METAPHORICAL CONCEPTUALISATION OFYORUBA NATION SECESSIONIST AGITATION IN SELECTED NIGERIAN NEWSPAPER REPORTS

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Abstract

Research problem: *Yoruba Nation Secessionist Agitation (hence YNSA) has become an issue of concern for Nigeria citizens and government. Giving the newness of YNSA in the Nigeria space, little attention has been paid to its linguistic scholarship. Previous linguistic studies on YNSA mainly examined lexical choices, labelling and identity construction, with little attention paid to metaphorical conceptualisation. This study, therefore, was designed to examine Nigerian newspapers metaphorical conceptualisation of YNSA with a view to identifying domains of metaphor, how they are mapped and linguistic choices deplored.*
Method and theory: *Descriptive design was employed. Twenty-four reports from four Nigerian newspapers: Punchand Vanguard, from the Lagos/Ibadan axis, and Daily Trust (DT) and Blueprint, from the Abuja/Kaduna axis, (six each) were purposively selected and subjected to critical discourse analysis. Conceptual metaphor theory (CMT), complemented with relevant principles from Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG), served as the framework.*
Result: *Analysis reveals that YNSA is metaphorically conceptualised as: war, crime, evil, justice, politics, economy, ignorance, journey and violence.*
Conclusion: *Metaphorical conceptualisations cognitively tasked readers; human brain expresses understanding of one thing through another. Also, context constructs meaning, and culture is the spine for the establishment of context to which language is interpreted.*
Contribution to knowledge*: It provides valuable discourse clues to critics that media reports are human experience of a thing through another and cognitively persuade readers to a judgmental angle.*
Recommendation: *Work ethics enforcement among media actors to mitigate disinformation, discrimination, misinformation, as well as ethnic and religious colouration to news.*

Introduction

The growing in the Yoruba Nation Secessionist Agitation (YNSA) is worrisome to the Nigerian government because of its threat to national unity, peace and security. It is borne out of the dissatisfaction and moral conviction of the tribe that the Nigerian government has failed the people of Yoruba tribe.Their suspicion of marginalisation is as a result of their exposure to insecurity, terrorism, banditry, and the general socio-political and economic underdevelopment. YNSA is, thus, a nationalist movement to realise independence and sovereignty for the Yoruba race – Oduduwa Republic.Studies on civic engagements and secessionist agitations have majorly toiled the line of discourse strategies and ideologies (Chiluwa, 2022). YNSA became a common news on media platforms, conceptualised differently along worldview of each media actor. It has thus lent itself to linguistic scholarship. Newspaper reports on the crisis have observably reflected lexical and syntactic choices through which we understand one thing through the knowledge of other. Lexical/grammatical choices become crucial because they assign meaning to persons and things in their social interactions.Lakoff & Turner(1989) viewed that human cognition is organised in skeletal form, in conceptual schemas; such that, we express our understanding of one thing through the understanding of others. This presupposes that media representation of YNSA is not a rhetorical linkage of similarities of two phenomena but that language is inherently metaphorical. Banditry and Fulani herdsmen's incessant violent clashes with sedentary farmers in the South-West states have led to death of thousand, especially in the rural areas, while million have been made homeless (Oke & Olawale, 2019).Their daily exposure to banditry, kidnapping and terrorism, and Federal Government's failure to tame activities of the Fulani brought about YNSA. From the metaphorical lenses, Osisanwo, (2017c; 2020) reflected lexical/grammatical exploration of Boko-Haram terrorist activities and banditry, while Odebunmi (2010) engaged in the metaphor related to body parts naming. Our perception of reality is increasingly moulded by media-driven narratives. Framing news reports constitute forces that contribute to the production of social reality and interpreting them. Rallies that were strategically organised, both at home and in Diaspora, to agitate for a secession, dominated the media space, attracting linguistic scholarship. However, how YNSA and banditry have been metaphorically conceptualised by media actors has not been sufficiently explored. As a result, this study invested its interest in investigating how YNSA is metaphorically conceptualised by media actors.

