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Political Persuasion through Multimodal Message Frames: A study of Raila Odinga and William Ruto's 2022 Presidential Campaign Speeches

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Abstract

This study examined the multimodal message frames in the 2022 presidential campaign speeches of Raila Odinga and William Ruto and the framing strategies employed in their construction. The study was guided by Framing Theory by Gamson and Modigliani and the Semiotic Theory of Multimodality by Bezemer and Jewitt. The population comprised televised campaign speeches of Raila Odinga and William Ruto broadcast by Citizen Television, NTV, and KTN between January 2021 and 9 August 2022. Three televised campaign speeches for each presidential candidate were purposively selected. The units of analysis were multimodal political campaign message frames in the presidential campaign speeches. The televised speech recordings were downloaded from YouTube and transcribed. Data were coded deductively based on the theoretical frameworks. Analysis employed interpretive packages proposed by Gamson and Modigliani, the Semiotic Theory of Multimodality by Bezemer and Jewitt, and linguistic annotations. The findings revealed that both candidates employed diverse multimodal political message frames. However, they did not consistently use equal numbers or types of multimodal message frames in all campaigns held in different parts of the country. Although most message frames were similar in type, their wording and deployment differed. For instance, in message frames constructed through catchphrases and rhetorical questions, one candidate extensively and repeatedly used catchphrases, pausing to allow the messages to resonate before repeating them. The study concludes that multimodal message frames varied in the way each candidate deployed them, and across different places the campaigns took place. The findings of this research help scholars, politicians, and political communication professionals gain more knowledge about multi-modal political message framing in presidential campaign speeches in Africa.

Key terms: Multimodal, message frames, semiotic, speeches, verbal modes.

INTRODUCTION

According to Gamson and Modigliani (1989), political message frames are strategic interpretations designed to influence how audiences understand issues, often categorised by their focus on public interest. This study will adopt this definition of framing because it gives room to incorporate many ways in which framing occurs, as is evident in the interpretive packages given by the scholars for interpreting message frames.

These interpretive packages are composed of five framing devices that include metaphors, words, rhetorical exemplars (i.e., historical examples from which lessons are drawn), catchphrases, depictions, visual images (e.g., icons); and three reasoning devices that include (1) roots (i.e., a causal analysis), (2) consequences (i.e., a particular type of effect), and (3) appeals to principle (i.e., a set of moral claims).

Globally, most research on message frames in political speeches have concentrated on the study of verbal mode of communication, often leaving out gesture mode (Schmuck & Mohamed, 2020), despite a growing consensus among scholars within social semiotics and linguistics, that verbal and gesture mode interact to simultaneously construct meaning (Kendon 2000; Streeck, 2008; Cienki, 2009; Bezemer & Jewitt, 2010; Müller *et al*. 2013; Giansante, 2014; Debras & L'Hôte 2015).

The observation that most studies have concentrated on the verbal mode of communication, or other communication modes that are not associated with political speeches, is corroborated by a number of research studies. Gomez et al. (2020, September 26) studied 2016 Trump's presidential campaign Spanish adverts, transmitted through television, radio, and the internet, targeting US Latino communities. Al-Azzawi and Saleh (2021) studied the presidential election, focusing on multimodal analysis of political posters of the American election of 2020. Kjeldsen and Hess (Kjeldsen &Hess, 2021) conducted a study of the multimodal aspects of the 2020 US presidential campaign artefacts. Mohamed et al. (2020) studied speeches of Donald Trump in the same presidential election of 2016, focusing on the analysis of both verbal and nonverbal modes.

Drăgan and Fârte, (2024) focused on multimodal communication in the construction of the political persona of the presidential candidates in the 2004 and 2009 Romanian presidential elections through the strategic management of semiotic emotional expression. Tameryana et al. (2019) studied the strategic use of Ossetian and Russian language by presidential candidates' campaign speeches during the 2017 South Ossetian presidential election. It should be noted that even a few of the foregoing studies that focus on both verbal and gestural communication are not even framing studies since they are not guided by framing theories.

Like in the rest of the world, there seems to be little multilingual and multimodal message frame research on political speeches in Africa. Paget (2019), in his chapter in Oxford Encyclopedia of African Politics, discussed a number of presidential populism messages in presidential campaign speeches, focusing on verbal communication; he observed that Michael Sata's messages were populist. Similarly, Jacob and Pedersen (2018), who studied populist political speeches of John Pombe Magufuli of *Chama cha Mapinduzi (The Revolution Party)* in Tanzania, focused only on the verbal mode of communication in the political speeches.

Like in the rest of Africa, in Kenya, multimodal and multilingual message framing studies have not received sufficient scholarly attention. Most of the studies on political speeches focused on the verbal mode of communication or a few aspects of the verbal mode, such as metaphors, humour, rhetorical questions, and negative campaign messages of the political actors, leaving out the gesture mode of political communication. For example, Otieno et al. (2016) and Wambua (2020) focused on the verbal mode of communication in their studies.

