Critical Discourse Analysis and the Study of Protest and Conflict Representation in the Print Media: A Review

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Abstract
At the heart of the most linguistic enquiry into the representation and construction of protest and conflict in the media is the critical discourse analytical approach to the study of language in use. The critical discourse analytical approach to linguistic studies has been employed in research to investigate how the media represent actors and actions in protest and conflict. The current study examines how Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) has been utilised in investigations into media (especially print media) use of language in conflict situations with particular emphasis on the reportage of protests. CDA investigates social matters and studies how issues such as dominance, (in) equality and hegemony are expressed in texts of different kinds. This study examines the tropes and nuances of CDA as well as its contributions to conflict studies. It traces the history and tenets of CDA and examines its strengths and weaknesses. The study peruses existing studies on conflict studies that employed CDA as an approach to observe the ways they have put CDA to use, in association with other approaches. It also considers the strengths and limitations of these previous research works. This study concludes by observing that existing studies on conflict construction in the media underscore the contextual relationship that exists between language and social practices.
Keywords: Critical Discourse Analysis, Conflict, Protest, Media, Representation

Introduction
One of the events that have an enormous propensity of being newsworthy is a crisis or any form of conflict. This is not just because people want to be kept abreast of crisis situations, but because 'journalistic attention is mostly driven by official initiatives and controversy since they breed a constant and reliable news flow' (Blanco, 1997:1). Protest as a form of conflict is a 'sustained and self-conscious challenge to authorities or cultural codes by a field of actors – organisations and advocacy networks – some of whom employ extra-institutional means of influence' Gamson and Wolfsfeld (1993: 115). In the end, the purpose of a protest or any social movement should not merely be to mobilise people but to influence a change in a particular situation.

Protests are important in contemporary societies; they constitute a veritable means through which citizens give voice to their plights and concerns (Lee, 2014). Protests constitute a prominent feature of democratic societies as protests have, in so many ways, shaped, formed and helped to build popular democracies in the world (Tilly, 2005). Even in non-democratic societies, Melucci (1996) notes that protests also remain important in

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the struggle for citizenship rights. He notes that protests perform the crucial role of serving as a link between the public, opinion formation and policymakers.

On protest and the media, Cottle (2008: 854) avers that 'the politics that animate [protests] are not only seen in public squares and on public [sic] streets but, necessarily, in and through the media' especially the news media. However, protests and demonstrations have questionably pursued too much attention from the news media, and the media has not only contributed to protest *hype* but also to the politics of protest and dissent conveyed to wider audiences, and it is by this same means that wider support and legitimacy for their actions and aims can be potentially won or lost (Cottle, 2008). Although protests have been seen in themselves as a form of 'media' (Alberto, 1996), 'there is still no avoiding the centrality of mainstream news media for the wider communication of dissent and the pursuit of instrumental or expressive goals' (Cottle, 2008). Protests need the media not just for the coverage of their activities but for 'wider mobilisation, validation and to broaden the scope of conflict (Gamson & Wolfsfeld, 1993). Increasingly, as Tilly (2005) observes, it is not the protesters that are more important in protests, but those who read, listen and watch the media coverage, and most often the elites and authorities watching and coordinating responses (Koopmans, 2004: 368).

Much more than merely reporting events in society, newspapers and the news media, in general, have contributed significantly to shaping the attitudes and beliefs of their audience about the issues they report. The form as well as the content of the messages that the news media transmit, and the discourse processes through which these are relayed to the society call for inquiry. For example, it is usually easy to recognise the meanings of texts and understand the meaning of a news report as well as what they may be trying to make us think, but locating and situating how this meaning construction occurs can be quite difficult (Richardson, 2007). This is similar to how we perceive a news item as being biased or malicious even when we cannot actually point out why we have reached this conclusion. The reason this is so is not unconnected with the inconspicuous ways news reporters represent issues in their reportage Most times, as Gladwell (2008) points out, bias which could be as a result of the reporter's personal ideological inclinations or the firm's corporate underlying ideology is not what the individual reporter is aware of or does deliberately.

