

Leader metaphors in Ekegusii language

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This is a cognitive linguistic study of a cultural-specific metaphor of a leader in Ekegusii, an African Bantu language in Kenya. A descriptive research design was used whereby the natives were asked to identify and explain the Ekegusii leader metaphorical terms and phrases, describe the social cultural values and to account for the cognitive mapping processes involved. The data collected were analyzed using the Cognitive Metaphor Theory (CMT) of Lakoff and Johnson (1980). The results show that a leader in Ekegusii is conceptualized as a plant, animal, object or the behavior the leader exhibits (also act as X domains). It was also found out that context, values, attitude of the speaker and cultural knowledge play a major role in interpreting and understanding Ekegusii leader metaphors. The study concludes by suggesting further research of metaphors in African and other languages to enable comparisons.

Keywords: metaphor, cognitive linguistics, categorization, leader, Ekegusii

1. Introduction

This is a cognitive linguistic study of Ekegusii leader metaphor; a resemblance metaphor that is cultural-specific, involving socio-cultural values and experiences in its mapping and interpretation (Grady 1997, 1999, 2007; Takada et al. 2006). According to Guthrie (1964), Ekegusii, an African Bantu language, whose speakers are called Abagusii, are labeled zone E42, narrow East African Bantu language group, occupying the southern section of the cool and fertile western highlands of Kenya. In their political organization, during the pre-colonial era, political power and authority were in the hands of male elder's council (Bosire 1993).

According to the respondents, the Abagusii had a political office of chief, *omogambi*, which means, "giver of verdicts or judge". Being a patriarchal society, women were seen as inferior beings, and their separation from their families upon marriage gave them little or no influence at all in their new homes (Nyakoe et al.

2012). Fighting, hunting and gathering, in the pre-colonial era, were the duty of the male members of the family. The man/father was the ruler/leader of his homestead and taught his family the laws and customs of the community. He punished minor offenses while the major ones were punished in consultation with his relatives or elders. Men continue to be patriarchs even today, and leadership is nowadays based on elected office in local government bodies such as governor, senator, Member of Parliament and member of county assembly and in administration as district commissioners, district officer, chief and assistant chief (Thomas 1994). This male dominance may possibly explain the reason behind the many names a leader was given by the community most of them being patriarchal.

Socially, Thomas (1994) further explains that during the pre-colonial period, disputes over cattle and land, crimes, and other misdeeds were handled by local male elders' councils and by big-men. Today, small local disputes are handled by a meeting of the council of elders headed by a village elder (*omotureti*; elder picked from among the village elders in consultation with the government administrator) and the assistant chief¹(*baraza*). Crimes and disputes can also be taken to the judicial system set up by the government. Gleason (1961) argued that language and culture are closely related and language expresses culture; therefore, our reasoning is influenced by the language which we use. We shall seek to establish how the culture influenced the choice of a leader metaphor. Not many scholars have researched on African Languages, especially in cognitive linguistics, thus, it is hoped that this study on Ekegusii leader metaphors will give more insight into the existing information gap.

In this study, we present, first, the previous research based on the Conceptual Metaphor Theory, followed by the methodology on how the metaphors were collected, the main part analyzes the data to illustrate various characteristics of Ekegusii leader socio-cultural metaphors, and finally, we present the conclusion.

2. Theoretical foundations: Conceptual metaphor theory

Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) was first associated with Lakoff and Johnson (1980). The theory has since been developed and expounded by other cognitive scholars such as Gibbs (1994), Grady (1997), Kövecses (2002, 2005), Evans & Green (2006), just to mention a few. This section attempts to describe the central tenets of the theory.

1. Baraza is a gathering chaired by a leader meant to solve a dispute or an issue of mutual concern.

It is acknowledged by most Cognitive Linguistics scholars that a metaphor is at the center of the mind and language. Since the time of Aristotle, researchers from many disciplines have tried to define metaphor and understand its importance in language, cognition, and culture (Gibbs 1994). Burke (1945) defines a metaphor as seeing, experiencing, or talking about something in terms of something else. Metaphor operates at the level of perception whereby they link two conceptual domains, the 'source' domain (also X) and the 'target' domain (also Y). The source domain consists of a bundle of certain features, linked semantically and stored together in the mind (Kövecses 2002, 2005).

Langacker (1999) stated that people are able to understand of one situation against the background afforded of another and that in metaphors, the source domain serves as a base for structuring and understanding the target domain, therefore, a metaphor is important in our daily discourse. Jäkel (2002: 20–42) summarized the basic principles of the Cognitive Theory of Metaphor in the form of nine hypotheses which describe the theory more vividly than the earlier versions. They are ubiquity, domain, model, diachrony, unidirectionality, invariance, necessity, creativity and focusing. It should be noted that most of the tenets will be applied in this study.

Many scholars in cognitive linguistics have stressed the importance of culture in conceptual metaphor theory discussions. Among them is Ritchie (2013), who identified and described the different types of metaphors. He asserted that many primary metaphorical concepts are based on culture-specific experiences. He says that metaphor theorists and researchers have regarded metaphors as a matter of how language is used. This position had also been adopted by Lyons (1968), who contended that the language of a particular people is an important part of their culture, and in most cases the vocabulary of a language will show the important features of the concerned culture, that is, its objects, institutions, and activities. Yet another scholar, Kövecses (2005), had questioned the universality of metaphors as early on suggested by Lakoff. He noted that the cultural context is very important for one to interpret metaphors accurately. Azuma (2012) carried out a research on how English native speakers interpreted Japanese culture-bound metaphors and concluded that the differences in culture affect the interpretations of the metaphor.

Similarly, Maalej (2004) analyzed conceptual metaphors in Tunisian Arabic and showed how they are influenced by cultural beliefs and practices. He discussed several expressions dealing with emotions like anger and how it is expressed differently using Tunisian Arabic culture-specific beliefs about physiology. His conclusion is that it is important to include cultural practices in any account of conceptual metaphors will be observed in this study.