Otieno et al. (2016) studied the use of metaphor to make sense of different political issues; Wambua (2020) examined the effectiveness of humour and rhetorical questions as persuasive strategies; and Wayua (2020) examined, as one of its objectives, how negative campaign messages by Raila Odinga's political rivals contributed to voters' reasoned action in the 2017 presidential election. It should be noted that most of the foregoing studies may not fall under

framing studies since non-framing theories that have different worldviews were employed. This study fills this gap by examining multimodal message frames in the 2022 presidential campaign speeches of Raila Odinga, William Ruto, and their well-known political allies.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Globally, most research on message frames in political speeches has concentrated on the study of the verbal mode of communication, often leaving out gesture mode (Schmuck & Mohamed, 2020). This observation justifies this study by filling the gap through examination of both verbal and gesture modes in political campaign messages. It fills this gap by examining how the interaction of verbal and gesture modes contributes to the construction of meaning. A number of scholars have observed that there is growing consensus among scholars within social semiotics and linguistics that meaning is achieved through both verbal and gesture modes. For example, Debras and L'Hôte (2015) have argued that verbal and gesture modes interact to simultaneously construct meaning. These scholars' observations further made a case for this study that seeks to examine how both the verbal and gesture modes construct meaning.

Gomez et al. (2020, September 26) studied 2016 Trump's presidential campaign Spanish adverts, transmitted through television, radio, and the internet, targeting US Latino communities. Al-Azzawi and Saleh (2021) studied the presidential election, focusing on multimodal analysis of political posters of the American election of 2020. Kjeldsen and Hess (2021) conducted a study of the multimodal aspects of the 2020 US presidential campaign artefacts. Mohamed et al. (2020) studied speeches of Donald Trump in the same presidential election of 2016, focusing on the analysis of both verbal and nonverbal modes.

Drăgan and Fârte (2024) focused on multimodal communication in the construction of the political persona of the presidential candidates in the 2004 and 2009 Romania presidential elections through the strategic management of semiotic emotional expression. In Europe, Tameryana et al. (2019) studied the strategic use of Ossetian and Russian language by presidential candidates' campaign speeches during the 2017 South Ossetia presidential election. Among these studies, it is only Mohammed et al. (2020) who examined both verbal and gesture modes of political speeches, which inform this study. Most of the foregoing studies inform this study only as far as the multimodal aspect is concerned. However, only the study by Mohammed et al. examined both verbal and gesture modes, which are the focus of this study.

Like in the rest of the world, there seem to be few multimodal message frame studies of political speeches in Africa**.** Paget (2019), in his chapter in the Oxford Encyclopedia of African Politics, discussed a number of presidential populism messages in presidential campaign speeches.

Focusing on verbal communication, Paget observed that Michael Sata's messages were populist. Similarly, Jacob & Pedersen (2018), who studied populist political speeches of John Pombe Magufuli of *Chama cha Mapinduzi (The Revolution Party)* in Tanzania, focused only on the verbal mode of communication in the political speeches. These studies informed this research only as far as the verbal mode of communication is concerned.

Similarly, there seems to be little multimodal message frame research in Kenya. Though there have been multimodal message frame studies in Kenya, most have left out studies of gesture mode. Studies by Otieno et al. (2016), Wambua (2020), and Wayua (2020) focused only on aspects like the use of metaphors, humour, rhetorical questions, or negative campaign messages, leaving out studies of gesture modes of communication.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a qualitative design, guided by Framing Theory (Gamson & Modigliani, 1989) and the Social Semiotic Theory of Multimodality (Bezemer & Jewitt, 2010) as theoretical and analytical frameworks. Linguistic annotations by Allwood et al. (2005), Kendon (2004), Müller (2004), and McNeill (1992) informed interpretation.

Gamson and Modigliani conceptualise political message frames as strategic interpretations shaping audiences' understanding of issues. Social semiotics examines meaning-making across modes, including gestures accompanying speech. Bezemer and Jewitt

(2010) argue that meaning is distributed across modes. Accordingly, the study examined how verbal and gestural modes interacted in constructing campaign message frames.

The population comprised speeches by Raila Odinga and William Ruto broadcast on Citizen Television, NTV, or KTN between January 2021 and 9 August 2022. Six speeches, three per candidate, were purposively selected for their varied framing strategies and delivery in campaign battleground regions. The researcher considered this sample sufficient; conventional sample-size recommendations were unsuitable for discourse-constructionist framing analysis (Aldiabat & Navenec, 2018).

Speeches were downloaded from YouTube and stored on a laptop, Google Drive, and a hard drive. The researcher transcribed them by listening and recording the text, then identified message frames using Gamson and Modigliani's interpretive packages. The researcher repeatedly listened to speeches for message frames, then observed and noted down gestures according to linguistic annotations.

The PhD proposal received approval from Laikipia University's Institutional Ethics Review Committee and a NACOSTI permit. The researcher checked broadcasters' footage-use policies. Where complete, unedited speeches were unavailable at NTV and Citizen TV, recordings were sourced from Kenya Digital News, Kenya News Media, Hotseat TV, and Facebook, with sources acknowledged.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This study found that both Odinga and Ruto constructed a wide variety of multimodal message frames through the use of metaphors, words, rhetorical exemplars (i.e., historical examples from which lessons are drawn), catchphrases, depictions, and three reasoning devices: (1) roots (i.e., a causal analysis), (2) consequences (i.e., a particular type of effect), and (3) appeals to principle (i.e., a set of moral claims). The study also established that they constructed their message through rhetorical questions. Besides constructing message frames through spoken word, Odinga and Ruto also constructed aspects of message frames through gestures. Though they constructed these message frames through similar interpretive packages, they often differed in the styles in which they deployed the message frames as they sought to persuade their campaign audience.

Discussion

The study revealed that both Odinga and Ruto persuaded their campaign audience around the country using a wide variety of multimodal message frames. As observed by Mohammed et al. (2020), it was also found that Odinga and Ruto further persuaded their political campaign audience through aspects of message frames constructed through gestures.

