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Conceptualizations of HEAD in Dholuo

Abstract

The role of the body in human perception of the surroundings has been continually investigated in the recent past. It has been influenced by the embodiment hypothesis which holds that the human body provides the very first experience that humans have about their environments. This article brings evidence from Dholuo that the HEAD is conceptualized in various ways like metonymic HEAD FOR HAIR, HEAD FOR PERSON, HEAD FOR CHARACTER TRAITS, UNIT OF MEASUREMENT. Metaphorically, the HEAD is extended to mean REASON, EMOTION, CONTAINER, TOOL, MEMORY, among others. These findings show that the HEAD is highly polysemous in Dholuo.

Keywords: head, body, conceptualization, embodiment, metaphor, metonymy

1. Introduction

In this research, my aim is to explore the conceptualizations of HEAD in Dholuo. This study is anchored on the embodiment hypothesis which proposes that human body plays a fundamental and unquestionable role in how we perceive and conceptualize the world. The body parts terminology is a source of productive lexical and semantic extensions (Wilkins 1996, Hilpert 2007, Maalej & Yu 2011) and grammatical meanings (Heine et al. 1991, Heine & Kuteva 2002).

In the recent past, a number of scholars have carried out studies on body part terms and how they are extended into various “internal” and “external” domains.

These works include Hilpert (2007), Sharifian et al. (2008), Maalej and Yu (2011), Kraska-Szlenk (2014a, b), among others. Further, there are also several studies that have specifically been carried out on the body part 'head' in various languages (e.g. Mol 2004, Niemeier 2008, Siahaan 2011, Maalej 2014, Baranyiné Kóczy 2019). In these studies, it is clearly shown that the lexeme 'head' is polysemous and can be extended to denote different concepts. However, there are still numerous languages which have not been studied in this respect, including Dholuo, which has been largely out of the scope of cognitive linguistic and cultural linguistic studies. To fill this gap, I pose the following research questions: (1) How is the HEAD extended to abstract concepts in Dholuo conceptualization? (2) What imaginative structures aid these conceptualizations? (3) Which part or characteristics of head is highlighted in various conceptualizations? and (4) What cultural elements of Dholuo worldview are captured in the conceptualizations of the HEAD?

It should be noted that culture plays a very important role in conceptualization. Lakoff and Johnson (1980: 57) in acknowledging the cultural basis of experience posit that "every experience takes place within a vast background of cultural presuppositions". Gibbs (2006: 13) further elaborates the idea of culture in cognition when he argues as follows: "bodies are not culture free objects because all aspects of embodied experience are shaped by cultural processes". Rohrer (2007) also acknowledges that the cultural environment influences embodiment and the use of the body and body part term in cognition. Sharifian (2008, 2011, 2017) emphasizes that there is an interconnection between language, cognition, and culture. He argues that they represent *cultural cognition*, that is: "networks of distributed representations across the minds in cultural groups" (Sharifian 2011: 5). Metaphors, metonymies, and image schemas can thus be considered to be culturally motivated as they transmit a cultural group's beliefs and ideas about their life, environment, religion, and so on.

This article aims to unveil the various conceptualizations of HEAD in Dholuo within the scope of cultural embodiment and it strives to find out the cultural models that are at play in these conceptualizations. The study adopts a lexicographic approach which is complemented by usage-based insights where further explanation is needed to gain a more complete view of the meaning. Although there are research works that have already been conducted on Dholuo, it can be considered a rather underexplored language from a cognitive-cultural linguistic perspective. Some of the remarkable research undertaken on Dholuo are Omondi's (1982) analysis of the major syntactic structures of Dholuo, Okoth's (1982) study on Dholuo morphophonemics in a generative framework, Atoh's (2001) semantic

analysis of Dholuo nouns, and Oduor's (2002) analysis of the syllable weight and its effects in Dholuo phonology. Abudho (2004) has also done an analysis of Dholuo coordinate and subordinate complex sentences under the Minimalist Programme, and Ochieng (2016) observed the metaphorical euphemisms used in Dholuo HIV/AIDS discourse. Apart from these, there is none, to the best of my knowledge, that has been carried out on the conceptualization of HEAD or any other body-part terms. This research aims to fill this gap.

The article takes the following structure: After the present introduction, Section 2 discusses theoretical background. Section 3 describes the corpus and the methodology of the study. Section 4 presents the main findings of the study and, finally, Section 5 offers the conclusions from the findings.

2. Theoretical background

In this section I will briefly introduce the Dholuo language, and after that I will also briefly look at the role of metaphor, metonymy, and image schema in cognition. This discussion is followed by a description of embodiment hypothesis as proposed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), and the figurative extensions of HEAD based on cross linguistic studies. The section further delves into the basic questions of body part semantics as proposed by Maalej (2004).

2.1. Dholuo language

The language, which many people refer to as Luo, is actually Dholuo. *Dho-* is a prefix for the noun class, it is a reduction of *dhok* which literally means 'mouth' but, in this case, means "language of...". Dholuo is, therefore, the language of the Luo people. It is a Nilotic language spoken by the Luo people that traces its roots to Southern Sudan (Greenberg 1966: 85). The language is among the languages of the Nilotic branch and specifically the Nilotic sub-branch belonging to the Eastern Sudanic family. Dholuo has two mutually intelligible dialects: Trans-Yala (TY) and South Nyanza (SN) dialects (Stafford 1967). Many scholars, among them Oduol (1990), have pointed out that the South Nyanza dialect is the standard dialect as it is used by a majority of the Luo population and is considered "socially" prestigious. It is the dialect used in Dholuo literature including the Bible and radio broadcasts.

2.2. Metaphor, metonymy and image schema in cognition

Metaphor involves understanding an abstract concept based on another, which is rather concrete, and this understanding is based on the perceived similarities

between the two concepts (Lakoff & Johnson 1980). The concrete one is the source domain and the abstract one the target. Metaphors are thus a major indispensable part of our ordinary, conventional ways of conceptualizing the world, they ensure that our everyday behavior reflects our metaphorical understanding of experience. Lakoff and Johnson (2003: 4) state that “primarily on the basis of linguistic evidence, we have found most of our ordinary conceptual system is metaphorical in nature. And we have found a way to begin to identify in detail just what the metaphors are that structure how we perceive, how we think, and what we do”.