One important fact that has been established by existing studies on the language of the news media is that news in itself cannot be said to provide an objective presentation, creation or interpretation of events, it would always be smeared by inconspicuous biases in the form of underlying ideologies of the news agencies, not to mention other rather seeming unobtrusive factors. Hence, only a systematised and objective enquiry into the language of news reportage can reveal these nuances and identify the linguistic means that have been used to conceal certain elements of 'subjectiveness' and ideology in the news. Given the enormous influence of the news media, it is pertinent that a study such as this interrogates how events are represented and constructed in the news.

The media and social movements
Social movements take different forms and are usually organised by people who feel the need to make specific demands from constituted authority. Sometimes, the formation of social movements is precipitated by the need to create awareness about certain issues. Social movements are often expressed in demonstrations, protests, strike action and public march. However, these expressions in themselves may not constitute social movement.

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The relationship that exists between the media and social movements seems to be a complex one (Lee, 2014). The media do not only need to feed on issues and happenings in society such as protests but actors in protests also rely on the media to sustain their protests. To establish this complex relationship between social movements and the media, Cammaerts (2012) puts forward the notion of a mediation opportunity structure. This structure has to do with how the mainstream media represent protests, the discursive environment with which movements articulate their frames, and the technological environment within which media practices may constitute protest actions (Lee, 2014). Protesters are aware that the success or otherwise of their venture depends, to a large extent, on the news media – an institution that can enable the events of a protest to travel far and wide (Guillen, 2016; Corbett, 1998). Gamson and Wolfsfeld (1993) note that successful movements were dependent on news media agencies for mobilisation of participants, validation of their cause, and enlarging the scope of their sympathisers since what constitutes their goal is winning the sympathy of the audience. Positive and popular coverage goes a long way to help boost the image of the protesters and can amplify or legitimise the voice of protesters, enhancing the tendencies for protest to attract public support and influence governmental authorities (Gamson &Wolfsfeld, 1993).

However, the rapid change in the news media outlets, especially in technological advancement, is fast affecting how protest movements interact with the news media. The sole reliance of protest actors on the mainstream media is no longer a practice. The internet now provides alternatives for protest actors, and this has become very significant. Nonetheless, the mainstream media still retains, to a large extent, enormous power to 'set agenda, reach a more diverse audience, and confer status and legitimacy' (Lee, 2014: 272). Guillen (2016) reports that the news media have loosened the grip that traditional media have hitherto had on the report of protests. Gitlin (1980) also points out that several reasons make movement actors cling to the news media. They include recruiting, challenging the authority, appealing to third parties, for protection through publicity, intimidation, and addressing of grievances.

How the media represent protests impacts on how the protest will be viewed or accepted by the audience, as well as whether or not it will achieve its aim or get the desired outcomes (Agnone, 2007; King, 2011). In the history of the relationship between the media and social movements, there has been misunderstanding and argument over the negotiation of meaning (Guillen, 2016). Most times, there are conflicting constructions of events between the protesters and the media in ways that suggest that their different perspective is reflective of reality. Guillen (2016:20) submits that 'in studying movement success with news-making involvement, success should be measured through successful interaction with newsmakers and the public and not solely success in the overall movement message'.

Studies such as Chan and Lee (1984), Boykoff (2006), Gitlin (1980) and Small (1995) have challenged the mainstream media for marginalising and delegitimising protests by representing their actions as deviant, threatening, or impotent (Lee, 2014). This act of the news media is referred to as the protest paradigm (Chan & Lee, 1984). According to Lee (2014), research on the concept of the protest paradigm investigates how media coverage is used as a variable, in other words, one does not set out to assume or try to establish that the mainstream media are prejudiced against social protests, instead, the manner of

delegitimising coverage is presented as existing to varying degrees in the representation of different forms of protests, by different media, or in different types of societies.

The report of protests has been subjected to selection biases in the news. Research has shown that protests tend to be reported if they align with the media house's agenda or possess features that make them newsworthy (McCarthy, McPhail & Smith, 1996; Meyers & Caniglia, 2004; Wikes, Corrigall-Brown, & Myers, 2010

Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is "a type of discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context"(Dijk, 2001). It has its roots in Classical Rhetoric, Textlinguistics, Sociolinguistics, Applied Linguistics and Pragmatics (Wodak, 2002). CDA sees language as a social practice (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997) and believes the context of language use to be crucial. Critical discourse analysis (CDA) as a framework provides an interpretation of how meaning is derived from texts.