Similarly, as found by Drăgan and Fârte, (2024) in their study of the construction of the political persona of the presidential candidates in the 2004 and 2009 Romania presidential elections, Odinga and Ruto strategically employed semiotic emotional expressions in their campaign message frames. As observed by Tameryana et al. (2019) in their study of the use of Ossetian and Russian language during South Ossetia presidential campaigns, this study also found an effort by Odinga and Ruto to appeal to the voters through multimodal campaign message frames bearing the vernacular language of the campaign host community.

Most other reviewed presidential multimodal Campaign message frames studies reviewed in this study, employed different modes that are not relevant to this study. Gomez et al. (2020) focused on adverts transmitted through television, radio, and the internet that target only the Latino communities.

Similarly, Kjeldsen and Hess (2021) focused only on presidential campaign artefacts, and not on spoken and gesture modes. Though not explicit, as found out by both Paget (2019) and Jacob and Pederson (2018), some of Ruto's messages were populist. For example, Ruto's inclusivity multimodal message frames were populist.

Raila Odinga's 2022 Political Persuasion of Campaign Audience

This study reveals that Odinga employed a wide variety of multimodal campaign messages as he crisscrossed the country during his 2022 presidential campaign. He tried as much as possible to make his

message frames resonate with his audience. As observed by Koopmans (2004), the audience (voters in this study) react positively to the message frames when the message resonates with them.

Persuading Political Campaign Audience through Multimodal Personality Message Frames

This study found that Odinga, through a personality message frame, persuaded his campaign audience to choose him over his main competitor and his allies because his main competitor and allies were liars. For example, in his speech at Kinoru, Meru (Kenya Digital News, 2022), he persuaded his campaign audience through a personality frame by portraying Ruto and his allies as people who make promises that they do not fulfil.

Odinga accompanied his speech with a number of hand gestures. First, he shook his palm with spread fingers down, followed by thumb and index finger contact (communicating that he is clear in memory). Through these hand gestures, Odinga further constructed an aspect of message frame intended to persuade his audience that he and his political team, unlike his main competitors, are leaders who clearly remember and who will implement what they promised.

Persuading Political Campaign Audience through Multimodal Nationalism Message Frames

The study reveals that Odinga, through nationalistic message frames, persuaded his political campaign audience by portraying himself and his political team as leaders who are against tribalism. In his Meru speech, referred to earlier, he said, "*Siasa duni ya ukabila indiyo Azimio imekuja kumaliza* (Mediocre politics of tribalists is what Azimio has come to finish)." Odinga pushed his vertical palm with slightly folded fingers away as he said Azimio has come to get rid of mediocre tribal politics, in the process constructing an aspect of message frame that further persuaded his audience that Azimio leadership is leadership that decries tribalistic politics. For example, in the same Meru speech earlier referred to, he tried to persuade his audience that he was their presidential candidate of choice because he understood that Meru was a suitable place to become an industrial hub because major roads converge there. He added that Meru, as the capital of Eastern Kenya, was going to be a manufacturing hub.

Odinga accompanied his speech with a number of hand gestures. He used finger-thumb contact (communicating clarity in memory) in his plans for Meru, palm down, as he said that Meru is the capital of Mt. Kenya East and, after describing its transportation network, in the process further persuading Meru people that he was a leader who could see the suitability of Meru to be made a manufacturing hub. He moved his hand in a circle, in the process further persuading his audience that he was a leader who could see that Meru was suitable to be the manufacturing hub in all the Eastern part of Kenya.

Through his index finger and thumb contact, Odinga further persuaded his audience that he was a leader who had a clear industrialisation plan for Meru. By accompanying his speech with his palm down, he further persuaded his audience through the construction of an aspect of the message meant to persuade his audience that industrialisation was going to come to Meru soon because of his presidency. And by moving his hand around, he constructed an aspect of the message frame meant to further persuade his audience that he is a leader who is able to tell that Meru was best suited to become an industrial hub.

Persuading Political Campaign Audience through Multimodal Employment Message Frames

It was found that Odinga persuaded his audience through a variety of employment message frames. For example, in his speech delivered at Shinyalu, Kakamega (Citizen TV, 2021), Odinga tried to persuade the audience that he was a candidate of choice through an employment message frame constructed through description, in the process framing himself as a candidate of choice who understood the employment situation in Western Kenya; therefore, he was the one who was going to solve. He spoke about Western Kenyan going to Nakuru and Nairobi to look for jobs.

Odinga further persuaded his audience through aspects of message frames constructed through his hand gestures. Raila employed a palm-down gesture to refer to Western Counties where the youths in the audience come from; pointed with his index finger to

refer to Nakuru, where the youths go to look for jobs; and used a horizontal open palm to refer to Nairobi, where Western youths go to look for jobs, and pointed with his index finger to refer to Mombasa, where Western youths also go to look for jobs – in the process, trying to win the Western Kenya counties youths' votes by framing himself as a leader who really understands their struggles in looking for employment. Raila also tried to win Western Kenya votes by accompanying his speech with a palm-down hand gesture as he talked about employment, in the process constructing an aspect of message frame that frames him as a choice of presidential candidate who is committed to creating employment for them.

Further, Raila moved his palm with spread fingers down, followed by his thumb and index finger. By accompanying his speech with these hand gestures, he tried to win votes by constructing an aspect of message frame that frames him and his political campaign team as leaders who are clear about what they want to implement, and who will implement what they promise.

