

Zaria Journal of Liberal Arts (ZAJOLA)

Faculty of Arts, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria

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Zaria Journal of Liberal Arts (ZAJOLA) is a peer-reviewed journal, published bi-annually by the Faculty of Arts, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria. The journal welcomes manuscript of original articles, from scholars around the globe, in the various areas of Liberal Arts. The articles may be product of descriptive or analytical research, field research notes, reviews of publications and printed materials, drawn from, but not limited to Languages and Linguistics; Law; Environmental Sciences, Education; Management Studies; Cultural and Literally Studies; Theatre Arts; Philosophy; Religion; History and Strategic Studies; Archaeology and Heritage Studies; Developmental Studies and Social Sciences.

All manuscripts submitted for publication should adopt APA 8th Edition Style of referencing. The manuscripts should be typed double-spaced with sufficient margins and should count between 4,000 and 6,000 words, including the abstract, references, and appendices. The Manuscripts should not be under consideration for publication in any other research outlet.

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EDITORIAL COMMENT

The Editorial Board of *Zaria Journal of Liberal Arts* wishes to announce the new Edition of its esteemed Journal after a short break. This Edition is made up of twelve well-researched articles drawn from seasoned colleagues and academics.

In the first article, Emmanuel Adeniyi examines the comic aspect of COVID-19 pandemic while Hauwa Mohammed Sani, in her article looks at the ethnographic study of language as a tool in resolving conflicts in Kaduna State.

Osakue Stevenson and Edorodion Agbon focus on the alternative paradigm of indigenous language film in Nigeria through *Agbon-Evuebo*, Muhammad Reza Suleiman examines Arts as drivers of African bilateral relations and regional integration. On their own part, Nura Lawal and Muhammad Rabiul Tahir (co-authors) and Isa Umar Al Musawi concentrate on the study of Hausa Proverbs and Hausa/Ganda burial rites respectively.

Participatory approach and sustainable development of world heritage sites in Nigeria retains the attention of Olufemi Adetunji while in their article, Abdulrasaq Oladimeji and Oluwaseun Yusuf Afolabi look at the teachers' perception of the integration of information and communication technology in public and private secondary schools with special focus on Kwara-Central Senatorial District of Nigeria.

In the area of French studies, Peter Akongfeh Agwu, Diana-Mary Tiku Nsan, Ashabua and Derick Achu carry out an evaluation of the influence of Africa in the poetic works of Charles Baudelaire. In a similar way, Babalola Jacob Olaniyi and Adelowo Kayode Olubukola study the contrastive linguistic divergence of nominal verbs in French and Yoruba languages.

Jamiu Saadullah Abdulkareem takes interest in the Arabic novel. In this article, Jamiu brings out the ideational dimensions and stylistic features of Abdul-Aziz Abdulkarim Burhanuddin's novel titled *Jamilah*. To round this Edition up, Nasiruddeen Ibrahim Ahmed studies the pragmatics of deixis in the poem "Independence of exploitation" of Salihu Alagolo.

It is important to note that the view and opinions presented in these articles are solely those of the authors. It is the hope of the Editorial Board that this Edition will enrich your curiosity.

Prof. Abubakar Sule Sani

Editor-in-Chief

31st May, 2023

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Ethnographic Study of Language as a Tool of Conflict Resolution in Kaduna State, Nigeria

Hauwa Mohammed Sani

Abstract

This article explores the often-overlooked role of language as a tool for promoting peace in Kaduna State, Nigeria. Using the Everyday Peace Indicators methodology, data was gathered through in-depth interviews, observations, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), and Key Informant Interviews (KII) with community members affected by conflict. The study focuses on the Hausa language, commonly spoken in Northern Kaduna, and the Atyapp and Fulfulde languages used in Southern Kaduna. The research argues that language and culture shape our thinking and communication habits, which can either promote or hinder peaceful interactions. Using the framework of Nonviolent Communication Theory, the study answers questions such as: How does language impact social relationships in Kaduna State communities? What techniques do community members use to prevent confrontations and facilitate peace? The research finds that language plays a crucial role in conflict resolution, as words can either promote harmony or incite violence. Based on these findings, the study recommends the inclusion of Peace Linguistics in school curriculums to promote a culture of peace among young people in Kaduna State.

Keywords: Ethnography, Language, Conflict Resolution, Mediation, Kaduna State

Introduction

Kaduna State has been prone to communal conflicts and insurgency for over three decades. Conflicts manifest at societal and social levels, resulting in widespread destruction and deep despair. Previous efforts to understand and resolve such conflicts have been influenced mainly by political factors, judicial determination, gunboat policies, and militaristic approaches. However, there needs to be a more sustained epistemic effort to build peace through language mediation that ethnographically involves the agency of culture and tradition. The overarching argument of this study is that while the attention of scholars and professionals in sociology, journalism, political science, and psychology geared towards conflict focused on prevention and resolution, the role of language in this exercise has either been ignored or superficially handled (Curtis, 2018). There has yet to be a sustained or systematic epistemic effort to build peace through the ethnographic study of language as a mediation tool encapsulating local customs and traditions. This study attempts to fill the vacuum.

