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**A Critical Discourse Analysis of Newspaper Reportage on Southern Kaduna
2016/2017 Killings**

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Abstract

Media discourse overtime has demonstrated great power in setting cultural guidelines and shaping political discourse. The political and powerful in Nigeria fully aware of the potential of the media and its tool – language, subtly but strongly imprint their views by having privileged control over public discourse via the media. This paper attempts to deconstruct covert ideologies which are hidden in newspaper headlines and lead news report on Southern Kaduna (Nigeria) herdsmen killings. The study adopted Fairclough's (1999) model of Critical Discourse Analysis as its theoretical framework. Four Nigerian newspapers (Daily Sun, The Nation, Daily Trust and Leadership) were selected purposively because of their wide circulations across Nigeria. 10 news headlines and 3 leads were drawn from the editions published between December 2016 and February 2017 through purposive random sampling technique. The period covers the peak of the killings. Findings of the study reveal that transitivity, apposition, idioms, naming and pragmatic hedging are used in the news reportage to exert the writers' ideological proclivities. In addition, these linguistic tools are used to control the reader's cognition while imprinting and strengthening the ideological stance of the dominant political and religious group – Hausa/Fulani and concealing the truth of the less privileged/dominated group – Southern Kaduna. The study therefore concludes and recommends that the media have the role of not just reporting what is new and sensational in the society, they need to investigate cryptic issues and report them in a way that solutions are easily deciphered. Also, the media should be wary of being manipulated by the government and should always investigate comments by politicians before they are reported.

Keywords: *Southern Kaduna, Killings, Ideologies, Dominance, Herdsmen*

Introduction

Edelman states that “Language is an integral facet of the political scene and not simply an instrument of describing events but itself a part of events, strongly shaping their meaning and helping to shape the political roles which officials and mass public see themselves as playing” (192). Language is used to influence, make or mar individuals and shape public opinions. Through language, emotions, feelings and ideological beliefs of individuals and groups are projected via linguistic expressions.

Critical discourse analyst uncovers hidden messages in texts through critical reading/listening, paying careful attention to linguistic and extra-linguistic features of discourse. Critical discourse analysis enables us to uncover what is actually the truth, what is false, what is ‘hidden’ or ‘absent’ or misrepresented in discourse which distort the truth. In addition, critical discourse analyst tries to deconstruct or otherwise, certain false beliefs that have been placed on the less privileged groups through political, social and religious motivated ideologies.

As our everyday lives become pervasively textually mediated, (Fairclough, 75), critical discourse analysis becomes pertinent so as to show the nature of texts presented in the media. Through CDA

we see who's the representations the news is, who gains what from them, the kind of social relations they draw people into. The ideological effects of such representations and their alternative representations are also revealed.

From the foregoing discussion, this paper attempts to deconstruct covert ideology which is hidden in newspaper headlines news report on southern Kaduna killings with particular reference to 2016 and 2017. The paper seeks to reveal how texts are constructed so that particular indoctrinating perspectives are projected covertly and delicately. Since they are covertly expressed, they are elusive of direct public challenge, consequently, they facilitate what is known as "retreat into mystification and impersonality" (Kress 1989 p. 57). The research attempts to uncover ideological biases infused into the framing reportage of southern Kaduna killings which tends to manipulate the readers to think otherwise about the situation.

Media Representation

POPP (2006 p. 6) avers that media language choice is an institutionalized means of framing reality. "in this light, framing social, political, cultural, economic and ideological realities highly depends on the language use of the mass media. Media framing refers to the angle or perspective from which the news story is narrated. Framing is an inherently ideological act which has a direct influence on how the story is investigated and reported. It informs on who the journalist chooses to speak to, what questions the journalist ask and how information is interpreted and reported. As a result of this, most news (stories) is value laden in both their production and content. Cissel (2012 p. 67) argues that the manner in which information is transferred to its recipient comes through various forms of communication framed to meet the goals of the providing source. "frame consists of a schema of interpretation, collection of anecdotes, and stereotypes that individuals rely on to understand and respond to events.

Framing defines how news media coverage can shape mass opinion. Framing influences public perception and serves as a vehicle for persuasion which has the tendency to create generalizations and stereotypes in the minds of its readers. according to Entman (1993 p. 51) "to frame a communicating text or message is to promote certain facets of a perceived reality and make them more salient in such a way that endorses a specific problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation and/or a treatment recommendation".