Persuading Political Campaign Audience through Multimodal Freedom Message Frames

The study found that Odinga persuaded his campaign audience in his final 2022 presidential campaign speech at Kasarani (NTV, 2022) through freedom Message Frames constructed through the use of the 'flames of freedom' metaphor. This framing portrayed him as a leader who has a desire and a determination to fight for freedom. He says:

> *Fellow citizens, thank you for keeping the flames of freedom alive in Kenya. I wish to specifically thank the strongest human being known to me, Her Excellency Ida Betty Anyango Odinga, the pillar of our family and the secret weapon to our combined strength.*

Odinga also persuaded his audience through gestures. In the preceding excerpt, Odinga moved his head forward, emphasising keeping the freedom of flames alive, in the process constructing an aspect of message frame meant to persuade his audience that he was a freedom fighter who cannot abandon the liberation cause.

In the Kasarani speech, Odinga also persuaded his audience by employing a freedom message frame constructed through exemplars. Through this message frame, he persuaded his audience that he was a leader of choice to fight for freedom because of his track record. Odinga says:

> *Martha is a freedom fighter. She has stood for the rights of Kenyans. She has paid a price for it. She has stood straight even at the time of great difficulties.*

He went further to persuade his audience not to choose his competitors, describing his main political opponents as lacking a fighting spirit. Odinga accompanied his speech with a number of hand gestures. He pointed his index finger to refer to his political competitors as he said that they are not fighters, in the process constructing an aspect of message frame that frames him and his team as the people who can fight for the people who were in his political team, hence persuading his audience that his team was the government of choice. He went on to point down with his index finger while saying that the fighters for a better Kenya were in Kasarani that day, further constructing an aspect of message frame that the people at Kasarani that day were the only hope of bringing about a better Kenya.

Persuading Political Campaign Audience through Multimodal Business Message Frames

First, in his Meru speech referred to earlier, Odinga, through business message frames, persuaded his campaign audience to elect him during the 2022 election by framing himself as someone who understands the needs of their business startups. He promised his campaign audience that they were going to create a youth fund for youths who want to start a business. Odinga accompanied his speaking with head movement. He emphatically pushed his head forward and said that youths who want to start their businesses will get government assistance, in the process persuading his audience by framing himself as a leader who is confident and determined to implement a youth business start-up programme.

Secondly, in his Meru speech, Odinga, by employing business message frames, persuaded his youths to choose him. He talked about empowering Jua Kali and "Bodaboda" (motorcycle operators). He said, "*Na*

watu wa jua kali na bodaboda watapata msaada kutoka kwa serkali yetu" (And *jua* kali and bodaboda people will get assistance from our government). Here, Odinga accompanied his speech with an index-finger-thumb gesture as he talked about his government assisting Jua Kali and Boda Boda people, in the process constructing an aspect of message frame meant to further persuade his audience that he was a leader with a clear plan to assist them.

Lastly, in his Meru speech, Odinga went further to persuade his audience through a business message frame by talking about empowering small micro enterprises and medium micro enterprises. He promised to empower Small Micro-enterprises (SMEs) and Medium Micro-enterprises (MMEs). Odinga accompanied his speech with index finger-thumb contact, in the process creating an aspect of message frame meant to persuade his audience that he is a leader who has clear details on how youth business start-ups can be empowered.

Persuading Political Campaign Audience through Multimodal Agricultural Message Frame

Odinga, in the Meru speech referred to earlier, persuaded his campaign audience through an agricultural message frame by promising farmers that he was going to empower them. For example, he told them his government was going to assist farmers with farm implements, seeds, and fertilisers. As he spoke, he moved his palm with spread fingers up and down as he enumerated how his administration would empower farmers, in the process persuading his audience that he was a leader who was going to put in place an elaborate programme for empowering farmers. Odinga accompanied his speech with a number of hand gestures. He moved his hand with spread fingers back and forth, then moved his index finger pointing up and moving it back and forth.

Through these hand gestures, Odinga constructed an aspect of message frame that communicates determination to help farmers meet all their farming needs (farming needs being input and marketing).

Persuading Political Campaign Audience through Multimodal Health Message Frames

In his Meru speech, Odinga employed health message frames to persuade his campaign audience by framing himself as a leader who has a working plan for health care. For example, he promised to bring about Baba Care. He said that through Baba Care he was going to make sure health care is near where people are living and that he was going to make sure that health facilities have nurses, doctors, and medicines. He also promised that his government would come up with health insurance where those who will not be able to pay will be paid for by the government. Odinga accompanied his speaking with index finger-thumb contact, creating an aspect of the message meant to persuade his audience that he was a leader who has a clear and detailed plan for inclusive health services and health financing.

Persuading Political Campaign Audience through Multimodal Education Message Frames

This study found that Odinga, in his Meru speech, persuaded his political campaign audience through an educational message frame. He promised free education from primary to university. As he spoke, he moved his palm with open fingers up and down as he explained that children will go through all levels of education without paying for it, in the process constructing an aspect of the message meant to persuade his audience that he was the choice of a president who cares much about his audience's educational needs.

Persuading Political Campaign Audience through Multimodal Knowledge Message Frame

The study reveals that Odinga, in his Meru speech, persuaded his political campaign audience through a knowledge message frame. He made claims to being knowledgeable about Meru roads, having travelled all around Meru and having participated in the classification of the roads, in the process persuading the audience to choose him because he was knowledgeable. Odinga said that he knows a lot about Meru Roads because he was Prime Minister who closely worked with Engineer Erastus Mwongera, visiting everywhere in Meru, classifying roads. Odinga accompanied his speech with a finger-thumb contact gesture followed by pointing his index finger, in the process constructing an aspect of message frame meant to persuade his audience that because he once participated in the classification of all roads in Meru, he had clear knowledge of roads in Meru, and that he

was definitely going to prioritise their improvement or their fresh construction.