Moreover, Kaduna state conflicts are mainly studied from the political perspective, and such studies focused on factors or explanations of conflicts, the outcomes of such conflicts, and their impacts (e.g., Agbalajobi, 2019; Uroko, 2018; Ezedikachi, 2017; Angerbrandt, 2015; Harris, 2013; among others). None of these studies is geared towards conflict prevention and resolution, mainly using language as a tool. The present study, therefore, exits the usual political focus of Kaduna state conflict research to employ the ethnographic approach using language as a viable tool for conflict resolution and peacebuilding. It, therefore, contributes to the empirical literature on conflict and peacebuilding in Kaduna state from the ethnographic and linguistic perspectives. In this context, ethnography is the scientific description of people, cultures, customs, and habits that trigger conflicts and abort peace.

Peace derives from the Latin word "pax," which means tranquillity and the absence of war. To the Roman Empire, peace meant the cessation of fighting. Though peace does not merely mean the lack of overt violence (which is referred to as "negative peace"), it essentially entails the presence of linguistic, social, economic, and political justice ("positive peace"). Peace linguistics aims to draw out the best of its recipients and linguistically lead people from darkness to light. Therefore, peace is developing values, knowledge, insights, attitudes, and skills to live in harmony with oneself, others, and the natural environment. It is about helping oneself and others understand and transform conflict in personal lives, the community, and the world.

Although research in peacebuilding and the applications of the outcome of such research has been well developed in other parts of the world through empirical research as exemplified by Gomes de Matos publications in Brazil (1984) Plea for a Language Rights (1987) Declaration of Recife (on Linguistic Rights), and the Universal Declaration of Linguistic Rights (1996), There need to be more such developments in Africa and Northern Nigeria. Furthermore, scholars from outside Africa have studied African conflicts through foreign theoretical lenses. Most foreign scholars do not sufficiently demonstrate a profound understanding of the African experience, traditions, and culture.

The present study, therefore, explores Kaduna State conflicts from African perspectives and experiences and demonstrates how conflicts are understood and resolved and how confrontations can be mitigated via linguistic and ethnographic

tools. It answers the following questions: i) What is the relationship between language, culture, and violence? ii) What linguistic keys affect social relationships amongst members of Kaduna State communities? iii) What language mediation techniques are used by the community members to prevent confrontations, resolve conflicts, and facilitate peace in the selected speech communities in Kaduna State?

The paper is divided into five sections. The first part briefly overviews the conflict situation in Kaduna state. The second part reviews the literature and sources related to the study. The third part explores the study's methodology. The fourth section provides an understanding of the nexus between Language, Culture, and Conflict in Kaduna State; it also explores the linguistic codes that affect social relationships in Kaduna State Communities and describes the conflict-language nexus in Peace Mediation in the State. The final section maps out the consequences of language and peace study interplay.

Literature and Sources/Theoretical Framework

In Peace Studies, a conflict occurs when a person or group in an interdependent relationship exhibits differences, experiences, or anticipates frustration from another person or group regarding resources, interests, desires, or needs. Because of this, human beings often find themselves at cross purposes with one another through the different senses associated with how they express their feelings and emotions. They engage in arguments that emit more heat than light because they have different conceptions of issues such as democracy, civilisation, art, culture, social security, and progress.

From this perspective, Mediation, which uses language as its vehicle, is seen as a veritable conflict management tool for mitigating and resolving conflict in our communities. Generally speaking, Mediation is a process that involves two or more people in conflict who are to be assisted by a third person who does not determine the outcome of their conflict (Wall et al., 2001). This third person is called the mediator. The mediator's central role is to assist the people in communicating with each other concerning the conflict between them.

Wall et al. (2001) posit that the mediation literature of the past decade is organised into six topical areas: the determinants of mediation, Mediation per se, approaches employed by mediators, determinants of the Mediation approaches, outcomes of

Mediation, and determinants of the mediation outcomes. The literature that describes Mediation per se, mediation approaches, and outcomes are very descriptive rather than theoretical. The literature dealing with the determinants of the Mediation approaches and outcomes is quite descriptive but provides an ample base for theory development.

