

**LINGUISTIC TAGGING AND IDEOLOGY IN SELECTED ENGLISH-MEDIUM NIGERIAN AND CAMEROONIAN NEWSPAPER REPORTS ON THE BAKASSI PENINSULA BORDER CONFLICT**

BY

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## **CERTIFICATION PAGE**

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## DEDICATION

This work is JOYFULLY dedicated to

**God the Father,**

**the Son**

and

**the Holy Ghost,**

for making me what I am.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Title Page	i
Certification	ii
Dedication	iii
Acknowledgements	iv - vi
Table of Contents	vii – xi
List of Tables	xii
List of Figures	xiii
Abstract	xiv – xv

### **CHAPTER ONE: GENERAL INTRODUCTION**

1.0	Introduction	1
1.1	Background to the Study	1 – 3
1.2	Statement of the Research Problem	3 – 4
1.3	Aim and Objectives of the study	4 – 5
1.4	Research Questions	5
1.5	Scope of the Study	6
1.6	Significance of the Study	6
1.7	The Bakassi Peninsula Border Conflict: An Overview	7 – 11
1.8	Conclusion	11
1.9	Definition of Terms	11 - 12

### **CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES**

2.0	Introduction	13
2.1	Language of News Reporting in the Print Media	13 – 15
2.2	The Print Media Representation of Conflict: A Review	15 – 24
2.3	Review of Related Literature on Bakassi Peninsula Border Conflict	24 – 26
2.4	Approaches to News Discourse	27 – 30

2.5	Discourse Analysis	30 – 31
2.6	Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)	31 – 34
2.6.1	Approaches to Critical Discourse Analysis	35
2.6.1.1	Wodak’s Discourse-Historical/Discourse-Sociolinguistic Approach	35 – 36
2.6.1.2	Fairclough Socio-semiotic Approach	36 – 38
2.6.1.3	Van Dijk Socio-Cognitive Approach	38 – 41
2.7	Ideology and Socio-Cognition	41 – 46
2.8	Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL)	46 – 48
2.8.1	Material processes	48 – 49
2.8.2	Relational processes	49
2.8.3	Mental processes	49 – 50
2.8.4	Verbal processes	50 – 51
2.9	Nominalisations	51 – 52
2.10	Passivisations	52 – 53
2.11	Metaphors	54
2.12	Lexis as a Level of Systemic Functional Linguistics	54
2.12.1	Lexical Decomposition: Componential Analysis	55 – 56
2.12.2	Semantic Fields	56 – 57
2.12.3	Denotation and Connotation	57
2.13	Summary and Conclusion	57

### **CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK**

3.0	Introduction	58
3.1	The Pilot Study	58 – 59
3.2	Sources of Data for the Research	60
3.3	Method of Data Collection	60
3.4	Method of Data Analysis	61
3.5	Analytical Framework: A Synthesis of Insights	61 – 63
3.6	Summary and Conclusion	64



**CHAPTER FOUR: THEMES AND LINGUISTIC TAGGING OF PEOPLE AND ACTIONS IN THE NEWS REPORTS ON THE BAKASSI PENINSULA BORDER CONFLICT (BPBC)**

4.0	Introduction	65
4.1	Results of the Content Analysis of Words (Tags) used in Representing People	65 – 66
4.1.1	Terrorism and the Tag of Terrorist	66 – 67
4.1.2	Militancy and the Tag of Militant	67 – 68
4.1.3	Possession and the Tag of Owners versus Non-Owners	68
4.1.4	Dispossession/Suffering and the tag of The Dispossessed/ Victims	68 – 69
4.2	Themes in the News Reports on the Bakassi Peninsula Border Conflict	69
4.2.1	Economy, Territorial Ownership and Non-Ownership	69 – 71
4.2.1.1	Words of Territorial Ownership and Non-ownership	71 – 82
4.2.2	Dispossession	82 – 84
4.2.2.1	Words of Dispossession	84 – 93
4.2.2.2	Grammatical Choices in the Representation of Dispossession	94
4.2.2.2.1	Transitivity of the Material Process	94 – 95
4.2.2.2.2	Passivization portraying Dispossession	96 – 97
4.2.2.3	Metaphors signifying Dispossession	97 – 98
4.2.2.4	Verbs Signifying Mental Conditions	98 – 100
4.2.3	Suffering	100 – 101
4.2.3.1	Words of Suffering	101 – 110
4.2.3.2	Grammatical Aspects of Representing Suffering	110
4.2.3.2.1	Metaphor signifying Suffering	110 – 111
4.2.3.2.2	Verbs showing Mental Conditions	111 – 114
4.2.4	Resistance	114 – 115
4.2.4.1	Words Denoting Resistance	116 – 126
4.2.4.2	Grammatical Aspects of Representing People and their Actions	126
4.2.4.2.1	Transitivity System Representing Resistance	126 – 128
4.2.4.2.2	Passivization Portraying Resistance	128 – 129

4.2.4.2.3 Nominalization portraying Resistance	129 – 131
4.2.5 Terrorism	131 – 132
4.2.5.1 Words Denoting Terrorism used in Representing Actors of Violence	133 – 143
4.2.5.2 Grammatical Aspects of Representing People and their Actions	144
4.2.5.2.1 Transitivity of the Material Process Representing Terrorism	144– 146
4.2.5.2.2 Passivisation portraying Terrorism	146 – 149
4.2.5.2.3 Nominalisation portraying Terrorism	149 – 152
4.2.5.2.4 Conclusion	152

**CHAPTER FIVE: IDEOLOGIES AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON THE LINGUISTIC TAGGING OF PEOPLE AND THEIR ACTIONS IN THE PRINT MEDIA REPORTS**

5.1 Introduction	153 – 154
5.2 Economic Interest Influences the Tagging of Territorial Ownership and Non-Ownership	154 – 158
5.3 Altruism Motivates the Tagging of Dislocation	158 –161
5.4 Social Justice Underlies the Tagging of Dislocation	161 – 164
5.5 Patriotism Motivates the Tagging of Militancy	164 – 167
5.6 Pacifism Influences the Tagging of Violence	167 – 170
5.7 Conclusion	170

**CHAPTER SIX: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

6.1 Introduction	171
6.2 Summary of Findings	171 – 172
6.2.1 The Recurring Dominant Themes in the Nigerian and Cameroonian Newspaper Reports on the BPBC	172
6.2.2 The Specific Linguistic Means and Forms of Representing People and their Actions in the Reports	172 – 173
6.2.3 The Specific Hidden Ideologies Underlying the Linguistic Representations of People and their Actions	173

6.2.4	The Link between the Specific Forms of Representing People and their Actions and Ideologies	173 – 174
6.2.5	The Convergence and Divergence of Underlying Ideologies in the Nigerian and Cameroonian Newspaper Reports	174 - 176
6.3	Conclusion and Contributions of the Study	176
6.4	Recommendations for Further Studies	177
	References	178 – 195
	Appendixes	

## LIST OF TABLES

	Page
Table 4.1: A Frequency Analysis of the Occurrences of Lexical Tags	66
Table 4.2: A Frequency Analysis of the Occurrence of Grammatical Features	69
Table 4.3: Headlines Depicting Territorial Ownership and Non-Ownership	71
Table 4.4: A Componential Analysis of Words of Territorial Ownership and Non-ownership	72
Table 4.5: Headlines Depicting Dispossession	83
Table 4.6: A Componential Analysis of Words of Dispossession	84
Table 4.7: Headlines Conveying Suffering	101
Table 4.8: Headlines Depicting Resistance	115
Table 4.9: A Componential Analysis of Lexemes of Actors of Resistance	116
Table 4.10: Headlines Portraying Terrorism	132
Table 4.11: A Componential Analysis of Words Describing Actors of Violence	133

## LIST OF FIGURES

	Page
Figure 1: Location of the Bakassi Peninsula	9
Figure 3.1: Analytical Framework	62
Figure 4.1 Words of Territorial Ownership and Non-Ownership	72
Figure 4.2: Words of Dispossession	85
Figure 4.3: Kinds of Suffering	102
Figure 4.4: Interconnections of Words Denoting of Resistance	117
Figure 4.5: The Interrelationships of Words Describing Actors and Acts of Violence	134

## ABSTRACT

Linguistic tagging, the labelling of people and their actions with particular socio-politically-grounded values, is an ideological denominator that plays a significant role in media framing of conflict. Despite this significance, existing studies on the Nigeria-Cameroon Bakassi Peninsula border conflict, which had concentrated on the historical, political, legal and sociolinguistic dimensions, largely neglected an exploration of the dynamics of linguistic tagging. Therefore, this study investigated the linguistic tagging of people and their actions, and the underlying social, political and economic ideologies in the Nigerian and Cameroonian newspaper reports on the Bakassi Peninsula border conflict, with a view to uncovering the interactions between the tagging and the ideologies.