Persuading Political Campaign Audience through Multimodal Infrastructural Message Frames

It was found that Odinga, in his Meru speech, persuaded his political campaign audience through Infrastructure message frames. For example, he said that he, together with Francis Muthaura and Kibaki, came up with a national development plan known as Vision 2030, in the process persuading his audience that he was their choice of presidential candidate. In the preceding excerpt, Odinga accompanied his speech with a number of hand gestures. He pointed with his index finger as he said that he worked together as the Prime Minister with Francis Muthaura, in the process constructing an aspect of the message that persuades his audience that he was a leader who recognised the contributions of distinguished civil servants. He moved his hand around as he talked about how he, Muthaura and Kibaki were developing a development plan for the whole country, in the process constructing an aspect of the message frame, in the process persuading his audience that since he was one of those who came up with a plan for the development of the whole country, he would definitely follow up with the implementation of the plan.

Persuading Political Campaign Audience through Multimodal Social Protection Message Frames

This study reveals that Odinga, in his Meru speech, persuaded his campaign audience through a social protection message frame that he was a leader who cares about the poor. He says, "we will bring about 'social protection programme, *vile inafanyika kule Amerikani, Kule Wilaya, kule Brazil, kule Egypt* '" (the way it is done in America, Europe, Brazil, and Egypt).

Odinga also constructed a protection of the poor message frame when he says, "*Jamii ambayo hawana chochote watapata msaada ya shilling 6000 kila mwezi kutoka kwa serkali*" (families who do not have anything will get assistance of Kenya shillings 6,000 every month from the government).

Through the construction of the protection of the poor message frame, he framed himself as the protector of the poor. Odinga went further to persuade his audience by accompanying his speech with a vertical palm with slightly folded fingers, followed by pointing fingers to refer to countries that have social protection programmes, in the process persuading his audience that he was the choice of presidential candidate because he had a clear, thought-out plan, backed by evidence, of alleviating the suffering of the most vulnerable in society.

Persuading Political Campaign Audience through Multimodal War Message Frames

It was found that Odinga, in his Bhugungu Stadium, Kakamega speech referred to earlier, persuaded his political campaign audience by employing war messages. For example, he uses war message frames constructed through metaphors to persuade his political campaign audience. By using the metaphors "soldiers" to refer to the youths and "commander in chief" to refer to himself, Odinga persuaded his audience that he was the choice of presidential candidate by framing the election as a war that needs experienced elders and carrying "father" as the commander in chief, and soldiers who are still in their youthful years. Through these metaphors, Odinga, through an appeal to their ego, is persuading youths that they are central in his quest for the presidency.

Persuading Political Campaign Audience through Multimodal Governance Message Frames

This study found that Odinga, in his Kakamega speech referred to earlier, employed a multimodal governance message frame to persuade his audience. He persuades his audience to choose him by framing himself as a corruption fighter. He said that he knows where and how his competitors steal public funds, and that he will seal the holes that they use to steal. He further persuaded his audience by accompanying his speech with a number of hand gestures. He pointed using his index finger in reference to the corrupt, in the process constructing an aspect of message framing meant to persuade his audience that because of his extensive experience, he was a leader who knows the people who are corrupt; and that he was a leader who knows where and how they steal public funds. Odinga further went on with his persuasion by pointing his index finger in reference to corruption loopholes, in the process constructing an aspect of the message that he is a leader who is knowledgeable

about loopholes that the corrupt use to steal from the public.

Secondly, in his Kakamega speech, Odinga persuaded his audience that he was their presidential candidate of choice by framing himself as a devolution fighter; hence, he was going to make devolution succeed. He said that his government would increase devolution revenue that goes to the counties from 15 per cent to 35 per cent to enable counties to build hospitals and roads. As he speaks, he repeatedly points with his index finger. He pointed down in reference to grassroots, and pointed at the space in reference to increasing county revenue sharing from 15 per cent to 35 per cent.

Through these hand gestures, he constructed an aspect of the message meant to persuade his audience that his administration will be an administration that is determined to increase money coming to counties. He employed this aspect of framing to persuade his campaign audience to choose him and his team because they were going to be an administration that was determined to make devolution succeed. Odinga then spoke as he moved his hand around to elaborate on how the money coming to counties would be used, in the process constructing an aspect of message frame that persuaded his audience to choose him by framing himself as a leader who is well-versed in the needs of counties.

Persuading Political Campaign Audience through Multimodal Deception Message Frames

Odinga, in his Meru speech referred to earlier, employed a deceptive message frame to persuade his campaign audience to choose him as the presidential candidate. He persuaded by framing his competitors as deceptive people who use the proceeds of corruption to portray themselves as caring and generous. Odinga said that his deceptive competitors steal public money and use some in harambees for youth groups, women groups, school vehicles, church leaders' cars – in the process deceiving people into thinking they are generous. Odinga accompanied his speech with fingers pointing at the space in reference to the corrupt giving out portions of the proceeds of corruption to portray themselves as generous, in the process constructing an aspect of message frame that further persuades the audience to choose him instead of his competitors by pointing out that those who are corrupt often camouflage themselves as philanthropists.