In terms of previous research, Friedrich (2007), Friedrich and De Matos (2012), Gomes De Matos (2018), Curtis (2017 & 2018), and Adedimeji (2019), among others, have all emphasised the importance of Peace Linguistics in the present crisis-ridden world. They focus on the need to illustrate how the intersection between language education and peace education is evolving. None of those studies mentioned above is ethnographic. Furthermore, all of the above studies were conducted outside Nigeria except for Adedimeji (2019), whose study is on the imperatives of peace linguistics and the Nigerian social media discourse. The works of Gomes de Matos (2018) and some of his contemporaries mentioned above are about how people could and should communicate with one another in ways that are respectful, compassionate, and peaceable in the sense of "behaving or happening in a way that avoids arguments and violence" for pedagogical implications. However, this approach has little to say about how people use language, as opposed to how they could or should use it outside the education context. Consequently, their approach is generally more prescriptive and superficial in advising on what should be said and written to avoid conflict rather than being descriptive or analytical. Here lies the distinctiveness of this study because it is ethnographic, hence descriptive, and entails the study of human behaviour in natural settings to develop an understanding of cultural/symbolic meanings of violence, conflict, peace mediation, and 'local rules.'

Nonviolent Communication Theory

Conflict is ubiquitous (Boulding, 2000, p. 89); hence, dealing effectively with conflict involves peacebuilding, which entails the application of communication theory for its management and resolution in society. Nonviolent Communication (henceforth NVC) is one of such peacebuilding theories developed by Rosenberg (2003) to foster intra- and interpersonal relationships of compassion, collaboration, and caring. He applied this theory in various settings like schools, hospitals, prisons, and restorative justice systems. At its heart is a belief that all human beings have the capacity for compassion and empathy. We only resort to

violence or behaviour harmful to others when we do not recognise more effective strategies for meeting needs.

Rosenberg (1983) defines the NVC process as having four fundamental principles. These four principles or components can be applied to two different NVC processes: 'expressing honestly' and hearing others or 'receiving empathically.' The first principle is the separation of observation from evaluation. When we want to express what is affecting our sense of well-being, we need to observe without bringing in any evaluation; otherwise, people who listen to us are apt to hear criticism and, therefore, create resistance towards what we want to express.

The second principle is exploring and expressing one's feelings that emerge from these observations. Rosenberg encourages expanding our feelings vocabulary to express as many nuances as "different passages of music in a symphony" (May, quoted in Rosenberg, 2003a, p.37). The second principle distinguishes between what we feel and think we are.

The third principle is taking responsibility for our feelings. Rosenberg believes what others say and do can stimulate our feelings but never the cause. The root of our feelings is twofold: "how we choose to receive what others say and do, as well as our particular needs and expectations at that moment" (Rosenberg, 2003a, p.49). This principle is the cornerstone upon which the NVC philosophy is founded: that human beings want to give out of 'intrinsic' inner motivations instead of guilt, shame, obligation, or reward. Rosenberg refers to this way of acting as 'giving from the heart.'

The fourth NVC principle is expressing an explicit request that will make life better. When the request is expressed clearly and with compassion, it creates a compassionate response; the request is optimistic about what needs to be done instead of what is done. Nonviolent Communication (NVC) helps communities to create a high quality of connection out of which people spontaneously enjoy contributing to one another's well-being. NVC uses consciousness, language, and communication skills to create a framework from which one can express one's feelings and needs with clarity and self-responsibility, listen to others' feelings and needs with compassion and empathy, and facilitate mutually beneficial outcomes for all parties involved.

Using nonviolent communication skills in Kaduna State speech communities can ensure harmonious coexistence while contributing to the emerging culture of compassionate corporate consciousness. This study examines the ethnography of language in conflict resolution and peacebuilding using NVC theory in selected speech communities in Kaduna State.

Methodology

The study adopted the Everyday Peace Indicators methodology (EPI). The EPI is interested in identifying bottom-up community-sourced peace, safety, and social change indicators. Participatory action research seeks to discover people's perceptions of their conflict rather than impose narratives on them.

The study elicited its data through primary and secondary sources to ensure the validity of the outcome of the data. The study employed qualitative methods. These included observations, ethnography, in-depth semi-structured interviews, and focus group discussions (FGD) using video, audio recordings, and field notes. For the interviews, four key informants (selected households, community leaders, and persons directly affected by communal conflicts) were obtained from each of the communities, making eight from each part and a total of sixteen interviews.

Three FGDs were carried out in each study area, totalling twelve. The FGDs were held with representatives of the different communities. The interviews and FGD were used to obtain information on the drivers of the conflicts, the role of language mediation in conflict resolution, the specific strategies adopted by the speech communities to mitigate conflict and minimise confrontations, and the effectiveness, sustainability, and outcomes of these initiatives in the selected communities.