Grady (1997) distinguished between complex and primary metaphors and introduced a "Resemblance Hypothesis" which distinguished between conceptual

metaphor and resemblance metaphor. He said further that among resemblance Metaphors, are image metaphors, where there are physical similarities between the source and target concepts. The other resemblance metaphors whose source and target domains don't have similarity but are associated by social cultural concepts he called them "social-cultural metaphors". Takada et al. (2006) used this metaphor in Japanese. This paper will elaborate on the same in Ekegusii, an African Bantu language.

3. Methodology

The research adopted a qualitative design. It sought to describe the leader metaphors in Ekegusii, a phenomenon that occurs naturally without the intervention of an experiment or artificially contrived treatment (Seligar & Shohamy 1989). The study population comprised 60 Ekegusii informants (30 men and 30 women to avoid gender bias) proficient in the native language comprising adults of between 50 and 70 years of age, born and brought up in Gusii (Nyamira and Kisii Counties). They were chosen from the many using judgmental sampling techniques whereby the researcher was assisted by the assistant to pick respondents with appropriate characteristics. This small sample was chosen in order to allow for in-depth investigation and analysis of data (Trudgill 1973). The study utilized an interview schedule and a tape recorder, where the respondents were subjected to the same questions and grouped according to the variable of gender. The interview schedule had open-ended questions which permitted a greater depth of response which in turn gave an insight into the feelings, background, hidden motivation, intuitions, interests and decisions of the respondents (Mugenda & Mugenda 1999).

The researcher asked the respondents to name words and phrases used to describe leaders and what the words meant. In addition, the researcher asked them to name the cognitive processes associated with the word to further explain the surface and deeper meanings that some of these processes elicited. Subsequently, they were asked, using their intuitions and memory, to name the values considered and the contexts in which these alternative terms were used and the reasons for their usage. The data obtained were examined critically in order to get detailed information about how leaders are perceived and then proceeded to establish groups with related properties which acted as the source domain.

Consequently, the data were presented in Ekegusii orthography and a gloss translation in English provided. The recorded data was transcribed and translated. Field notes written during the sessions were used to supplement the recorded data especially in cases where references to particular items were unclear. The transcribed data was edited in order to come up with a clean and organized copy to

facilitate recall of information. This was thereafter followed by translation of the copies from Ekegusii to English. The analysis of the data was discursive; the researcher identified, delimited and sorted the relevant information. The relevant words and phrases were sorted out and classified into different categories by looking at the values that were related. A list of these categories was then compiled into groups. In addition, the images, words and phrases were explained how they were understood in the Ekegusii society. The social cultural values from the data on the cognitive processes were then mapped from the source domain to the target domain and analyzed using the Cognitive Metaphor Theory.

4. Results and discussion

The data that was collected describing how a leader is conceptualized, basing on the Conceptual Metaphor Theory, was organized and analyzed. From the patterns created, they were then classified as objects, plants, animals or behavior of the leader by the researcher. Tables and pie charts were used to aid the presentation of the responses obtained. Figure 1 below is a summary of words and phrases describing a leader in Ekegusii as collected from the respondents.

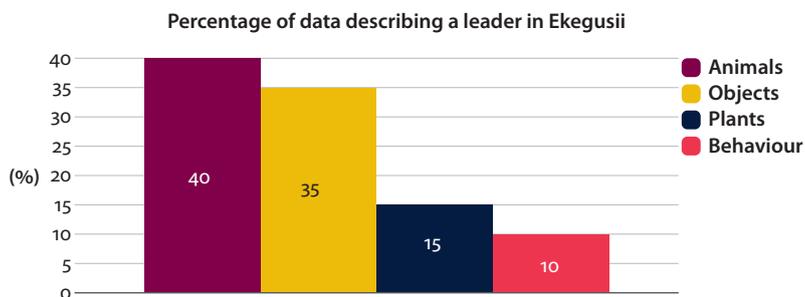


Figure 1. Summary of words describing a leader in Ekegusii

Figure 1 shows that a total of 100 words describing a leader in Ekegusii were collected from the respondents. Basing on the Conceptual Metaphor Theory, the words were classified as animals, plants, objects or behavior as source domains. There were 40 names for animals, 35 for objects, 15 plants and 10 for behavior, representing 40%, 35%, 15% and 10% respectively (for a full list of the words and meanings, see the Appendix).

The research used a social-cultural metaphor model in which social-cultural interpretations of the source and target concepts play an important role in the mapping (Grady 1999). Here, we mean how Abagusii community understand and conceptualize a leader. It should be noted that not all qualities of animals,

plants, objects or behavior were mapped as the source domain to the target domain (leader). Only a few relevant qualities were mapped from the X to the Y domains. Takada et al. (2006) and Grady (1999) argued that this mapping requires the source and target concepts linked by socially accepted values from the setting. For example, the Ekegusii metaphor "*Omogambi ne eeri*." This means that a leader is conceptualized as a bull. In Gusiiland bulls are used for ploughing, hence, seen as very strong and resilient when it comes to hard labor. Here, strength is socially defined for human beings, and the bull is determined as of the prototypical category that possesses strength. There could be other qualities of a bull but they are left out. Then, the source concept "strength of a bull" is mapped onto the target concept "strength of human being who is a leader."

According to Takada et al. (2006) the social – cultural analysis of metaphors can be seen as a model where the property of the target and source concepts are defined socially and, therefore, the source concept is mapped onto the target concept because the values defined are alike or almost or near similar. This model fits in this study because specific qualities of the source (objects, animals, plants or behavior) as understood and perceived in Ekegusii culture, are mapped onto the target (a leader).