The theoretical framework was a synthesis of insights from van Dijk's socio-cognitive model of Critical Discourse Analysis, Halliday's Systemic Linguistics and the theory of lexical decomposition. Data were collected from three Nigerian newspapers (*The Guardian*, *The Punch* and *The Nigerian Chronicle*) and three Cameroonian newspapers (*The Cameroon Tribune*, *The Post* and *Eden*), published in English between August 2006 and August 2010. These newspapers were purposively selected on the basis of their wide virtual and non-virtual publicity on the conflict. Out of a total of 650 news reports, 164 (87 Nigerian and 77 Cameroonian news reports) were purposively selected and subjected to content, linguistic and descriptive statistical analyses.

Five conflict-related themes, namely, terrorism, resistance, dispossession, suffering and economy, which correlated with different forms of linguistic tagging, were identified. Terrorism took lexical tags of violence, and resistance, the tags of militancy. Dispossession and suffering took the tags of dislocation, and economy, the tags of ownership. These tags featured emotive and evaluative adjectives and intensifying adverbs. The themes of terrorism and resistance were tagged by transitive clauses of action, while dispossession and suffering were represented by metaphors

and verbs signifying mental conditions. Economic interests in the Peninsula were represented positively while violence, militancy and dislocation evoked negative connotations. Ostensibly to attract international support, Cameroonian newspaper reports emphasised tags of violence (46.0%), militancy (37.0%), ownership (14.0%) and dislocation (3.0%) while the Nigerian ones devoted more attention to tags of dislocation (53.0%), ownership (36.0%), militancy (9.0%) and violence (2.0%). Ideologically, the tags were motivated by specific values. The economic value of consumerism motivated the tagging of ownership in both nations' newspapers. However, in the Nigerian reports, 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. Cameroonian reports had a larger concentration of agentless passives (76.0%) than Nigerian ones (24.0%) to obscure media bias. Nominalisations were deployed in the Nigerian reports (54.0%) and the Cameroonian ones (46.0%) to play down media involvement.

There is a dynamic interaction between socio-political and economic ideologies and linguistic tagging in the newspaper reports on the Bakassi Peninsula border conflict. This interaction projected respectively social concerns and political rights and peace in Nigerian and Cameroonian reports. Thus, an awareness of this interaction is essential to the understanding of media reports on border conflicts.

**Key words:** Linguistic tagging, Newspaper reports, Ideology, Bakassi Peninsula conflict

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **GENERAL INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.0 Introduction**

This chapter is a general introduction to the study. It includes a discussion of border conflict in general and that of the Nigerian-Cameroonian Bakassi Peninsula in particular. It discusses the role of the print media, especially in their use of language to represent people and their actions in conflict situations. The chapter also states the research problem, the aim of the study, its scope and significance.

#### **1.1 Background to the Study**

Conflict over ownership of territories between nations is an endemic human phenomenon all over the world. In Africa, several nations have been engulfed in crises over the determination, ownership and control of their boundaries. Some scholars (e.g. Ushie 2010, Omede 2006, Mbuh 2004) ascribe border crises in Africa to the arbitrary partitioning of the continent and the random yoking of independent nations by the colonial masters during the Berlin Conference of 1884 – 1885. Thus, in trying to redefine their boundaries, African nations have been drawn into avoidable and protracted disputes over such regions. Border crisis in Africa extends beyond mere determination of boundaries to competition for the control of valuable material and natural resources in/around the territories in disputes (Konings, 2005).

Border conflicts often have extensive political, economic and socio-cultural implications for governments and citizens of contending nations. While government is committed to its political mandate to protect its territorial sovereignty with its economic potentials for the benefit of their citizens, the citizens themselves (more often than not) are



concerned with their socio-cultural heritage which stands threatened in the event of such political and economic conflicts. The outcomes of most international conflicts, particularly border-related ones are usually calamitous. Typically, people are forced out of their habitats, either by instrument of government or by the activities of opposing groups, leading to their being dispossessed of vital means of livelihood. The situation results in considerable suffering and loss of life.

The Nigeria-Cameroon Bakassi Peninsula border dispute is one remarkable current international boundary conflict in Africa that has dominated the print media for the past ten years. Volumes of information on the conflict are disseminated across several communities and nations on daily basis through hundreds of newspapers of various circulatory capacities. A significant concentration of news reports on the disputed Nigeria-Cameroon border is observed between August 2006 and August 2010, following the two handovers of the peninsula (in August 2006 and 2008) to Cameroon by Nigeria in compliance with the judgment of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in 2002. Within this period, the newspapers were preoccupied with reporting on the development of the conflict. The reports' headlines captured various dimensions of the conflict situation including historical and geographical details and statistics of the peninsula, governments' position and activities, such as military operations in the region, positions of other interest groups and their activities in the territory, concern of the international communities, such as the International Court of Justice's intervention and the 2002 judgment, the Green Tree Agreement in 2006 and the handover of the peninsula to Cameroon by Nigeria in 2006 and 2008.

During the over three decades that the dispute lasted, series of violence and killings were recorded and pains from which are still being nursed by the affected citizens of both nations, especially the displaced. After a decade of intervention and resolution of the conflict by the International Court of Justice in 2002, issues on the conflict have continued to emerge from different quarters. Recently, on the 15th and 6th October, 2012, *The Guardian*, a Nigerian newspaper, respectively reported the struggle for self-determination by the displaced Bakassi indigenes and the legal battle to compel Nigerian president to revoke the Green Tree Agreement. Although the conflict is commonly reported in Nigerian and Cameroonian newspapers, there are divergent interests and ideological

motivations by both nations. Such differences between these nations reflect their different philosophies and commitment to such beliefs which their print media invariably represent and express. This is manifest in their use of language in the reports in terms of details (content) and discourse-stylistic choices (form).

## **1.2 Statement of the Research Problem**

Existing studies on the Nigerian-Cameroonian Bakassi Peninsula border conflict have addressed the historical, political, legal and sociolinguistic dimensions but with little attention paid to the crucial role of language as the primary means of framing the conflict. An available linguistic study on the conflict is Omoniyi and Salami (2004) who investigate identity constructs of the inhabitants narratives from a sociolinguistic (ethnographic) perspective. The study analyses the people's narratives of identity in Bakassi Peninsula, against the backdrop of International Court of Justice's ruling on the ownership of the peninsula. Using narratives as paradigms to uncover the people's identity, the study focuses on sociolinguistic variables such as ethnic affiliation, ancestry, language, cultural properties (e.g. sacred sites), the people's way of life (including occupation and religious practices) and resources embedded in personal and community narratives. Significantly, the study discovers that the construction of Bakassi identity in the context of ICJ verdict is dynamic and has a lot of implications to the understanding of the conflict. However, a better understanding of the conflict would require not only studying the identity constructs but also examining language use in terms of how people and their actions in the conflict situation are represented or tagged.