The study was conducted in communities drawn from Northern and Southern Kaduna State, Nigeria, namely, Zaria/Sabon Gari and Kafanchan/Zonkwa. The justification for choosing these communities is that they have experienced prolonged conflicts and still suffer from the effects. Again, it is crucial to understand the peculiarities and relationships in the peacebuilding approach deployed by each community; hence, a comparative analysis of the study areas will be undertaken.

Secondary sources included relevant published and unpublished works comprising government publications on conflicts and peacebuilding, journal

articles, chapters in edited books, dissertations, conference papers, seminar papers, media reports, and others. The interviews and focus group discussions were analysed through the qualitative analysis of themes. Qualitative data analysis was guided by grounded theory, a procedure for constructing theoretical models based on the emerging themes from the interviews. The themes were organised to provide answers to the research questions.

Analyses

Understanding the nexus between Language, Culture, and Conflict in Kaduna State

Language is the basis on which humans establish relationships with themselves and things in their environment. Language is the engine that powers human activity. Through it, we preserve our cultures; similarly, it plays a crucial role in causing and resolving conflicts. The primary function of language is communication. However, as a social practice, it goes beyond mere speech acts to include, among other things, peacebuilding, peace-supporting, and peace-sustaining functions. An interesting fact about language is that, as it is used to communicate/create conflict, it can also be used to communicate/create peace. This is what this study sets out to demonstrate: using language to create peace in Kaduna State.

Language provides a repertoire of words that name the categories into which the language users have divided their world. Definitions of words are linguistically, culturally, and contextually bound. Words carry meanings that make sense to members of a shared social environment. Conflict resolution relies heavily on word choices. Here, language is crucial to conflict resolution because it is the words humans use as an accelerator to harmonious living or existential war and destruction. There is an assumption that conflict is best resolved when people can speak in one "nativity"; for instance, the three languages that were analysed used their various languages to insult other linguistic groups: the Atyapp call the Hausa *Abvuiantiyokakpat*, meaning the rotten Hausa and the Hausa call them *Arnanbanza*, the poor pagans. It is believed that these insults would not have arisen if the groups had spoken the same language. Furthermore, it is believed that when faced with conflict, humans can best sort out the issue in their native language because of the semiotics of the conflict. There is linguistic consistency where all the words are used to add value to the discourse and search for a resolution.

Conflict is an unavoidably integral part of communal existence. Its unfolding is inevitable, but its resolution should be amicable. The basic choice of language and words could end or fuel a conflict. Scholars have defined the term differently depending on the perspective from which they are looking at the concept. Making a distinction between conflicts and disputes, Spangler and Burgess (2005, p. 1) state, "conflicts involve deep-rooted moral or value differences, high-stake distributional questions, such as who dominates whom, fundamental human psychological needs, for identity, security, and recognition are often at issue as well. "Differences, therefore, constitute a core element in the conflict. Spangler and Burgess added: "People will not compromise fundamental values. They will not give up their chance for a better life by submitting to continued injustice or domination, nor will they change or give up their self-identity. In this perspective, conflict is considered as value differences resulting from group interaction. We, however, want to add that some conflicts can also be generated by infringement on the values of one party by another.

For Radcliffe (1994, p. 3), conflict is 'division.' Such divisions could be over class, religion, linguistic or gender issues. Kupolati (1995, p. 225) adds that conflict also covers disturbances. Some scholars define conflict based on its outcome. Constantino and Merchant define conflict as "fundamental disagreement between two parties" (quoted in Spangler and Burgess, 2005, p. 2). They add, "People with opposing interests, values or needs are in a state of conflict, which may be latent or manifest" (p. 2). From the preceding definitions, we can deduce that conflict expresses differences, divisions, or oppositions of interest or values. The view of this paper is that conflict is an expression of the feeling of threat over self-identity or group interest.

Violence means harming others in the pursuit of one's preferences. Cultural and social norms are highly influential in shaping individual backgrounds, including the use of violence. For instance, cultural acceptance of violence or conflict through beatings, as exhibited, is a risk factor in interpreting violence.

A culture shock is produced in a mix where diverse people meet, most especially due to social and geographical contacts (Furnham & Bochner, 1986). Usually, that is not the problem; rather, the challenge arises when politicisation or poor Mediation of diversity leads to violent shocks that explode into social conflicts with devastating consequences like what is happening in Kaduna State.

