

MAPPING CULTURAL METAPHORS IN MOTOR-PARK DISCOURSE

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Occupational discourse refers to the specific way(s) language is used in professional or work-related settings. It explains how people within a certain profession can manipulate language to navigate their day-to-day undertakings within the work environment. One work environment saturated with specialized language is the commercial transportation domain, particularly in commercial vehicles and motor parks. Thus, this study examines the metaphorical language utilized by commercial drivers, conductors, and passengers, in motor parks and commercial vehicles within the Port Harcourt metropolis offering insights into how language serves as both a tool for communication and a medium for cultural expression between motorists and passengers. Applying Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) as the theoretical framework, the research analyzes the metaphorical structures used by motorists and passengers, providing clarity and understanding of how these metaphors reflect both individual cognition and mutual cultural patterns. Initially, a total of 93 lexical items were retrieved from 26 participants. However, 17 out of the total population have been sampled for analysis. The 17 entries have been selected for their ideological commonalities and degree of frequency in usage among the participants. The study's focus on Port Harcourt, a major economic hub in Nigeria, adds a geographic and cultural dimension to the expanding body of work on discourse and metaphor in African settings, particularly, Port Harcourt, Nigeria. The findings of this study show that motorists and passengers use metaphors to seek and index affinity, institute dominance, speed up conversations, and give instructions or commands – further uncovering the cognitive and cultural frameworks that shape the worldview of these motorists and passengers.

Keywords: Metaphorical, conceptual, discourse, language, drivers, Port Harcourt

INTRODUCTION

Language is a fundamental communication tool and a medium through which individuals express their identities, emotions, and worldviews. Across cultures and communities, language serves as the bedrock of interaction, allowing individuals to connect, share experiences, and transmit knowledge. Beyond its role in everyday communication, language shapes how people perceive the world and their place within it. The power of language lies in its ability to convey both literal meanings and more complex, symbolic representations of reality through the use of figurative language, including metaphors. These metaphors enrich discourse by adding layers of meaning that reflect cultural values, social relationships, and personal perspectives.

In particular, the language used in specific social environments often develops unique features that reflect the distinct characteristics and needs of the community. Occupational groups, for example, adopt specific linguistic styles and jargon that are influenced by their daily experiences and the environments in which they operate. This specialized language, referred to as occupational discourse, is defined by Holmes and Stubbe (2003) as “the use of language, communication patterns and interactional strategies unique to a specific profession, often reflecting the culture, values, and practices of that occupational community” (p.12). These specialized forms of communication facilitate practical interactions and serve as markers of identity and solidarity within the group.

In the context of motor-park discourse among drivers and passengers in Port Harcourt, metaphorical language becomes a crucial tool for articulating complex ideas, emotions, and experiences in ways that resonate with the members of the community. Using metaphors in occupational discourse allows individuals to encapsulate abstract concepts, social hierarchies, and collective beliefs in familiar, everyday terms. For example, when the medical doctor says a patient is “fighting” a battle against cancer, this metaphor frames illness as “war” with the patient battling the disease; similarly, when

the football commentator says a certain team/player is “in the driver’s seat”, they have used the metaphor of driving to mean control or advantage in a game. Etc. This creative use of language, not only helps in aiding understanding and clarity in a discourse but also adds aesthetic value to language use.

One such environment where specialized language thrives is the motor park setting, particularly in urban centres like Port Harcourt, Nigeria. Motor parks are bustling hubs of transportation activity where commercial drivers, passengers, vendors, and other stakeholders converge. Within this space, commercial drivers—key players in the transport ecosystem—develop a unique form of discourse, rich with metaphors, slang, and colloquial expressions. The language of these drivers is not merely functional; it is deeply embedded in their profession’s socio-economic and cultural realities. Thus, this study focuses specifically on the metaphorical language employed by commercial drivers, passengers, and conductors (a term for driver’s assistant in charge of regulating payments and allotting seats) in Port Harcourt’s motor parks and commercial vehicles.