According to Lakoff & Johnson (1980), regarding the basic conceptual metaphors, we felt that some conceptual metaphors in this study could have fit the analysis especially when mapping size, strength and hardness of plants, animals, objects or good behavior. For instance, the basic conceptual metaphors: POWERFUL IS HIGH OR BIG, IMPORTANCE IS BIG, POSITIVE IS UP, MORE IS UP, GOOD IS UP, LESS IS DOWN, NEGATIVE IS DOWN, BAD IS DOWN AND UNYIELDING IS HARD. This was not so because there were some inherent weaknesses. The big animals, although seen as powerful and important, had other negative qualities that made them less. The elephant, for example, was considered big, strong and powerful but had negative attributes, like; it lacks intelligence which is less. Secondly, some small animals, according to the conceptual metaphors, are perceived as less but in Ekegusii leader metaphor there is a contradiction. Some small animals are up. For example, the hare is a small animal but is perceived as intelligent, witty and cunning, these are the qualities mapped. These flaws make the social- cultural metaphor model be the best suited for this study because we map only the relevant values.

Metaphors convey the images, feelings, philosophies, religion, history, values and thoughts found in our cultures, as Mittelberg (2007) states. Additionally, Kövecses (2005) said that a metaphor is based on similarity and cross-domain correlations in our experiences. In mapping the qualities from the X domain (animals, objects, plants or behavior) to a Kisii leader (Y domain), only some salient properties were mapped. The metaphor can only make sense if we know those culturally accepted features for the animal, plant, object or behavior of a leader. Also,

metaphors make sense when only relevant traits are picked leaving others. So, it is clear that metaphors are selective, highlighting particular aspects of the X and the Y while hiding others (Lakoff 1993). This is called focusing hypothesis where metaphors only supply a partial description or explanation of the target domain in question, highlighting certain aspects while hiding others. It is this focusing that makes the difference between alternative metaphors for the same target domain (Jakel 2002).

5. Values mapped

We analyzed different types of animals, plants, objects or behavior according to the values that are mapped or unmapped; we found a number of positive and negative properties that are crucial in leader metaphors in Ekegusii. The metaphors are formed based on physical appearance or feature of an animal, plant, object or behavior exhibited. Some of these features are used because of the traits which folk models² decide about them (Rouhi 2011). Here, according to Ekegusii folk tales, for example, the animals are depicted behaving like human beings. In this way, they are shown with family relationships similar to humans. Such family members have duties spelt out. Outside, they have groupings with Leaders (kings or rulers) and even soldiers doing their duties.

According to the respondents, the Abagusii view a leader as a sober, witty and respected elder (usually a man because the community is patriarchal) chosen by the community and bestowed with the responsibility of overseeing the political, social, cultural, religious and economic aspects of the community with the help of a council of elders. All the respondents interviewed agreed that a leader, during the pre-colonial era, was understood to be a man, this was in line with the Abagusii culture which was a purely male dominated society. Although, they observed that, with more exposure and interaction with other cultures, they have now started to understand equality and recognized the fact that even women can be leaders.

The respondents noted that there is no single leader with all the qualities of a good leader; a leader will be found to have some desirable qualities and undesirable ones just like the animals, plants and objects. The assessment of the qualities of a leader is a very subjective exercise; a leader could be viewed differently by different people. There was also the issue of context; depending on what a leader had done or behaved, attracted a name accordingly. Philip (2012) has emphasized this

2. Folk model is the assumption that a community's cultural wisdom resides in the community's collective minds rather than in the minds of the individuals. This is found in oral narratives where animals are given qualities of human beings (personified)

point when he says that when identifying metaphors, less attention has been paid to context and usage. A metaphor is in the eye of the beholder, as it were, and there are some parameters that affect the perception of metaphoricity. This also explains the motivations behind the many names of a leader in Ekegusii.

Using CMT, we analyzed specific values from the X domain (animals, plants, objects or behavior) which were then mapped to Y (leader). The following positive and negative qualities were identified: Size, age, courage, wisdom, strength, prudence, greed, humility, foresightedness, cooperation, dominance, development consciousness, immorality, selfishness and faithfulness. It should be noted that the positive qualities are the ideal; negative characteristics are meant to mock a leader who lacks the salient qualities of a good leader, different cultures view these qualities differently. This is in line with the position adopted by Lyons when he contends that:

The language of a particular society is an integral part of its culture, and...the lexical distinctions drawn by each language will tend to reflect the culturally important features of objects, institutions, and activities in the society in which the language operates. (Lyons 1968: 432)

We decided to group the traits that are almost the same together for easy analysis, discussion and to avoid repetition. However, it should be noted that not all animals, plants, objects or behavioral traits collected from the field were discussed; we only present a few to illustrate the leader metaphor in Ekegusii. Figure 2 below is

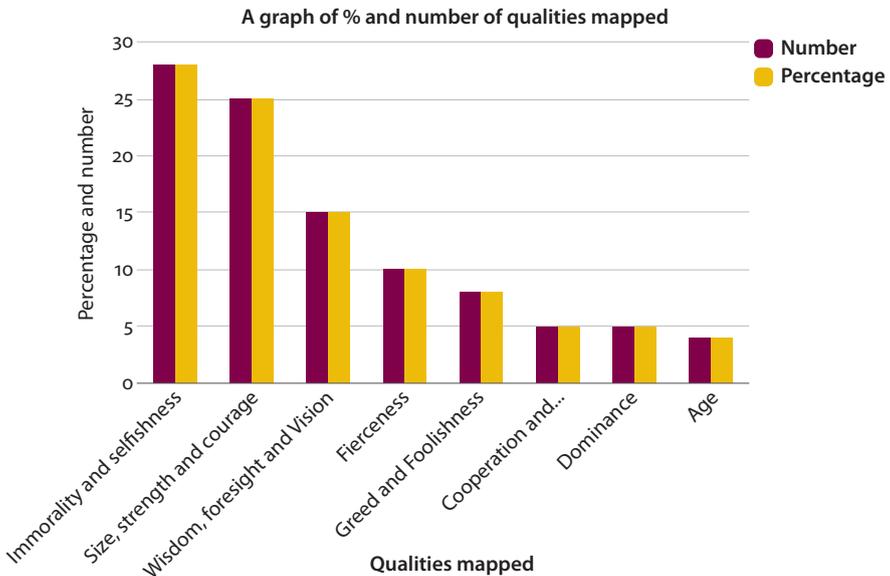


Figure 2. Summary of qualities of a leader mapped from X to Y domains

a summary of the qualities mapped or unmapped from the source domain to the target domain (for a complete list see the Appendix).