Metonymy, on the other hand, is not anchored in perceived similarity but rather spatial, temporal or conceptual contiguity within the same conceptual domain. Radden and Kövecses (1999: 21) define metonymy as “a cognitive process in which one conceptual entity, the vehicle, provides mental access to another conceptual entity, the target, within the same cognitive model”. There are two basic metonymic mappings: PART FOR WHOLE and WHOLE FOR PART. Barcelona (2005) introduces the aspect of metonymic chain which they refer to as “direct or indirect series of conceptual metonymies guiding a series of pragmatic inferences” Barcelona (2005: 328). As pointed out by Brdar-Szabó and Brdar (2011: 229): “[t]his term has also been used in a different, more specialized sense in metonymy research”, as documented, among others, in Reddy (1979), Radden and Kövecses (1999: 36), Nerlich and Clarke (2001, Ruiz de Mendoza and Díez (2002), and Hilpert (2007). What these scholars have in mind are mainly complex conceptual metonymies. It is stressed by Hilpert (2007: 80) that “these chains break up complex conceptual mappings into simple, well-motivated mappings with a strong experiential basis”. Such metonymic chains are called metonymic tiers in Brdar and Brdar-Szabó (2007: 229). The advantage of this terminology is the distinction between textual and conceptual metonymic chains which are considered by Brdar-Szabó and Brdar (2011: 229) as “two dimensions” which are “essential and inseparable”. These authors argue as follows: “Both the textual (horizontal or linear) dimension and the conceptual (vertical) dimension should be integrated into a comprehensive study of how metonymy works in discourse, i.e., in the study of metonymic networks [...]”. In this framework double and triple metonymies are defined as special cases of conceptual metonymic chains which are referred to as metonymic tiers or tiered metonymies and which are also “unified by common metonymic targets because the metonymic target of one tier serves as the metonymic source for the next higher metonymic tier”¹. Furthermore, it

¹ Cf. Brdar-Szabó and Brdar (2011: 234).

has to be mentioned that Nerlich and Clarke (2001) make a distinction between synchronic and diachronic metonymic chains and for the latter type they introduce the term serial metonymy.

Croft (1993: 348) makes a difference between metaphor and metonymy by considering metaphor as a cross-domain mapping and metonymy as mapping within one cognitive domain. Brdar (2019) summarizes some further differences between the two concepts by proposing that “it is widely accepted that metonymy is based on contiguity or association whereas metaphor is based on similarity. The two also differ in terms of the number of conceptual domains involved. The standard view is that metonymic mapping occurs within a single domain while metaphoric mappings take place across two discreet domains” Brdar (2019: 54).

Image schemas, as proposed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) are recurring structures within our cognitive processes, which establish patterns of understanding and reasoning. Image schema theory began with Lakoff and Johnson (1980) and was later developed by other scholars including i.a. Gibbs (1994), Gibbs and Colston (1995), Langacker (1987), Mandler (1984), Talmy (1983), and Lakoff and Turner (1989). All these studies tend to support the fact that image schemas inform how our minds organize information, knowledge, and memories and also how we relate percepts to concepts.

Metaphor and metonymy remain key issues in cognitive linguistics, as they are part of our everyday thinking and conceptualization of the world. They are both conceptual and cognitive processes. Even though metaphor and metonymy are considered distinct conceptual phenomena, they function together in many linguistic expressions. This complex interaction between the two concepts is discussed in several studies, i.a. Lakoff (1987) and Kövecses (1995). Goossens (1990, 2002) coined the term *metaphonymy* to capture the interplay between metaphor and metonymy. He proposes that the interaction between the two takes place in four ways, namely: metaphor from metonymy, metonymy within metaphor, demetonymization within a metaphor, and metaphor within metonymy. This is illustrated by Kövecses' (1986) example of the metonymy BODY HEAT FOR ANGER, which motivates examples like “he was boiling with anger” which can be demonstrated by metaphors like ANGER IS HEAT and BODY IS A CONTAINER FOR EMOTIONS.

2.3. Embodiment: the broader perspective

In a broader sense, Rohrer (2007: 27) defines the *embodiment hypothesis* as “the claim that human physical, cognitive, and social embodiment ground our conceptual linguistic systems”. Research on embodiment has steadily grown

over the years. Many researchers (Gibbs 2006, Johnson 1987, 2007, Kövecses 2005, Lakoff and Kövecses 1987, Maalej 2004, 2007, 2008, Sharifian et al. 2008) have carried out extensive studies on embodiment. In these studies, there is a considerable attention paid to the role that the body plays in conceptualization by humans. 'Embodiment' is a term that has been widely used in linguistics to refer to what Gibbs (2006: 1) terms as "understanding the role of an agent's own body in its everyday, situated cognition". This is to mean that it is the way the human body shapes our thinking and language use. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) and Johnson (1987) talk about the embodiment hypothesis which holds that the conceptual system and the linguistic structures are highly metaphorical, and that they are often based on the physical embodied processes. All in all, human beings understand the complex aspects of their everyday experience through their bodies. Lakoff and Johnson (1980: 112) argue that our conceptualization of entities in more abstract domains is based on concrete concepts which are more clearly delineated in our experience. Going by this view, body parts are one of the very first experiences humans have about their environment, and later on they play an important function in gaining impression about the bulk of the phenomena in the world. Gibbs (2006: 13) proposes, as already mentioned in the introduction, that bodies are not culture free objects since all aspects of embodied experience are shaped by cultural processes. Sharifian (e.g. 2011) strongly champions the connection between cognition, language and culture, and argues that human cognition is as much a cultural as it is an individual phenomenon. Gibbs (1999a) advances the claim that culture shapes our understanding of abstract concepts in our environment via our bodies by stressing on the interaction between mind, body, and culture. He argues: "Scholars cannot and should not assume that mind, body, and culture can somehow be independently portioned out of human behavior as it is only appropriate to study particular 'interactions' between thought, language, and culture, respectively. Theories of human conceptual system should be inherently cultural in that the cognition which occurs when the body meets the world is inextricably culturally-based" (Gibbs 1999a: 153).

2.4. Body part semantics and figurative extensions of HEAD

The issue of how the body is segmented into parts and part of parts is one that has been debated over time and has proved to be a complex topic. Kraska-Szlenk (2014: 15) poses that "any discussion of embodiment as well as of the extension of body part terms from a comparative perspective must first pose a fundamental question: what parts does the human body consist of, or, more specifically,

which parts are linguistically encoded?" Another big subject that arises is whether the body part segmentation is a language specific affair or is common to all languages. This topic of body part segmentation has been discussed by many, e.g. Andersen (1978), Brown (1976), Brown and Witkowski (1981), Enfield et al. (2006), Majid (2010), Wierzbicka (2007), and Wilkins (1996). These studies tend to agree that a basic vocabulary of body-part terms exists and occurs across numerous unrelated languages. It is also evident that the body partonomy is extensively subject to more cultural variation. The body part HEAD, what it entails and its boundary, has also been discussed. Majid (2010), for instance, claims that Aslan languages do not have a term for 'head' but only have a term referring to the part of the head covered by hair. This is evidenced in Majid (2010: 64) phrases such as: 'look through the head' meaning checking for lice or dandruff or 'cut head' meaning cut somebody's hair and not 'head.'