All the interviewees of this research agreed *“that culture and language do not serve as reasons why the people should be experiencing conflicts and attacks now and then.”* Moreover, the *“culture that people practice is to bind them together not to destroy their common needed unity.”* However, they all accepted that *“appropriate use of language can promote peaceful coexistence.”* Some of the interviewees lamented that the fundamental thing that could address the turmoil they were passing through could be tied to the inability of the elites to use language correctly and appropriately so that Atyapp Bajju and the Fulani could come to terms and reconcile. They added that even government intervention is needed to make sure they make an invitation to the reconciliatory table so that the mayhem can be curtailed. One of the royal fathers, the Agwam Bajiu, asserts:

Language's role in ensuring peaceful coexistence is unarguably very proper. It starts from even a family as the smallest unit of society. It is the language that keeps a family as an entity. When parents do not make sure they use language to transmit morals to their children, they automatically lose their moral standing. The maturity of an individual is counted according to his ability to use language properly, and the nexus between an individual and his maturity is the use of language.

The interviewees also attributed the escalation of the mayhem to the “ghastly unguarded utterances of the government and the “conspiracy of silence” (two contradictory reasons).

On the relationship between language, culture, and conflict, one of the royal fathers, the Emir of Jema'a, affirms that “language is a magnetic element that keeps people together in harmony.” He rhetorically wonders what would have happened amongst Kaduna State people without language, which serves as a common identity. In his speech, he says, “Culture and language are like Siamese twins; they cannot be separated.” He further observes that the culture he inherited from his parents is a culture of peace, not violence. According to him, before the demise of his father, he cautioned him that he should never be privy to any group of people that cause tension that could lead to the loss of lives and destruction of properties. He said his father warned him that his culture was practised according to the required rhythm of their community. In his speech, he said that “even Allah does not encourage violence; therefore, people should not allow their interests to be a reason for tension.”

Still, on the nexus between language and culture, the youth leader in one of the southern communities asserts that most of the names of the communities in the local government, like *Zangon Kataf*, *Samaru*, and *Kurmin Masara*, to mention but a handful, have Hausa origin. To him, that was evidence of peaceful coexistence and cross-cultural relations that had existed for generations in the community before its distortion by conflict. From the ethnographic point of view, the above discourses buttress the fact that language is a veritable, viable, and indispensable tool for peacebuilding, sustaining, and reconciliation in Kaduna state. It also reiterates the substantial nexus between language, culture, conflict, and violence.

Linguistic Codes that Affect Social Relationships in Kaduna State Communities

“Mere words can prevent war, create understanding or inflame prejudice, form constitutions or destroy them, sell shoddy or superior ideas, justify man’s worst action or express his highest ideal” (Berk’s assertion quoted in Adedimeji, 2019, P. 3). Conflicts and misunderstandings appear unavoidable in discourses between two or more individuals. Because no language user can control the understanding of other users, especially when it is possible for varying degrees of understanding of the same piece of language by a group of listeners, misunderstanding can arise due to poor choice of expression by the speaker or wrong interpretation of the expression by the listener. Several scholars have tilted their research towards accounting for how communication is understood from the hearer’s perspective, while many others have accounted for theirs from the speaker's perspective.

This paper examines how positive or negative confrontations may be minimised to reduce the possibility of conflicts, particularly in face-to-face communication. Studying the quality of the language of interaction between two or more interlocutors is essential because, according to Fillmore, as cited by Tannen (2005), language is primarily used for interaction.

It has been established that language users always choose from the available alternatives; the choice may be consciously, subconsciously, or unconsciously made through informal contexts. The choice is almost always consciously made since language users are aware of the implications of their expressions. For instance, a language user in a job interview will be careful in their choice of language because their success at the interview is partly dependent upon it.

Conversely, language use in informal contexts appears to be less conscious of the communicative implication, and, therefore, the choice is subconsciously or unconsciously made. Thus, confrontations in language use are least expected in formal contexts but more expected in informal ones; that is the basic assumption. However, during this research, it was found that even during the Mediation, which is usually within the formal context, the choice of words is subconscious, particularly from the side of the disputants.

Phrases like *rama cuta* (retaliation is compulsory), *Za ku gani* (you shall see), *wallahi sai mun dau fansa, mu zuba mu gani* (we swear we will seek revenge), *shege ka fasa* (only the bastard will stop), etc. are prevalent in most of the antagonists/disputants' speeches. Expressions like these are termed Linguistic Conflict Triggers (henceforth LCT). It was also discovered that the use of such callous, aggressive, or confusions epithets that are directly confrontational and highly accusative trigger conflicts in the linguistic communities of Kaduna State. More examples of vile language include the following:

Kafirai (non-believers) *Arnan banza* (useless pagans or herders)
Idan mutuum ya ji haushi ya hau dutsen kufaina (If you are angry, climb the Kufena rock and kill yourself)
Kowa ya kwana Lafiya shi ya so (Whoever sleeps in peace is his making)
Ayi dai mu gani (let us sit and watch)
Yaro bai san wuta ba sai ya taka (the child does not know fire until he steps on it)
Fada da aljani ba dadi (fighting the demon is not a convenient act)
Ruwa ba sa'an Kwando ba ne (water is verily no match for basket)
Bakin rijiya ba wajen wasan makaho/yaro ba ne (the vicinity of the well is not the blind/child's playground)
Mu zuba mu gani (Do it, and we are keenly watching)
Settlers dan Bahausha (son of Hausa man)
Shege (bastard)
matsoraci, (coward)
Ya'yan baki (children of the strangers)
aboki shine my shoe
Bahausha wawa (Hausa man a fool)
Kaado (Non-Fulani speaker)
Balwakoppijo (people with black knees),
Kafeero (non-believers), etc.