CDA stemmed out of the functionalist approach to discourse analysis. It aims to link linguistic analysis to social analysis (Woods & Kroger, 2000: 206) as language is seen as a form of social practice (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997). What it seeks to achieve is to affect social practice and social relationships (Tischer *et al*, 2000: 147), particularly in relationships of disempowerment, dominance, prejudice and/or discrimination (Richardson, 2007). CDA sees both written and spoken discourse as a form of social practice (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997).

It is important to note that one major assumption of CDA is understanding the nature of social power and dominance (Dijk, 1993). It is believed that power involves the control of one group over other groups, that is, a group that has power over another group may limit the freedom of action of members of that group by influencing their minds. According to Dijk (1993:254), this kind of power is "mostly cognitive, and enacted by persuasion, dissimulation or manipulation, among other strategic ways to *change the mind of others in one's own interests*" (emphasis in original). And, managing the mind of others is essentially a function of text and talk. Such mind management is not always bluntly manipulative, rather, dominance may be enacted and reproduced by subtle routine everyday forms of text and talk that appear 'natural' and quite 'acceptable'. The form of power that is different from legitimate and acceptable forms of power is referred to as *dominance*. However, if the minds of the dominated are influenced in such a way that they accept to be dominated and act in the interest of the powerful willingly, it is referred to as *hegemony* (Gramsci, 1971).

CDA reveals how discourse conceals the politics and intricacies of power and how inequalities are normalised, hence, it would be a viable theoretical framework to adopt in any research on conflict. Studies in CDA seek to link linguistic analysis with social analysis as language ought to be analysed in relation to the social context in which it is being used and the social consequences of its use; and, especially, the relationship(s) between discourse and its social conditions (Richardson, 2007).

Approaches to Critical Discourse Analysis

CDA is a broad movement within discourse analysis, having several approaches or models in it (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997). Each approach consists of a set of philosophical

premises, theoretical methods, methodological guidelines and specific techniques for linguistic analysis. However, there are some key elements shared by all the approaches identified by Jorgensen and Phillips (2002: 61-64) and they are explained below.

i. **The character of social and cultural processes and structures is partly linguistic-discursive:** Discursive practices are seen as an important form of social practice and it is through them that texts are produced and consumed. This social practice contributes to what constitutes the social world. Since discourse involves not only written and spoken language but also visual images, it is accepted that the analysis of texts that have visual images must account for the special elements of visual semiotics and the relationship between language and images. It should be noted that within CDA, there is a tendency to analyse images as if they were linguistic texts.

ii. **Discourse is both constitutive and constituted:** Critical discourse analysts see discourse as a form of social practice that constitutes the social world and, as well, is constituted by other social practices. Discourse does not just contribute to the shaping and reshaping of social structures, it also reflects them.

iii. **Language use should be empirically analysed within its social context:** CDA carries out concrete, linguistic textual analysis of language use in social interaction and this makes it different from other discourse theories which do not carry out systematic, empirical studies of language use.

iv. **Discourse functions ideologically:** In CDA, it is believed that discursive practices contribute to the creation and reproduction of unequal power relations between social groups. CDA's research focus is both the discursive practices that construct representations of the world, social subjects and social relations, including power relations, and the role that these discursive practices play in furthering the interests of particular social groups. CDA aims at revealing the role of discursive practice in the maintenance of the social world and this includes those social relations that involve unequal relations of power. It also aims to contribute to social change along the lines of more equal power relations in communication processes and society in general.

v. **Critical research:** The term 'critical' can be traced to the influence of the Frankfurt School and Jürgen Habermas. 'Critical theory', according to the Frankfurt School and Jürgen Habermas means that social theory should be oriented towards critiquing and changing society as a whole. The school also believes that critical research should improve the understanding of society by integrating all the major social sciences, including Economics, Sociology, History, Political Science, Anthropology and Psychology. CDA sees itself as a critical approach that is politically committed to social change. It does not see itself as politically neutral.