A number of studies in various languages have shown that the lexeme 'head' can be figuratively extended to create various meanings. In Hausa (Will 2019) it is evidenced that the HEAD is associated with LOCATION, UPPER PART, FRONT, PERSON, HUMAN CHARACTER TRAIT, SELF, REASON, and INTELLIGENCE. In Basque, according to Ibarretxe-Antunano (2012), the HEAD can be figuratively extended to mean PERSON, HAIR, FRONT PART, MIND, LOCATION EXTREMITY, and CENTER. Baranyiné Kóczy (2019) demonstrates that in Hungarian the HEAD is the SEAT OF INTELLECT/THINKING, which is represented by numerous metaphors of THOUGHT and THINKING.

The abstract nature of some conceptualizations of head in Dholuo is a result of grammaticalization. Traugott (2003: 645) defines grammaticalization as the process whereby lexical material in highly constrained pragmatic and morpho-syntactic contexts is assigned grammatical function. Heine and Kuteva (2002: 2) and Heine (2014: 16) define grammaticalization as the evolution of lexical items to grammatical forms. Further, the concept embraces even more grammatical forms from other relatively less grammatical constructions. The chief concern of grammaticalization is to demonstrate how grammatical forms arise over time and come to be structured as they are. Heine (2014: 16) offers a model which presents a four-stage grammaticalization process, including:

1. Extension: Here, linguistic expressions are used in new contexts with reinterpretations that are of grammatical value.
2. Desemanticization: In this case, a lexical structure is stripped of its semantic content.
3. Decategorization: Here, grammaticalized items are ripped off the important morphosyntactic properties typical of other members of its lexical class.

4. Erosion: In this process, the grammaticalized lexeme is phonetically mutated or reduced.

This is discussed in Section 4.3 of the article.

3. Corpus and methodology

This study investigates the conceptualization of the HEAD in Dholuo. It seeks to look at how the HEAD is extended to create new meanings in the language. The objectives are as follows: 1. to understand how the head is extended to both the external and internal domains, 2. to understand what imaginative structures, like metaphor, metonymy, image schema etc., are implemented in the conceptualization, 3. to understand which part or characteristics of the head is highlighted in various domains, and 4. to capture the cultural elements in the conceptualization. Although there are a number of research studies on Dholuo, there is no existing corpus for academic research yet. This article, therefore, employs a lexicographic approach which is complemented by a usage-based approach. For the present study approximately 80 expressions were randomly collected from existing dictionaries, collocations, proverbs, and sayings. Expressions were further collected from programs aired in Dholuo radio stations and from recorded songs.

4. Presentation of the lexeme *WICH* ‘HEAD’

This section deals with the different meanings from the extensions associated with *WICH* ‘HEAD’ in Dholuo. The Dholuo word for ‘head’ is *wich*, /wɪtʃ/ and *wiye* /wɪje/ in singular and plural respectively. In the genitive construction the word often takes the following forms: *wiya* /wɪjə/ for first person, *wiyi* /wɪji/ for second person, and *wiye* /wɪje/ for third person. as seen in examples (1) and (2).

- (1) *wi-ye*
 head-POSS.3SG
 ‘his/her head’
- (2) *wi-Ø Otieno*
 head-GEN Otieno
 ‘Otieno’s head’

While there is considerable empirical evidence about cross-cultural variation in the categorization of body parts, the basic meaning of the head is rather clear; it is the physical part of the upper human body. Many studies devoted to the

body part head seem to agree with this partonomy. In this research I consider the head basically as “the part of the body on top of the neck containing the eyes, nose, mouth, and brain”. In several languages, virtually all, there are numerous conceptualizations of the word ‘head’ other than just being the upper part of the body above the neck. Berthoz, Graft and Vidal (1992) emphasize that the head carries most of the sensory systems that allow us to function effectively in our three-dimensional habitat.

4.1. Meanings developed from metonymical extensions of *WICH* ‘HEAD’

Regular metonymic process is a common occurrence in many languages. There are cases where part of something becomes the name of the whole thing – PART FOR WHOLE, or vice versa, where the whole of something is used to make reference to part of it, always the salient part – WHOLE FOR PART. The whole for part metonymic process takes place in the conceptualization of ‘head’ in Dholuo.

4.1.1. *Wich* ‘HEAD’ for HAIR metonymy

In this case the term for HEAD is used to refer to part of the head, the crown, the part where hair grows, a case of PART-FOR-WHOLE metonymy. This is as in exemplified in (3) and (4).

- (3) *Mary o-dhi suko wi-ye.*
 Mary PERF-go plait head-POSS.3SG
 ‘Mary has gone to plait her hair.’

- (4) *Wi-ya dongo-∅ piyo.*
 head-POSS.1SG grow-PRS.1SG fast
 ‘My hair grows faster.’

Examples (3-4) present the WHOLE FOR PART metonymy where HEAD is used to make reference to a part of it which is the hair.

4.1.2. *Wich* ‘HEAD’ for PERSON metonymy

Kraska-Szlenk (2019: 119) opines that “because of its upper location and distinctive features such as hair color and style and facial features, the head stands out as a prominent part of the physical appearance of a person which triggers a cross linguistically common metonymy HEAD for PERSON”. She further asserts that, “while people with some of their body parts badly damaged or even lacking, they are unable to live without their heads” Kraska-Szlenk (2019: 145). From these assertions, the head is clearly one of the most important parts of the human

body. It is the uppermost part of the body, which is home to the brain and also bearing other human sensory organs, like the mouth, nose, ears and eyes, all of which play important role in the daily interaction by humans. HEAD FOR PERSON is thus a prominent metonymy across most languages of the world (Kraska-Szlenk 2019). In this conceptualization all human faculties are mixed and are undivided, for instance in example (5) emotional, moral, and intellectual faculties are combined. Here, it is more than one-step metonymy where HEAD could stand for WHOLE BODY which further stands for ENTIRE HUMAN BEING, including physical and psychological faculties.

- (5) *Wich e dhano.*
 head is human
 'One is as good as his/her head is.'

Example (5) is a proverb that has a metonymic description – PART FOR WHOLE (*PARS PRO TOTO*), where HEAD is used for HUMAN, and it can also be used as a proverb to show that one's head determines who he or she is, and the quality of head stands for the person's quality. In this case the head is considered the seat of BEHAVIOR, MORALITY, INTELLIGENCE, and ETHICS. This conceptualization of HEAD FOR PERSON can further be exemplified in (6).

- (6) *Jo-go many-o wiy-a nikech wach mar lo.*
 people-those search-IMPV head-POSS.1PL because issue of soil
 'Those people want to kill me because of land.'