While there has been considerable research on the language of occupational groups in various contexts, limited attention has been given to the unique linguistic features of motor-park discourse in Nigeria. The analysis of metaphors used in this discourse domain uncovers the cognitive and cultural frameworks that shape the drivers’ worldview, as well as the broader socio-economic factors influencing their language use. The significance of this study lies in its contribution to the understanding of how metaphorical language functions within an occupational group, particularly in an African urban context. While Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) has been widely applied in various fields of discourse analysis, its application to motor-park discourse remains relatively unexplored. This research aims to fill that gap by providing a detailed analysis of the metaphorical structures used by commercial drivers, offering insights into how these metaphors reflect both individual cognition and collective cultural patterns. Moreover, the study’s focus on Port Harcourt, a major economic hub in Nigeria, adds a geographic and cultural dimension to the growing body of work on discourse and metaphor in African settings.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

The theoretical anchor for this study is the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT henceforth). CMT emerged in the late 20th century as a significant shift in the study of language and cognition. Its origins can be traced to the groundbreaking work of George Lakoff and Mark Johnson in their 1980 publication *Metaphors We Live By*, which challenged traditional views of metaphor as merely a rhetorical or literary device. Instead, they argued that metaphor is central to human thought, influencing how individuals conceptualize the world around them. According to Lakoff and Johnson (1980), metaphors structure our everyday experiences, thought processes, and even our language, thereby providing a framework for understanding abstract concepts through more concrete experiences. Their work revolutionized the study of metaphors by suggesting that metaphorical thinking is not just linguistic but cognitive (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 5).

Since its inception, CMT has been expanded and refined by various scholars across different disciplines. Early work in the field focused on identifying metaphors in language and linking them to broader cognitive processes. Over time, however, the theory evolved to encompass more detailed analyses of how metaphors influence thought and communication in specific cultural contexts. Scholars such as Kövecses (2002) and Gibbs (1994) have contributed significantly to the development of CMT by exploring the cross-cultural and experiential dimensions of metaphorical thought. Kövecses (2002) particularly expanded the theory by demonstrating how cultural and social factors shape the metaphors people use, highlighting the dynamic nature of metaphors in different communities (Kövecses, 2002, p. 16).

The major proponents of CMT include George Lakoff, Mark Johnson, Raymond Gibbs, and Zoltán Kövecses. Lakoff and Johnson’s foundational work provided the cognitive framework for understanding metaphor, but other scholars have built upon their ideas. Gibbs (1994), for example, explored how metaphors reflect embodied experiences, asserting that our physical interactions with the world shape the metaphors we use. Kövecses (2010) further examined how metaphorical thought is shaped by culture, arguing that metaphor is not universal but can vary depending on cultural and social experiences. These scholars have played key roles in refining the theory, extending its application beyond language to include broader cognitive and cultural analyses.

Several scholars have defined CMT in ways that underscore its cognitive and linguistic dimensions. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) defined it as “understanding one conceptual domain in terms of another” (p. 5), which implies that metaphors map elements from a source domain onto a target domain. Kövecses (2002) further described metaphors as “systematic correspondences between two conceptual domains” (p. 16), emphasizing the structured nature of metaphorical thinking. According to Gibbs (1994), a conceptual metaphor is “a cognitive process in which we use knowledge of one domain of experience to structure and understand another domain” (p. 203). Steen (2011) defines metaphors as “tools that allow us to comprehend abstract concepts through more concrete experiences” (p. 56), while Barcelona (2000) views metaphors as “cognitive mechanisms that structure not only language but also thought and perception” (p. 80). These definitions

highlight the centrality of metaphor in both cognition and language.