Persuading Political Campaign Audience through Multimodal Fear Message Frames

This study found that Odinga, in his Kasarani speech, persuaded his political campaign audience through a fear message frame. In asked a number of questions has, captured in the extract below:

> *My dear Kenyans, the questions we face today are "who has a safe pair of hands to complete what we started on Sabasaba Day?", "whose hands will dismantle the hand of the economy of corruption?", "whose hands are your family safe?",*
>
> *"When you looked at your children, who would you feel will really make sure that you have the ability to give them the best they deserve?"*
>
> *"Who would you feel would ensure healing to the country no matter the election results?" "Is he the man who shook the hands of his bitter rival and brought national reconciliation and healing, or the hands of the war monger who is a deviant and a convicted thief?" "Which hand will you trust to deliver social protection for the poor?*
>
> *The Auditor General tells us 800 billion Kenyan Shillings is stolen every year through corruption. 800 billion is twice the economy of two of our neighbours in East Africa.*
>
> *East African Community. "Who would you feel is best qualified to dismantle this cartel of corruption?*

As he pauses, asking questions from his written speech about whose leadership Kenya will feel safe under, he occasionally moves his head up and down and occasionally raises his head to look at his campaign audience. Through this head gesture, he constructed an aspect of message frame that he was in agreement with his audience that he was the choice of a leader with safe hands.

Persuading Political Campaign Audience through Multimodal Religious Message Frames

It was found that Odinga, in his Kasarani speech, persuaded his political campaign audience through a religious message frame constructed through religious metaphors, "Canan" and "promise land". Through these two metaphors, Odinga framed his presidency as a period when people will live a prosperous and happy life. He said, "I Raila Amolo Odinga have seen Canaan, the land of milk and honey. I have seen the promise land, the land of the Redemptive Song [Raila leads the crowd to sing the song]. But you know the battle is hardest when the victory is nearest…"

Persuading Political Campaign Audience through Multimodal Choice Message Frames

It was found that Odinga, in his Kasarani speech, persuaded his political campaign audience through a choice message frame by framing the 2022 General election as a choice between good and bad -a choice between the promised land and the land of bondage. He said, "You have a choice of the promise land but the land of bondage is so within sight."

Persuading Political Campaign Audience through Multimodal Peace Message Frame

Finally, Odinga, in his Kasarani speech, persuaded his political campaign audience through the Peace Message Frame. He said, "Dear Kenyans, we are soon entering Canaan, and there are few rules which we will have to observe. In Canaan we must embrace reconciliation". He went on to say, "This is why I always find a way in my heart to reconcile. I shook the hand of Daniel Toroitich Arap Moi in March 2002, of President Mwai Kibaki in March 2008, and of my brother, President Uhuru Kenyatta in March 2018."

Odinga accompanied his discourses with head gestures. He moved his head up and down as he said that he wanted to pay tribute to Uhuru Kenya for agreeing to work together for the betterment of our country, in the process constructing an aspect of message frame that persuaded his audience that he and Kenyatta are nationalist leaders who are in agreement when it comes to prioritising the interest of the country over anything else.

Ruto's Persuasion of Political Campaign Audience through Multimodal Message Frames

This study reveals that Ruto used a wide variety of political campaign messages as he crisscrossed the country during his 2022 presidential campaign. He aimed as much as possible to persuade his campaign audience to have him as their presidential candidate of choice. For example, a study done in Kenya in 2021 about "hustlers versus dynasties" rhetoric in the 2022 general election revealed that this political message frame earned him massive support (Karanja, 2022).

Persuading Political Campaign Audience through Multimodal Class Message Frames

This study found that Ruto persuaded his political campaign audience through class message frames. For example, he employed a catchphrase (an easily remembered phrase) to describe his ideas about work and people who have money, in the process framing himself as a leader who will recognise and empower the business of the lower class (ordinary people).

In his speech in Kakamega (Hotseat TV, 2022), Ruto says, *"tunasema kazi ni kazi. Mnanielewa?"* He went further to describe the difficulties of ordinary people in Kenya because of the lack of acceptance of their work. Ruto then used the *"Kazi ni Kazi"* catchphrase together with another catchphrase, "pesa mfukoni". He used the catchphrase *'pesa mfukoni'* (money in the pocket), in the process, persuading his audience to choose him because his administration will make sure people will always have readily available money. Here, Ruto employs a vertical palm horizontally and with fingers pointing into space in reference to his main political competitors, as he said, *"kazi ni Kazi"* (any work is work). He touches his hand as he said, *"pesa mfukoni"* (money in the pocket). Through these hand gestures, Ruto created an aspect of message framing that acknowledges that all work, often despised, is an acceptable form of livelihood.

This study also found that Ruto employed rhetorical questions in his persuasion. He persuaded his audience through a class message frame constructed through a series of questions that question the rationale of funding rich people's businesses and leaving out the poor. In the extract of his translated Kiswahili speech, he says:

> *If we have put 100 billion in one company, Kenya Airways; is there any wrong if we put 50 billion in an ordinary person's business?*

Persuading Political Campaign Message Frame through Multimodal Health Message Frames

This study reveals that Ruto, in his Shinyalu, Kakamega speech, referred to earlier, persuaded his political campaign audience through a health message frame. He persuaded his audience that he was a suitable presidential candidate by framing himself as a leader who understands the health problems of the common people, having been a common person like them in the past, and as a leader who will solve their health problems. He said that his government will have medical insurance, and that the government will pay for those who cannot afford the insurance. He further said people will not sell their property again to pay for hospital bills. Ruto accompanied his speech with a number of hand gestures. Ruto used his fingers slightly folded downwards and with his index fingers pointing downwards while telling people that they will not sell their property again to pay hospital bills because his political team will come up with an inclusive health service that will enable them to go to the hospital for treatment without paying any money.

Through this gesture, Ruto created an aspect of the message meant to persuade the audience that Ruto's political team are composed of leaders who are determined to make sure that ordinary people access health services despite their low socioeconomic status.