In modern day news reporting, framing is an instrument used by media and politicians to make salient points that would direct their readers to a desired frame of mind. Framing influences the mind of the readers on anything. This implies that although news provides certain representations of reality, the realities could be distorted through the use of biased framing strategies to suit the interest and values of a particular section of the society.

Framing strategy is most often used by journalists to cunningly make imbalanced representation, over-representation, or misrepresentation appear to be commonsensical, normal and natural when in fact the reality is prejudice and injustice (Ogungbe 2011 p. 47).

Theoretical Underpinning

Ideology

Ideologies are the basic frameworks for organizing the social cognitions shared by members of social groups, organizations or institutions Eagleton, (1991 p. 30, cited by Calzada 2003 p. 30), defines ideology as “ideas and beliefs which help to legitimate the interest of a ruling group or class by distortion or dissimulation”. Bloor and Bloor (2007 p. 10) see ideology as “a set of beliefs or attitude shared by members of a particular social group”. The theory of ideology which forms the discourse analytical approach of this paper is multidisciplinary. It is expressed within a conceptual triangle that connects society, discourse and social cognition in the framework of a critical discourse analysis (Van Dijk 1993b).

Ideologies are both cognitive and social. They basically serve as the link between the cognitive representations and processes underlying discourse and action, on one hand, and the societal position and interests of social groups, on the other hand. Social cognition is seen as the system of mental representation and processes of group members; the socio-cultural knowledge shared by the members of a specific group, society or culture. The ideologies are gradually acquired by members of a group or culture through a complex and long-term processes of social information processing and socialization. Ideologies mentally represent the basic social characteristics of a group such as identity, norm, values, position and resources (Van Dijk...2)

In addition, ideologies can be summed as representations of who we are, what we are, what we stand for, our values and what our relationships are with other groups; specifically, our opponents or enemies. That is, those who oppose what we stand for, threaten our interests and prevent us from equal access to social resources and human rights. Ideology is the representation of us and them a social group (Van Dijk, 1998 p. 69, cited in Tardy, 2009 p. 267)

Critical Discourse Analysis

There are a number of approaches to critical discourse analysis, henceforth CDA. Eminent and leading scholars in the field of CDA include: Teun A. van Dijk, Ruth Wodak and Norman Fairclough.

Robert Fowler’s work (1979) has often been cited as the starting point of critical linguistics which is the earliest and one of the most influential linguistically oriented critical approaches to discourse analysis. Fowler (1979 p. 90) aptly states that critical linguistics is simply an enquiry into the relations between signs, meaning, and the social and historical conditions which govern the semantic structure of discourse; with the aid of a specific type of linguistic analysis. Critical linguistics changed its name in the 1990s to Critical Discourse Analysis. CDA is founded on the assumption that texts and talks play a key role in maintaining and legitimating inequality, injustice and oppression in societies (Brown 2005 p. 290). Fairclough also sees CDA as:

[...] a tool that aims to systematically explore often opaque relationship of causality and determination between (a) discursive practice, events and texts, and (b) wider social and cultural structures, relations and processes: to investigate how such practices, events and texts arise out of and are ideologically shaped by relation

of power and struggles over power; and to explore how the opacity of these relationship between discourse and society is itself a factor securing power and hegemony (135).

One practical aim of CDA is to perceive language use as social practice. The users of language function in a set cultural, social and psychological framework. CDA picks the social context and studies the connection between textual structures and take this social context into account, exploring the links between textual structures and their functions in interaction within the society. According to van Dijk (1993), CDA is a field which is basically concerned with and explores the way in which powerful social agents influence social beliefs and values and shape ideologies, through the standards they set for what is and what is not acceptable, therefore unraveling the power asymmetry in discourse. This study is therefore anchored on the framework of Fairclough (1999) model of CDA.