2.1 Interdisciplinary Approaches to CMT

Recent approaches to CMT have broadened its scope by incorporating interdisciplinary perspectives. For instance, Fauconnier and Turner's (2002) Blending Theory, while distinct from CMT, complements it by explaining how multiple mental spaces can merge to create new meanings. Another contemporary approach is the examination of metaphors in multimodal communication, such as visual and digital media (Forceville & Urios-Aparisi, 2009). This expansion reflects a growing interest in how metaphors function beyond verbal language, including visual and gestural modes of communication. Additionally, the integration of CMT with neuroscience has provided new insights into the neurological basis of metaphorical thinking, with researchers using brain imaging techniques to explore how metaphors are processed in the brain (Boulenger et al., 2009).

Another study is by Charteris-Black (2004), who analyzed political speeches to reveal how metaphors shape political ideologies. His work showed how metaphors of war and conflict are used to manipulate public opinion (Charteris-Black, 2004, p. 45). Another study by Musolff (2004) focused on metaphors in European political discourse, examining how metaphors of the body politic were used to describe nations and international relations (Musolff, 2004, p. 73).

Kövecses (2005) applied CMT to cultural contexts, analyzing how different cultures use specific metaphors to reflect their social values. For instance, he demonstrated how the metaphor of anger is conceptualized differently in English and Hungarian, revealing cultural variations in metaphorical expressions (Kövecses, 2005, p. 112). Deignan (2005) conducted a corpus-based study of metaphors in everyday English, providing empirical evidence for the pervasive use of metaphors in everyday language (Deignan, 2005, p. 25). Her research supported the claim that metaphors are not just literary devices but are integral to ordinary communication.

One particularly interesting application of CMT is in educational discourse. Cameron (2003) studied metaphorical language used by teachers and students in classroom settings, revealing how metaphors shape understanding in educational environments (Cameron, 2003, p. 118). Her work highlighted the role of metaphors in explaining abstract concepts, particularly in subjects like science and mathematics, where teachers often rely on metaphorical language to simplify complex ideas for students.

Another area where CMT has been applied is health discourse. Semino et al. (2018) conducted a study on metaphors used in conversations about cancer, revealing how patients and healthcare professionals use metaphorical language to frame the experience of illness (Semino et al., 2018, p. 19). Their findings showed that metaphors such as "battle" and "journey" play a significant role in shaping patients' attitudes toward illness and treatment. This study demonstrated the emotional and psychological impact of metaphorical framing in health contexts.

Research has also explored the relationship between metaphor and emotion. Steen (2007) analyzed the use of metaphor in emotional discourse, examining how emotions are conceptualized metaphorically in everyday language (Steen, 2007, p. 95). His findings revealed that people often use metaphors like "being in control" or "being overwhelmed" to describe their emotional states, suggesting that metaphorical thinking is deeply tied to emotional experiences. This study provided empirical evidence for the link between metaphor and emotional cognition.

In media studies, CMT has been used to analyze the metaphors employed by news outlets to frame complex social issues. Lakoff (2014) studied how metaphors of war and morality were used in media coverage of immigration, revealing how metaphorical language shapes public perceptions of migrants and immigration policy (Lakoff, 2014, p. 150). His analysis demonstrated that metaphors are powerful tools for framing political discourse, often influencing public attitudes toward controversial issues.

Seeing the multiplicity of approaches CMT assumes in various analytical contexts, justifies that CMT is highly relevant to the analysis of motor-park discourse because it allows us to explore how commercial drivers in Port Harcourt use metaphorical language to express their everyday experiences and navigate their daily goings-on. In a motor park setting, drivers frequently employ metaphors to frame abstract concepts such as time, money, competition, and authority in more tangible terms, often drawing from their physical environment and occupational practices.

In conclusion, CMT has had a profound impact on the study of language and thought. From its origins in the work of Lakoff and Johnson (1980) to its current applications in fields such as politics, education, health, and media, CMT has provided valuable insights into how metaphors shape our understanding of the world. The empirical studies reviewed here demonstrate the wide-ranging applicability of CMT, confirming that metaphorical thinking is central to human cognition and communication. As research continues to evolve, CMT remains a crucial tool for analyzing the complex relationships between language, thought, and culture.