Research problem

Secessionist agitations and security challenges in Nigeria have become a thing of concern for Nigerians, private bodies, Nigerian government and the whole world. Both local and international media outlets have incessantly taken an occupation in the reportage of violence agitations, civic and political engagements (Chiluwa, 2017; Osisanwo, 2020). However, discursive scholarships on civic agitation and secessionist struggles have not yielded equal proposition. Specifically, conceptual metaphorisation appears to be a linguistic/cognitive concept that has enjoyed robust scholarship, with explorations in different domains and contexts, such as terrorism (Osisanwo, 2017); media representation (Osisanwo 2020); ideological view of body parts (Odebunmi 2020). Related linguistic scholarship on YNSA reportage and or conceptual metaphor are: Osisanwo and Akano (2023 a & b), and

Osisanwo, (2017c; 2020), Odebunmi, (2010). Appraisal of available studies shows that YNSA has not enjoyed metaphorical study of language that sieve how media representations of the issue show understanding of one thing through the other and how representations persuade readers to an angle.Banditry means different things to different people and is understood in relation to culture and society. Hence, lexical/grammatical choices become crucial because they assign meaning to persons and groups in their social interactions.Newspaper reports on the crisis and insecurity have observably reflected lexical choices through which we understand YNSA through the knowledge of other.This study, therefore, was designed to examine Nigerian newspapers metaphorical conceptualisation of YNSA with a view to identifying domains of metaphor, how they are mapped and linguistic choices deplored.

Research objectives

With a view to explicating cognitive understanding of YNSA in the light of other experience of the world, the study aims at: (i) identifying conceptual domains through which YNSA is understood; (ii) explaining how the domains are mapped with YNSA; (iii) examine linguistic choices deplored.

Theoretical framework

Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT), complemented by MAK Halliday's transitivity system, served as the framework. CMT is committed to the view that human cognition is organised in skeletal form, in conceptual schemas (Lakoff & Turner, 1989). CMT relates to the way human brain is structured to function. The theory does not see metaphor as rhetoric of language that directly compares two things of similar characteristics, rather, it posits that language is inherently metaphorical. Human brain is believed to be wired in such a way that, to activate the meaning or action of a phenomenon requires the activation of human experience of other phenomenon. Lakoff & Johnson (1980) propounded the theory; their belief that human cognition is skeletally formed presupposes it is conceptually schematised. The schemas are cognitive models, each for understanding of human experiences of the world. Lakoff (1999), Grady (1997), and Kovecses (2002), posit that certain aspects of the source domain are mapped to the target domain while others are left unmapped in our understanding of a thing. It is our position in this work that every aspect from the source domain are mapped to the target domain in our understanding of a concept or an entity of the world, only that some schemas are foregrounded while others are backgrounded, based on degree of interrelatedness. The conceptual schemas are inter-dependence; each helping others in linguistic selection for a proper configuration of a message. Cognitive models are not conscious models; they are sub-conscious and are used automatically and effortlessly" (Lakoff & Turner, 1989). Thus, media messages on YNSA are properly activated through human experiences and viewpoints, such as war, politics, ignorance, crime, journey, justice, economy.Complementing CMT is Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG) which is a built on scholarly views, particularly on Firth' notion of language as system. For Halliday, grammar is described as system not as rules because every grammatical structure involves a choice from a describable set of options. Transitivity component belongs to the experiential metafunction and therefore is a resource for construing human experience (Halliday, 2004). In every media representation is human experience, interpersonal relationship and message. While CMT brings to fore, metaphorical configuration of human

experiences in media representation, SFG provides materials used by CMT to arrive at the identified conceptual metaphors.

Methodology

The descriptive design was employed. Twenty-four headlines and overline storiesof online editions of four Nigerian newspapers: *Punch*and*Vanguard*, from the Lagos/Ibadan axis, and *Daily Trust (*DT*)* and *Blueprint*, from the Abuja/Kaduna axis, (six each) were purposively selected based on national circulation and wide readership. The metaphorised YNSA activities are mapped from source domain onto target domain and are explained.