Linguistic tagging, the labelling of people and their actions with particular socio-politically-grounded values, is an ideological denominator that plays a significant role in print media representation of conflict. The print media, a powerful institution whose roles in the society affect millions of lives, plays a pivotal and central role of relaying conflict events to their numerous consumers who depend on them for daily news. The role of the print media in conflict situations could be likened to that of commentators in football competitions. If the Bakassi peninsula conflict is taken as an international soccer contest, the print media, just like commentators report on the conflict events and happenings. In

their reporting of the events of the conflict, both Nigerian and Cameroonian newspapers deploy certain representational strategies and processes in portraying the people and actions either negatively or positively. How and by what means the print media represents the conflict actors and their actions is very essential to the understanding of the conflict situation. The representational strategies and processes are very important to the judgment of print media consumers as they create different images and impressions. Thus, language use in terms of tagging or labelling becomes a veritable tool and means of representing people and their actions in the news reports on the conflict. It has also remained the primary means through which conflicts are initiated, engaged and finally resolved. It is also predominant in better understanding of the nature of conflicts vis-à-vis the prolonged or extended time such conflicts would last.

Since language use is never neutral, labelling of people and their actions are motivated by specific ideologies. Ideologies influence the ways in which people interpret and describe social, cultural, political, and economic systems and structures. Therefore, in the controversial socio-political conflict like the Nigerian-Cameroonian Bakassi Peninsula border dispute, it becomes necessary to investigate both the language use and the influence of ideology in representing the conflict in news reports. Therefore, uncovering the ideologies is crucial to an understanding of the linguistic representations of people and their actions. In view of this, this study is not only interested in the language but also the underlying ideologies in the Nigerian and Cameroonian newspaper reports on the Bakassi Peninsula border conflict.

### **1.3 Aim and Objectives of the Study**

The aim of this study is to critically investigate linguistic representation of people and their actions, and the underlying ideologies in the Nigerian and Cameroonian newspaper reports on the Bakassi Peninsula border conflict, with a view to uncovering the interactions between the representation and the ideologies. The specific objectives are:

- (1) To identify and consider the recurring dominant themes in the Nigerian and Cameroonian newspaper reports on the Bakassi Peninsula conflict situation,

- (2) To examine the various linguistic forms and means of representing and labelling people and their actions in the reports,
- (3) To uncover the hidden ideologies that supposedly influenced the way people and actions are linguistically represented,
- (4) To find out whether or not there are links between forms of labelling people and their actions, and socio-political ideologies manifest in the reports, and
- (5) To see whether there are differences in the underlying ideologies in the Nigerian and Cameroonian newspapers' reports and to determine how the differences between them are reflected in the linguistic representation of people and their actions in the conflict situation.

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

The research is designed to address the following questions

- (1) What are the recurring dominant themes in the Nigerian and Cameroonian news reports on the Bakassi peninsula border conflict?
- (2) In what specific ways and by what specific means is the representation of people and their actions linguistically carried out in the Nigerian and Cameroonian news reports on the conflict?
- (3) What are the hidden ideologies underlying the linguistic representations and labelling of people and their actions?
- (4) Are there links between the forms of linguistic representations of people and their actions and specific socio-political ideologies manifest in the reports?
- (5) Are there differences in the underlying ideologies in the Nigerian and Cameroonian newspapers representation of people and their actions in the conflict situation?

## **1.5 Scope of the Study**

This study is limited to one aspect of language use – linguistic tagging in print media representation of border conflict situation. It focuses only on how Nigerian and Cameroonian newspapers deploy different forms of linguistic tagging in representing people and their actions in selected events of the Bakassi Peninsula border conflict. In view of the numerous events vis-à-vis the long period of the Bakassi peninsula conflict, it becomes imperative to restrict the selection of events across the significant period of the conflict. Such major events we consider significant in this study include the August 14, 2006 and 2008 handovers, 2008 withdrawal of Nigerian soldiers and resettlement of Bakassi residents in Nigerian refugees' camps. This thus, informs our decision to choose our data to cover the period from August 2006 to August 2010. Our data sources are restricted to only newspaper reports from three Nigerian (*Nigerian Chronicle, The Guardian* and *The Punch*) and Cameroonian (*Cameroon Tribune, The Post* and *Eden*) English-medium newspapers. This period also marks the time the print media consistently reported on the events of the conflict as there were several crises that emanated from the handovers.

## **1.6 Significance of the Study**

The Nigerian-Cameroonian Bakassi Peninsula border conflict is one of the longest boundary disputes in Africa's modern history. The print media plays a critical role in representing the conflict situation, positively and negatively in terms of labelling people and their actions. A critical investigation of language use in reporting the conflict in the Nigerian and Cameroonian newspapers would reveal the different patterns of linguistic representations of people and their actions as well as the underlying ideologies in both nations' newspapers. The study would also lay bare the interface between linguistic representation and ideology which has important implications for better understanding of print media reports on border conflicts. Insights from this study would contribute to the study and research in print media discourse on conflict situation and also help in future conflict management and mediation.

## **1.7 The Bakassi Peninsula Border Conflict: An Overview**

The Bakassi peninsula border conflict is a boundary dispute between two brotherly nations – Nigeria and Cameroon. The origin of the conflict dates back to the Berlin conference of 1884 – 1885 where Africa including the Bakassi peninsula was arbitrarily partitioned and drawn on maps (Ushie, 2010). British Prime Minister Lord Salisbury's statement and remark as cited by Mbuh (2004) supported this by saying that "We have been engaged in drawing lines upon maps where no White man's foot ever trod; we have been giving away mountains and rivers and lakes to each other, only hindered by the small impediment that we never knew exactly where they were..." As a result of the artificial demarcation exercise, people in the Bakassi peninsula who have enjoyed a degree of freedom and autonomy were not only separated but drawn into inter-state boundary dispute and conflict over the ownership of the region. The dispute was heightened upon the discovery of oil in the area. Rather than being a 'blessing', oil became a 'curse' in the supposedly brotherly relationship between Nigeria and Cameroon. According to Mbuh (2004), oil was a catalyst of the conflict.

The conflict which lasted for three decades started on May 16, 1981 when Nigerian military patrol army and Cameroonian troops clashed at Rio Del Rey. The incident led to the killing of five Nigerian soldiers and also raised the questions of sovereignty over the Bakassi Peninsula. Armed assaults, shooting, harassment and torture continued to plague the Bakassi region leading to many casualties and deaths of soldiers and civilians.

The over three decades of diplomatic dispute between Nigeria and Cameroon on the one hand, and the continual clashes among Bakassi inhabitants within the same period on the other hand is directly linked to the struggle for ownership and control of the peninsula and its enormous economic resources. This struggle has involved the use of force by both nations, through military activities. Several militant groups within the region such as Niger Delta Defense and Security Council' (NDDSC), Movement for the Emancipation of Niger Delta (MEND), Bakassi Freedom Fighters (BFF), Bakassi Movement for Self Defense (BAMOSD), Movement for the Liberation of the Niger Delta and Bakassi Self-Determination Movement (BSDM) are also involved in the struggle. The activities of these groups brought about various forms of illegalities and violence including decriable economic sabotage and wanton killings. Thus, rather than being a

haven for the inhabitants, the peninsula has become a territory of deprivation and savagery. On March 29, 1994, Cameroon filed a law suit to the International Court Justice (ICJ) for its adjudication. In 2002, the court decided in its judgment that “Pursuant to the Anglo-German Agreement of 11 March 1913, sovereignty over Bakassi lies with Cameroon” (Lacey and Banerjee, 2002). It instructed Nigeria to transfer possession of the peninsula, but did not require the inhabitants to move or to change their nationality. Cameroon was thus given a substantial Nigerian population and was required to protect their rights, infrastructure and welfare. Despite this intervention by the ICJ, dispute over the peninsula continued with pockets of crisis particularly among the different interest groups within the region.