Figure 2 gives a summary of the traits mapped from the X domain. The traits were summarized to seven groups with their percentages; immorality and selfishness had the highest number, a leader of these qualities was despised and held in very low esteem by the community. It was followed by size, strength and courage; wisdom, foresight and vision; fierceness; greed and foolishness; cooperation and development consciousness, and dominance had same number following in the order respectively, and finally, age.

A. Size, strength and courage

It was realized that animals, objects, plants or behavior of a leader that had the three values were mapped onto the leaders. These traits were mostly used for leaders who exhibited the qualities during the time of inter-community and clan wars which were common before colonialism. This was the time to showcase heroism.

Ontological correspondence:

Source domain		Target domain
Size and strength of a plant	→	Strength and power of a leader
Size, strength and courage of animals	→	Strength, power and courage of a leader
Strength of objects	→	Strength and power of a leader

The respondents noted that the big animals were mapped onto the leaders because the animals were taken to be having a lot of energy and courage even as noted from the model of stories in the Ekegusii folk tales. They felt that a leader is *enchogu*, *enchari*, *endo*, *eng'era*, *emamba*, *eeri*, *ekeobiri* and *ebunda*. This is an elephant, hippo, lion, buffalo, bull, crocodile, rhino and donkey, respectively. An elephant is known for its big body, but foolish and destructive. The traits mapped here are the size and strength. It stands for a powerful leader who is strong and pushy. This leader can deliver the demands of the subjects because opposing him is deemed a risky undertaking. Although the respondents agreed that such leaders are destructive and not endowed with intellectual acumen. *Eng'era* is a buffalo. This is a relatively huge animal of the cow family. A lone male buffalo is strong, fierce and confident. These qualities are mapped into a leader. Such a leader is viewed by the community as strong and dependable.

Another big animal is *endo* or *esimba*. This is a lion. It belongs to the cat family. Its qualities of fierceness, strength and confidence which make it the king of the

jungle are mapped onto a leader by the community. A leader given this metaphorical name conjures up images of ruthlessness, powerfulness, confidence, authority and fear. Most cultures perceive the animal likewise. This leader is held in high esteem in Gusiiland. *Emamba* or *eng'oina* is a crocodile. It is a large reptile with many sharp teeth in its long mouth that lives in lakes and rivers. A leader of this kind is confident, fierce and untouchable. If provoked, can retaliate and destroy the opponent. *Ekeobiri* is a rhino. It is also another big animal considered by the community as strong but ugly. This animal is ferocious and dangerous. A leader referred this way is revered by even the enemies for he is ruthless. In Ekegusii folk tales, these animals are presented as powerful, authoritative and hard working but destructive and not very intelligent. These qualities are mapped onto a leader.

Plants that are used to project a leader in Abagusii as big, strong and courageous were very few. Among them is *egechuri*, a pointed piece of wood placed at the tip of a traditional thatched roof hut. It was a very significant component in homesteads because it signified the presence of a father, the head of the family who was held high in a home. Upon the demise of the father, the *egechuri* was broken to announce the departure of the head of the family. A good leader in Gusiiland is seen as the head of the family. He is supposed to be strong and responsible in disseminating responsibilities just like a father would in a family set up. *Omokonge* is a type of cross-grained hard wood tree of the acacia family that was used for constructing traditional huts. Anything made out of this tree was considered strong and long lasting. *Ritina* is a trunk of a tree. This is the strongest part of a tree that shoulders all the weight. A leader is perceived by the community as a trunk of a tree, shoulders all the grievances and such related issues concerning his people. He is supposed to be strong and unwavering as he has to weather political storms. *Egesigisa* is a strong central pole used in constructing traditional huts. *Emoti* is a pole vault. A strong piece of wood used for jumping over fences. Such a leader traditionally is supposed to vault his subjects from one level of development to another. *Esiro* is a prop; a strong piece of wood used for supporting weaker plantains such as banana stalks. A leader that is seen as a strong, supportive and reliable with unwavering stand in defending the rights of omogusii is given these attributes by mapping the traits from objects.

The qualities of hardness or strength in objects are mapped onto a leader that is strong in defending his people, dependable in his policies and principled. For example, *rigena*, which means a stone, *echuma* is a strong iron bar, *egettare* which means a rock, *enyundo* is a hammer and *euma* is a fork; used for digging on hard surfaces. Other hard objects identified are *endari* or *ekebari* is a wedge; a piece of wood or metal that has one thick edge and one pointed edge and is used especially for keeping a door open or for splitting wood, *enguba* which means shield or anything that can protect a person from damage, and *richoki*, a yoke; a wooden

bar used for keeping two animals together, especially cattle, when they are pulling heavy loads or ploughs. All these objects don't break easily. According to Abagusii, a leader conceptualized this way, is emotionally strong, difficult to be swayed, takes firm decisions, highly respected and edified.