2.0 Literature review

2.1 Regional agitations in Nigeria and YNSA

YNSA is a nationalist movement to realise independence and sovereignty for the Yoruba race – Oduduwa Republic.The agitation rides on antecedents in the inter-ethnic relationships within the Federal Republic of Nigeria (Osisanwo & Akano, 2023a). Indeed, the crisis between Fulani herdsmen and the people of the southern states, on the first hand, and the ethnic hostility between the North and the South, on the other hand, have been for long.There had been allegation of Fulani's claim to ownership of the entire country. Thus, continue migration of Fulani to the zone and their daily attacks on people raised serious concern. Religious supremacy battle, tolling the ethnic ideological view, as well as perceived unequal distribution of socio-economic and political resources of the country have often been causing crisis. Compared to other regions, the South-West enjoyed relative peace. South-South has experienced conflict on the basis of resources; Christian-Muslim divides the middle of the country; civil war plagued the East; and recently, the Boko Haram insurgency in the North-East has forced the declaration of states of emergency on Yobe, Adamawa and Borno states; the South-West was only bedeviled by ritual killings and systemic kidnappings (Obarisagbon& Akintoye, 2019:5). However, recently resurged YNSA gained attention and gathered momentum following the frequent mass murder of Yoruba in their homeland, open grazing of cattle that disrupt farms and the killing of farmers, banditry, kidnapping and general insecurity in the Southwest states, alleged to be mostly perpetuated by Fulani. Apart from ethnic, religious and cultural dimension read to it (Olayoku, 2014:7), it is also said to be political (Akinkuolie, 2018). The political dimension considered Federal Government action and inaction to it as disappointing and intentional. Muhamadu Buhari as the president of Nigeria, and being of Fulani origin, is considered to be intentional about the activities of the group and his inattentive to the killings (Akinkuolie, 2018). People became agitated, instigating their state and local government authorities to take action for adequate security, irrespective of federal security apertures. Among efforts to address this issue by governors in the zone let to the creation of *Amotekun* security outfit. Yet, both *Amotekun* and federal security apparatus seem incapable. Considering Government to have failed, there was a desperate need for a leader, and so the stepping in of Sunday Adeyemo, popularly known as Sunday Igboho, was welcomed, irrespective of his acclaimed political thuggery (*Punch*: February 12, 2021, p.3). Sunday Igboho strategically held several rallies, both at home (Oyo State: 17 April; Ogun State: 1 May; Osun State: 15 May; Ondo State: 22 May; Ekiti State: 5 June; Lagos State: 3 July, 2021) and in diaspora (*One Million Man March* held at the United Nations headquarters in New York on 14 September 2021, among others across world's continents). YNSA gained local and

international attention. This led to consciousness raising; within a short space of time, people were massively mobilised and different pro-Yoruba nation groups sprang up across the globe to end the perceived marginalisation, Islamisation, Fulanisation.YNSA became threatening to Nigerian government, national unity, peace and security. Thus, stories regarding YNSA and banditry in Southern Nigerian communities, qualifies as secessionist discourse, became commonplace in the news media and on social media platforms. This study, therefore, examined metaphorical conceptualisation of Yoruba Nation Secessionist Agitation.

3.0 Data Presentation and Analysis

In the data, nine conceptual metaphors relate to YNSA: YNSA as violence, YNSA as war, YNSA as journey, YNSA as politics, YNSA as (in)justice, YNSA as crime, YNSA as evil, YNSA as economy, YNSA as ignorance. These are represented in the figure bellow:

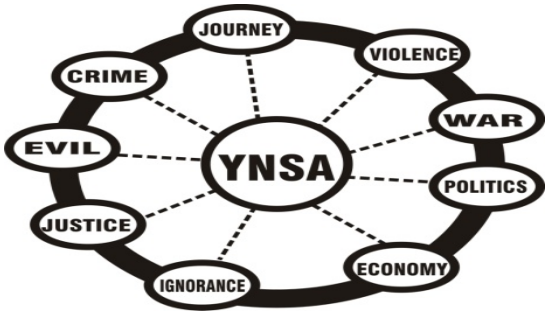


Figure 1: Self: Conceptualising YNSA

The diagram above represents newspapers' metaphorical conceptualisation on YNSA. From the domain of YNSA, media representations are a representation of the agitation as evil, journey, crime, politics, war, justice, economy, ignorance and violence.