The situation reached its climax at the August 2006 and 2008 official handovers of the peninsula to Cameroon by Nigeria. Each of the handovers brought about renewed grievances and attracted resistant/violent reactions among individuals and interest groups in the region. Indeed, the Nigeria-Cameroon Bakassi Peninsula border conflict is a subject of local and international interest and has become a lead story and constant feature in the print media since then. The role of the print media in reporting on the conflict situation is expectedly a significant factor in determining the various issues, dimensions and implications for stakeholders in the conflict.

**Figure 1: Location of the Bakassi Peninsula**



Source: [http://www.afrol.com/News2002/cam006\\_nig\\_eqg\\_bakassi.htm](http://www.afrol.com/News2002/cam006_nig_eqg_bakassi.htm)



The map above captures the Bakassi Peninsula, a relatively small but politically and economically significant region. The socio-geographical details and precision of Bakassi Peninsula such as location, size, population and language have been a subject of debate among several interest groups and opinion leaders from both Nigeria and Cameroon. The differing views are expressed in the many interests which separate the people. The peninsula is located at the extreme eastern end of the Gulf of Guinea, covering an area of some 1000km<sup>2</sup> of mangrove swamps, creeks and half-submerged islands. It lies roughly between latitudes 4° 25' and 5° 10'N and longitudes 8° 20' and 9° 08'E (Ogen, 2010; Aghemelo and Ibhasebhor 2006). In Ogbogbo's (2002) view, the peninsula is between the Cross River (Nigeria) and the Rio del Rey estuaries (Cameroon) where the warm east flowing Guinea current meets the cold north-flowing Benguela current.

The location of the Bakassi Peninsula is considered very strategic. Its positioning as indicated in Figure 1 above makes it a potentially effective base for defensive and offensive military operations. The region is also viewed as a pathway to both Nigeria and Cameroon, harbouring two important seaports in Douala (Cameroon) and Calabar (Nigeria). Mbuh (2004) describes the peninsula as 'a strategic underbelly of Nigeria'. A number of scholars have also observed and acknowledged the rare economic potential of the peninsula. It is described as a veritable ground for fish farming and other water-based businesses for daily sustenance of the people. Besides farming, Nwachukwu (2008: 3) opines that "the coast of Bakassi Peninsula is estimated to hold oil deposits of billions of barrels". Similarly, de Konings (2008) suggests that the Peninsula contains several trillion cubic feet of natural gas beds, potentially more profitable than the reserves of crude oil. More significantly therefore, the extensive reserves of oil and gas in the Peninsula make it the richest Peninsula in Africa (Mbuh 2004; Mbaga and Njo 2007).

The peninsula which is constituted of over forty villages comprising Nigerians and Cameroonians (Aye, 2006), hosts an estimated population of between 150,000 and 300,000 inhabitants (Mbaga and Njo 2007; Ogen 2008a; de Konings 2008; Cornwell 2006). This population includes the Isangele, Ekoi, Efut and Okoyong of Cameroon and the Efik and Ogoni of Nigeria (Omoniyi and Salami 2004, Etekenob 2003). In the views of de Konings (2006: 5),

The Bakassi peninsula forms a meeting point of various tribal groups that can roughly be divided in two, according to language: Oroko speakers of Cameroon; and Ibibio speakers of Nigeria. Amongst the Oroko speakers the Balondo Badiko section, of which villages are located just north and east of the peninsula, has most immediate dealings with the Bakassi peninsula. Amongst Ibibio speakers, the Efik tribe is most numerously represented in Bakassi, followed by the Efiat. Not fully belonging to either of the main language groups, two ethnic groups have an intermediate position: the Korup peoples that inhabit the southern section of the Korup national park and have villages on either side of the national boundary; and the Isangele kindred, which is composed of several villages in the transition zone from mangrove to dry forest in the north of Bakassi.

## **1.8 Conclusion**

In this chapter, we provided a general background to the study and discussed the concept of conflict in general and the Nigerian-Cameroonian Bakassi Peninsula border dispute in particular. We also discussed the role of print media in conflict, especially in representing people and their actions. The research problem, the aim and objectives and significance of the study are also provided. In the next chapter, we review the theoretical perspectives and related works on print media representation of conflict situations.

## **1.9 Definition of Terms**

### **Conflict:**

The term conflict describes a common human experience which involves situation of incompatibility between two or more individuals or groups of people in a relationship. Such incompatibility often results in struggle among contenders in the existing relationship with attempts by each to gain advantage over the other in the prevailing situation. The incompatibility which may be real or merely perceived by the involved persons or groups is often motivated by their divergent goals, ambitions and ideologies. It may also involve their attitudes to material values and natural resources available to them for exploration and control.

In this study, conflict is specifically on border/boundary. Border conflict describes a competition for the control of scarce resources in boundaries by two nations or sovereign states. International borders constitute a potential cause of conflict particularly among governments of nations with implications for individuals and groups within the affected nations.

### **Linguistic Tagging:**

Like a chisel in the hands of a sculptor, language is the basic and potent tool in the hands of the print media for creating vivid images of people, actions and situations in the minds of readers. Arguably, newspapers do not only aim at informing readers but to guide and persuade them to some form of belief and actions. Thus, whether deliberately or inadvertently, the print media's linguistic artistry in news packaging illustrates some form of creativity which leaves definite images on the mind of readers. One way newspapers achieve this is what some scholars have termed labelling, which we similarly described as linguistic tagging. Tagging is the process of using specific lexis to sort people into rigid social categories (Chiluwa, 2011, Matheson, 2005). The pictures the print media creates about individuals or group of people and their actions through linguistic tagging suggest how members of the society would possibly understand and judge such individuals or group. Although, the print media may not absolutely determine what readers will believe about certain news presentations, the linguistic elements of news items seem to hem in readers to a limited set of options. For the present study, linguistic tagging is seen as a process of labeling of people and their actions with particular socio-politically grounded values. The assumption here is that the Nigerian and Cameroonian newspapers do not merely describe people and their actions with some tags or labels but are motivated by certain ideologies.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

This chapter reviews related literature and theoretical perspectives. It starts with a review of language of news reporting in the print media and then examines related media studies on representation of conflict situations both at the global and local scene. It also looks at related literature on the Bakassi Peninsula border conflict. This is followed by an examination of approaches to news discourse. A brief discussion on the broad field of discourse analysis which is one of the major approaches to news studies is also provided. Then, the review concentrates on the specific field of critical discourse analysis which serves as one of the theoretical frameworks for the study. In addition, other frameworks such as systemic functional linguistics and the theory of lexical decomposition are also discussed.

#### **2.1 Language of News Reporting in the Print Media**

News reporting is the conscious use of language to represent people and their activities in specific events and situation which are considered as significant current interest for the public. In the literature, a number of studies on the language of newspaper reports have been examined by scholars of various persuasions. Their submissions revolve around the question of objectivity, which some have described in such terms as bias (subjectivity) and polarization (positive self versus negative other distinctions).