Fairclough Approach to CDA

In CDA studies, Fairclough's model and approach is considered the most important and the center of CDA. According to Fairclough (1989), model for CDA is made up of three inter-related processes of analysis tied to three inter-related dimensions of discourse. The dimensions include:

- (a) The target of analysis which include verbal and visual texts,
- (b) The process or methodology by which the objects are produced and received such as viewing, speaking, listening, writing, reading and designing by human subjects and
- (c) The socio-historical conditions which govern these processes

According to Fairclough, these three dimensions require three different analyses. The first level is text analysis. The textual level of analysis includes both micro and macro-levels of text structures. Also, this aspect of analysis involves Halliday's systemic functional linguistics and the three domains of ideational, interpersonal and textual analysis. Shojaei, Youssefi and Hosseini (2013 p. 3) explain that the ideational functions include meta-narratives that circulate in society. At this level, the analysis includes transitivity; that is types of verbs involved in the interaction along with mood and modality. The textual domain involves the thematic structure of the text. The second aspect is the process of analysis which involves interpretation and analysis of the process of production, interpretation, distribution and consumption. The third aspect is the social analysis. This aspect focuses in particular on the relation of discourse to power and ideology.

What marks off CDA from other forms of discourse of analysis lies in its attribute of 'critical'. 'critical' implies showing connections and causes which are hidden; it also implies intervention, for example providing resources for those who may be disadvantaged through change'' (Fairclough 1992 p.9). It therefore becomes pertinent to expose hidden things through CDA, since they are not always evident for the individuals involved, hence cannot be fought against.

Methodology

The study is a qualitative content analysis of southern Kaduna killings Newspaper reportage. Data for this study were taken from print media reportage on Southern Kaduna killings in four national

daily newspapers in Nigeria: *Daily sun*, *The Nation*, *Daily Trust* and *Leadership*. These newspapers were published from December 2016 through February 2017. This was the peak period of incessant, indiscriminate and gruesome killings which claimed scores of lives in southern Kaduna. Twenty verbal reports and interviews that capture the killings were purposively selected. From the sampled news items, headlines and lead stories were mostly selected because they are the most widely read aspects of news.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Transitivity

- {1} Youth CAN seeks El-Rufai's impeachment over negotiation with foreign Fulani
- {2} LG chairman imposes 24-hour curfew on Kafanchan – Leadership, 20/12/2016
- {3} LG boss impose 24-hour curfew in Kafanchan – Daily Sun 20/12/2016
- {4} Kaduna re-imposes 24-hour curfew on Jema'a, Kaura LGAs – Daily Trust 22/2/2017

Youth CAN is projected as the 'actor' who seeks El-Rufai's impeachment over negotiation with foreign Fulani. With El-Rufai's infamous claims that he went into negotiation with foreigners over Southern Kaduna killings; which was decried by all and sundry. The framing of the news by Daily trust attempt to focus public attention on CAN youth's opinion on El-Rufai's miscalculated move and action termed as wrong and not on Rufai's negotiation with foreigners (criminals). This tends to shift public attention from the main issue and could be seen as an ideological move by Daily trust to incite or weep up political and religious sentiment against CAN youth.

In the following headlines from three dailies focusing on the same news items, LG chairman (Leadership), LG boss (Daily sun) and Kaduna (Daily trust) are the senser. Kafanchan (Jema'a) and Kaura are the phenomenon and the mental processes are 'imposes' and 're-imposes'. Through the use of the active structure, the Local Government chairman of Jema'a and the Kaduna state governor are assigned the roles of powerful, active and legitimate authorities invested with the power to command and sit in judgment over the people. The people through the framing are subtly presented as the passive lawbreakers deserving to be punished through the imposition and re-imposition of curfews. This sort of power is looked upon as being normal and even in instances when such power is deployed to oppress, manipulate an inflict psychological and physical violence as it happened in this case; it is often not visible because it has come to be accepted as normal. Since at the surface level, the riled believe it is only used to maintain law and order.

Apposition

- {5} SOUTHERN KADUNA: soldiers kill 17 herdsmen

Creative apposition is used here and is powerful because it plays on our likelihood to view the world around us in terms of binaries. Through the use of apposition in the headline, the occupation of the two groups is presented – soldiers versus herdsmen. Soldiers are known with guns and

associated with force, while herdsmen are pastoral in nature and lifestyle. Therefore, the use of herdsmen as a cover for killers who unofficially declared war on Southern Kaduna with their incessant attacks on communities gives an impression that soldiers are (meant to keep peace) have suddenly turned to killers while the herdsmen (the killers) are innocent. The reader is thereby pushed to sympathize with the herdsmen (the real culprit).