These callous phrases and epithets can be very provocative and, most of the time, are coded.

Surprisingly, some of these offensive terms that defied the principles of NVC are realised in one of the communities leader's speeches during one of the interviews in sentences like...

"I will crush anybody who gets in my way...."

"I do not appeal to the emotion of anybody," etc.

When asked about politeness, he inferred that some of the unguarded LCTs used by some people could result from bluntness. However, the researcher contends with him that bluntness is not synonymous with rudeness or impoliteness because one can be blunt and still be polite.

Some of the LCTs discussed above may be termed hate speeches as they are abusive or threatening phrases that express prejudicial beliefs against a particular group based on ethnicity and religion. Such phrases include "useless pagans," "those people that put their heads on the ground," "hopeless Atyapp," and many more. Sani (2021) posits that hate speeches threaten national unity. Hate speeches could promote sectional, not national interests, negatively affecting Nigeria and Nigerians.

Table 1: Linguistic Conflict Triggers (Hausa Language)

S/N	Linguistic Conflict Triggers (Hausa Language)	Translation
1	<i>Kafirai,</i>	Non.- believers
2	<i>Arnan banza</i>	Useless pagans
3	<i>Ida nmutum ya ji haushi ya hau dutsen Kufena</i>	If you are angry, climb the Kufena rock and kill yourself
4	<i>Kowa ya kwana lafiya shi ya so</i>	Whoever sleeps in peace is his making
5	<i>A yi dai mu gani</i>	Do it, and we are keenly watching
6	<i>Yaro bai san wuta ba sai ya taka</i>	The child does not know fire until he steps on it
7	<i>Fada da aljani ba dadi</i>	Fighting the demon is not a convenient act
8	<i>Ruwa ba sa'an Kwando ba ne</i>	Water is verily no match for a basket
9	<i>Bakin rijiya ba wajen wa san makaho/yaro ba ne,</i>	The vicinity of the well is not the blind/child's playground
10	<i>mu zuba mu gani</i>	Let us sit and watch

(Compiled by the author)

Table 2: Linguistic Conflict Triggers (Pullo)

S/N	Linguistic Conflict Triggers (Pullo)	Translation
1	<i>Kaado</i>	Non -Fulani speaker
2	<i>Balwakoppiijo</i>	people with black knees (non-believers)
3	<i>Keefero</i>	Pagan
4	<i>Mgondaandiri</i>	Namesis

(Compiled by the author)

Table 3: Linguistic Conflict Triggers (Atyap Language)

S/N	LINGUISTIC CONFLICT TRIGGERS (ATYAP)	TRANSLATION
1	<i>AbvuiAntiokAbuta</i>	A rotten Fulani Man.
2	<i>Banyedtsuakatsyi</i>	people that put their heads on the ground (prostrate)
3	<i>Banyedcranaya</i>	those people with lice

Table 4: Linguistic Conflict Mitigators (Atyap Language)

S/N	Linguistic Conflict Mitigators (Atyap Language)	Translation
1	<i>Tung dung ayetdukwaba:</i>	Living in a cooperative atmosphere does not mean slavery.
2	<i>Shi da abvuabvunayetshiaami</i>	accepting that you're wrong infers greatness
3	<i>Di gbadanayinanyiai sip bubayacen:</i>	The greatness of a person comes from how he accepts visitors

(Compiled by the author)

Understanding the Conflict-language Nexus in Peace Mediation in Kaduna State

Peace mediation in a conflict-affected context such as Kaduna State, Nigeria, aims to mitigate violent conflicts, prevent their escalation or degeneration, or resolve them. Mediation is a particular form of negotiation in which a neutral third party plays a central role in helping the parties in conflict achieves a

mutually acceptable settlement. Skilled mediators who facilitate dialogue and confidence-building based on the nonviolent resolution of differences are respected and trusted by both sides. Language becomes essential as the mediator has to fully understand the context and dynamics of the conflict, communicate effectively with the various actors, manage negotiations, and facilitate acceptable agreements to all concerned. Direct negotiations between disputants may only be feasible sometimes; given their divergent interests, needs, and emotions, third-party intervention is necessary in many conflicts. From this perspective, Mediation by a third party is a veritable conflict management tool for settling disputes and conflict situations.