Despite the media's claim of objectivity in representing reality through news reporting, media scholars believe that they are rather subjective (Chiluwa 2010, Ayoola 2008, van Dijk 2006, Fowler 1991). In line with this, Fowler (1991: 2) submits that: "news is not a value-free reflection of facts since the linguistic structure of news embodies values and beliefs". Herman and Chomsky's (1988: 22) propaganda model projects news reporting as a conscious selection of language and information, to appeal to the emotions of a target audience. Hence, they argue that the information the media presents is biased to serve the interests of those who own and/or finance them. They added that "since the media depends heavily on the government for press release, it is very difficult to call authorities on whom one depends for daily news liars, even if they tell whoppers... an example is the adoption of the phrase 'collateral damage' ('unintentional injury to civilians or damage to civilian buildings which occurs during a military operation') by the Western/American media to describe the wholesale killing and deaths of civilians in Afghanistan and Iraq." Apparently, news reporters select language that will reflect the views and ideologies of the government and people they represent. Language use in Nigerian newspapers is characteristic of some deliberate manipulations of linguistic choices to meet the ideological expectations of the Nigerian audience (Olowe 1993). In line with this argument, Chiluwa (2005) submits that news reporting is not only aimed at informing and educating the masses but also persuading them.

Language of news reports also reflects the positive 'self' and the negative 'other' world view. van Dijk, (1997) argues that the language of media in conflict-ridden countries is couched in the "oppositional metaphors" of "us" and "them". The use of these metaphors leads to polarization strategy of positive 'us' and negative 'them' representation. This ideological polarization may be implemented by a large variety of forms such as the choice of lexical items that imply positive or negative evaluations, as well as in the structure of whole propositions and their categories. This strategy of polarization consists of (a) emphasizing our good properties/actions, (b) emphasizing their bad properties/actions, (c) mitigating our bad properties/actions, and (d) mitigating their good properties/actions (van Dijk, 1988, 1991). Therefore, as newspapers represent actors and their actions in the events motivating the news, their language betrays elements of

patriotism and discrimination. One situation in which the language of media reveals bias is conflict.

## **2.2 The Print Media Representation of Conflict: A Review**

News reports on conflicts have attracted a lot of attention from media scholars. Indeed, some splendid linguistic researches have been carried out globally and locally, in recent times, on the print media representation of conflict situations. First, we shall review some of the global related literature on media representation of conflicts, then on the ones carried out locally.

One of the studies on media representation of conflict situations is Teo (2000). Teo (2000) studies the Australian media representation of Vietnamese gang violence and crisis in Australia. The study, which focused on racial discrimination, seeks to unmask the racist ideology of the press that is manifested in “asymmetrical power discourse” (Teo, 2000: 7). Adopting an eclectic CDA approach that integrates the theories of Fowler, van Dijk, Fairclough and Wodak in analysing the macro and micro structures of the selected news reports, Teo (2000) discovers evidence of a systematic ‘othering’ and ‘stereotyping’ of the ethnic community (or law breakers) by the white majority (law enforcers). The study also differentiates various cognitive strategies which help shape the discourse and serve to protect the interests of the white majority (in-group). The strategies are (i) Positive Us-presentation and Negative Them-presentation (ii) Generalization; (iii) Stereotyping; (iv) Denial of minority voice; and (v) Othering: by means of over-lexicalization. Teo (2000) concludes that a new form of racism, which is subtle, covert and insidious, is embedded in the structure of news reports on conflict. According to him, the new form of racism assisted in the criminalization and Asianization of the gang.

Fang (2001) examines the discourse strategies of several Chinese language news reports on two controversial crises events in two ideological opposed newspapers, namely, China’s *People’s Daily* and Taiwan’s *Central Daily News*. Specifically, the paper investigates how discourse structures (lexical, grammatical and thematic) are manipulated by the two media’s reports in the construction of a version of political reality in the civil unrest in South Africa (22-28 March 1985) and in Argentina (31st May-June 1st 1989).

The main concern of the study is to discover how textual elements are employed for justification and legitimization of certain foreign policies adopted by the government in China and Taiwan. Applying the principles of Critical Discourse Analysis, the paper critically analyses and compares how the lexical choices, headlines and themes/topics, and transitivity patterns of the two newspapers reflect these crises. The study discovers that there were vast differences in the portrayal of the event in South Africa, but a greater degree of convergence in the depiction of the situation in Argentina. According to Fang (2001), the differences in the discourse strategies used to frame the events are motivated by ideological and political opportunism, as well as the obligation to justify, legitimize and defend the policies formulated by the government.

Flowerdew, Li and Tran (2002) analyse the discursive practices of Hong Kong Newspaper, *The South Morning Post*, reports on the conflicting event of immigrants from Mainland China that claims the right-of-abode in Hong Kong during the period, 30 January 1999 to 19 August 2000. The aim of the study is to examine to what extent linguistic strategies of discrimination as reported in the literature are also found in the Hong Kong reports. Testing the data against the Critical Discourse Analysis, discriminatory taxonomy (such as positive US and negative THEM presentation, stereotyping, blaming the victim, etc.), the findings show that all the major strategies are also found in the Hong Kong reports. However, the study strikingly discovers that the discriminations are applied to people from the same ethnic and linguistic background.

Viser (2003) is an analysis of how American *New York Times* and Israeli *Ha'aretz* attempted to show objectivity (or bias) in their portrayals of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. The study aims to examine how the American and Israeli newspapers portrayed the two sides (Palestinian and Israel) of the conflict in 1987-1988, 2000-2001 and post-September 11, 2001 periods. Using multiple and quantitative indicators of news coverage (such as end quotes, story topics, topic locations and number of fatalities and deaths) to explore the biases, and pro-Israeli and pro-Palestinian, the study discovers that both *New York Times* and *Ha'aretz* are more favourable toward the Israelis than the Palestinians. However, the level of partiality towards Israelis is lesser in *Ha'aretz* than in the *New York Times*. Specifically, the study discovers that the *New York Times* used more Israeli sources than

Palestinian sources, provided a more one-sided version of the conflict and gave only passing reference to Palestinian fatalities while Ha'aretz actually personalised Palestinian deaths more than Israeli deaths.

Argren (2006) is also another study that reveals bias in print media reports. Argren (2006) applies the principles of critical discourse analysis to the analysis of how Swedish print media portrayed international law during the war in Iraq. Specifically, the paper focused on the *if* and *how* standards of international law were represented in the Swedish media discourse during an international conflict between 20th March and 10th June, 2003. The major argument of the paper is that 'human rights' appear in the media discourse abstractly and thus misrepresent the human right obligations of the States. In addition to this, the paper argues that the few instances where humanitarian law is represented in the newspaper articles, it is to a large extent done concretely and with explicit reference to the legal provisions. The paper therefore concludes that the media is not an objective and impartial entity since their representations contain biases and flaws.

Lee, Maslog and Kim (2006) comparatively examine the news coverage and framing of the Iraq war (international conflict) and Asian conflicts (local conflicts) by eight newspapers from India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Indonesia and the Philippines. Using Galtung's (1986, 1998) war/peace journalism framework, the study conducts a content analysis of 1558 stories on the Iraq war and four Asian conflicts involving Pakistan and India's tussle over Kashmir, The Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka, the Muslim separatist movement in the Southern Philippines province of Mindanao and the Aceh and Maluku civil wars in Indonesia. The study uncovers that the Asian newspapers used a war journalism frame in covering local conflicts but deployed a peace journalism frame in covering the Iraq war. Specifically, the study finds out that hard news stories were dominated by war journalism while features and opinion pieces were dominated by peace journalism framing. In addition, the study discovers that foreign-sourced stories from wire services contained more war journalism frames and fewer peace journalism frames than locally produced stories written by the newspapers' own correspondents. Lee et al (2006) conclude that the prevalence of war journalism frame in foreign-wire services copy on the



Iraqi war reflects the perspectives of the western countries that are directly involved in the war.