According to Rashidi & Souzandehfar (2010), quoting Dijk (2007), there are four approaches to Critical Discourse Analysis and they include:

i. **Critical Linguistics**, developed by Fowler et al. (1979), Fowler (1991, 1996), Kress (1985) and Kress & Hodge (1979);

ii. **Sociological approach** introduced by Fairclough (1989, 1992, 1995);

iii. **Discourse-Historical approach**, proposed by Wodak (1996, 2001) and Wodak et al. (1999); and

iv. **The sociocognitive approach** proposed by Dijk (1998, 2002).

Critical Linguistics (CL) is regarded as the earliest linguistically oriented critical approach to discourse analysis (Rashidi & Souzandehfar, 2010). Rashidi & Souzandehfar (2010), quoting Fowler (1991:90), define critical linguistics as "an enquiry into the relations between signs, meanings and the social and historical conditions which govern the semiotic structure of discourse, using a particular kind of linguistic analysis". CL makes use of Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar for its analysis. Fowler's approach focuses on the media's representation of events, the linguistic analysis of that representation and the ideology encoded by it (Rashidi & Souzandehfar, 2010).

Fairclough built on the analytical methodology of CL and developed his Sociocultural analysis in 1995 (Rashidi & Souzandehfar, 2010). Fairclough believes that language is connected to social realities and that it brings about social change. He also believes that government involves the manipulation and use of language in significant ways, and is concerned with the connection among discourse, ideology and power relations within the society. Fairclough also makes use of Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar in his analysis. He studies texts and specific discourses and also emphasises a text as the product of a process in which discourse is closely related to social structures in its production and interpretation. He examines critically, specific situations where relations of power, dominance and inequality are represented in discourse. This model of CDA works with a dialectal relationship between the micro-structures of discourse (linguistic features) and the macro-structures of society (societal structures and ideology).

The Discourse-historical approach of Wodak (1996, 2001) was advocated by the Vienna School and it has focused on the impact of historical socio-political contextual factors since the 1980s. Here, the importance of context to meaning cannot be overemphasized. Attention is given to the contribution of non-verbal aspects of texts, that is, semiotic devices. Also, texts are not just to inform us of some reality, they, in addition, construct the reality (Dijk 1985). In the discourse-historical approach, discourse is seen as structured forms of knowledge and the memory of social practice, while text refers to concrete oral utterances or written documents (Reisigl & Wodak, 2001). CDA, therefore, aims to reveal the sources of dominance and inequality observed in society by analysing texts, whether written or spoken. It is to find the discursive strategies utilized to construct or maintain such inequality or bias in different contexts (Rashidi & Souzandehfar, 2010).

van Dijk's Socio-cognitive approach is set on the belief that cognition mediates between 'society' and 'discourse'. Our perception and comprehension of discursive practices are shaped by long-term memories, short-term memories and certain mental models (Rashidi & Souzandehfar, 2010). The basic conceptual and theoretical frameworks identified by Dijk (2010) are macro vs. micro and power as control. The micro level involves language, discourse, verbal interaction and so on, while the macro level involves power relations such as inequality and dominance. Power as control involves control of public discourse and mind control.

In this approach, social power is seen as a means of controlling the minds and actions of other groups. Social power may not necessarily be negative but misuse of power may bring about inequality in the society. Dijk (2002) sees ideology as the attitude of a group of people towards certain issues. To reveal the ideology generated in discourse, Dijk resorts to social analysis, cognitive analysis and discourse analysis of the

text. However, the approach that will be adopted for this research work is Fairclough's model of CDA

The approaches to Critical Discourse Analysis also fall along regional lines. The British model, sociological approach draws largely from Foucault's theory of discourse and Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (Fairclough, 1993; 1995; Fowler, 1991) and popularised by scholars such as Norman Fairclough, Roger Fowler and Van Leeuwen; the Dutch socio-cognitive approach (van Dijk, 1993; 1998; 2001), made popular by Teun van Dijk; the discourse historical approach of the Vienna school (Reisigl &Wodak 2001; Wodak, 1996, 2002; Wodak *et al.*, 1999) made popular by Ruth Wodak; and the social psychological approach of Wetherell and Potter (1992).