Fairclough (2001) opines that dialogue is a panacea for assuaging crises. It is a situation where the parties in a conflict come together to discuss and resolve their differences. Dialogue within and between communities has been part of African cultures and traditions of peace-making. Many of those interviewed during this study confirmed that mediation is significant in conflict management in Kaduna State. It is essential to note mediation is voluntary and non-visitant characteristics because, during such negotiations, the parties have no obligation to go further than they wish. However, the mediator can transmit and initiate suggestions for resolving the conflict. Mediation's fundamental goal is achieving an acceptable settlement through nonviolent means. From human experience within the context of the family, community, country, and even in international relations, mediation is used as a nonviolent method of resolving conflict and attaining peace.

Mediation Processes in Kaduna State

Mediation processes in Kaduna State tend to be in the following formats:

- i) **Facilitative Mediation.** In facilitative or traditional Mediation, a professional mediator facilitates negotiations between the parties in conflict. In most cases, it is performed by traditional leaders such as *Emirs*, for example, the *Emir* of Jamaa, the *Emir* of Zazzau, and the *Masu Anguwa* (local chiefs). Rather than making recommendations or imposing a decision, the mediator encourages disputants to reach their voluntary solution by exploring each other's deeper interests, particularly in marital or inheritance disputes.

These are some of the phrases/clauses/metaphors and proverbs used during the mediation processes:

Ku je ku sasanta kanku (go and reconcile)

Kuyi hakuri (be patient)

Shi zaman aure dan hakuri ne (marriage involves tolerance and patience),
and

Zo mu zauna, zo mu saba (familiarity breeds contempt).

Others include:

Tsakanin harshe da hakori ma akan saba (it is not by design that the teeth bite the tongue) and

Mata da miji sai Allah (only God knows what binds a husband and wife).

- ii) **Evaluative Mediation.** This is a process in which the mediator facilitates negotiation between the conflicting parties and evaluates the merits and demerits of the case before suggesting steps toward its resolution. *Emirs* handle such issues mostly in cases such as land or territorial disputes. In most cases, the mediator advises disputants to embrace peaceful approaches to resolving conflict, using the following sentences:

Ku yi hakuri ku sasanta (be patient and reconcile!)

Kasar ta Allah ne (the land belongs to no one but God)

Ku ji tsoron Allah (fear God), and

Ku 'yan' uwan juna ne (you are your brother's keeper).

- iii) **Transformative Mediation.** The transformative approach does not seek an immediate resolution of the conflict or problem but rather the empowerment and building of mutual respect between the parties involved. According to Bush and Folger (2004), empowerment means enabling the parties to define their issues and seek solutions with minimal outside interference. In other words, transformative Mediation focuses on the "people" instead of the "problem." This mediation approach is adopted in the dialogue between bandits, government officials, and a notable Islamic *Sheikh* (scholar), Ahmed Gumi, in Kaduna State. Given the rather intractable nature of banditry and the ways the phenomenon has defied the efforts of law enforcement agencies, some religious leaders decided to wade into the crises. The *Sheikh* used his expertise in Islamic learning and status as a respected authority figure to hold talks with bandits in their camps, intending to get them to adopt nonviolent methods in expressing their grievances against the government and society. Such peace talks also

preach the value(s) of pacifism, humanism, and brotherliness. Although his mediation effort is yet to yield substantial favourable results due to certain obstacles, it is worthwhile to pay close attention to his approach to peace making in subsequent studies.

- iv) **Faith-based approach.** This is referred to locally as the “Pastor-Imam” approach. According to the facilitators of this mediation strategy, they realize that Nigeria is a very religious country, and one can market virtually anything using religion. People will buy it before thinking when you say what the Almighty says on this matter. You get people to shift position more quickly than when using the western mediation method.

They use verses from the Quran and the Bible to appeal to conflicting parties to settle their differences peacefully. In deciding on which verses of Muslim or Christian Scriptures to use, mediators operating from the background of faith-based organizations (FBOs) engage in contextual analysis before deploying their influence or deciding on which type of mediation best addresses specific conflict management challenges.

V) **Hybrid Approaches: Shuttle Mediation, Interventionist, and Language/Communication Tools/Strategies**

This research also reveals the multifaceted or hybrid approaches used by conflict mediators and peacemakers operating in conflict-affected communities of Kaduna State. Underlying these approaches is the creative use of language tools in dousing tensions and appealing for peace among inhabitants of conflict-affected communities. The mediators employed simple sentences and clauses, mainly proverbs, to appeal to the disputants' emotions. The following table summarises some of the clauses and proverbs used during conflict mediation processes.