Richards (2007) explores the Chilean print media dichotomous representation of women and Indians during the 1992 to 2003 conflict between the Mapuche people, the State and elites in Southern Chile. In particular, the study examines how the three competing archetypal portrayal of the Indians and the women by the Chilean print media contribute to the cultural politics surrounding the conflicts. According to Richard (2007), the representation of Mapuche women as *bravas* (or fierce women), *permitidas* (or integrated women) and *obsoletas* (obsolete women) expose the dominant cultural assumptions about women's role in the Mapuche struggle and the Mapuche's place in the Chilean nation. The study discovers that the media portrayals reflect and reinforce the central principles of neoliberal multiculturalism – the prevailing form of governance in contemporary Latin-America which promotes diversity while perpetuating the marginalization of indigenous people and many of their rights. The study concludes that the print media representations contribute to the understandings of how race and gender ideologies continue to inform debates over national memberships in contemporary Latin America.

Nunn (2007) examines the concept of “Value and Truth” in the western (BBC and Guardian Newspaper news) and non-western (Pakistan Today) news reports on an overnight U.S. commando raid against the Taliban on Friday October 19, 2001. The paper seeks to show bias and inconsistency in the reporting of the same crisis event by the two different media. Using Halliday's modality and transitivity system of analysis, the findings show that while western media reports present a doctored and biased representation of the raid, the non-western source presents a more balanced report. The study concludes that the inconsistency of the news makes it difficult for the reader/viewer to have a clear picture of what really happens on the world scene.

Kalb and Saivetz' (2007) study is entitled ‘The Israeli-Hezbollah War of 2006: The Media as a Weapon in Asymmetrical Conflict’. Kalb and Saivetz (2007) is a content analysis of the representation of Israeli and Hezbollah by the media in the Israeli-Hezbollah war of 2006. Analysing the contents of several print and electronic media

reports, the study submits that the Israeli is portrayed as the aggressor, whose retaliating attack is disproportional. The study therefore concludes that there are biases in news reports on conflicts.

Wang (2008) investigates intertextual aspects of Chinese newspaper news reports and opinion articles on the event of 11 September, 2001 terrorist attacks. Using an eclectic theory of intertextuality in CDA, new rhetoric genre studies and appraisal theory, the study analyses how Chinese news writers draw on outside sources and position themselves in relation to other sources in the writing of their news reports and opinion articles. Specifically, the study examines how newspaper commentaries on terrorism are discursively constructed in Chinese newspapers at the textual, intertextual and contextual levels. Using the four dimensions of 'intertextual representation', 'source type', 'source information' and 'endorsement of the source' in analysing different forms of direct and indirect quotes, the study observes that Chinese writers tend to use unidentified external sources and sources with high status for keeping a distance from these sources in their writing.

Simmons and Lecouteur (2008) analyse the presence of modern racism in the media accounts of two Australian 'riots' involving youths and police. Riot is perceived here as a great disturbance and crisis situation. The study, therefore, looks at the media reports' (newspaper articles, television and radio interviews, and parliamentary debates) construction of 'the possibility of change' in their description of the two Australian 'riots': one involving indigenous, and the other involving non-indigenous, community members. The study shows that 'change' was explicitly and implicitly repeated as an outcome that was not achievable in the media representation of events involving indigenous Australians, while 'change' was regularly represented as an achievable outcome in the descriptions of problems within the non-indigenous community. This is made explicit in the ways in which (indirect) attributions of blame and negative stereotypes such as aggressiveness and/or a weakness for drugs and alcohol, were used to describe the indigenous people (Aboriginal Australians). According to Simmons and Lecouteur (2008), repeated descriptions implying directly and indirectly that change is not possible could excuse or mitigate the actions of the police and the government, and absolve them from the

responsibility of contributing to the cause of the conflict. Thus, the social problem is attributed to the 'racially' marginalized group. The study concludes that discourse around 'the possibility of change' in the Australian media reporting of social problem can be seen as another identifiable practice in terms of which 'modern' forms of racism are regularly accomplished in public discourse.

Phelan (2009) is an analysis of the newspaper editorial reports on the 2003 political conflict between the Crown (i.e. the New Zealand State) and the indigenous Maori people over the ownership of New Zealand's foreshore and seabed. The paper examines how the conflict was discursively constructed as political antagonism in the editorial reports of four New Zealand's daily newspapers. In particular, the paper is concerned with explicating the role of these editorials in constructing an antagonistic discourse frontier that demarcated interests of the 'national' (all New Zealanders) from those of indigenous 'Maori' people. Using Laclau and Mouffe's (2001) discourse theory, the study shows how the editorial representation of the foreshore and seabed conflict in New Zealand's four biggest selling daily newspapers articulated a hegemonic discourse that was prejudicial to the interests and cultural identity of Maori and contrary to a spirit of democratic inquiry and openness. The study concludes that the four newspapers non-coercively function as agents of ideological closure by disseminating, naturalizing and legitimizing particular understandings of the conflict that were congruent with the government's strategic wish to 'resolve' the issue in ways that precluded satisfactory discussion of the complex implications of the Court of Appeal ruling.

Hawkins (2009) analyses the *Australian* newspaper reports in the coverage of the Democratic Republic of Congo conflicts. The study seeks to find out whether national interest or business interest led to the newspaper's poor attention to one of the world's deadliest conflict. The study contends that the Democratic Republic of Congo's (DRC) conflict, as one of the fatal conflicts in the world today is largely ignored in most of the world's mass media, while attention and interest is focused on smaller conflicts. Thus, the paper quantitatively and qualitatively examines the coverage the Democratic Republic of Congo conflicts in the *Australian* newspaper, comparing it with that of other conflicts and crises, primarily Israel-Palestine, Darfur and Zimbabwe. Using the indications of overall

quantity of coverage, and the tone of the coverage, as well as the newspaper's handling of specific types of issues and incidents, namely the total death toll and massacres, the paper discovers that there is more coverage for Israel-Palestine conflict alone than that of the conflicts in the entire African continent. Similarly, the little coverage devoted to African conflicts was for Zimbabwe and Darfur conflicts with gross relegation to DRC conflicts. According to Hawkins (2009), the *Australian's* strong and constant interest in Israel-Palestine conflict, moderate interest in Darfur and Zimbabwe and large marginalization of the Democratic Republic of Congo serve both the business interests (of its customers) and national interest. The study concludes that some subjective and narrow perceptions of national interest as well as business interests (producing news that 'sells' and following international news flows) serve to explain the Democratic Republic of Congo's marginalization in The *Australian* newspaper.

In Nigeria, few linguistic studies have been carried out on media representation of conflicts. One of the studies is Ayoola (2008). Ayoola (2008) is a critical discourse analysis of the news reporting of some Niger Delta conflict issues in selected Nigerian newspapers. The study examines the linguistic and pragmatic features as well as the discourse strategies employed by the writers in their representations of the setting, topics and participants in the news reports. The main aim of Ayoola's (2008: xviii) study is to propose 'an analytical framework for describing and interpreting Nigerian print media-political discourse.' In line with this objective, Ayoola (2008: 111) offers 'a three-layered pragma-linguistic theoretical framework' which captures the three levels of language analysis – contextual, linguistic and pragmatic and further pragmatic at three stages – primary, secondary and tertiary respectively. Explaining the interconnection between the levels of language use and stages of analysis, Ayoola (2008:108) opines that "the analysis of context ... is basically pragmatic... further analysis of pragmatic concepts covers the essential pragmatic notions and discourse strategies employed by the author to project the message of the discourse." Ayoola shows the distinction between his 'Further Pragmatic Analysis' and 'Pragma-linguistic Analysis' by stating that the first two levels of his analyses (contextual and pragmatic analyses) are pragma-linguistic analyses while the third and innermost level is the further pragmatic analysis (Ayoola 2008:110). To him, the

third level covers other significant pragmatic perspectives and discourse strategies not covered by the pragma-linguistic analysis.