Review of works on the media construction of protests and conflict
Studies on the representation of protest in the media have been examined both in Nigeria and internationally. Lee and Craig (1992), for instance, study US newspapers' representation of civil action in South Korea and Poland as represented in *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post* and *The Wall Street Journal*. Using Critical Discourse analysis, they discover anti-Communist sentiments in the reports, as well as the 'us versus them' ideological dichotomy of the Cold War. They found that US newspapers' coverage of civil actions in Poland and South Korea differed. While the civil action in Poland is constructed as being caused by communism, which was the system of government practised in Poland at the time, the Labour strikes in South Korea are blamed on 'deviant and violent protesters'. It is important to point out that South Korea's political system is patterned after that of the United States. It also has similar ideologies with the US. In examining the news report at the textual level, especially, syntax, style, news grammar, rhetoric and graphic representation, to determine its ideological structure, Lee and Craig conclude that US news representation of civil action in foreign countries usually has an ideological or political undertone. Similarly, Wang (1993) studies how ideologically opposed newspapers report the same news. Wang does this by comparing and contrasting how the American and Chinese press represent the failed 1991 Soviet coup. Studying the macro level (topics, thematic structures, schematic structures) and micro level (styles and lexical features) in *New York Times (NYT)* and *Remin Ribao (RR)* for the week of the coup, Wang discovered that the representation of the event by the two newspapers is both structurally and quantitatively different. Employing Discourse Analysis, Wang observes that the *NYT* covers the news more completely while the *RR*, the official paper of the Chinese Communist Party, leaves out all background and contextual information about the event. The study shows that this variation is a product of ideological and political interests.

Also, Fang (1994) examines rhetorical strategies such as lexical and syntactic choices in reporting civil actions employed by mainland China's official newspaper *Renmin Ribao* (The People's Daily). Like Lee and Craig (1992), Fang discovers that how conflicts in foreign countries are represented or labelled depends largely on China's policy towards these countries and their governments. Countries that are favourably disposed to China's policy are positively represented while the opposite is the case when the country being reported is at loggerheads with China. For instance, the protests are represented as deviant and lacking resolve when they take place in countries with good relations with China. However, when the protests take place in countries hostile to China, the protests are constructed as resulting from state oppression. Fang (1994) reveals that similar events

may be represented differently by the same newspaper, depending on the news house's ideological inclinations. However, the study does not expressly show what the ideological inclinations of these newspapers are, at least not objectively. It only makes statements about how China's relationship with the countries reported in the news affects the representation in the media.

Like the works above, Fang (2001) studies how two ideologically opposed newspapers, namely mainland China's mouthpiece, *The People's Daily* and Taiwan's *KMT* newspaper, *The Central Daily News*, represent the civil unrest in South Africa and Argentina. Employing Critical Discourse Analysis as a framework, the study investigates the lexical choices, headlines, themes/topics and the transitivity patterns of the two newspapers and how they reflect the crises. The study also shows that lexical choices and agent attribution in syntactic structures play a great role in revealing the ideological viewpoint of the newspaper. Fang also demonstrates that issues that are not in alignment with the newspaper's perspective could also be downplayed or completely ignored. He proves that issues that are not favourable to the news ideology of the media houses could be suppressed, 'backgrounded' or downplayed. The study concludes that the discourse strategies employed to represent the events serve to legitimise and uphold the policies enacted by the regimes in power. Fang's study differs from the current study as the current study, in addition to exploring the discursive strategies and ideology in newspapers, also examines how social actors and actions are represented in the newspapers on protest.

