of the northern elders in the form of temporary suppression of a resistance is likened as a temporary postponement of doom's day just as the Dam temporarily holds up excess water.

EXCERPT 11..... With all the **cards of power** in the hands of Northern Muslims, everything is bursting in the seams.

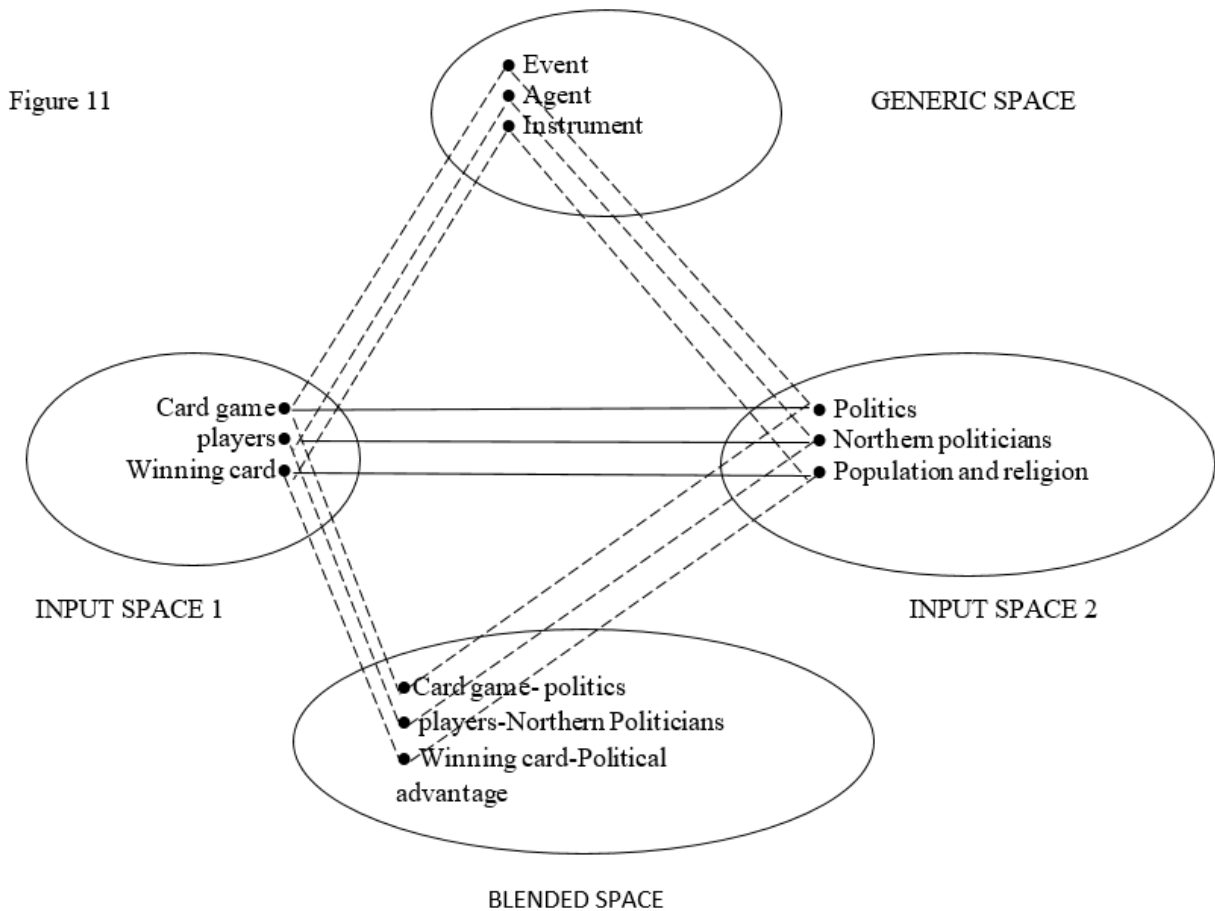


Figure 11 is predicated on the topos of game-playing aspects of politics. In the generic space, common thematic relations of event-agent-instrument exist between elements of the input spaces. The composition mechanism of the blending operation juxtaposes sport scenario with politicking scenario. The completion process of the emergent structure in the blended space enacts conceptual equations of card playing to politicking, the players of the card game to Northern politicians, and the winning card to northern population and religion. The inference of the conceptual equations of the emergent structure shows that the speaker exposes the selected driving ideologies of politics as a game of number and interest and the Machiavellian ideology of the end justifies the means. Northern politicians are portrayed as taking advantage of their political winning instruments of number and interest to manipulate the electorates into voting for them. The speaker however, calls out the northern politicians for not using the enormous political advantages to the benefit of the ordinary northerner

EXCERPT 12: The experience of northern Nigeria is evidence that **nepotism is a counterfeit currency** (scenario of commercial transaction is blended with political scenario and presupposes a relation of a buyer-seller role of a transaction scene).