Ayoola (2008) adopts an eclectic method of data analysis, drawing insights from van Dijk (2003), Fairclough (1995) and Verschueren (1999). The study still stands as one of the leading critical discourse studies on media representation of conflict in Nigeria. It finds out that discourse participants from different sides of the Niger-Delta conflict often use language that presents them positively and presents their opponents negatively. Specifically, the findings reveal that Niger-Delta discourse participants use several pragmatic and discourse strategies such as the force or logic, the use of figures and percentages, the persuasion of science, interdiscursivity and intertextuality, rumour mongering, name calling, dysphemism, obfuscation and flattery in their quest to gain political advantage over their opponents. As in most studies on media representation of conflicts, the study discovers evidence of bias and partisanship in the news reports of the journalist and the media houses they represent.

Chiluwa (2010) is another study on the media representation of conflict situation. The study entitled 'the media and the militants: constructing the Niger Delta crisis' is a critical discourse study that applies the principles of corpus linguistic methods in analysing the frequently used lexical items by the Nigerian press to represent the Niger Delta militia groups and their activities. The study seeks to demonstrate that the choice of particular vocabulary over other available options reveals value judgments that reflect power, identity and socio-economic marginalisation. To achieve the objectives, the study employs concordance and collocational tools in analysing the semantic profiles of the selected lexical items and their collocational differences. Though the findings show negative representations of the ethnic militia, the study does not address the underlying ideologies in the representations which in most cases are the preoccupations of critical discourse studies.

Chiluwa (2011a) is also a study on media representation of conflict situation. Chiluwa (2011) undertakes a critical discourse study on the media representation of Nigeria's Joint Military Task Force in the Niger Delta Crisis. The study applies the principles of critical discourse analysis to examine the (linguistic) role of the media in

manipulating public opinion and people's perception of the roles of the Joint Military Task Force (JMTF) in the Niger Delta crisis. The study reveals that the Nigerian press was sympathetic of the activities of the JMTF through exaggeration, labelling and agency attribution. These strategies showed positive representation of the JMTF and negative representation of Niger Delta youth. Being a critical discourse study that favours ideologies, the study fails to reveal the underlying ideologies in the strategies used. Recognising this lapse, Chiluya (2011b) tried to bridge this gap in his work entitled '*Labelling and ideology in the press: a corpus-based critical discourse study of the Niger Delta crisis*'

Chiluya (2011b) is a critical discourse study that seeks to reveal ideology in the labeling of Niger Delta youth by the Nigerian media. The study applies a corpus-based analytical methodology to the analysis of discursive construction of Nigeria's Niger Delta ethnic militias in the Nigerian press. Specifically, the study combines critical discourse approach and corpus linguistics – two approaches that seem incompatible to the analysis of patterns of labelling in selected Nigerian newspapers. The study is able to prove the applicability of a combination of corpus linguistics that favours quantitative analysis and critical discourse analysis that tilts towards qualitative description of texts. However, the ideologies underlying the use of such labels by the Nigerian media were not revealed in the study.

The review above shows that much linguistic studies have been carried out on media representation of conflict situations. Most of the studies focused on media bias in the representation of the conflict actors and events. In addition, some of the studies analysed language used in representing and labelling the conflict actors and actions from the perspective of critical discourse analysis. However, little or none of the studies has employed the principles of componential analysis and lexical semantic field methodology in distilling the semantic properties of the various labels. Similarly, the review reveals that that most of the studies concentrated on representing intra-state conflict (conflict between two groups in a country) paying less attention to inter-state conflict (conflict between two sovereign states or nations). Hence, the present study seeks to study the media representation of Bakassi peninsula conflict (an international border conflict between

Nigeria and Cameroon) in the Nigerian and Cameroonian newspapers. Specifically, the study undertakes a critical study of the language employed by the newspapers in representing (and tagging) the conflict actors and actions using lexical decomposition (componential analysis) and semantic field analytical methodology with the intent to unearth their underlying ideologies.

### **2.3 Review of Related Literature on the Bakassi Peninsula Border Conflict**

Most of the researches on the Nigerian-Cameroonian Bakassi Peninsula border conflict are from the journalistic, historical and political perspectives. However, majority of available literature are from newspaper reports and news magazines articles. Thus, Ogen (2010) states that there is relatively sparse academic literature devoted to Bakassi Peninsula border conflict. Some of the scholarly works are reviewed below.

Onomerike (2008) is a scholarly research on the Bakassi peninsula conflict from a political perspective. The study examines the role of international diplomacy in the resolution of the Cameroonian-Nigerian border crisis. The aim of the research is to re-examine and re-assess the effective/otherwise role that diplomacy played in resolving Bakassi Peninsula conflict. The study started by identifying and examining the remote and immediate causes of the dispute, the dimensions the disputes have undergone in the last two to three decades, and the international attempts so far made at resolving the disputes. According to Onomerike (2008: 7), examining the causes and dimension of the disputes are done with ‘a view to assessing the role of diplomacy in resolving the conflict’. Analysing archival documents with Idealist and Games theories, the study discovers that, while the initial diplomatic efforts in the 1970s/1980s conducted through negotiation were unsuccessful in resolving the conflict, the ‘later days’ diplomatic efforts in the form of mediation and arbitration were effective, as evident in the final resolution of the dispute. Thus, Onomerike (2008:15) contends that “though diplomacy is not the only means through which conflict resolution can be attained, it remains an important strategy of conflict resolution.”

Ogen (2010) is a study on Bakassi Peninsula from a historical perspective. The study which is entitled “Ethnic Irredentism, oil politics and Historical Deconstruction in

the Gulf of Guinea: The Bakassi Crisis and the Abuse of History” is a compelling revision of the meager Nigerian historiography on the Bakassi Peninsula. The paper, which sets out to counter Nigeria’s claim of ownership of the Peninsula, contends that Nigeria’s attempt to forcefully annex the Bakassi Peninsula through Efik irredentism (historical claims) is logically indefensible and historically unsustainable. The paper argues that Nigeria’s occupation of, and attempts to exercise sovereignty over the Peninsula emanated from the predictable desire of the Nigerian ruling elite to appropriate Bakassi’s abundant natural resources and the strategic advantage the Peninsula holds for Nigeria’s oil interests in the Gulf of Guinea, making the socio-economic interests of the inhabitants of Bakassi secondary. The study therefore concludes that peace can only be guaranteed in the Bakassi Peninsula, and indeed in virtually all conflict prone African borderlands, if African governments respect and acknowledge the colonial treaties and national borders irrespective of their arbitrariness and artificiality, since that constitute the foundation of all modern African state structures.

Other scholarly studies on Bakassi Peninsula are Asiwaju (1996) “The Bakassi Peninsula crisis: An Alternative to war and litigation.” In this paper, Asiwaju merely proffers a political solution to the Bakassi crisis. Omoniyi and Salami (2004) is a study on the identity constructs in the contested Bakassi Peninsula border. Here, Omoniyi and Salami (2004) investigate identity and identification discourses as captured mainly in news media commentaries on the inhabitants of the Peninsula. Omoigui’s (2004), ‘The Bakassi Story’, is primarily concerned with exonerating the former Nigerian military ruler, General Yakubu Gowon, of the widespread allegation that he ceded Bakassi to Cameroon as a mark of Nigeria’s appreciation for Cameroon’s support during the Nigerian civil war. Mbuh (2004) analyses the Bakassi Peninsula conflicts from a legal point of view. Mbuh (2004) provides a legal interpretation and implications of the dynamics of the Bakassi crisis and emphasises the important nature of the 1913 Anglo-German Treaty. Similarly, Milano (2004); Kirchner (2005); Egede (2008) and Oduntan (2006) look at the implications of the various treaties and agreement signed in the Bakassi conflicts from the legal perspective.