3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a qualitative research methodology to explore the metaphorical language used by commercial drivers, passengers, and conductors in motor parks across Port Harcourt, Nigeria. The focus is on how these metaphors convey

socio-cultural and ideological meanings within this specific occupational and social context. The primary data for this research were collected through direct observation and interaction in six different motor parks in Port Harcourt, namely: Rumuokoro Park, Choba Park, Mile Three Park, Mile One Park, Waterlines Park, and Eleme Junction Park. Data collection involved the researcher spending time in each of these motor parks and joining public vehicles to closely observe the interactions among drivers, conductors, and passengers. Additionally, informal conversations with drivers, passengers, and conductors were conducted to understand the motivations behind the use of certain linguistic expressions, particularly metaphors. Through these interactions and observations, a total of 93 unique metaphors were recorded. The data were collected over several weeks, allowing for an in-depth understanding of the recurring metaphorical expressions and their use in specific contexts. To ensure the accuracy of the data, the researcher maintained detailed field notes documenting the observed language use, contextual cues, and any relevant social dynamics.

For analysis, 17 metaphorical expressions were selected from the 93 items retrieved. These expressions were chosen based on the frequency of occurrence, their relevance to the research objectives, and their representativeness of the consistent conversational patterns observed in the motor parks. The selected metaphors are believed to encapsulate the major themes and ideological positions prevalent within the motor park discourse.

4 DATA PRESENTATION

The communication in Port Harcourt's motor parks showcases a rich use of metaphorical expressions that reflect cultural identity and aid social interaction. Drivers, conductors, and passengers use a coded language to navigate the transport system, highlighting shared meanings and unique perspectives.

Below is a list of 17 metaphorical expressions gathered from interactions in motor parks, along with their conceptual mappings:

Table 1: Conceptual Mapping of Metaphorical Expressions in Motor-Park Discourse

Metaphorical Mapping	Expression	Literal Meaning	Ontological Correspondence
Monetary Value as Colours/Letters	Sky	Fifty Naira	Money is conceptualized as tangible objects or colours, with specific notes being represented by their colours (e.g., sky {blue} for fifty naira).
	Green	Twenty Naira	The twenty naira note, represented by its green colour, is also conceptualized as an object or colour.
	H	Hundred Naira	The letter "H" is used as shorthand for hundred naira, based on the first letter of the word "hundred."
	2 H	Two hundred naira	The term "2H" is a simple extension of "H," where "2" refers to two units of "H," representing two hundred naira.

Continuation of Table 1

	Change	Smaller denominations	"Change" represents the concept of receiving smaller bills or coins, viewed as a tangible object.
Passengers as Objects or Materials of Work	Work	Passenger	Passengers are resources to be "worked" on (Passengers are jobs)
Movement and Direction as Actions	Wear your shoe	Passengers should get ready to alight.	Getting ready to leave as "wearing" something
	Dey go front	Drivers/conductors asking a by-standing commuter who has not agreed on the fare to go away.	Disagreement or refusal is conceptualized as moving forward or leaving.
	Go work	The conductor asking the driver to resume driving	Continuing to drive is continuing work
	Commot body	A driver asks another to make way.	Represents a request for spatial clearance, using physical body imagery to express the need for movement.
	No kiss me	A driver warning another to be careful.	Uses the metaphor of "kissing" to signify the dangers of close encounters, particularly when driving.
Passengers as Obstacles	Leave am for shirt	Making way for another passenger to alight.	The shirt is a symbolic representation of physical obstruction.
	Leave am for leg	Making way for another passenger to board or alight	Legs as part of the body, represent physical obstruction
	Shake body	Adjusting the sitting position to let others pass	Body movement represents facilitating others
	Shake body (second occurrence)	Passengers adjusting to accommodate	Shifting to allow others access shared space

Continuation of Table 1

Transaction as Possession/Control	Put am for my body	Pay me	Payment is possession or receiving of value onto one's self
Control as Holding	Hol' am	A brief stop to pick up/drop off	The act of holding symbolizes control over the vehicle's movement or a temporary pause.