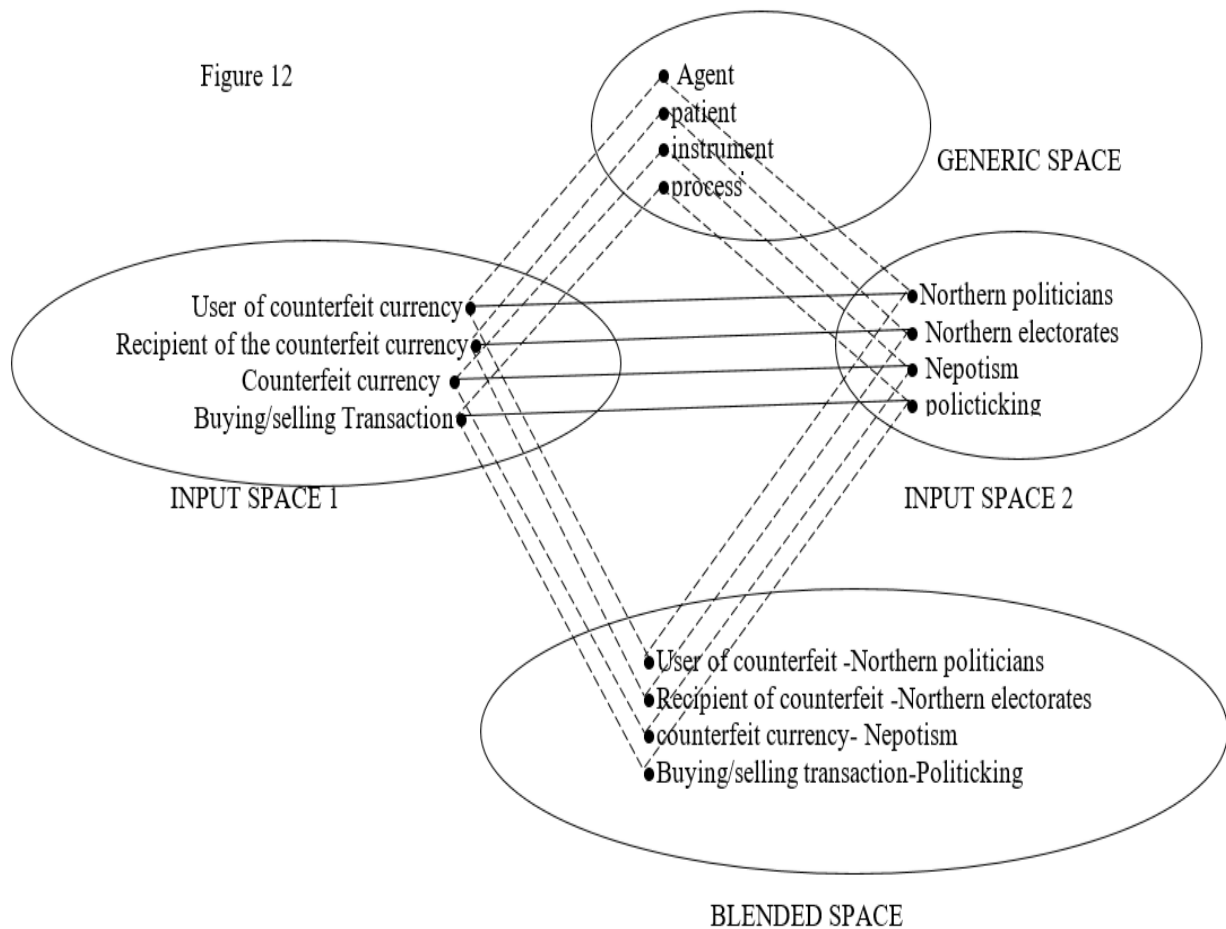


Figure 12 projects the topos of transactions involving buying, selling and exchange of commodities. In this case, the thematic relations between elements of input space 1 and 2 scenarios are agent, patient, instrument and process, while the composition process juxtaposes elements of the two scenarios of business transactions and politics evoked in input space 1 and 2. The completion process featured in the emergent structure of the blended space conceptually equates buyer/user of counterfeit currency with northern politicians, recipient of the currency with northern electorates, counterfeit currency/money with nepotism/ethnicity, and buying and selling transaction with politicking. These conceptual equations in the emergent structure provide inferential insights of the speaker's selective projection of the ideologies of politics of deceit, political convenience and transactions of political promises with favorable vote cast witnessed among northern politicians. These again spotlight the insincerity of northern politicians to their electorates.