Review of works in Nigeria on the representation of news actors in conflict/ protest in the media

Previous studies have examined the different shades of the representations of news actors in the media employing the tools and techniques of CDA. Ayoola (2008), as a case in point, studies how Nigerian newspapers report some Niger Delta conflict issues. He investigates the linguistic as well as the pragmatic features utilised by writers in representing the setting, topics and participants in the news reports. Employing van Dijk's (2003) and Fairclough's (1995) models of CDA as theoretical frameworks, he discovers how discourse participants use language to polarise, presenting themselves positively and others negatively. Ayoola observes that the discourse participants use several pragmatic and discourse strategies like logic, the use of figures and percentages, the persuasion of science, *interdiscursivity* and *intertextuality*, rumour mongering, name calling, dysphemism, obfuscation and flattery in their bid to have a political edge over their opponents. The study concludes that the reports smear of bias and subjectivity which is a reflection of the reporters and media houses' ideological inclination.

Osisanwo and Iyoha (2020) examine the representation of actors in the discourse surrounding the pro-Biafra protests. The relevance of this study lies in its detailed account of representational strategies of protesters as 'freedom fighters' and 'economic saboteurs' on the one hand and 'law-biding citizens' on the other hand. This shows how news reports become sites of struggle among social actors in the discourse. Like Osisanwo and Iyoha (2020), Osisanwo and Iyoha (2021, a & b) also examine the ideological inclinations and discourse issues of the newspapers in representing the actors involved in the pro-Biafra protest. The studies employ a combination of the Discourse historical approach of Ruth Wodak and the Systemic Functional Grammar of Halliday in their analysis.

Similarly, Igwebuike (2013) studies linguistic tagging – how people and their actions are labelled – and the underlying social, political and economic ideologies in newspaper reports on the conflict between Nigeria and Cameroon in border areas. Igwebuike focuses on unravelling the relationship between the tagging and the ideologies in the reports. Using van Dijk's socio-cognitive model of CDA, Halliday's systemic linguistics and the theory of lexical decomposition as a theoretical framework, he discovered that there exists a unique relationship between socio-political and economic ideologies and linguistic tagging in the reports. In his study, Igwebuike identifies five conflict-related themes which include terrorism, resistance, dispossession, suffering and economy. He draws a connection between the themes and the different forms of linguistic tagging in the report. For instance, he connects the theme of terrorism with the lexical tags of violence and the theme of resistance with the tags of militancy. The theme of dispossession and suffering took the linguistic tags of dislocation while the theme of economy took the tag of ownership. Igwebuike also affirms that these tags had emotive and evaluative adjectives and intensifying adverbs as features. He notes that the themes of terrorism and resistance were tagged by transitive clauses of action while, on the other hand, dispossession and suffering were represented by metaphors and verbs signifying mental conditions.

Igwebuike also discovers that positive representations were given to economic interests in the peninsula while negative ones were given to violence, militancy and dislocation. He further posits that the tags were motivated by certain values. For instance, the economic value of consumerism, to him, motivated the tagging of ownership in both Nigerian and Cameroonian newspapers. Also, the values of social justice and altruism mediated the tagging of dislocation while in the Cameroonian reports, the political ideals of pacifism and patriotism triggered violence and militancy tags.

He also notes that people were put in categories and groups using several linguistic tags at different levels. He opines that words portraying violence such as 'gunmen', 'attacker', 'pirates' and 'assassins' were used in tagging people as terrorists. Again, words suggesting resistance, such as 'rebels', 'insurgents', 'freedom fighters' and 'activists' were used to tag people as militants. He also finds that words that denote dispossession and suffering were used to tag people as dispossessed or victims. Such words include 'refugees', 'returnees', 'the displaced', etc. In addition, words such as 'indigenes', 'natives', 'residents' and 'inhabitants' were employed in tagging people as territorial owners and non-owners.