Conceptualising YNSA from domain of violence

The source domain is violence while the target domain is YNSA. By violence perception to YNSA, I mean the deep seated knowledge about violent acts and YNSA acts. We observe that the media representations emanated from the pool of knowledge of everything that is violence driven to drive the representations about YNSA. Metaphor maps the source domain (violence) onto the target domain (YNSA) and makes the target domain appears in a new light. Violence is describes as action which causes destruction, pain or suffering. It is an extreme force, fighting and violation of law. It opposes peace and makes people live in fear of what is unknown. In this connection, lexical and syntactic choices that relate to violence are a manifestation of speaker's knowledge of violence that are used to express other thing about YNSA. These linguistic choices are exemplified in the data below:

1. *SELF-DETERMINATION: Yoruba agitators* ***storm Ibada, warn against*** *2023 polls.*(*Vanguard*: April 18, 2021, p. 4).
2. *The growing calls for secession by some Yoruba indigenes seem to have* ***polarized the region.(****Blueprint :* May 28, 2021: 5)

3. ***FG's threat*** *to Yoruba Nation agitators, - joke carried too far, Ohanaeze..(Punch, April 26th, 2021, p.4*).

4. *Igboho: Yoruba people '**ll no longer tolerate killing**,*

(*Punch, August 8th, 2021, p. 3*)

What indexes violence in the excerpts above include: "storm Ibadan", "polirised the region", "FG's threat", "ll no longer tolerate killing". Thus, we could say that the implicit assumption held in interaction about YNSA by the media actors is that of violence. In excerpt 1, the agitators are said to storm Ibadan, and are warning against election. The lexical choices, **storm**, and **warn** suggest the speaker' schematic imaging of activities related to YNSA derived from violence, from which he is able to construct his message on YNSA. In excerpt 2, we probed into news persona who observed that a region of people is polirised. This linguistic choice "polirise", constitutes a conceptual schema out of many. Other conceptual schemas from the same domain could include but not limited to "destabilised, troubled, vandalised. Our impression here is that, speaker pooled from violence related experience to project his message about YNSA, and by so doing, implicitly conditioning readers to seeing YNSA from violence angle.Also, that FG's reaction to YNSA is termed threat, and that there will no longer be tolerance for killing, all indicate the speaker's understanding of violence, which is instrumental to his linguistic choices, both lexically and syntactically. To "threat" is to be ready for breakdown of law, for fight, and for trouble. In the same way, intolerance for killing presupposes violence against killing, jettisoning of law and jettisoning of peace to put a stop to killing. Killing itself is violence ridden, and determination not to tolerate it any longer is to violently stop violence.It is thus believe that the speaker has experience of violence and its related acts. The violence perspective to it is to activate the positive effects agitation has to secession (excerpt 1), negative effect and associated risk to it (excerpt 2 and 3), as well as a positive means to stop violent killing (excerpt 4).Understanding of violence sub-consciously informed linguistic choices in the construction of the speaker's messages, and it is an exercise of power to use language to condition readers' understanding of the news.

Conceptualising YNSAfrom domain of war

The source domain is war while the target domain is YNSA. The speakers map the source domain (war) unto the target domain (YNSA) and pass different messages about YNSA. There is a consistent use of war-like grammar such as: ***agitators trooped,protesters armed, degenerate into war,*** **etc**. The expressions consistently pick linguistic selection from war related image schemas and war embodiments, as found in excerpt 5, 6, 7:

5. *Hundreds of **agitators trooped** to the city from the neighbouring Southwest states.*(***Punch*****:** May 23, 2021: 4).

6. Our correspondence observed *a handful of **protesters armed** with #BuhariMustGo and #YorubaNation placards on the streets of Abeokuta.* (*Daily Trust:*Wednesday, 09 Jun 2021: 3).

7. *Agitation for Yoruba Nation may **degenerate into war** if not well managed, Ladoja.*(*Blueprint:* May 14, 2021: 8)

The data above reveal "war" as the source domain while YNSA is the target domain. Construing YNSA from war perspective derives from the authors' sociological processes and cultural view of war. Contrary to some

submissions that certain elements of source domain are map to target domain while the rest are left, we believe in this study that every image schemas and embodiments about war are mapped before the speakers picked more related image schemas. War and its associated characteristics are well activated in the speakers' brain, before it selected those choices most suitable for the desired expression on YNSA.The declaration in the expressions relate the act "agitating for Yoruba Nation" to "warring"; the act of agitating, and the manner at which government agents attempted to repress the people are that which were fought like war.The reports use such choices like: ***agitators trooped, protesters armed, degenerate into war***to depict agitators as warring, while at the same time, uses construction like:**FG' threat,**to depict government as also warring or at war with agitators. However, there are consequences in this kind of situation where we all seem to agree with the metaphor that YNSA is a war. In war, attack is inevitable, it means violence and casualties at both camps are naturally acceptable.