In example (6) HEAD represents a PERSON, the one who is being sought after. This meaning may have risen from the fact that in the African traditions, Luo included, one of the prototypical and traditional ways of killing people was to cut off their heads. This can be seen in African folk tales, like the legendary *Luanda Magere* of the Luo community, where success in war was coming back with the enemies' heads. It thus suffices to say that when one is looking for another's head, they have the intention of killing them. The metonymy HEAD FOR BODY is at play in this conceptualization. In Hausa, a Chadic language spoken in Nigeria. there is the idiom *neman kai da wani* 'seeking a head of someone'. Hausa's dictionary meaning for the idiom is 'getting rid of cheaply', e.g. by willing to take any price. In contemporary Hausa language use it means 'wanting to get rid of something or someone' (Will 2019: 170).

Hilpert (2007: 77) talks about the regular process of chained metonymy that involves several conceptual shifts. This phenomenon is referred to in the framework developed by Brdar and Brdar-Szabó (2007) as tiered metonymy, as al-

ready mentioned above². The HEAD becomes a PERSON and a PERSON becomes SELF. According to example (7), the HEAD can be extended not only to mean a PERSON but also their PERSONALITY, IDEAS, and EMOTIONS.

- (7) *Wi-ye-wa ok winjre.*
 head-POSS.1PL NEG agree
 'We cannot agree on issues.'

In example (7), HEAD represents WHOLE PERSON, it stands for people who differ in reason, moral, and emotions. The tiered metonymy is evident here – HEAD becomes PERSON, PERSON becomes REASON/MORAL/EMOTIONS. They cannot 'put their heads together' meaning they differ on principles and ideas. Tiered head for person metonymy is further exemplified in (8-9):

- (8) *Wach pesa chando wi-ya.*
 issue money disturb-IMPV head-POSS.1PL
 'Money issue is bothering me.'
- (9) *Kes-na ma e doho chando wi-ya.*
 case-POSS.1SG which in court disturb-IMP head-POSS.1SG
 'My case which is in court is bothering me.'

Examples (8-9) present tiered metonymy of HEAD-WHOLE PERSON-PERSONALITY, the HEAD does not only represent the PERSON but also represents their disturbed PERSONALITIES, the people worried about money and court case respectively.

- (10) *Wi-ye o-wuo.*
 head-POSS.3SG PERF- LOOSE
 'He/she has gone mad.'

In example (10), HEAD is conceptualized as a MACHINE with bolts and nuts tightly connecting different parts of it together. A loosely tied machine is a malfunctioning machine and a good working machine has its parts tightly tied together. A WORKING MIND IS A TIGHTLY CONNECTED HEAD. Here the head is metonymically conceptualized not only as a whole person but further as the right state of mind. This presents HEAD-WHOLE PERSON-RIGHT STATE OF MIND metonymic tier.

- (11) *Wi-ye rach.*
 head-POSS.3SG bad/inappropriate
 'He/she is mad.'

² Cf. also Brdar-Szabó and Brdar (2011).

In Dholuo *rach* means 'bad' or 'inappropriate'. Here, GOOD/APPROPRIATE HEAD IS RIGHT STATE OF MIND. *Wich rach* 'madness', therefore, is an inappropriate state of mind. Here the HEAD is also the locus of sanity. It therefore represents the whole person who is not in their right state of mind.

4.2. Metaphorical extensions of *WICH* 'HEAD'

4.2.1. *WICH* 'HEAD' as the locus of reasoning

While many cultures associate the heart with emotion, the head is associated with reason. People tend to see reason as residing in the head since it is where the brain is located. This combination of head and brain thus presents HEAD AS USED FOR REASONING which also presents the notion of THINKING/KNOWING/UNDERSTANDING. The metaphor of HEAD AS REASONING in Dholuo can be presented via various conceptualizations of HEAD AS A LIVING ENTITY, A CONTAINER, A TOOL, A MOVING ENTITY, and A POSSESSED ENTITY.

4.2.1.1. *WICH* 'HEAD' AS A LIVING ENTITY: THINKING AS A LIVING HEAD

In various cases in Dholuo, the HEAD is conceptualized as a living entity and given such features as those of human. The head is considered a living thing which can die – this presents the metaphors HEAD IS A LIVING ENTITY and REASONING IS A HEAD BEING ALIVE where lack of reasoning and thinking maps onto a dead head. This is evidenced in the following example (12).

- (12) *Wi-ye o-tho.*
 head-POSS.3SG PERF-dead
 'He/she does not think.'

In this conceptualization the HEAD is a LIVING ENTITY, as such, a person described to have a dead head is thus considered to lack thinking, intelligence and understanding. Further, (13) gives the head the ability to grasp which is largely a human attribute. In this case knowledge and intelligence are presented as objects, that can be picked or grasped, thus, THE DEGREE OF INTELLIGENCE IS ABILITY OF ONE'S HEAD TO GRASP KNOWLEDGE. Again, the speed with which one's head grasps knowledge is the speed with which one learns.

- (13) *Ochieng wi-ye kwany-o.*
 Ochieng head-POSS.3SG grasp-PERF
 'Ochieng is sharp/quick to learn.'

HEAD is conceptualized as a LIVING ENTITY as it is presented as having the ability of being asleep and awake, this does not only present the metaphor HEAD IS A LIVING

ENTITY but also THINKING IS BEING AWAKE in which case lack of thinking maps onto a sleeping head. As illustrated by (14-15), a person whose head is awake is therefore considered one who is intelligent.

- (14) *Wi-ye o-chiewo.*
 head-3SG PERF-wake
 'He /she is sharp/intelligent.'
- (15) *Ng'at-cha wi-ye nindo.*
 Person-that head-POSS.3SG sleep
 'That person is a fool.'

4.2.1.2. *WICH* 'HEAD' AS A TOOL FOR REASONING

The head is also conceptualized as TOOL that has weight just like any other tool used by builders. It is easier to use a light tool for work, LIGHT HEAD is easy to use thus INTELLIGENT. Head is construed as an object of thinking and its weight counts for its efficiency, the lighter the head the easier it is to use.

- (16) *John wi-ye yot.*
 John head-3SG.POSS light/easy
 'John is fast/quick/sharp.'
- (17) *En gi wich ma-pek.*
 3SG POSS head REL-heavy
 'He/she is slow/not brainy.'

These examples present the metaphor: THE DEGREE OF ACQUIRING INTELLIGENCE IS THE WEIGHT OF ONE'S HEAD. The heavier one's head is, the less intelligent one is considered. This conceptualization is present not only in Dholuo but in other languages too. In Hausa there is a phrase *saukin kai* (lit. 'lightness of the head') which means 'open mindedness' (Will 2019: 163).

Aside from the weight, efficiency of a tool is also in its sharpness, here THE DEGREE OF INTELLIGENCE IS THE SHARPNESS OF THE HEAD ability to think is having the right tool, which is a sharp one. A blunt tool is insufficient. This is exemplified in (18).