Idiom

{6} SOUTHERN KADUNA KILLINGS: EL-RIFAI UNDER FIRE:

{7} KADUNA HAS NO INDEGENES- EL-RUFAl

You must find the killers Now-Archbishop Onaiyekan. ‘Under fire’ is an idiom which signifies intense criticism. The idiom is used to serve a figurative function and as well, instrumentally applied to exercise and represent an ideological concept. The headline performs the explicit act of reporting, informing and asserting and the implicit act of protesting, condemning and inciting. The implicit acts are used to condemn and protest the Archbishop’s statement; thereby presenting governor El-Rufai as an innocent administrator who is made a ‘scapegoat’ and held responsible for killings he knows nothing about. The headline also indicts the Archbishop and implicitly incites the Muslim community to react against the assertion; since it is coming from a Christian cleric to El-Rufai the Hausa Fulani Muslim governor. El-Rufai is presented as a defenseless innocent victim and Archbishop Onaiyekan as the aggressor who brashly or unjustly tasked the governor to produce the ‘killers’ in Southern Kaduna. It feels as though the reader is pushed to sympathize with El-Rufai.

Beyond the obvious act of reporting, the headline is a discursive enactment and public assertion of the ideological stand and belief of the Hausa-Fulani Muslim group in Kaduna state. The statement therefore serves to reveal the impetus behind the brutal killings which the Fulani herdsmen started in Southern Kaduna in 2016. Terror was unleashed and whole communities had to flee with the Fulani’s settling down in such communities. This occurred with no one questioning their action or calling them to accountability.

The statement presupposes that certain peoples group (Bajju, Kataf, Ham etc) claim southern Kaduna as their homeland: The implication is that the region belongs to all. This statement supports and legitimizes the attacks carried out by the Fulani herdsmen at their whims and caprices on the southern part of the state. Discrimination, prejudice and injustice which has always been carried out against the southern Kaduna people by the Hausa/Fulani ruling political class is re-enacted and legitimized in the twenty first century. This is strengthened through bias representation in the media.

Ideologically Underpinned Lexical Items

Ideologically Induced Nominal Expressions

{8} Southern Kaduna: Hoodlums Destroy Military Base Foundation-El-Rufai promises to punish perpetrators

{9} Foreigners behind Southern Kaduna Massacre - *Leadership*

{10} Gunmen Killed 21 in Southern Kaduna – *The Nation*

{11} Kaduna Killings – El-Rufai Denied Paying Herdsmen – *The Nation*

In the examples above, four nominal expressions have been having employed and these choices are tacitly fortified by certain ideological which has raise discourse kerfuffle by analysts. In {8} the word ‘hoodlums’ in the headline implies an ideological undertone to the people linked with destroying the military base. The word has been subtly applied to represent a negative image of the people behind the act. The reader is now left with the implication that the people responsible are dangerous, violent and criminally inclined; with nothing good to offer the society. This also gives the reader little or no room to have personal view of the people described as hoodlums. The second part of the sentence ‘‘El-Rufai promises to punish perpetrators’’ is a threatening sentence. It implies that the agent ‘El-Rufai’ has the power, authority and legitimacy to punish the perpetrators and will certainly do so; through the use of the word ‘promises’. There is a clear manifestation of power relation and dominance in the headline. The use of the word ‘promises’ in the headline, has the potential to manipulate the mental model of the reader and to reinforce and naturalize the power of the governor. Also, the promise of the governor to punish the people involved is justified by the lexical choice used to name the people involved: ‘hoodlums’ and ‘perpetrators’. Since ‘hoodlums’ and ‘perpetrators’ are always naturally brought to justice.