Conceptualising YNSAfrom domain of politics

YNSA is also expressed from the domain of politics. We observe that culture and context of situation are influencing factors to conceptualising YNSA from political realm by speakers. Excerpts 8, 9, and 10 below exemplify how speakers' cognitive models put the comprehension of their experience and reasoning about YNSA in term of politics.

8. Why govs can't **openly support** Yoruba nation –Sunday Igboho.*(Vanguard:* June 5, 2021: 3).

9. According to him, the South-West governors could not openly associate with the agitators. He added that the **Federal Government might stop their monthly allocation, if the governors declared open support** for the cause. (*Vanguard*: June 5, 2021: 3).

10. Secession agitation,---**politically motivated**.(*Blueprint*, June 21, 2021, p. 6).

In excerpts 8,9, and 10, YNSA is understood in term of politics. Not that YNSA is politics itself, but the message(s) about it are a reflection of the media actors' understanding of politics. Thus, media bring readers into reading politics into YNSA. Politics in the Nigerian context have certain characteristics. And its knowledge in all ramifications has influence on how and why news are cast and interpreted along the line of thought. The mapping derive from the way brain is wired in such a way that human being expressesmessage about one thing through the knowledge of other thing. Politics in Nigeria context is associated with schemas like trick, supports, campaign, management of resources, motivated, deceit, secrecy, etc. all these and more are embodied and schematically imaged. This means that knowledge of a thing in the world is not isolated, but can only be expressed in relation to knowledge about other thing. While politics could be what is involved in taking over government and in managing affairs of the state, it can also be unhealthy manipulation of people's will. The fact that **govs can't openly support,** means that the said **"govs"** exhibit other form of support, which is not open. Those **"govs"** are also politicians, thus, it is political that they exhibit other form of support apart from open support. Excerpt 8 is a pro-YNSA that projected it as a popular, widely accepted movement, thereby encouraging readers to positively view it. Excerpt 9 is also a pro-YNSA, discrediting the opposition to it, and excerpt 10 is anti-YNSA that projected it as a

mere, calculated strategy to win election and hold public office.It is also said that "*Federal Government"* might stop their monthly allocation if they declare open support. FG is also politician, and to stop govs allocation meant for their states is politicking for holding on to power.

It is an ideological issue and drive readers into political colouration about the agitation. While the mapping of YNSA as evil presents it negatively, mapping it as politics trivialises it as popular and part of generally acceptable way of life. However, banking on the Nigerian context of socio-political culture, YNSA and reactions to it by FG are mapped as politics to project a very devilish act of holding on to power at all cost through various unhealthy strategic planning. Politics in the Nigerian context is a-do-or-die affairs, so when the reporters map politics with YNSA, it presupposes a political calculation by FG to discredit a camp, calculation aiming at ensuring people have no other choice than being at own mercy, thereby keeping them to what they are tired of.

Conceptualising YNSAfrom domain of economy

Economy is the source domain while YNSA is the target domain. Elements associated with economy include: economy as resources, gain, lost, profit, daily bread, daily activities, etc. these metaphorical embodiments and image schemas sub-consciously drove linguistic choices that expressed necessity for or against YNSA. Among such linguistic choices for economy conceptualisation of YNSA are: *resources for development*, new hustle, as exemplified below:

11. "We have **the resources to develop** our Yoruba Nation, but all these have been siphoned to develop another region.**(***Punch*, May 23, 2021: 4).