Igwebuike further cites the use of tags at the grammatical level where people and their actions were tagged by transitive clauses, passivisation, nominalisation and metaphors. He notices that the tagging of violence and military was strengthened by material processes of actions, agentless passives, passives and nominal clauses, amongst others. Igwebuike also points out that the linguistic representations of people and their actions are motivated by five fundamental ideologies which include economic interest, altruism, social justice, patriotism and pacifism. He concludes by observing that there exists an intricate link between socio-political and economic ideologies and linguistic tagging in the reports. Like Igwebuike (2013), Igwebuike and Taiwo (2015) examined how Nigerian and Cameroonian security forces are represented in the Bakassi Peninsula conflicts in the print media of both countries. The study showed that the news media represent participants and assign roles to them in certain ways in the report of the

conflict. The study discovered that the reports as reported in Nigerian print media represented the Cameroon security forces as brutal and violent attackers. They were also portrayed as perpetrators of evil and victims of violence. The Nigerian newspapers also portray the Nigerian forces as the defenders of the people. On the other hand, the Cameroonian newspapers represented the Cameroon forces as 'victims of the Nigerian militants', 'saviour' of the Cameroonian people and 'patriotic' to Cameroon.

Also, Ononye (2014) investigates media reports on the Niger Delta crisis in Nigeria. The study draws a connection between lexico-stylistic choices and reporters' ideological stances in the reports. Ononye, hence, explores the styles, contexts and strategies that exist in Nigerian newspaper reports of the Niger Delta conflicts in other to establish how media ideologies relate largely to the existing lexico-stylistic choices in the reports.

The study incorporates context-oriented stylistic and socio-cognitive tools in investigating the relationship 'between media ideologies and lexico-stylistic choices in the reports' (Ononye, 2014:241) instead of paying attention to the linguistic and contextual areas of the media reports as previous studies have done. According to Ononye (2014), existing studies on the Niger Delta reports have not studied this relationship and have only concentrated on the general stylistic, pragmatic or discursive features of the reports, ignoring the interaction between the ideology and the styles employed by newspaper reporters, preventing an understanding of 'group-induced motivators for the crises and reports (Ononye, 2014: ii). Integrating Lesley Jeffries' Critical stylistics, Teun van Dijk's context model and aspects of evaluative semantics and conceptual metaphor, Ononye discovers three styles (evaluative, manipulative and persuasive styles), influenced by the Niger Delta issues and contexts, and three media ideologies: propagandist, framist and mediator ideologies.

According to Ononye, the styles are achieved through four stylistic strategies: naming/describing, equating/contrasting, hypothesising, and viewing actions/events. He discovers that the evaluative style is represented by emotive metaphors from three source domains – crime, hunting and military. The manipulative style, he holds, 'is indexed by synonymous, *hyponymous* and *meronymous* lexical items and intentional material actions that highlight the effect of armed struggle in discourse' (216). The persuasive style is achieved with reiterations, lexical fields and collocation.

Ononye notes that corresponding ideologies, propagandist, framist and mediator are each dominated by naming/describing and equating/contrasting, and are enacted by reiterative and emotive labels and so on. For instance, he observes that the mediator ideology has to do with hypothesising and 'is constructed with reiterations, lexical fields and collocations that express epistemic and boulomaic meanings, which project news actors' views that align with those of the news reporters. Hence, he observes that each of the ideologies motivates a corresponding style.

Ononye's conception of the evaluative style captures the way news writers use 'value-laden language to express an opinion or point of view' (2014: 152). By manipulative style, Ononye means the way news reporters use 'calculated language with an underlying message aimed at influencing or controlling the reader to the reporter's advantage' (155). He observes that this style brings news readers 'at the mercy of the reporters in seeing what the reporters foreground or include or make explicit to them, and not noticing what is backgrounded or excluded or made implicit to them' (155). He observes that the style is reinforced through agency deletion, Gricean maxim violation, and thematisation.

The persuasive style means the manner in which news reporting uses 'rhetorical language with an underlying message aimed at convincing or influencing the reader to see things in the reporter's way. According to him,

> …one of the major advantages of the news reporter and by extension the newspapers he/she represents is to be in a position to provide a mediated context – relying on the reader's expectation of neutrality – to all ideas to the reader in a subtle but persuasive manner from which the reader may not be able to reason differently' (2014: 157-158)

He observed that the style is reinforced by voice attribution and illocution. Ononye observes that the propagandist ideology is motivated by the persuasive style and associated with two stylistic strategies: naming and describing, and viewing actions and events' (195), manifested in two media practices of 'thematic representation of violence, and the roles of the participants involved in the Niger Delta conflict' (195).