On the informational value of example {9}, the given idea foregrounds “foreigners” and further thematised this word as being the crux of the matter. This is a deliberate attempt to tacitly conceal the truth and also shift the focus of readers from the actual acts – the killings, to the foreigners – the actors. In this way, the readers of this discourse, shrewdly focus on the theme and give little or no concern to the Rheme which in fact in the core of the message. This however, is a discourse framing ideological, for explaining away the atrocities meted on innocent souls in Southern Kaduna region of Kaduna state. The ideational function of {9} creates a social implication that questions the veracity of the innocence of the state governor, Mal Nasir El-Rufai who has consistently dissociated himself from the killings. Ostensibly, the framing of {9} is thematised with a cognitive effect of readers constantly seeks to mitigate the heightened tension in the state, however, the failure of the governor to decisively deal with the roguish massacre of innocent souls in the speaks volume. This is corroborated by {11} which introduces another nominal expression that cryptically suggests the stronghold beyond the Southern Kaduna Massacre. More importantly, the interpersonal function of {11} brings to light a suggestive discourse which shows that while sample {8}, {9} and {10} foregrounds the fact that, the people behind the southern Kaduna killings are faceless, his alliance in {11} with herdsmen is suggestive of the fact that contrary to the claims in sample {8} to {10}, one can cautiously opine that El-Rufai is in the know of the forces behind

the southern Kaduna massacre. {11} asserts implicitly that the Fulani herdsmen are behind the killings and the Governor's refusal and unwillingness to deal resolutely with them speak volume.

Ideologically Induced Verb

{12} 808 Killed in Southern Kaduna Catholic Church Alleges

The ideological import of sample {12} is a framing strategy that pragmatically hedges the "authority{s}" that is behind the impish massacre of the citizens of southern Kaduna. The verb "Alleges" as used by the media carefully obscure the culprits of the nefarious acts. In discourse, specifically journalese, the deployment of lexical items is purposive as to engage the cognitive process of readers and to alter their world view about socio-political issues. In sample {12} who the Catholic church alleges is concealed from readers, the implication of this discourse framing strategy used in this headline (Concealing the direction of the allegation) is that, readers' cognitive schema is already configured to make inferences that could tilt towards focusing on two dialectal entities – the ineptitude of government in securing her citizens and the actors of the acts. This is dialectal because the government of Kaduna state has criminalized asking questions that could bring these heartless individuals to book. And the indigenes are suffering in silence. Hence, the very important question, "who has been alleged, and what has the government of Kaduna done about it?"

Intertextual Analysis of Lead Paragraphs

According to Fairclough (1996 p. 220) Inter-textuality "points to how texts can transform prior texts and restructure existing conventions to generate new ones". All spoken and written texts have the meanings that text users assign to them in and through their relations with other texts in some social formation. In media discourse, intertextuality brings to the fore the representations of what newsworthy people have said and which voices are subtly but implicitly silent. Examples from four National newspapers are presented in the table below.

News Actors and Participants Quoted in the Lead to Represent Southern Kaduna Killings

Newspaper	voice of southern Kaduna people	voice of government
1. The nation	silenced	Kaduna state governor
2. Daily sun	silenced	Kaduna state governor
3. Daily trust	silenced	Kaduna state governors

From the table, the voice of southern Kaduna people (who are killed) is silent while the voice of the governor which is considered more important is heard. As a result of this, southern Kaduna people cannot express their ideas and realities on the killings and atrocities carried out on them. The reader is therefore left to only hear and believe a one sided presentation and claim of the governor. The southern Kaduna people are deprived of being heard on the matter.

Conclusion

The media is an influential institution in the human space. Its role is key not only in the dissemination of information, but also in defining and dictating what people think and talk about in the society. These roles have been explored in the news reportage analysed in this study. News reports beginning from the headline are capable of shaping the worldview of readers. The killings in Kaduna South have been underreported, misreported and inaccurately reported in that the voice of the people are largely subsumed under the voice of the state government. The plight of the people has been grossly neglected and this has been reflected in the choice of lexical items used in and the framing strategy of the news reports. It is vivid from the reports that the heinous atrocities meted on the people of Southern Kaduna are uncalled for and are seemingly politically motivated. This conclusion is motivated by the ways in which the government has handled the situation and the reports that the government has allowed to get to the media. What this kind of governance portends is the polarization of the people of Kaduna and a subtle attempt to conceal the ineptness of the state government. This paper therefore concludes that the media needs to go beyond news reporting to fact finding which will aid effecting unbiased representation of people, issues and ethno-religious affiliations in the media.

The study therefore concludes and recommends that the media have the role of not just reporting what is new and sensational in the society, they need to investigate cryptic issues and report them in a way that solutions are easily deciphered. Also, the media should be wary of being manipulated by the government and should always investigate comments by politicians before they are reported.

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