Persuading Political Campaign Audience through Multimodal Personality Message Frames

It was found that Ruto, in his Makutano, Meru speech (Kenya Digital News, 2021), persuaded his political campaign audience through a personality message frame. By describing those who are fronting Raila as being insincere, he persuaded his audience to choose him over Raila because Odinga will serve those who were fronting him. He says:

> *You never supported Kitendawili when he was in a position to run the affairs of the country. Now that it is obvious that he can't run the affairs of Kenya, how do you want to pretend that you want to support him, unless you are using him as a puppet so that you can rule, and you can continue to manage, and you can continue to decide the issues of Kenya using Kitendawili facade. And we will not allow you. The people of Kenya are more intelligent than that.*

Persuading Political Campaign Audience through Multimodal Self-Interest Message Frames

It was found that Ruto, in his Meru speech, persuaded his audience through a self-interest message frame. For example, he talked about people who join them in government and derail their Big 4 agenda, in the process persuading his audience that they should not be chosen because they represent selfish leadership. Ruto said that the people who joined them want to change the constitution to create positions for themselves. He accompanied his speech with a vertical palm facing his audience to draw the audience's attention to listen carefully and think well to avoid voting for the wrong people, in the process constructing an aspect of the message meant to persuade his audience to avoid the consequences of voting for the wrong people.

Persuading Political Campaign Audience through Multimodal Track Record Message Frames

This study showed that Ruto, in his Makutano, Meru speech, persuaded his political campaign audience through a track record message frame. For example, he persuaded his audience to choose him because he had a track record of fulfilling his promises to the electorate. He said that they allocated one billion to a water project and expansion of sewerage in town, that they have built five technical colleges, and that they will not stop connecting electricity that they started in 2013.

As he framed himself and his political team as leaders who talk and act, Ruto employed a number of gestures. First, his vertical palm faced towards the audience as he carefully drew the attention of the audience to things they did in Meru; in the process constructing an aspect of frame meant to persuade his audience to choose him because of the developments.

Ruto used palm down as he talked about the electricity connection in Meru County that had taken place and was going on, in the process constructing an aspect of message meant to persuade the audience that he was a leader committed to making sure everybody in Meru County was going to get electricity.

Persuading Political Audience through Multimodal Livelihoods and Economic Message Frames

The study reveals that Ruto, in his Makutano, Meru speech, persuaded his political campaign audience through livelihoods and economic message frames. For example, through the catchphrases "Kazi ni kazi" and "Bottom-up", Ruto persuaded his audience to choose him because he was a leader who recognises the common man's work and who will implement development prioritising common people. He says:

> *Si chama ni hii ya kazi ni kazi? Si tumejipanga na kazi ni kazi? Si tumejipanga? Si tumejipanga na bottom up? Si tunasema mpango ni bottom up?*

(Isn't our party a party that embraces all types of businesses and works? Have we said our plan is bottom-up?) Here, Ruto accompanied his discourse with a curved palm-down gesture, in the process constructing an aspect of message frame that they are all in agreement that they were ready to choose a party that cares for everyone, in the process persuading them that he was their candidate of choice.

Persuading Political Campaign Audience through Combination of Multimodal Employment, Business, and Agricultural Message Frames

This study found that, in his Makutano, Meru speech, Ruto persuaded his audience through a combination of employment, business, and agricultural message frames. He framed himself and his political team as people who had a plan for employment of young people, for financing micro, small and medium enterprises, and as people who will finance agriculture to make sure there is enough food at affordable prices. He said that they were allocating 100 million for housing, agroprocessing, value addition, and manufacturing, so that Kenyan youths, as a matter of priority, get employment. As he spoke, Ruto had his index finger pointing up as he made the point that the following year, they will prioritise allocation of money to the Big Four Agenda, in the process constructing an aspect of frame meant to persuade his audience that he and his political team should be chosen because they were determined to implement the programmes of the Big Four Agenda as a matter of urgency.

Ruto, in his Meru speech, took his persuasion a notch higher when he said that there were 14 million Kenyans who are blacklisted with CRB, and that young people cannot do business because they take credit from predatory creditors that charge high interest rates. To persuade his audience that he was the presidential candidate of choice, he promised that his government would come up with a special fund for micro, small and medium enterprises. As Ruto framed himself and his political team as leaders who will come up with inclusive business financing, he accompanied his speech with his index finger and thumb coming into contact at the tips, constructing an aspect of message framing that he employs to persuade his audience to choose his team because they had a well-thought-out and clear plan for financing micro, small and medium enterprises.

Persuading Political Campaign Audience through Multimodal Priority Message Frames

The study reveals that Ruto, in the Meru speech referred to earlier, persuaded his political audience through a priority message frame. Ruto persuaded his audience that he was the candidate of choice through a priority message frame when he asked his political campaign audience:

> *Do you agree with those who saying we increase positions and powers of leaders or we change the economy of those youths by providing them jobs? Do you want us to change the constitution or economy?*

As he framed himself and his political team as selfless leaders who prioritise the needs of the ordinary people, he accompanied his speech with his palm up and fingers pointing at the audience, in the process constructing an aspect of message frame meant to persuade his audience that prioritising the economy of the ordinary people is the right thing to do as opposed to the wrong priorities of his political opponents.