4.1 Analysis of Data

The analysis of the data is grounded in Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT), which provides a framework for understanding how individuals use metaphor to structure their thoughts and communicate complex ideas. Each metaphorical expression is categorized into different metaphorical domains to better understand the underlying cognitive and cultural frameworks of the speakers.

4.1.1 Monetary Value as Colours/Letters

Colours and Letters metaphors are used to facilitate monetary transactions. This method not only expedites exchanges but also fosters a sense of belonging among community members, as a shared understanding of these terms is rooted in collective experience. For example, the reference to "sky" for the fifty naira note, due to its distinctive sky-blue colour, transcends linguistic barriers and evokes a vivid mental image. Similarly, using "H" to denote one hundred naira streamlines conversations, allowing for rapid communication between conductors and passengers.

Moreover, expressions like "You go pay green?"—which signifies the requirement for a twenty naira payment—illustrate how this coded language reinforces social relationships. The efficiency of these exchanges reflects an in-depth understanding of community dynamics, where each term carries significant meaning beyond its monetary value. Phrases such as "2H" or "change" are emblematic of the unique interactions that characterize daily life in these spaces.

Metaphors in this context function as more than just practical communication tools; they reflect the complex social dynamics within the motor park environment. This coded language encapsulates shared cultural experiences and reinforces community ties, illustrating how language can shape social interactions and relationships among individuals in this setting. The chemistry of language and social context in Port Harcourt's motor parks exemplifies how communication shapes and is shaped by the community's collective identity.

4.1.2 Passengers as Objects or Materials of Work

In the motor park discourse in Port Harcourt, the term "work" serves as a metaphorical representation that captures the view of passengers as not just individuals but as essential components of the driver's livelihood. This linguistic choice reflects a wider understanding within the transportation context, where passengers are perceived as resources or materials to be engaged with. This term conveys the idea that each passenger represents an opportunity for economic gain and underscores the transactional nature of the driver-passenger relationship.

When drivers refer to passengers as "work," it suggests a mechanical or labour-oriented perspective of their interactions. In this view, the act of transporting passengers becomes akin to a job or task that drivers must perform. This perspective can be further illuminated by examining everyday conversations in the motor park context. For instance, when a conductor shouts to the driver, "Pilot, carry work!" this instruction translates as "The driver should carry the passenger." Here, the term "work" is not merely a casual reference; it highlights the conductor's urgency in ensuring that passengers are promptly taken to their destinations. The use of "carry work" implies that picking up passengers is part of a job that needs to be done efficiently. Similarly, when a conductor tells a driver "Pilot, see work" he is calling the driver's attention to a by-standing passenger that needs to be boarded. The term "work" here metaphorically represents the opportunity to earn income by picking up the passenger. Additionally, it reflects the drivers' recognition of passengers as integral to their livelihood, where each ride represents a task to be completed for economic gain. This language reinforces the notion that, in the motor park environment, interactions are often stripped of emotional tenors and framed instead through the lens of productivity and economic necessity.

4.1.3 Movement and Direction as Actions

The metaphorical mapping of movement and direction as actions in the motor park context reveals how language encapsulates the dynamics of transportation and social interactions among drivers, conductors, and passengers. For instance, the phrase "wear your shoe" signifies that passengers should prepare to alight from the vehicle. Here, "wearing" something is metaphorically linked to the readiness to leave, emphasizing the physical act of getting ready for departure. This metaphor not only highlights the immediacy of the situation but also infuses a sense of urgency into the action of disembarking. Similarly, the expression "go work" encapsulates the idea of continuity in a task. When a conductor urges the driver to "go work," it signifies a return to their primary responsibility: transporting passengers. This framing reinforces the notion that driving is not just a means of transport but a job requiring constant action and engagement.