Framist ideology 'allows media practitioners to attach their assessment on the entities in the news in a way that will present the entities in a positive or negative light' (212-213). The ideology, according to Ononye, is motivated by the evaluative style and is manifested in how news participants are represented and the intentions triggering their actions in the discourse as positive or negative as it relates to the issues in the conflict discourse.

Mediator ideology, to him, is a kind of media ideology with a structure of social cognition and professional norms, which mandates media practitioners to act as a go-between, especially in conflict situations'. It is motivated by the manipulative style and is achieved by 'the representation of news participant's position on issues in the news as commendable and the representation of news participant's conditions in the discourse as (un)favourable' (219). The stylistic strategies used are hypothesising, equating and contrasting.

Ononye concludes by observing that there exists an intricate relationship between lexico-stylistic choices and ideological positions in Niger Delta media reports which are deployed through lexical relations and stylistic strategies motivated by reporters' ideological roles as propagandists, framists and mediators.

Iyoha (2017) studies how the media represent the criminal justice system in crime reports. He observed that though the reporter seeks objectivity, the reporter's mode of presentation or representation of a report surreptitiously represents his view or opinion even though he seeks objectivity. He observed that crime reports were presented in a way that portrayed the media as non-neutral. He discovers this through the language choices that the reporters employ, for instance, the use of passive structures and agentless clauses which brings the crime to the fore and not the perpetrators.

In the study, it was discovered that the grammatical structures employed in the crime reports mostly put the criminal justice system in the background when they have done something laudable but foreground them when they are to blame for a negative occurrence, therefore constructing an opinion about criminal justice. This, invariably, affects how the criminal justice system is named or viewed. The work concludes by noting that in suppressing the positive action of the CJS and in foregrounding their negative actions, crime reports can no longer be said to maintain objectivity and fairness. Osisanwo (2016) examines linguistic and discourse strategies used in the construction and representation of the *Boko Haram* group in Nigerian newspapers. The study uses the

transitivity system of Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar and Van Leeuwen's version of Critical Discourse Analysis to investigate the different representational strategies through which the Boko Haram group is labelled and framed by the news media. Osisanwo discovered that in the Nigerian newspapers studied, there is a convergence to negatively represent Boko Haram. Several discourse strategies were used to negatively represent Boko Haram. Osisanwo identified 13 of these which were developed in the reporting. Osisanwo observed that Boko Haram was discursively represented as insurgents/terrorists, militants, attackers, religious fundamentalists, killers/murderers, gunmen/shooters, outlaws/criminals, abductors, political gangsters, miscreants/evil perpetrators, bombers, al-Qaeda affiliates and wasters/damagers.

Osisanwo's study corroborates earlier studies on how the news media influence people's opinions or belief systems. He posits that the news media 'set the agenda by orientating their readers to negatively perceive the BH terrorism in Nigeria' (Osisanwo 2016: 19) which invariably gives 'allegiance to the agenda–setting prowess of the media'. He then insinuates that the negative representation of BH as terrorists could help in no small way to proffer a solution to the problem of Nigeria. The study opines that the obvious negative disposition of the newspapers to the insurgents in their reports cannot be separated from the view and position of the citizens about the group in Nigeria, but Osisanwo forgets to add the fact that this view and value judgement of the citizenry must have been shaped by the news media itself in the first place. Or how else would the citizens have had such opinions and beliefs?

Conclusion
This study has examined how previous works have used CDA to analyse conflict representation in the media. CDA's approach to linguistic studies has been employed in research to investigate how the media represents actors and actions in conflict situations such as protests. This study examined how Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) has been utilised in investigations into media use of language in conflict situations with particular emphasis on the reportage of protests in the media. This study examined the tropes and nuances of CDA as well as its contributions to conflict studies. It traced the history and tenets of CDA and examined its strengths and weaknesses. The study peruses existing studies on conflict studies that employed CDA as an approach. It reviews these previous works by observing the uses to which they have put CDA in association with other approaches. It also considered the strengths and limitations of these works. This study concluded by observing that existing studies on conflict construction in the media underscore the contextual relationship that exists between language and social practices.

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