A leader lacking the qualities of strength, decisiveness and courage is mocked by being given the metaphorical names of animals, plants and their attributes which are considered weak and therefore, negative. Such a leader is conceptualized as very weak and unable to help his subjects. For plants, the following attributes are mapped onto a weak leader: *omoneke* is a type of a very weak plant that is dark green smooth skinned and produces mucus like a sap when broken. It is very brittle and grows to knee height. *Ebosi* is the pith of a tree, that is, the central part of a tree which is normally very soft. *Risakwe* is dry maize stalk; normally very weak and breaks easily. *Omokobokobo* is a type of tree with wild leaves. This tree is a soft wood and not used by the community for construction because it is considered very weak. If used, the huts will collapse within no time. *Riserebu* is an off-cut; an outer part of timber that is not considered useful by carpenters. A leader given these names is despised, considered weak and valueless to the community. Such a leader was mocked in social gatherings by use of the above metaphors as Rouhi (2011) asserts that such metaphors provide amusement and shared pleasure in groups hence reinforcing social bonds.

The respondents identified the following parts of animals as unfavorable and therefore mapped onto weak leaders to satirize them: *Egetago* means animal hoof. The hoof is considered the most valueless part of a cow among the traditional Abagusii. *Omoseto* is bone marrow. This is a soft tissue inside a bone. It refers to a weak leader. Among the Abagusii, a leader is supposed to be hard, unfeeling and remorseless. We have the following objects whose negative traits are mapped onto weak leaders: *Egunia* is a sack or a large bag used to carry goods like grains. An empty bag is weak and can only stand if filled with goods. A leader with this attribute is weak, useless, empty-headed and a nonstarter. *Emeseke* is the traditional brew dregs or waste. It is a substance that is obtained after sieving and drenching the traditional brew using a piece of cloth or sack. A leader given these metaphors is conceptualized as incompetent, useless and incapable of doing any development projects and even mentoring his subjects.

B. Wisdom, foresight and vision

The respondents felt that these are the most important qualities of animals and objects mapped onto leaders. Surprisingly, in this group, there were no plants. In objects, the respondents equated sharpness and efficiency of an object to wisdom. A leader who also exhibited good behavior attracted specific names which were

not plants, animals or objects. The respondents observed that most tiny animals are conceptualized as witty among the Abagusii which might not be the case in other cultures. This could be because, may be, small animals are agiler than the big animals. We considered this trait as minor.

Ontological correspondence:

Source domain		Target domain
Wisdom, foresight, vision and smallness of animals	→	Wisdom, foresight and vision of a leader
Sharpness and efficiency of objects	→	Wisdom, foresight and vision of a leader
Good behavior	→	Wisdom, foresight and vision of a leader

Animals presented in Ekegusii folk tales as wise had the same qualities mapped onto leaders. *Egesusu* is hare; small bodied, cheeky and clever wild animal as presented in most folk tales. A leader conceptualized as *egesusu* is seen as witty, cheeky, foresighted and focused. He uses his brains to protect his subjects giving solutions to all their problems although physically weak. *Egesora* is a dragonfly; a brightly colored insect with a long thin body and transparent wings which lives near water. It represents a clever leader who is well educated and informed about the society's matters. *Enguru* is a tortoise. This is a relatively small hard-bodied slow walking animal. A leader referred by this name is also considered cautious, tough and clever. *Ekemoni* is a cat. This is a small pet with a sharp vision at night. It kills rodents and even snakes. A leader of this nature is intelligent, visionary and friendly to his subjects. He is highly admired by many. *Egetinginye* is a type of small shrewd bird that lives in a group of 20 to 30 birds. They operate in a group and even sleep together in the same nest. They can sense different weather changes. This leader is clever, cooperative and focused in development. *Omosike* is a leader who has good character traits worthy being a model.

Leaders lacking qualities of leadership such as wisdom foresight and focus are conceptualized differently, hence, given different animal names with their attributes to mock them. *En'gombe*, *Eng'ondi*, and *Embori* is a cow, sheep and a goat respectively. These are domesticated animals found in most *Omogusii* homesteads. The three were viewed by the respondents as stupid animals that are unable to do anything without supervision or direction, despite, their immense value of providing meat and milk. Such a leader is despised by the subjects because he is docile, foolish, lacks focus and myopic. He is always controlled by his subjects. *Rinyo* and *egesengi* are rodents; a mouse and cony respectively. They are known for their destructive nature of crops in farms and barns (common in most homesteads because Abagusii are great farmers). The quality of destruction and foolishness are

mapped onto a leader. This leader is foolish, destructive and will not create wealth for his subjects. Other animals which are seen as foolish are: *ekebwé* is a fox. Other cultures present a fox as a witty animal but in Abagusii culture, this animal is presented as an ugly, foolish and dislikable. This type of a leader is foolish and unable to handle any situation. *Ritutu* and *ritimbo*; is an ugly noise making bird and a beetle respectively. The two are known for their noise making. They represent a foolish, timid, poor personality and noisy leader who can't articulate and champion the grievances of the subjects. Such a leader makes a lot of noise with little development agenda for his people.

Objects that are sharp and hard were mapped into witty leaders. For instance, *orwembe* is a razor blade, *ensara* is an arrow, and *ritimo* is a spear. These objects are sharp pointed, very lethal and traditionally used in war and hunting wild animals. When released by the thrower, they are swift and cover quite a distance. The leader given these names is perceived by the community as intelligent, focused and development oriented. Such a leader acts quickly in helping the subjects. Leaders who lack these qualities are ridiculed with unfavorable qualities mapped from the following objects: *ebicha* and *etebe* is a picture and empty tin, respectively. A picture is just there fixed and staring, cannot move. An empty vessel only makes noise when hit by something. Such a leader is just there like a picture and devoid of fresh ideas. He cannot initiate any project and offer any solution to the problems bedeviling the subjects but always complaining over nothing. *Rikindi* is a soil clod. The lump of soil is considered valueless because it cannot even be used to hit somebody. A leader of this type is also foolish and cannot help his people. *Esike*, *risombe*, *risuri* and *kebara*, these are cow dung, human excretion, a fart and a pit latrine, respectively. These are very disgusting things among the Abagusii because they are dirty and all emit a terrible stench. Most of the respondents agreed that a leader given such terms conjures up very negative images of his leadership. Such a leader is foolish, disgusting, annoying and his people hold him in the lowest esteem. He was also given names such as *kebago* meaning a thug; *ekerecha* meaning evil; *richara* meaning one who lacks wisdom and many others. His leadership is metaphorically, said to stink. The stench is mapped onto poor leadership.