- (18) *Nyako-no wi-ye bith.*
 Girl -that head-3SG.POSS sharp
 'That girl is brainy/sharp/intelligent/keen/clever.'

The conceptualization in example (18), probably, is born out of the fact that, traditionally, Dholuo speakers were blacksmiths, they were also hunters, gatherers,

fishermen and farmers, and in all these activities they used tools like hoes, swords, spears, hooks, and other sharp tools. The effectiveness of these tools was in their sharpness. These activities, evidently, have led to the conceptualization of head as a tool.

4.2.1.3. *WICH* 'HEAD' AS A CONTAINER WHICH KEEPS THOUGHTS

In many cases the HEAD has been conceptualized as a CONTAINER. In this container, thoughts, intelligence, memories, and data are stored. Here reasoning and memory are considered as located inside one's head. According to examples (19-20) information is kept in one's head.

- (19) *Nyathi-ni ni-kod namba-na mar simu e wi-ye.*
 child-this PERF-HAS number-1SG.POSS of phone in head-2SG.POSS
 'This child has memorized my phone number in his head.'

- (20) *Wach-no pok a-golo e wi-ya.*
 issue-that not-yet 1SG-remove in head-1SG.POSS
 'I have not removed that issue from my head.'

Further, this HEAD AS A CONTAINER conceptualization can be looked at from the viewpoint of the metaphor THOUGHTS ARE SATURATION IN THE HEAD. Here, the size of the container 'head' refers to the quantity of thoughts contained therein. Emptiness means having no thoughts at all which could further be extended to mean lack of knowledge or intelligence. This is seen in examples (21-22).

- (21) *Wi- ye diny.*
 head -3SG.POSS narrow/small space
 'He/she is shallow/unintelligent.'

- (22) *Wi- ye o-pong'.*
 head- 3SG.POSS PFV-full
 'His/her head is full of thoughts.'

These examples present us with the metaphor: THE DEGREE OF INTELLIGENCE IS THE SIZE OF ONE'S HEAD. Intelligence is considered a physical entity which is contained in the head and thus the smaller or narrower the container, the less intelligence contained therein. This expression is in examples (21-22). This presents the metaphors: HEAD IS A CONTAINER; INTELLIGENCE IS CONTAINED and KNOWLEDGE IS OBJECTS IN A CONTAINER.

Just like a closed container would not allow anything in or out, a blocked head does not only allow knowledge to enter it but also does not also allow knowledge to come out of it for use. This is exemplified by (23):

- (23) *Wi-ye o-dinore.*
 head-3SG.POSS PFV-block
 'He/she is blockhead/dumb/unintelligent.'

The example above presents an ontological metaphor where KNOWLEDGE is treated as a PHYSICAL OBJECT/ENTITY that is contained in the head. I find this example synonymous with the English 'blockhead'.

In Dholuo, conceptualization of LACK OF INTELLIGENCE has been associated with having water in the head. This conceptualization is also evidenced in other languages. Kraska-Szlenk (2019: 145) talks about Swahili example of *kichwa-maji* 'madman, lunatic' (lit. 'watery head', 'head of water'). 'Wet' is negatively evaluated and is considered unintelligence. Examples (24) therefore presents the metaphor UNINTELLIGENT IS WET/WATERY HEAD.

- (24) *Otieno wi-ye o-pong' gi pii.*
 Otieno head-POSS.3SG PFV-full with water
 'Otieno is foolish.'

In this example water is evaluated negatively as a weak thin liquid. It is considered tasteless weak and pale. For Dholuo speakers, therefore, tasty is considered less watery just like in their soup and tea, presenting us with the metaphor: HAVING WATER IN THE HEAD IS UNINTELLIGENT.

Again, in this language, lack of intelligence is associated with dirt in the head as opposed to having intelligence that is considered as having a clean head as evidenced in examples (25-26).

- (25) *Wi-ye o-timo chuodho.*
 head-3SG.POSS PERF-have mud
 'He/she is not intelligent/sharp.'

- (26) *Japuonj wi-ye liw.*
 teacher head-3SG.POSS clean/pure/clear
 'The teacher is wise/brainy/sharp/intelligent.'

Mud is dirt, thus, one who is not intelligent is considered to have mud in head as in example (25). Accordingly, intelligence, on the other hand, is described in terms of cleanliness of the head. When the ideas contained in one's head are considered clear, pure or clean, and their actions considered acceptable in the society, then they are judged to have clean head. This is exemplified in (26).

4.2.1.4. *WICH* 'HEAD' AS A POSSESSED ENTITY

This conceptualization presents the HEAD as a precious object that is possessed. Here, the metaphor THINKING IS POSSESSING A HEAD is evident. Not possessing the head, therefore, means no reasoning, hence little or no intelligence. This further presents us with HEAD FOR THINKING metonymy. In examples (27-28) the HEAD is conceptualized as a TOOL FOR THINKING and POSSESSING A HEAD means POSSESSING A TOOL FOR THINKING. INSTRUMENT OF ACQUIRING KNOWLEDGE IS HEAD, losing the head means no tool for thinking, hence little or no intelligence. The head is thus conceptualized as a precious object that is possessed and which is used for thinking.

(27) *Onyango wiy-ye o-lal.*
 Onyango head-POSS.3SG PERF-lost
 'Otieno is foolish.'

(28) *Nyathi-ni wi-ye onge.*
 child-this head-POSS.3SG absent/missing/lacking
 'This child is foolish.'

4.2.1.5. *WICH* 'HEAD' AS A MOVING ENTITY

Here, THINKING/REASONING IS MOTION/MOVEMENT. A thinking head is in constant motion. (29) presents thinking as also based on movement of one's head. When the head is stuck, thinking is considered curtailed. MOVING HEAD IS A THINKING HEAD. This movement of the head should also be in a reasonable speed. Slow speed like in (30) presents slow reasoning. In (31), likewise, head moving too fast is reckless.

(29) *Ng'at- no wi-ye o-moko.*
 person- that head-POSS.3SG PFV-stuck
 'The person is slow/not sharp/not intelligent.'

(30) *Wi-ye dhi-θ mos.*
 head-POSS.3SG move-PRS.1SG slow
 'He/she is slow in thinking/not a fast learner.'

(31) *Wi-ye dhi matek.*
 head-POSS.3SG go fast
 'His is rash/reckless.'

4.2.2. *WICH* 'HEAD' as the locus of memory

Memory is an issue that presents us with a mixture of intellectual and emotional aspects of life. There are various expressions in Dholuo, like that in example (32), which present the head as the locus of memory and thought.

- (32) *Wiy-e o-wil*
 head-POSS.3SG PFV-???
 'He/she has forgotten something.'