Linguistic Conflict Mitigators during Mediation Processes (Hausa Language)

S/N	Linguistic Conflict Mitigators (Hausa Language)	Translation
1	<i>Zaman Lafiya ya fi Zama dan sarki.</i>	Living in peace is better than living like a prince. Living in peace is better than living in pieces.
2	<i>Mai hakuri shi yake dafa dutse har ya sha romonsa.</i>	A patient man can cook stone and enjoy the taste It is he who is patient that succeeds in life
3	<i>Mu 'yan' uwan juna ne.</i>	We are our brother's keeper.
4	<i>Nijeriya guda daya ce.</i>	We only have one Nigeria.
5	<i>Hakuri maganin zaman duniya.</i>	Patience is the medicine for living in this world Patience is the key to success.
6	<i>Bayan wuya sai dadî.</i>	Success comes after hardship. There is always light at the end of the tunnel.
7	<i>Wanda ya yi hakuri da kunun maraice ya kai ga tuwon dare.</i>	Whoever reaches the ear of the evening will reach the tip of the night.
8	<i>Mahakurci Mawadaci.</i> (Compiled by the Author)	He who is patient is always rich. A patient dog eats the fattest bone.

There are several stages in the mediation process. This may be why it is often regarded as a process. A typical outline of the steps involved in Mediation in Kaduna State includes initiation, preparation, introduction, problem statement, and problem clarification. Others are generating and evaluating alternatives, selecting options, and reaching an agreement. The researcher and her assistant noted that in all the mediations they observed in the northern and southern parts of Kaduna State, mediators adhered to the preceding stages to achieve the following objectives:

- (i) Resolution of the substantive problems.

- (ii) Maintaining and promoting existing cordial relationships are usually founded on mutual trust.
- (iii) Minimising psychological and social costs of terminating such relationships if unavoidable.

The mediators diligently pursued the participation of disputants at every stage of the mediation process. In the study, the researcher observed that African cultures highly value relationships and hierarchies when facilitating dialogue and resolving conflicts. However, some nonverbal communication cues were used during the mediation process. For example, disputants sat on the floor while the *Emirs* sat on their thrones; they also genuflected or bowed their heads as a sign of respect. These acts reflect hierarchical power relations and submission to authority. The pattern of Mediation is such that conflict actors' behavior can be influenced or changed out of a high level of respect for and obedience to the Emir. Minimal gestures and paralanguage, such as tone, facial gestures, and expressions, are some of the nonverbal communication cues used during mediation.

From recent interviews with the stakeholders at the Kaduna State Peace Commission (KSPC), the study discovered that most of their mediation processes occur within political parties, during political campaigns or rallies. The KSPC has regulated the use of vile and derogatory language to avoid bloody conflicts during such events. Below is an excerpt from one of the stakeholders in the State:

Concerning engagement with citizens, civil society, and stakeholders, the Kaduna State government has done reasonably well in dealing with this. However, regarding negotiating with criminals and armed gangs, the state government has not been aligned to mediocrity roles with these groups (Sani, 2021).

Despite the detailed explanations and discussions about the mediation processes in Kaduna State, the researcher found out from the focus group discussions (FGDs, 2021) that there need to be more mediation attempts on the part of the state government. Mediation processes only took place within Kaduna communities' local/royal contexts.

Conclusion

The study identifies the need to understand conflicts and design mitigating influences, particularly in the use of language. Ezedikachi (2017) suggests a need

to devise a means of ensuring a pragmatic solution to the Kaduna state conflict. Hence, this study provided an ethnographic guide to understanding the basic rudiments of Mediation in the context of Kaduna State. It has defined and described the language used in mediation to mitigate conflict. The types and stages of Mediation have been outlined and explained. In the end, this essay draws attention to the utility of mediation in conflict management based on its non-reliance on violence. It establishes that language is viable for mitigating and resolving conflict in Kaduna State. Therefore, this study is intervention research for analysing conflicts in Kaduna state and implementing policy using the ethnographic approach of Peace Linguistics. It is a 'turn to language research for essential decisions in peacebuilding practice, policies, and recommendations. The researcher believes that the path to peace lies in peace study through peace linguistics across the board. Therefore, the researcher recommends and advocates the injection or mainstreaming of Peace Linguistics and its significance in the school curriculum in helping foster a culture of peace among young persons in Kaduna State. The skills they acquire will be helpful in life. It is expedient that students should have good communication skills, such as listening, paraphrasing, and summarising what they have heard without distorting the main facts. They should be able to describe and explain their ideas about the world peacefully and with members of other groups and cultures. The study enhances the capacity of Nigerians and Africans to respond to their conflicts and challenges through Peace Linguistics.

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