EXCERPT 13: Nigeria has stumbled so much. **It is time for us to turn on (election process) the light (good governance) of the torch (competent leaders).**

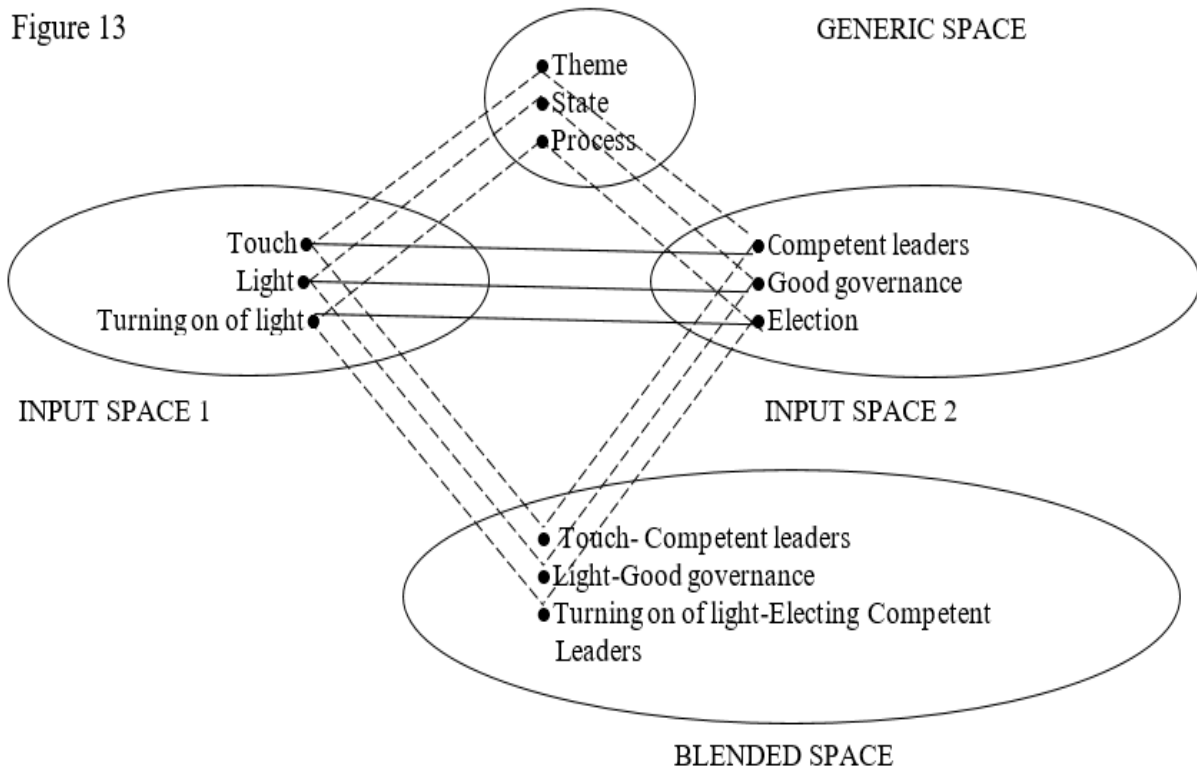


Figure 13 fleshes out the topos of illumination and transformation of state of being. In this conceptual metaphor, political event and emission of energy scenarios are juxtaposed through the composition process of blend operation. The generic space shows that the shared thematic relation or properties between elements of input 1 and input 2 are theme, state and process, while the completion process of the blended space equates the turning on of light source with good governance and political awareness, touch light source to execution of governance by elected competent leaders, and turning on of light or illumination with election of credible leaders. These emergent structures, through the elaboration process of inference reveals that the speaker foregrounds the ideology that election and level of political awareness has illuminating or darkening consequences on the electorate. The speaker also reminds the citizens that it is their responsibility to bring about that illuminating change of state of being (good governance consequences of electing credible leaders) by turning on light (increase political awareness and participation).

Conclusion

The paper examined the conceptual metaphors blending in a Christian religion homily that premised certain topos of obstruction of development process before maturation, containment

and territorial occupation, mental non-responsiveness and psychological numbness in the face of economic pressure, terminal and gradual deterioration of state of well-being, production/source-to-means, transition, harm/injury, ritual of sacrifice, containment, withdrawal, and utilization of reserved resources, crisis and political hypnotism, game-playing in politics, transactions of politics, and finally illumination and transformation of state of being. The cleric speaker's choice of words, sentence structure and their meanings transcend the rituals of Christian homilies for spiritual uplifting. Through the deployment of conceptual metaphor blending, scenarios, events and activities that capture a dimension of the Nigerian political system and ideology and the citizens' disposition are concretized. The study therefore concludes that the blending of conceptual metaphors in the homily featured the selective projections of representational ideologies of obstructionism, space ownership and containment as against protectionism, mental resignation, gradualism and terminalism with regards to negative consequences of corruption to a nation's well-being, productionism with regards to source-to-means relation, speed and direction components of progressivism, betrayal of public trust, victim-hood and sacrificial exchange, religious rigidity and ideological stagnation, corrosive effect and spread of crisis, parochialism and competition, transaction and shrewdness in politicking, and finally liberalization, illumination and responsibility impact of knowledgeable political decisions. The metaphors, therefore, are not mere linguistic devices; they are projections of the selective ideologies of the speaker that critique the inadequacies of the Buhari –led government of Nigeria.

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