12. Biafra, Oduduwa Republic –'Liberation Struggle' - as the **new hustle**. (*Daily Trust*, May 17th, 2021, p.7).

Economy domain to YNSA in excerpt 11 derives from nationalistic tendencies to building a nation, which requires economic resources. Thus, the agitation is projected as a drive for economic control of a nation's resources. In excerpt 12, the agitation is viewed in a negative light, as a deceitful means by participants to achieve daily economic gain. The economic perspective, both positive and negative, posits the ideological view of the speakers and implicitly condition readers to interpretive angles. For the media actors to frame their messages about YNSA, their understanding of economy drove their linguistic selections, which then result in the proper construction of the message about YNSA. In excerpt 11, to have talked about having economic resources to develop YNSA, is to see the agitation about economy and development. And it is also economy metaphorisation to see YNSA as deceitful means to source financial gain from government (excerpt 12). The schematic organization of speakers brain into many conceptual schemas activate all economic related characteristics and connected closely related ones to express YNSA. Functionality of brain understands it as evil to some people, while it sees it as economy to other, Each based on human experience of the world around and with a view to exercise power in language use to force a perspective of interpretation. Lakoff (1999), Grady (1997), and Kovecses (2002), posit that certain aspects of the source domain are mapped to the target domain while others are left unmapped in our understanding of a thing. It

is the position in this work that every aspect from the source domain are mapped to the target domain in our understanding of a concept or an entity of the world, only that some schemas are foregrounded while others are backgrounded. .

To say that some elements are not mapped, is in itself, an indication that our knowledge of the concept maps those things. We wouldn't have known that some things are not needed in our intending meaning to be associated with the target domain, if we don't know they exist. Good knowledge of a concept or an entity of the world, full cognitive functioning of all conceptual schemas, the mapping of all conceptual schemas with the cognitive capacity, and the context of situation lead to foregrounding related image-schematic structures of the two domains and backgrounding unrelated image-schematic structures in the two domains. In other words, if only an aspect of a domain is mapped, it is as good as having little knowledge of the concept to be mapped, and having no complete knowledge of a concept is as good as having no knowledge of it at all. A medical term used in a particular way to the hearing of a non-medical individual is a good example of someone trying to conceptualise such. Only the meaning as used to the hearing of him determines the aspect to be mapped in his effort to do so. But a good understanding of a concept necessitates mapping everything known about such concept to other domains, while the context of culture, participant, situation, subject of discussion, and others, determine what our cognitive capacity foregrounds and backgrounds in our understanding of the target domain. It should be noted that, as Lakoff and Johnson stated, cognitive models are not conscious models, rather they are subconscious and are used optimally and effortlessly. Hence, to the cognitive, metaphor is primarily a matter of thinking and derivatively a matter of language.

Thus, in the assumption which says that in metaphorical expressions such as: **Theories are Buildings**, things like the number of rooms, attics or cellar that the building has, are not mapped, we wouldn't have come to the knowledge of their being mapped or not if they are not mapped. Our full knowledge of the word maps everything about it but our cognitive capacity takes the context into action to foreground related schematic structures of the two domains.It is then logical why the social actors in describing YNSAwould not properly construct their experiences of it but used economy related words in their expressions of YNSA. It is their good knowledge of economy and its various ways of manifestations that necessitates the grammatical choice. Their constructions that relateYNSA to economy indicate linguistics resources available to them in constructing their experiences, which is the ideational metafunction of language. The interpersonal metafunction is an explanation of their relationship with members of the society; their status, closeness and activity to their people, that brought about the way their experiences of the world is constructed. This talks about the tenor of interactivity. And the newspapers reportage covers the textual metafunction of language in this regards.

ConceptualisingYNSAfrom domain of evil

"YNSA, on the one hand, its causes (FG) or opposition, on the other hand, are configured from the domain of “evil". The phenomenon of “evil” along with every characteristics surrounding it are made available for users to express their messages on YNSA. Among the elements associated with evil are dangerous, wicked, bad, hatred, enmity and others. Evil opposes good, kindness, safety, etc. So, while

those opposing YNSA are seen from evil eye in excerpt 13, with a view to view the agitators from the good (opposite of evil) eye; excerpt 14 sees the agitators themselves from evil end because they are accused to be harboring "***deep-seated prejudice"*** between and among them. The newspapers reports conceptually metaphorise YNSA as evil. In the data, metaphor maps a source domain (evil) onto a target domain (YNSA), and makes the target domain or its causes appear as something wicked and evil. This is indicated through metaphorical expressions which portray agitators or opposition to agitators as morally corrupt, malevolent, wicked, selfish, who performed monstrous, nefarious, undesirable, inhumane, and malicious acts. Excerpts 13-14 exemplify the evil in the act that relate to YNSA or its causes.

13. We don't have anything to do with **those evils** again. (*Vanguard:* June 5, 2021: 3).

*14. The **deep-seated prejudices** among the micro-ethnic groups in Yoruba will resurface. (Blueprint:*May 28, 2021: 5).