Wich wil 'forgetfulness' is an idiomatic expression whose meaning of individual words is hard to determine. *Wil* for instance does not appear as a single word in the available Dholuo dictionaries but used together with *wich* brings out the meaning of 'forgetfulness'. While in some languages, memory is a function of the heart, it is clear from the expression that in Dholuo it is a function of the head. This is further shown in:

- (33) *Ndiki wach-ne-no e wi-yi.*
 write issue-3SG-that on head-POSS.2SG
 'Keep his/her issue in your memory.'
- (34) *Pod a-kano wach-no e wi-ya.*
 still 1SG-keep issue-that in head-POSS.1SG
 'I still remember that issue.'
- (35) *Wach gop-i a-serucho e wi-ya.*
 issue debt-2SG 1SG-PERF-rub on head-1SG
 'I have forgotten about your debt.'
- (36) *Nyathi-ni o-mako-Ø wend-no te gi wi-ye.*
 child-this 3SG-catch-PERF song-that all with head-POSS.3SG
 'This child has memorized the whole song.'

Examples (33-36) present thoughts as inanimate objects stored in the head. Thoughts can be placed or written in the head or removed/rubbed from the head. These examples further present the head as a container as has already been discussed.

4.2.3. *WICH* 'HEAD' as the locus of emotions

Lakoff and Johnson (1980) give the metaphors: *SADNESS IS DOWN*, *HAPPINESS IS UP* which is rather universal. This is evident in the posture and the position of the head in relation to emotion in Dholuo. Pride and joy are associated with upright posture of the head while shame and sadness are associated with droopy head. This presents the metaphor *BODY POSTURE FOR EMOTION*, as seen in examples (37-39):

- (37) *Saa mane i-somo ne ketho ne o-lung'o wiy-e piny.*
 time when PST.IMPV-read for offence PST PERF-lower head-POSS.3SG down
 'He lowered his head when his offences were listed.'

(38) *Yombo mar Obama o-ting'o wi-wa malo.*
 win for Obama PERF-lift head-POSS.1PL up
 'Obama's victory made us proud.'

(39) *Nyaka-ne ko-re yud loch sani o-wuotho ka wi-ye ni malo.*
 since-PST side-POSS.3SG get victory now 3SG.PERF-walk when head-3SG is up
 'From the time his/her side/team won he/she walk with pride.'

In these examples the upright position of the head is associated with pride and joy, while drooped head is associated with embarrassment or shame. Example (37) presents the emotion of shame, a negative emotion. The drooping of the head as a result of shame presents the metaphor *DOWN IS NEGATIVE/SHAMEFUL*. Examples (38-39) show that pride is experience with head in an upright position as opposed to shame, thus *UPRIGHT IS POSITIVE/PRIDE*. King (1989: 136) says that a person who is happy lifts his or her head up, Barcelona (2003: 43), on the other hand, opines that sadness is associated with drooping bodily posture which affects both the shoulders and the head.

Aside from movement of the head, experiencing an emotion is also seen to have a connection to physically felt body sensation. Researchers like Lakoff and Johnson (1980), Johnson (1987), and Kövecses (2000, 2005) have shown that there exists a metonymic connection between certain body parts and the experience of some emotions. In Dholuo it is evident that the swelling of the head stands for embarrassment; while fat head stands for a flattered person as exemplified in (40-41):

(40) *Wi-ye o-kuot.*
 head-3SG.POSS PERF-swell
 'He/she is embarrassed/humiliated/ashamed/disgraced.'

(41) *Wek pugo wi-ya.*
 don't fatten head-POSS.1SG
 'Don't flatter me.'

Experiencing an emotion has a metonymic connection to physically felt body sensation. In example (40) swelling of the head is considered caused by embarrassment – *wichkuot* in Dholuo is 'embarrassment/humiliation/shame or disgrace'. As for example (41) flattering is considered fattening one's head. This conceptualization, I believe, stems from the fact that culturally the Luo consider fat as special, for instance, traditionally, they slaughtered fat animals to mark special cultural occasions as childbirth and marriage. A respected guest is also slaughtered for a fat animal (sheep, cow or goat).

The emotion of anger has been equated to heat presenting us with the metaphor ANGRY IS HOT HEAD. Here hot depicts anger and its location in the head clearly shows that head is also the locus of the emotion of anger.

- (42) *Kwe wi-yi!*
 cool head-POSS.2SG
 'Calm down/sober up!'

This example present HEAD FOR PERSON metonymy. The head stands for the whole person, it also shows that low temperature stands for emotional control.

4.2.4. *WICH* 'HEAD' as the locus of character traits

Here, there is also the tiered metonymy, the HEAD is used for the WHOLE PERSON then to PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS. Most personal characteristics reflect somebody's ability for reasoning and thinking which is already listed and there are other few examples.

- (43) *Wi-ye wach.*
 head-POSS.3SG sour
 'He/she is rough/troublesome.'

A sour taste is considered unpleasant for the mouth, in the Luo community sour milk and porridge are part of their staple foods but when it is overly sour it is normally neutralized with fresh milk or water. Again, this sour milk is not served to children and people with certain illnesses. This probably informs this conceptualization of 'sour head' to be roughness or troublesomeness. The English speakers also have idioms like 'go/turn sour' which mean to 'stop being pleasant or working properly'. Example (43) therefore presents a sour head as that which presents a rough and troublesome personality that is not a welcome behavior in the society.

The head is also used to conceptualize the character trait of stubbornness. Example (44) shows this:

- (44) *Wi-ye tek.*
 head-POSS.3SG hard
 'He/she is stubborn.'

This example presents hard head as stubborn. Its hardness is indicative of resistance to persuasion. Society expects people of good moral to show some degree of softness of the head. This conceptualization of stubbornness as

based on hardness of one's head can thus be captured by the metaphor STUBBORNNESS IS HAVING A HARD HEAD.

4.2.5. *WICH* 'HEAD' as location

There are meanings developed from HEAD understood as LOCATION in Dholuo. From these extensions many meanings arise in reference to its position in space. Heine (1997: 41) states: the "head is the topmost part of a human being and the frontmost part of an animal and that is why it is frequently associated: FRONT and TOP". The conceptualization of *wich* as TOP of something is based on the metaphor HEAD AS LOCATION. Thus, as the head is the topmost part of a human being it is also the topmost part of an object. This is exemplified in (45-46).

(45) *Yien cha wi-ye o-wang'.*
 tree that head-POSS.3SG PERF-burn
 'That tree's top is burnt.'

(46) *Od-ni wi-ye kwar.*
 house-this head-POSS.3SG red
 'This house has a red roof.'

Wich can also be extended to mean the front part of something, a shift from its conceptualization as the top of something. Heine (1997: 46) explains this shift by saying that human body in its upright position is not perceived as being absolutely vertical but rather leaning forward – that is the way it is situated when one is running or walking rather than when one is standing. This as shown in (47):

(47) *O-tuomo wi mitoka.*
 3SG-hit head motorcar
 'He/she has hit the front of the car (bonnet).'