Further examination of expressions like "dey go front" and "commot body" showcases the rich linguistic dynamics of the motor park and commercial vehicle conversations. The former phrase conveys a request for a by-standing commuter, who has not agreed on the fare, to "move away". Here, disagreement or refusal is framed as a form of dislodgement, suggesting that the absence of consensus necessitates physical displacement. This metaphor reflects a broader understanding of social dynamics in which conflict or hesitation is resolved by physical separation. In contrast, "commot body" illustrates the use of physical body imagery to request spatial clearance. When one driver asks another to "commot body," it invokes a sense of urgency for movement, signaling the need for immediate action to facilitate passage. This request not only demonstrates the practical aspects of navigating a busy road but also highlights the communal interactions that govern the space.

The analysis of these metaphorical expressions unveils significant findings regarding the linguistic framing of movement and direction within the motor park discourse. The metaphors utilized not only serve practical functions but also embody the relational dynamics among participants in this setting. The language reflects an underlying conceptual framework in which actions, social interactions, and responsibilities are intertwined with the physicality of movement. Ultimately, these expressions illustrate how drivers and passengers navigate their roles and relationships, emphasizing the importance of efficiency, clarity, and the need for cooperation in a bustling transportation environment.

4.1.4 Passengers as Obstacles

The metaphorical mapping of passengers as obstacles provides insightful perspectives on the dynamics within the motor park setting. Expressions such as "leave am for the shirt" and "leave am for leg" highlight the way physical obstructions are linguistically represented (by drivers and conductors) through parts of the body. In the first example, "leave am for shirt" signifies the need for a passenger to make way for another to alight. Here, the shirt serves as a metaphorical representation of physical obstruction, indicating that someone's presence can hinder movement. The second phrase, "leave am for leg," employs the notion of legs as an embodiment of obstruction, suggesting that passengers can block the way for others either when boarding or alighting. This linguistic framing underscores the relational aspect of space, emphasizing how one's position can impact the movement of others.

In addition, the expression "shake body" conveys the necessity for physical adjustment to facilitate others' movement. The repeated use of this phrase illustrates the communal aspect of the motor park experience, as passengers often have to alter their sitting positions to accommodate others. The act of "shaking body" suggests an awareness of shared space, where individuals must work together to ensure a smooth flow of passengers. The dual application of this phrase also indicates the dynamic nature of the interactions, where physical space is constantly negotiated and adjusted according to the needs of all passengers involved. This highlights not only the physicality of the situation but also the social cooperation that is inherent in these exchanges.

The analysis of these metaphorical expressions reveals significant findings regarding the conceptualization of passengers as obstacles within the motor park discourse. This mapping illustrates how the physical presence of individuals can influence the movement and obstruction of others, emphasizing the importance of spatial awareness in communal environments. The metaphors used demonstrate a clear understanding of how language can encapsulate physical realities, shaping social behaviours and interactions. Ultimately, this linguistic approach emphasizes the relational dynamics at play, showing how passengers negotiate space and facilitate movement through a shared understanding of their roles as both obstacles and collaborators in the transportation process.

4.1.5 Transaction as Possession/Control

The metaphorical mapping of transactions as possession or control offers a compelling lens through which to analyze the dynamics of payment in the motor park context. The phrase "put am for my body," used by conductors/drivers which translates to "pay me," embodies the concept of monetary exchange as a physical transfer of value into one's possession. Here, the use of "body" suggests that the act of payment is not merely a financial transaction but a means of claiming ownership over the value being exchanged. This framing highlights the intimate relationship between the individual and their earnings, suggesting that payment is an affirmation of self-worth and agency in the economic landscape of the motor park.

Moreover, this metaphor extends beyond the individual to encapsulate broader themes of control within the transactional interactions. The expression implies a degree of power that the conductor or driver holds over the transaction, as they are actively asserting their claim to the fare. This assertion of control is further exemplified in the phrase's linguistic structure, which positions the act of payment as something that the passenger must fulfill to the driver or conductor. Owing to the summoning of the body as a site of possession, the language suggests that the transaction is a personal and tangible experience, reinforcing the notion that money is not just an abstract entity but a physical embodiment of value in the hands of the individual.