The representations of YNSA in the excerpts do not only appeal to readers' emotion in a pitiable situation; but it also suggests a great threat to the lives of the persona in the excerpts. Excerpt 13 here is pro-YNSA, referring opposition to its cause as evil, while excerpt 14 is anti-YNSA, foregrounding evil within and among those people claiming to drive the same course. While the participants are represented as agitators, it is interesting to know that no one would encourage relation with anyone said to be evil. To refer opposition to YNSA as evil in excerpt 13 is to justify the agitation and condemn its opposition, while to say there is *prejudice* between and among same people fronting the same course is to accuse them of evil in excerpt 14, thereby condemning their agitation and justify oneness of Nigeria. With the media metaphorical representations of YNSA, we are able to see the images formed by groups or individuals of others or themselves, and come in contact with their values, tendencies and attitudes regarding YNSA. Representation of participants or its opposition as evil ideologically projected the angle media actors want readers to judge YNSA.

Conceptualising YNSAfrom domain of crime

YNSA or opposing is conceptualized from the domain of. Metaphor mapped crime and its related characteristics to YNSA with a view to either encourage YNSA against criminals who are opposition to it, or with a view to encourage opposing it having seen YNSA as crime. It then becomes associating YNSA or its opposition to criminal related acts. Our efforts here analyses how language expresses idea of YNSA or its opposition in the light of all that is known with crime, as well as how criminal activation to it is an exercise of power in language with a viw to either encourage or discourage YNSA. Although, crime is a regular occurrence in society, however, it is an evil every society fights. This relates to the view that those agitating or those opposing their course are 'murderers' and 'criminals' who commit 'murderous crimes'. Who is a criminal? A criminal's actions and in-actions are harmful to people. But when a criminal becomes the leader of the society, the powerless citizens endure criminality and celebrate attacks on their welfare. They become 'crime victims', yet celebrate their doom. Excerpt 15,16, and 17 exemplify the metaphorisation of YNSA or its opposition as crime.

15. *"We have the resources to develop our Yoruba Nation. But **all these have been siphoned to develop another region.*** **(*Punch:*** May 23, 2021: 4).

16. *Yoruba Nation Agitation* ***Suicidal*** *- Council of Elders.* (*Daily Trust, April 3rd, 2021, p. 5*).

17. *Nigerians must* ***rise against*** *secession-Group.(Blueprint, June 09, 2021: 4)*

In excerpt 15, that fact that some people's resources are said to have been "siphoned" to other people, is a criminal act. To siphon is to steal,which is criminal. In excerpt 16, to commit suicide is also a criminal offence, and in excerpt 17, to construct necessity for a group of people to rise against a course presupposes that such course is evil. Thus, *Punch,Daily Trust*and *Blueprint* newspapers reporters manage the voice of newsworthy group of people (We, *Council of Elders, Group),* to nominate, activate and criminalise the activities for or against the agitation. The report identifies FG as criminal in excerpt 15 but agitators themselves are identified as criminals in excerpts 16 and 17.

Conceptualising YNSAfrom domain of justice

YNSA frommdomain of justice, at one point; YNSA from domain ofinjustice at other point, is other conceptual metaphors foundin the newspapers reportage that constitutes the corpus. The mapping of YNSA to justice, by pro-YNSA, presents it as a right, legitimate and lawful act against dominance and exploitation, while the anti-YNSA advocates unity of Nigeria instead of agitation. The pro-YNSA in their construction of message about it, metaphorised it in the light of justice, relating it to the view that people are cheated by bad government of the country, and by the inaction against frequent attacks perpetrated by the people of Fulani origin against the Southerners. This is why agitation is said to be a **case to be presented at *76th UN General Assembly,***and it is also referredto as *suit seeking referendum.* Justice is considered a legitimate blessing upholding society. Excerpts 18, 19, 20, and 21,exemplify both pro and anti-YNSA as (in) justice:

18. *Yoruba Nation to* ***present case*** *at 76th UN General Assembly. (Vanguard:* ……

19. Again, court adjourns ***suit seeking referendum*** *for Biafra, other nations. (Blueprint, January 20, 202: 3).*

20. *He lamented that Buhari supported the self-determination of Palestine* ***but ordered the arrest*** *of Yoruba Nation agitators.* (*Vanguard* :June 5, 2021: 3).