There is a further shift from the conceptualization of head as 'front of something' to 'beginning of something' like in the case of example (48) where speakers of Dholuo extend the head to name the part of the river where it begins:

(48) *O-lilo pi gi e wi aora.*
 3SG-soil water from on head river
 'He/she has made water dirty upstream.'

The HEAD in Dholuo is also extended to make reference to locative positions. Here, again, the metaphor OBJECTS FOR HUMAN BEINGS is at play. Going by this association, when things are situated on top of objects like tables, cupboards,

chairs etc., they are talked about as being on the heads of such objects like 'head of cupboard'. This is what (49-52) exemplify:

- (49) *Wi kabat o-lil.*
 head cupboard 3SG-dirty
 'The top of the cupboard is dirty.'
- (50) *Buk ni e wi mesa.*
 book is on head table
 'The book is on (top of) the table.'
- (51) *Ne o-chungo mitoka e wi olalo.*
 PST 3SG.PERF-park car on head bridge
 'He/she parked the car on the bridge.'
- (52) *Wuon-wa nind-o e wi kom.*
 father-POSS.1PL sleep-IMPV on head chair
 'Our father is sleeping on the chair.'

Spatial and locative extensions of the head in (49-52) can further be thought of as triggered by the metaphoric mapping of HEAD AS TOP, UP, ABOVE. Here, the vertical schema also comes into play where Dholuo speakers consider the top part of different things as the head. In examples (49-51) *wich* 'head' has been used to refer to the topmost part of the cupboard, table, and bridge, respectively. It should be noted, with respect to (52), that most of traditional African chairs do not have backs, so the sitting part is probably the topmost part.

4.2.6. *WICH* 'HEAD' as a unit of measurement

Maalej (2014: 228) posits that "the word 'head' in various languages is often used as a classifier of objects and typically occurs with numerals as in Tunisian Arabic *raaS bSall* 'onion head' *raaS bruklu* 'cauliflower head', and English *three head of cattle*". This motivation to use head to classify objects could be out of metaphorical mapping occasioned by the similar shape shared by these objects and the head, the round shape but often not the size. Most objects classified in this manner are thus fruits and vegetables which have a round shape as that of the human head. The meaning in example (53) is motivated by metaphorical mapping that makes reference to cabbage as head in terms of the similarity in the round shape of the head and that of the cabbage:

- (53) *A-dwaro alot kabich ma wi-ye duong.*
 1SG-want vegetable cabbage REL head-3SG big
 'I want a big sized cabbage.'

Head as an upper part of an item is not only because of the topological position of the human head but also its important role as a carrier of loads. Kraska-Szlenk (2014: 112) shows that the top position makes the human head ideal for carrying loads. This has given rise to meanings of head as location, a place where something can be placed. This is coupled with the fact that in many African cultures, Luo included, loads are often carried on the head. Uncountable things like firewood and grass are often tied with ropes as bundles fit to be carried on the head. This creates a unit of measurement that can thus be defined as something that is appropriate to carry on one's head. For example in (54-55):

Ne o-keko lum wiy-e adek.
 PST 3SG.PERF-bring grass head-PL three
 'He/she brought three bundles of grass.'

(54) *Wa-dwaro yien wiy-e ariyo.*
 1PL-want tree head-PL two
 'We want two bundles of firewood.'

Just as people use their physical heads to carry material loads, as demonstrated in the examples above, the head is also conceptualized as the carrier of non-material loads – responsibilities or problems in Dholuo. It is considered the body part where responsibilities and problems are located. This is as seen in (56-57):

(55) *Ting mar jo-nyuol-na ni e wi-ya.*
 burden of PL-parent-POSS.1SG is on head-POSS.1SG
 'The responsibility of taking care of my parents is on me.'

(56) *En gi ting ma-pek mar rito ki-ye mang'eny.*
 3SG has burden REL-heavy of IMPER-care orphan-PL REL-many
 'He/she has the heavy responsibility of taking care of many orphans.'

4.2.7. *WICH* 'HEAD' as title, chapter or heading

Here is a similar conceptualization which relates to the central issue of head being the most important part of one's body. It also used to make reference to the title, chapter or heading of songs, stories or bible readings. However, these conceptualizations also stem out of the idea that titles and headlines do not only appear at the beginning but also at the top of such songs and stories. This is seen in the following examples (58-59):

(57) *Wi-Ø wer ma gi-wer en kwe.*
 head-GEN song REL 3PL-PERF.sing is peace
 'The title of the song they have sang is peace.'

- (58) *Wi-Ø sigana ma o-gan kawuono en ang'o?*
 head-GEN story REL PERF-told today is what
 'What is the heading of the story told today?'

4.3. Grammaticalization of *WICH* 'HEAD'

Grammaticalization involves embedding into grammar of a once no grammatical phenomenon. Haspelmath (2004: 26) terms it as a diachronic change by which parts of a constructional schema come to have stronger internal dependencies. Kraska-Szlenk (2014a, 2014b) opines that the domain of spatial orientation seems to be the most significant target domain in the grammaticalization of body part terms as evidenced by innumerable languages of the world. In Dholuo, *wi* /*wɪ*/, which is also a genitive preposition is used to mean 'upon' or 'on top of' however, there is also the conceptualization of HEAD as ahead of or front of something. This is in respect to the direction of movement of something, as illustrated by examples (60) and (61) below:

- (59) *Ka i-dwa chungo dho-go to chung'e wi-gi.*
 if 2SG-want stop cows-those then stand in head-POSS.3PL
 'If you want to stop the cows then stand in front of them.'

- (60) *Dhako-no o-ringo e wi-wa ma o-wuoyo gi ruoth.*
 woman-that PERF-run on head-POSS.1PL REL PERF-talk with chief
 'That woman has gone ahead of us and talked to the chief.'

Example (60) talks about a locative position which is a point in front of the cows in the direction they are moving, in (61) the head is used to refer to time, the time before other people's action.

The HEAD in Dholuo can also be extended to mark the TOPIC of conversation. In this case it corresponds to the English preposition *about*. This conceptualization is motivated by the fact that people normally come up with an issue first then its discussion follows. Examples (62) and (63) demonstrate this.

- (61) *Wa-wuoyo e wi Otieno.*
 we-talk.IMPF on head MN
 'We are talking about/discussing Otieno.'

In example (62) the HEAD FOR PERSON metonymy is used where the head of the person under discussion is used to represent the whole person, in (63) however the head is metaphorically used to represent the concept of the topic that is under conversation.

- (62) *Gi-dwaro wuoyo e wi wach mar liel.*
 3PL-want.IMP talk on head issue of funeral
 'They want to discuss the issue of the funeral.'