The analysis reveals that the metaphor of transaction as possession underscores the complexities of economic interactions in the motor park environment. This linguistic mapping illustrates how payment is conceptualized not only as a financial obligation but also as a form of self-affirmation and control. It highlights the goings-on between individual agency and the social dynamics of economic exchanges, where the language used reflects deeper meanings tied to identity and power. Ultimately, this analysis emphasizes the significance of metaphor in shaping our understanding of transactions, revealing how such expressions can encapsulate the nuances of human interactions within specific socio-economic contexts.

4.1.6 Control as Holding

The metaphorical mapping of control as holding reveals the nuanced ways in which drivers and conductors manage their environment within the motor park setting. The phrase "hol' am," which signifies a brief stop to pick up or drop off passengers, encapsulates the concept of control through the imagery of holding. In this context, "holding" suggests a deliberate act, emphasizing the driver's authority over the vehicle's movement. This metaphor conveys that stopping is not merely a physical action but a strategic decision that enables drivers to regulate the flow of passengers and maintain order within the often chaotic dynamics of the motor park.

This idea of control as holding can be further examined through its implications for the relationships between drivers, conductors, and passengers. When a conductor says "hol' am," it signals to both the passengers and other road users that the vehicle will momentarily halt. This act of "holding" effectively commands attention and prioritizes the needs of those boarding or alighting. In this sense, the language employed not only reflects the practicalities of transportation but also reinforces the social hierarchy within the motor park. The driver's ability to "hold" the vehicle serves as a manifestation of their authority, underscoring the power dynamics at play in these interactions.

The analysis demonstrates that the metaphor of control as holding is intricately tied to the management of movement and authority in a commercial vehicle. Through expressions like "hol' am," the language encapsulates the conductor's ability to exert influence over the transportation process, transforming a simple act of stopping into a significant exercise of control. This mapping reveals the broader implications of language in shaping our understanding of social interactions and hierarchies within specific cultural contexts. Ultimately, the metaphor underscores the interplay between language, power, and the dynamics of movement, illustrating how linguistic choices reflect deeper meanings embedded in everyday practices.

CONCLUSION

The analyses conducted on the metaphorical mappings within the motor park discourse illuminate the goings-on between language, social interactions, and the socioeconomic realities of drivers and passengers. The various metaphorical representations, such as "work" for passengers, "hol' am" for control, and colour-coded expressions for monetary values, reveal how language serves not only as a means of communication but also as a tool for navigating complex social hierarchies and managing everyday challenges. Each metaphor reflects a distinct aspect of the drivers' and conductors' experiences, emphasizing their roles, the spatial dynamics within the vehicles, and the transactional nature of their interactions with passengers.

The findings highlight that motorists and passengers use metaphors to seek and index affinity, institute dominance, speed up conversations, and give instructions or command. For instance, the use of body imagery to describe movement and space illustrates how physicality is woven into verbal communication, emphasizing the collaborative nature of shared spaces among passengers. Additionally, the conceptualization of money as colours or letters not only simplifies transactions but also conveys the value systems prevalent in this particular environment.

Owing to the demographic limitation of this study to just few motor-parks within Port Harcourt, it is recommended that further studies could expand on these findings by exploring how metaphorical mappings in motor parks vary across different cultural and regional contexts. Also, investigating the impact of technology on communication practices among drivers and passengers, particularly with the rise of ride-sharing apps like Bolt, Uber, In-Drive, etc., and digital payment systems, could provide crucial perspectives into evolving language use. Furthermore, a comparative analysis between informal and formal transportation systems may reveal how metaphorical language reflects broader societal dynamics and attitudes towards participants in the transportation sector. Overall, these recommendations aim to deepen our understanding of the interaction between language, culture, and social practices in occupational discourse, particularly in the transportation domain.

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