21. ***Minorities will suffer*** *if Nigeria split.I am a strong believer of one Nigeria.* ***We deserve policies that makes us strong,*** *even in our diversities. But this seems to be what we lack, but we better stay as one.* **(***Daily Trust,* June 12, 2021: 2).

Lexical choices used in the above expression, though not direct, but are meant to represent the metaphorisation of YNSA from the view of justice or injustice. The knowledge of the speaker about justice helped in their understanding and expression of YNSA. While excerpts 18 (YNSA presents case at 76thUN General Assembly), excerpt 19 (suit seeking referendum) framed YNSA as legal, legitimate course, and excerpt 20sees YNSA as justice but opposition to it as injustice, excerpt 21 framed YNSA as injustice against minority group, thereby suggesting dropping it as justice, and it is also seen as injustice against better policies with unity. The concern in this paper is not about who justify and who condemns, but in analysing how human brain expresses understanding of YNSA through the knowledge of justice or injustice.

Conceptualising YNSA from domain of journey

YNSA is also understood from the perspective of journey. A journey is an adventure with a definite goal and destination. A journey is meant to achieve a goal. The following excerpts exemplified YNSA as journey.

22. ***No going*** *back on one million protest at UN General Assembly — Yoruba Nation, IPOB, others vow.(Punch, September 9th, 2021: 5).*

23. *BuhariMustGo protests* ***afoot*** *in Ogun.*(*Daily Trust Newspaper,* June 12, 2021: 3).

To say "No going back" is to understand journey as movement, which could be forward or backward. And to say "protests afoot", suggests trekking in movement or journey. In a journey, there could be delay, there could be attack, there could be accident, there could be blockage, and others. It is our belief that all these elements are cognitive models that are activated for linguistic combinatorial possibility in the expression of YNSA. In this position, we oppose the view of some scholars that certain elements of the source domain are mapped while others are left. We believe that all the elements are readily available as user has experience about the source domain. However, only those that are mostly related to the proposed messages are cognitively connected for expression of YNSA. Thus, it is through the knowledge of journey that the speakers are able to construct their messages about YNSA. This is the position of CMT, that we understand one thing through others.

Conceptualising YNSAfrom domain of ignorance

Ignorance is another source domain while YNSA is target domain. Elements in this regards include novice, lack of information, lack of consequence or risk associated to an action, etc. To be ignorance of a course is to be a fool on it, to make stupid decision. Some social actors see YNSA as foolish, stupid decision. By extension, those agitating are referred to as fools, stupid people, thereby conditioning readers to see YNSA as a meaningless move by stupid, foolish people.

24. **Secession move idiotic**, Obasanjo tackles IPOB, Yoruba Nation Agitators. Says, *some of the agitators for the Yoruba Nation* ***don't even know what it means***. (*Daily Trust:* Wednesday, 09 Jun 2021: 3).

The agitation is said to be idiotic, those agitating for it are said to have no knowledge of it, and the persona in the excerpt does not believe in it, all of which suggest agitators as novice, fools, who do not have knowledge of their action and the consequences of it. Our concern is that, participantsbrain is able to form their message of YNSA through their knowledge of ignorance.Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) is committed to the view that human cognition is organised, in skeletal form, in conceptual schemas. Conceptual schemas "constitute cognitive models of some aspects of the world, models that we use in comprehending our experience and reasoning about it" (Lakoff & Turner, 1989). What this means is that language is inherently metaphorical. It is not a plan action of the speakers to link YNSA with ignorance but linguistic choices made available to them sub-consciously select from those that express other experiences of the world. So while these selection reveal their related experiences of the world, they also implicitly persuade readers to the side taking by user of media representation.

Conclusion

With Lakoff & Johnson's CMT,and relevant principles from Halliday's SFG, to analyse YNSA, findings reveal that YNSA has both positive and negative connotations. Findings also establish and support that context constructs meaning, and that, culture is the spine for the establishment of the context to which language resources are interpreted. The newspapers' metaphorical conceptualisation of YNSA as war, crime, evil, justice, politics, economy, ignorance, journey and violence cognitively tasked readers. Reader's experience in relation to YNSA has been linked to the understanding of one thing in terms of the other.

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