It is worth noting that, sections 4.2.5, 4.2.6 and 4.2.7 that are previously mentioned are also, to some extent, cases of grammaticalization albeit not fully. *Wich* HEAD AS LOCATION (4.2.5) for instance, can also mean 'above', i.e. 'above the cupboard, table and bridge' in examples (49, 50 and 51) respectively where part of the physical entities (cupboard, table and bridge) are used as space. This makes the meaning more abstract hence classical cases of extension and desemanticization processes of grammaticalization. Further, although HEAD AS TITLE, CHAPTER OR HEADING 4.2.7 also seem abstract, in often cases they are written down thus visualized. Their reference as head probably is because they integrate the main part and are vertically the topmost part of songs and stories as in examples (58-59).

4.4. Infrequent extensions of HEAD

These are extensions that are rather infrequently used in Dholuo. For instance, while many languages use head to refer to the most important person in an organization or country, for example English 'head of state' and 'head of department', such kind of reference does not exist in Dholuo. Other languages like English tend to present leadership in a vertical top-down manner, with the most senior person being the head/at the top and the rest working under him/her. Dholuo, on the other hand, presents leadership horizontally with the leader in front and others following him/her. The only examples given, in which the leader is referred to as head in Dholuo are thus from religious books like bible, and are standard across languages.

- (63) *Dichuo e wi dhako mana kaka Kristo e wi kanyakla jomao-yie kuome.*
 man is head woman just like Christ is head together people-who 3PL-agree
 'For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ is the head of the church.'

(Joefesos/Ephesians 5:23)

Example (64) is a famous/popular? Bible verse mostly used in weddings, it says that the husband is the "head" of the wife, and thus wives should submit to them. It brings out the concept of interpersonal relations, husbands as given "power" over their wives.

- (64) *Kristo e wi od- ni.*
 Christ is head house this
 'Christ is the head of this house.'

Example (65) presents the metaphor HEAD IS SUPREME POWER, here Christ is said to be the head of the house to mean people of the house consider themselves under the protection of Christ. They acknowledge and submit themselves to Christ.

5. Conclusions

This article focused on the conceptualizations of *wich* 'HEAD' in Dholuo. The analysis has demonstrated that in the language the HEAD can metonymically and metaphorically be extended to mean a number of notions like HAIR, LOCATION, UPPER PART, FRONT, BEGINNING, AHEAD, UNIT OF MEASUREMENT, WHOLE PERSONALITY, REASON, INTELLIGENCE etc. It is also proven that there exist certain infrequent extensions borrowed from other cultures like the Christian Bible. These extensions prove that the conceptualization of HEAD in Dholuo is richly polysemous. From the onset, the study focused on both the metaphorical and the metonymic conceptualizations of HEAD. The results have demonstrated that the two concepts provide an appropriate understanding of the various conceptualizations of HEAD in Dholuo. The metonymical extensions show that the HEAD can be conceptualized as HAIR and PERSON, and it can also stand for concepts external to human, like LOCATION, UNIT OF MEASUREMENT, CARRIABLE QUANTITY, TOPIC, TITLE, and HEADING. The analysis of the metaphors of head shows that it is primarily connected to REASONING and in some cases to EMOTION and MEMORY. Fig.1. summarizes the metonymical and metaphorical conceptualizations of HEAD and it also highlights how they are conceptually linked to one another.

It comes from the data that some meanings like HEAD FOR LOCATION and HEAD FOR PERSON are more salient than others. The HEAD FOR PERSON is more prevalent because the head has always been considered the most important part of the human body home to the brain and major sensory organs like the eyes, ears, nose, and mouth. Aside from that, while one can survive without other body parts like, legs and hands, no one can survive without the head. This, I believe is the reason for the prominence of the HEAD FOR PERSON metonymy in Dholuo. Again, most of human behaviors are related to the head. HEAD is also metaphorically associated with LOCATION in the language and this is also prominent. It has been understood as TOP, UP, FRONT, BEGINNING and AHEAD which I believe this is due to the fact that the head is the uppermost part of the human body when sitting or standing. This aids the association of the head with the uppermost part of objects. REASON and INTELLECT have also been found to be key function of the HEAD in this language. There is also a rich source to the spatial experience connected to head for

example, UNIT OF MEASUREMENT and CARRIABLE QUANTITY seem to be culture specific. English *foot* and *inch* as units of measurements may come from probably universal experience as walking and measuring with hands however using the head as carrier for loads may not be a common practice in all in all cultures.

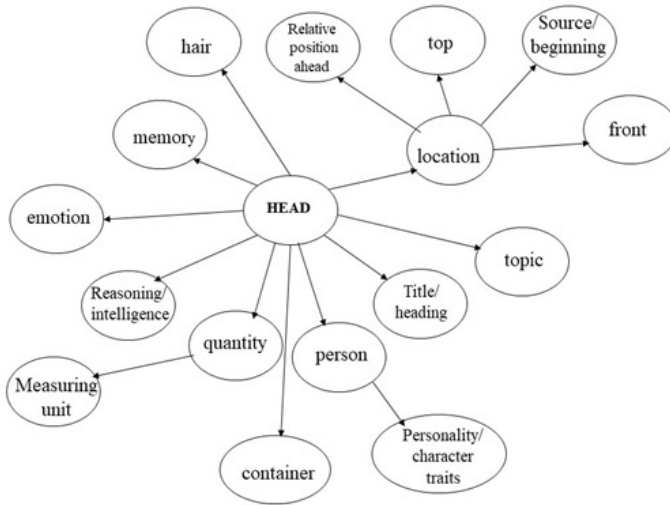


Fig. 1. The figurative extensions of head in Dholuo.

Among the metaphorical extensions HEAD FOR REASONING is the most outstanding one. Within this domain the head is conceptualized as LIVING ENTITY, TOOL, CONTAINER, POSSESSED ENTITY AND MOVING ENTITY. While EMOTION is represented only by a few examples, it is remarkable that swelling or fattening head represent contradictory feelings like shame and pride.

The article has also briefly pointed out that some meanings covered by *wich* that are found in other languages, especially those spoken in Africa, notably in the case of *kichwa* in Swahili and *kan* in Hausa, among others. Certain similarities were also found with languages spoken outside Africa like Basque in the case of *buru* or Hungarian in the case of *fej*. It is however my hypothesis that some of the conceptualizations discussed are unique to Dholuo language, however, cross-linguistic studies in future can prove this right or wrong.

It can be seen that the study of the figurative extensions of body parts are beneficial to understanding the semantics of a language and also systematically analyze

the cultural elements incorporated in language. The metonymies and metaphors involved in body parts highlight the way the Dholuo cultural community view the human body and its interaction with the environment. I suggest that further studies be carried out on other body parts in this language as they could also be richly polysemous and loaded with a lot of cultural meanings.

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