C. Fierceness

The fierceness of animals and bitterness of parts of plants were mapped onto leaders perceived as harsh and no nonsense types. These terms were used especially in times of war and when resolving disputes both internal and external.

Ontological correspondence:

Source domain		Target domain
Fierceness of an animal	→	Harshness of a leader
Bitterness of a plant	→	Harshness of a leader

The respondents posited that fierceness is another key quality of a leader. This trait mapped from the following animals as the source domain to the leader as the target domain: *enchoke* and *ekiarambe*, is a bee and wasp respectively. The two insects are known to be peaceful but when provoked they are very aggressive in fighting back with stings. This quality is mapped onto a leader who is friendly and humble in his territory but loathes the intruders. A bee has other qualities like cooperation and hard working but the respondents felt that they are overshadowed by fierceness. Some respondents argued that the qualities mapped could depend on the occasion and attitude of the speaker towards a particular leader. *Echui* is a tiger. This is a powerful feline that captures its prey by stalking and suffocating it using the sharp canines. *Ekebengi* is a jackal; a highly poisonous wild animal like a dog with reddish-brown fur. This one has the same qualities like a tiger. These two animals are extremely feared by the Abagusii. The respondents agreed that a leader given any of the two names is dangerous and feared by his subjects because of harshness and their leadership is characterized by merciless killings. Such a leader is also referred to as *obosaro*. A bitter concoction of ash made from different herbs used for the treatment of different ailments. The Abagusii believed that to cure any ailment, the medicine must be extremely bitter. This is a harsh but hard working leader treasured by his subjects especially in times of needy.

D. Cooperation and development consciousness

Cooperation and togetherness of animals were perceived as salient traits mapped onto leaders who are visionary and development conscious. This is because, in many cultures, when people do things together in a group, they prosper. Abagusii are known for their communal working. On the other hand, light and the ability of an object to support other things are symbolically seen as progress or development. So, these objects were mapped onto leaders perceived as visionary and development conscious.

Ontological correspondence:

Source domain		Target domain
Cooperation and togetherness of animals	→	Development consciousness of a leader
Light and supporting ability of an object	→	Development consciousness of a leader

The respondents identified *rige*, termite; a type of insect that lives in groups. They build large piles of earth to live in, and can give a very painful bite. The termites are known for working in a group and very cooperative in doing their work. The quality of cooperation and togetherness are mapped onto a leader. This leader is perceived as cooperative and development conscious.

The following objects were identified as the vehicle for the traits: *oboraro* is a bridge. Gusiiland has many streams and *oboraro* assist in the movement from one side to another. *Ereru* is a truss; a frame that holds or supports the roof of a traditional hut. *Ekiage* is a food store or barn that every hard working omogusii should have in his compound for storing surplus food. A leader given these names among the Abagusii is conceptualized as cooperative, peaceful, hardworking and carries hope because he is a conduit to the success of his subjects. *Omogaso* and *etaya* are the sun and lamp respectively. The two provide light. Light is metaphorically used for development. A leader referred to by these terms is a development conscious leader. He initiates development projects to fight poverty like constructing roads to make transport and movement easier, hospitals to eliminate diseases, schools to fight illiteracy and initiates other income generating activities to bring light to his subjects.

E. Immorality and selfishness

These negative traits are mapped from animals perceived as amorous and selfish onto equally amorous and selfish leaders to mock them. As per the respondents, these traits are highly detested among the Abagusii culture.

Ontological correspondence:

Source domain		Target domain
Immorality and selfishness of an animal	→	Immorality and selfishness of a leader

A leader who is immoral and selfish was given names such as, *esese* this is a dog. The Abagusii view dogs as immoral and selfish because of the way they behave during the mating season. Other cultures could be conceptualizing a dog as a faithful servant. *Onchimbo* is an amorous long-tailed male bird that dances in the air artistically to flatter the female bird. *Egoree* is a he-goat. The three terms refer to a leader who is rompy and disgusting only chasing women instead of initiating development projects for the subjects. On the other hand, a leader referred to as *etwoni* meaning a cock, has both positive and negative qualities. Depending on the attitude of the speaker to the leader and occasion, *etwoni*, is either immoral or dominating and proud. A cock is known for dominating other weaker cocks in the

presence of hens. Such a leader is perceived as dominant among his peers and can sustain peace although he is arrogant and promiscuous.

F. Age

The young age of animals and fruits that are not ripe were associated with immaturity of leaders. These properties were mapped onto a leader who is unseasoned and immature. The traits could also be used to satirize a leader who is mature but doing things that are against the wishes of the subjects.

Ontological correspondence:

Source domain		Target domain
Age of an animal	→	Experience of a leader
Ripeness of a fruit	→	Experience of a leader
Behaving like a boy or girl	→	Experience of a leader

Age is a respected factor in leadership among the Abagusii. Youth and unripeness of especially fruits were associated with inexperience and immaturity. Respondents argued that a leader should not be very young. A young and inexperienced leader was referred to as *egetaraganka*, meaning, a cockerel; a young male chicken especially one learning to crow. He was also perceived as *oborera* meaning unripe maize cob. Such a leader is weak, not seasoned enough and vulnerable when faced with tough situations in the face of his competitors. A leader who behaved immaturely was called *omosia* meaning a small boy or *egesagene* meaning a small girl such a leader was seen as inexperienced and young even if he was mature.