Persuading Political Campaign Audience through Multimodal Power Message Frames

The study reveals that Ruto, in his final 2022 presidential campaign speech at Nyayo National Stadium (NTV, 2022), persuaded his political campaign audience through a power message frame constructed through two metaphors, 'deep state' and 'system'. While 'deep state' refers to powerful people, especially in the private sector, who are believed to have a lot of influence to decide who wins an election and who is appointed to influential government positions, 'system' refers to powerful people in the

executive arm of government and the political class who also influence who will win an election and who is appointed to influential government positions. Ruto encouraged his audience that they were going to prevail against a powerful and selfish people. He says:

> *On Tuesday, the people of Kenya will prevail over the deep state. The people of Kenya will prevail over the system, and we are going to have a nation that leaves no Kenyan behind.*

Ruto, while talking of the people prevailing over the 'deep state' and the 'system', accompanied this with a finger emphasis, constructing an aspect of message frame that framed people as more powerful than the "deep" state and the "system".

Persuading Political Campaign Audience through Multimodal Governance Message Frames.

Ruto further, in his Nyayo Stadium speech, persuaded his audience by telling them that he and his team had a plan for all arms of government. For example, he promised that they would make sure that criminal justice would be given both constitutional and financial independence, that they would fight corruption, and that they would build institutions that fight corruption. In this framing, Ruto accompanied his speech with his folded finger and his index finger in contact with his thumb, creating an aspect of framing that his political team has a clear, implementable plan.

Through this aspect of framing, he persuaded his audience that he was the presidential candidate of choice because he had a clear, implementable plan to reduce the cost of living.

Persuading Political Campaign Audience through Multimodal Religious Message Frame

It was found that Ruto persuaded his political campaign audience through a religious message frame. For instance, in his Nyayo Stadium speech, he persuaded his audience to choose him by framing himself as a person who is humble enough to give God credit for his protection and enablement. Through his English translation of an extract of his speech, he says:

> *I stand in front of you, thanking God because I am here today…They said that we will not reach 2022, but because there is God in heaven, we reach 2022. They said we will not be in the ballot… aren't we in the ballot?*

In this preceding excerpt, Ruto pointed all fingers in reference to those who had said they "will not reach 2022", creating an aspect of framing that God is the only one who knows the future for everyone. Through this aspect of message framing, Ruto persuaded his audience that he is the chosen one because God did not enable him to see 2022 for nothing, but because he had a plan for him to be the president of Kenya.

Persuading Political Campaign Audience through Multimodal Inclusivity Message Frame

This study reveals that Ruto, in his Nyayo Stadium speech, persuaded his political campaign audience through an inclusivity message frame. Through this message frame, Ruto persuaded his audience that he was a candidate of choice to bring about an inclusive Kenyan society and a government that reflects the face of Kenya. In a translation of the Kiswahili extract of his speech below, he says:

> *I stand here to tell you, my brothers and sisters, Kenyans and the people of Nairobi that this Kenya does not belong to a few people. This Kenya is for all people of Kenya.*

Ruto accompanied his words with a vertical palm with spread-out fingers to make a point that Kenya is for everybody. As he concluded the same sentence, Ruto used his fingers slightly folded downwards, with his index fingers pointing downwards to emphasise that Kenya belongs to all people. Using the same gesture, Ruto went on to emphasise that soon, they will have a country in which everybody will be embraced.

Through this aspect of message framing, Ruto persuaded his audience to choose him because, through him, an exclusive and unequal society will be a thing of the past. Ruto used his fingers slightly folded downwards and with his index fingers pointing downwards to strongly emphasise their objection to those who want constitutional change to be prioritised over economic change. This gesture creates an aspect of framing that further persuades his audience by framing Ruto's political team as people who are determined to empower the common people. Ruto went further in his inclusivity framing. He said:

> *And I want to assure you that the government that we will form will unite all Kenyans from all ethnic communities, from all religious backgrounds, and from all regions of Kenya." As*

he talked about a government with the face of Kenya, his fingers were slightly folded downwards, and his index finger was pointing downwards, creating an aspect of message frame that he is a leader who is determined to make sure that the government he will form will have the face of Kenya.

Persuading Political Campaign Audience through Multimodal Constitutionalism Message Frames

This study found that Ruto, in his final speech at Nyayo Stadium, persuaded his political campaign audience through a constitutionalism message frame. Through this message frame, he persuaded his audience that he was the presidential candidate of choice because he would be a president who would not undermine the constitution. In the preceding excerpts.

Ruto further persuaded his audience through a number of hand gestures. He moved his hand up and down, and with his index finger pointing up to emphasise a point, followed by his index finger pointing towards the direction of the people he was referring to in his speech. Here, he creates an aspect of framing meant to persuade his audience that his political team were committed to protecting the constitution, to respecting the constitution, and to making sure the government and the opposition play their role.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion: The study concludes that Odinga and Ruto did not always employ equal numbers and types of political campaign messages in all their campaigns held in various parts of the country, as they persuaded their audience to accept them as the presidential choice. It can also be concluded that although most of the types of political message frames used were similar, their word choice and the way they were deployed to persuade the audience differed. For example, Ruto repeated and extensively deployed his campaign catchphrases and rhetorical questions (pausing in between) in his Kakamega and Meru speeches, unlike Odinga

Recommendations: Because of the overwhelming data generated by even one speech, the study has focused on only areas in which Odinga and Ruto heavily campaigned because they were considered battlegrounds, leaving out other regions that, if studied, might reveal political multimodal message frames addressing other issues. This study particularly recommends studying Odinga and Ruto's 2022 presidential campaigns' multimodal message frames in the Coast and North Eastern Regions. North Eastern regions still experience infrastructural problems, persistent droughts, interclan fights, cattle rustling, and terrorism, while the Coast still have problems of absent landlords and lack of land titles.

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