6. Conclusion

In this study, we have expounded on the socio-cultural metaphor which is a distinction in resemblance metaphors. In this type of metaphor, the source and target concepts are socio-culturally determined, and the mapping between them is motivated by the similarity between source and target concepts (Grady 1999). In the light of the present research, we have established that a leader is conceptualized as an object, a plant, an animal or name of a character a leader exhibits based on values such as size, age, courage, wisdom, strength, prudence, greed, humility, foresightedness, cooperation, dominance, development consciousness, immorality, selfishness and faithfulness. Therefore, Ekegusii language is rich in metaphors which form networks by which we conceptualize leadership in concrete terms. It

was also found out that context, attitude of the speaker and cultural knowledge play a major role in interpreting and understanding Ekegusii leader metaphors. Finally, we suggest more studies of socio-cultural metaphors in other languages to enable a comparative study to determine how similar or different Ekegusii cognitive linguistics is to other languages.

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Appendix. Summary of qualities of a leader mapped from X to Y domains

Ontological correspondences

Leadership qualities	Source domain and values mapped	Target domain
Positive traits	- <i>Enchogu</i> (Elephant) – size, strength and courage	- Strength, power and courage of a leader
(A) Size, strength and courage	- <i>Ekeobiri</i> (Rhino) – Size, Strength and courage	- Strength, power and courage of a leader
	- <i>Endo</i> (Lion)- Size, Strength and courage	- Strength, power and courage of a leader
	- <i>Eeri</i> (Bull)- Size, Strength and courage	- Strength, power and courage of a leader
	- <i>Ebunda</i> (Donkey)- Size, Strength and courage	- Strength, power and courage of a leader
	- <i>Emamba</i> (Crocodile)-Size, Strength and courage	- Strength, power and courage of a leader
	- <i>Engera</i> (Buffalo)-size strength)	- Strength, power and courage of a leader
	- <i>Enguru</i> (Tortoise) -Strength	- Strength, power and courage of a leader
	- <i>Echuma</i> (Steel or Iron bar)-strength	- Strength, power and courage of a leader
	- <i>Etinga</i> (Tractor)-strength	- Strength, power and courage of a leader
	- <i>Egesigisa</i> (Central pole of a house)-strength	- Strength, power and courage of a leader
	- <i>Ereru</i> (Bar of a house)-strength	- strength of a leader
	- <i>Egetare</i> (Rock)-strength	- strength of a leader
	- <i>Emoti</i> (Pole Vault)-strength	- strength of a leader
	- <i>Egetachabokari</i> (Three legged structure)-strength	- strength of a leader
	- <i>Enyundo</i> (Harmer)-strength	- strength of a leader
	- <i>Ritina</i> (Stem of a tree)-strength	- strength of a leader
	- <i>Euma</i> (Fork)-strength	- strength of a leader
	- <i>Egechiko</i> (Spoon)-strength	- strength of a leader
	- <i>Esiro</i> (Prop)-strength	- strength of a leader
	- <i>Omokonge</i> (Hard wood of acacia family)-strength	- strength of a leader
	- <i>Enguba</i> (Shield)-strength	- strength of a leader
	- <i>Esururu</i> (Hind part of a jembe)-strength	- strength of a leader
	- <i>Orogena</i> (Grinding stone)-hardness	- strength of a leader
	- <i>Richoki</i> (York)-strength	- strength of a leader
	- <i>Omoribo</i> (Barrier)-strength	- strength of a leader
	- <i>Endari</i> (Wedge)-hardness	- strength of a leader
	- <i>Rigena</i> (Stone)-hardness	- strength of a leader
		- strength of a leader
		- strength of a leader

Ontological correspondences

Leadership qualities	Source domain and values mapped	Target domain
(B) Wisdom, foresight and vision	- <i>Egesusu</i> (Hare)-wisdom, foresight and vision	- wisdom, foresight and vision of a leader
	- <i>Enguru</i> (Tortoise)-wisdom, foresight and vision	- wisdom, foresight and vision of a leader
	- <i>Egetinginye</i> (small bird)-wisdom, foresight and vision	- wisdom, foresight and vision of a leader
	- <i>Egesora</i> (Dragon fly)-wisdom, foresight and vision	- wisdom, foresight and vision of a leader
	- <i>Ekemoni</i> (Cat)-wisdom, foresight and vision	- wisdom, foresight and vision of a leader
	- <i>Esirori</i> (Giraffe)-foresight and vision	- Wisdom and foresight of a leader
	- <i>Orwembe</i> (Razor blade)-sharpness	- Foresight and vision
	- <i>Ensara</i> (Arrow)-sharpness	- Wisdom of a leader
	- <i>Ritimo</i> (Spear)-sharpness	- Wisdom of a leader
	- <i>Eriso</i> (Eye)- foresight and vision	- Wisdom of a leader
	- <i>Ekebogo</i> (A cane)-wisdom	- Foresight and vision of a leader
	- <i>Egechiko</i> (Spoon)-Efficiency	- Wisdom of a leader
	- <i>Obota</i> (Bow)-efficiency	- Wisdom of a leader
	- <i>Ekebiro</i> (Plumb line)-wisdom	- Wisdom of a leader
(C) Fierceness	- <i>Echui</i> (Leopard)- Fierceness	- Fierceness of a leader
	- <i>Enchoke</i> (Bee) - Fierceness	- Fierceness of a leader
	- <i>Rirubi</i> (Cobra)- Fierceness	- Fierceness of a leader
	- <i>Ekiarambe</i> (Wasp)- Fierceness	- Fierceness of a leader
	- <i>Ekebengi</i> (Wild dog)- Fierceness	- Fierceness of a leader
	- <i>Obosaro</i> (Medicinal bitter ash) - bitterness	- Fierceness of a leader
	- <i>Omoneke</i> (medicinal herb)- bitterness	- Fierceness of a leader
- <i>Emamba</i> (Crocodile)- Fierceness	- Fierceness of a leader	
(D) Cooperation and development consciousness	- <i>Rige</i> (termite)- Cooperation and development consciousness	- Cooperation and development consciousness of a leader
	- <i>Omogaso</i> (Sunshine)- Cooperation and development consciousness	- Cooperation and development consciousness of a leader
	- <i>Oboraro</i> (Bridge)- Cooperation and development consciousness	- Cooperation and development consciousness of a leader
	- <i>Ereru</i> (truss)- Cooperation and development consciousness	- Cooperation and development consciousness of a leader
	- <i>Ekiage</i> (Food store)- Cooperation and development consciousness	- Cooperation and development consciousness of a leader
(E) Dominance	- <i>Etwani</i> (Cock)-dominance	- Dominance of a leader
	- <i>Endo</i> (Lion)-dominance	- Dominance of a leader
	- <i>Eeri</i> (Bul)-dominance	- Dominance of a leader
	- <i>Omotwe</i> (Head)-dominance	- Dominance of a leader
	- <i>Egechuri</i> (ceiling)-dominance	- Dominance of a leader
	- <i>Etwani</i> (Cock)-dominance	- Dominance of a leader
- <i>Endo</i> (Lion)-dominance	- Dominance of a leader	
Negative traits	- <i>Engondi</i> (Sheep)-foolishness	- Foolishness of a leader

Ontological correspondences

Leadership qualities	Source domain and values mapped	Target domain
(F) Greed and foolishness (Lacking wisdom, foresight and vision)	- <i>Embori</i> (Goat)-foolishness	- Foolishness of a leader
	- <i>Egesengi</i> (cony)-foolishness	- Foolishness of a leader
	- <i>Ekebwe</i> (fox)-foolishness	- Foolishness of a leader
	- <i>Rinyo</i> (mouse)-foolishness	- Foolishness of a leader
	- <i>Engurue</i> (Pig)-greed and foolishness	- Foolishness greed and of a leader
	- <i>Masamu</i> (Hyena)-greed and foolishness	- Foolishness and greed of a leader
	- <i>Ritimbo</i> (beetle)-foolishness	- Foolishness of a leader
	- <i>Engombe</i> (Cow)-foolishness	- Foolishness of a leader
	- <i>Ritutu</i> (noisy bird)-foolishness	- Foolishness of a leader
	- <i>Etebe</i> (Empty tin)-foolishness	- Foolishness of a leader
	- <i>Riaga</i> (bough of a tree)-foolishness	- Foolishness of a leader
	- <i>Ebicha</i> (Picture)-foolishness	- Foolishness of a leader
	- <i>Ebikoba</i> (Lips)-foolishness	- Foolishness of a leader
	- <i>Echoo or kebara</i> (Toilet)-foolishness	- Foolishness of a leader
	- <i>Esike</i> (Cow dung)-foolishness	- Foolishness of a leader
	- <i>Emeseke</i> (traditional brew dregs)-foolishness	- Foolishness of a leader
	- <i>Risakwe</i> (Maize stalk)-foolishness	- Foolishness of a leader
	- <i>Egetago</i> (Hoof)-foolishness	- Foolishness of a leader
	- <i>Omoseto</i> (Bone marrow)-foolishness	- Foolishness of a leader
	- <i>Rigoma</i> (banana leaf)-foolishness	- Foolishness of a leader
	- <i>Ebunda</i> (Donkey)-foolishness	- Foolishness of a leader
- <i>Riserebu</i> (Timber off-cut)-foolishness	- Foolishness of a leader	
- <i>Ebosi</i> (pith of a tree)-foolishness	- Foolishness of a leader	
- <i>Rikongiro</i> (big weed)-foolishness	- Foolishness of a leader	
- <i>Omokobokobo</i> (softwood with wild leaves)-foolishness	- Foolishness of a leader	
- <i>Ribusi</i> (mole hill)-foolishness	- Foolishness of a leader	
- <i>Risombe</i> (Excretion)-foolishness	- Foolishness of a leader	
- <i>Ekiogoto</i> (Chaff)-foolishness	- Foolishness of a leader	
- <i>Ekebubuche</i> (sponge)-foolishness	- Foolishness of a leader	
- <i>Rikindi</i> (soil clod)-foolishness		
(G) Immorality and selfishness	- <i>Ese</i> (Dog)-Selfishness and immorality	- Selfishness and immorality of a leader
	- <i>Egoree</i> (He-goat)-Selfishness and immorality	- Selfishness and immorality of a leader
	- <i>Enyambu</i> (Cameleon)-Selfishness	- Selfishness of a leader
	- <i>Onchimbo</i> (Peacock)-Selfishness and immorality	- Selfishness and immorality of a leader
	- <i>Ekiebundi</i> (Hedge hog)-Selfishness	- Selfishness of a leader
	- <i>Ensase</i> (spark of fire)-Selfishness	- Selfishness and immorality of a leader
	- <i>Ekebaki</i> (Eagle)-Selfishness	- Selfishness of a leader
	- <i>Omokinyi</i> (ligament)-Selfishness	- Selfishness of a leader
	- <i>Oborera</i> (Unripe maize cob)-immaturity	- Selfishness of a leader
	- Immaturity of a leader	
(G) Age	- <i>Egetaraganka</i> (Cockerel)- immaturity	- Immaturity of a leader
	- <i>Omoisia</i> (young boy)-immaturity	- Immaturity of a leader
	- <i>Egesegane</i> (young girl)-immaturity	- Immaturity of a leader

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