Also, Nwobi (2006) examines the impact of the Nigeria-Cameroon conflict on the Bakassi populace. The study is an attempt to examine the implication of the execution of the ICJ ruling and Green Tree Accord on the Bakassi people. According to Nwobi (2006), the findings of the study would lead to proffering lasting solution to the conflict. Examining the treaties of 1885 and 1912, the study concludes that if the options in the ICJ judgement and Green Tree agreement are not properly handled, they have potentials to generate conflicts in the near future. None of the studies reviewed above considered the role of language in either escalating or de-escalating Bakassi peninsula conflict. Thus, the present study aims to examine the role of language and argumentation in the Nigerian and Cameroonian news reports on Bakasssi peninsula conflict

The only available linguistic study on the Bakassi peninsula border conflict is Omoniyi and Salami (2004) who investigated identity constructs of the inhabitants narratives from a sociolinguistic (ethnographic) perspective. The study analyses the people's narratives of identity in Bakassi, against the backdrop of International Court of Justice's ruling on the ownership of the Peninsula. Using narratives as paradigms to uncover the people's identity, the study focuses on sociolinguistic variables such as ethnic affiliation, ancestry, language, cultural properties (e.g. sacred sites), the people's way of life (including occupation and religious practices) and resources embedded in personal and community narratives. The study discovered that the construction of Bakassi identity in the context of ICJ verdict is dynamic and has a lot of implications to the understanding of the conflict. However, a better understanding of the conflict would require studying the media representation of the actors and conflict events from a (critical) discourse analysis perspective. How the media represented the conflict has a significant impact and ideological implications on the conflict. This study therefore critically seeks to examine the media representation of nature of language use, paying particular attention on linguistic representation, in the Nigerian and Cameroonian newspaper reports on the Bakassi peninsula border conflict in order to unearth the underlying ideologies embedded in the representations.

## 2.4 Approaches to News Discourse

News discourse has been extensively studied in the past by critics from media and sociolinguistics perspectives (Bell, 1991), critical linguistics (Fowler, 1991, 1996; Fowler et al., 1979; Hodge and Kress, 1993; Simpson, 1993; Trew, 1979), critical linguistics and social theory (Fairclough, 1989, 1995a, 1995b, 2003), social cognition (Van Dijk, 1988, 1993, 1995, 1998) and discourse–historical backgrounds (Titscher et al., 2000; Wodak, 2001a, 2001b; Wodak and Meyer, 2001). All these approaches, apart from Bell (1991), concentrate more on sociopolitical implications and power structures in the news at the production and consumption stages. Bell (1991) discusses the production stage (neglecting the reception stage) from the insider point of view of a journalist.

In recent years, there is the growing critical literature on media studies, as media studies so far provide the richest ground of critical studies of discourse. One of the first critical linguistic and discourse studies on the media is an early collection of work of Roger Fowler and his associates (Fowler, Hodge, Kress & Trew, 1979). Fowler, in his critical studies of the media defines news not as a reflection of reality, but as a product shaped by political, economic and cultural forces (Fowler, 1991). Thus, news has elements of bias. Fowler's (1991) analysed media language using Halliday's systemic functional analytical tool of transitivity, passives, modality, nominalisation, etc. He argues that Halliday's framework is the best model for examining the connections between linguistic structure and social values and ideologies (Fowler, 1991). His studies of news discourse reveals how news discourse is constructed according to the stylistic and ideological conventions of the newspapers, not of the writers. What this suggests is that news discourse activates an institutional voice rather than a personal voice, as the writer is constituted by the discourse, which is embedded in the social and institutional ideologies. The relevance of his study is that it reveals the potential discursive practice of discrimination in news discourse, which is achieved by means of a variety of discursive strategies and linguistic tools. Thus, Fowler's (1991) major argument is that events and actions may be described with syntactic variations that are a function of the underlying involvement of actors (e.g., their agency, responsibility and perspective). Van Dijk (1998) supports this that, in media accounts of conflicts, the responsibility of the authorities (such

as police) is systematically de-emphasized by de-focusing, leaving agency and responsibility implicit using passive constructions and nominalisations. On the other hand, the negative role in deviance and violence of the 'Other' are emphasized by representing them as responsible agents in topical, subject position.

Similar critical studies of the news discourse situated within the systemic functional linguistics are Fairclough (1989, 1995a, 1995b). Working within a social and critical perspective of discourse, Fairclough's sees language use as consisting of social identities, social relations and systems of knowledge and belief. Fairclough (1995b) analyses news discourse at three levels of text, discursive practices and social practices. Fairclough (1989, 1995a) and Fairclough and Wodak, (1997) base their micro-level analysis of lexical items and syntactic structures on Hallidayan systemic functional grammar, utilizing the three metafunctions: ideational, interpersonal and textual in its analysis. These metafunctions are observed in such grammatical features as modality (interpersonal function), and transitivity, including nominalisation and passivity (ideational function). Textual function is realized by overall textual organization, including the coherence and cohesion of the text. Fairclough's approach has been criticised mainly for interpreting the text on the basis of a selective linguistic analysis. In particular, there has been strong criticism of the analysis of limited lexical items and grammatical features, which are seemingly chosen arbitrarily to meet the analyst's specific interpretation (Widdowson, 2004).

From a different dimension, van Dijk (1998) provides an integrated cognitive analysis of news texts, paying attention to the reception stage. According to van Dijk (1988b), media's bias and stereotypical representations are a matter of socio-cognition. Thus, it is the shared mental models that led to the partisan use of words in the description of Us and Them (and Our/Their actions and characteristics). Using these bias mental models, writers and speakers represent in-group positively as good and innocent while the out-group is negatively represented as evil and guilty. In order to account for this polarization in the international news (especially racism in the press coverage), van Dijk (1998) provides a three in one socio-cognitive model of analysis. The model covers

discourse analysis, cognitive analysis and social analysis, in which socio-cognition mediates between discourse and social analysis.

Herman and Chomsky's (1988) study is similar to van Dijk's cognitive analysis of news but has less focus on discourse structures. In their 'propaganda model', Herman and Chomsky (1988) extensively criticized the U.S. media for their collusion with official U.S. foreign policy, and occasionally referred to the use of persuasive and bias words (such as euphemisms for atrocities committed by the U.S. and its 'client states'), but they did not propose a fully fledged analysis of media discourse. Chomsky (2002) argues that commercial media institutions form and define people's norms and beliefs according to the social, political, and economic interests dominating the state. Thus, the media mobilizes the public to support the social interests of the elites. Chomsky (2002) cites an example with the adoption of the term 'collateral damage' ('unintentional injury to civilians or damage to civilian buildings which occurs during a military operation') by the Western/American media to describe the wholesale killing and deaths of civilians in Afghanistan and Iraq. Here, Chomsky (2002) argues that American media acts as an ideological apparatus and a discursive institution, fabricating/distorting 'messages', manufacturing public consent for discursive purposes in favour of the government.

A critical survey of the studies of news discourse reveals a common pattern of discriminatory discourse strategies by the media. Prominent amongst the discriminatory discourse studies are van Dijk (1988, 1991, 1993). van Dijk in most of his studies on racism outlines several socio-cognitive strategies that are used to discriminate between the majority (elites) and minority groups. These strategies are summed up in the general strategy of positive self-presentation, as opposed to negative other-presentation. Some of the strategies are Scare tactics: the use of exaggerated figures to serve the interests of the dominant group and discredit the powerless group; Categorical generalization: generalized ascription to the minority group which is stereotyping or cognitively prejudiced; Self-justification: praising self and accusing the minority group; Blaming the victim: blaming the minority as cause of conflicts or problems; Mitigation: using euphemisms to minimize the negative actions of the dominant group. With a similar interest in racism and discrimination, Wodak and her colleague developed a set of macro-strategies which

explain discrimination against foreigners, as follows (Wodak 1997: 36–42): (i) strategies of justification and relativization: shift of blame and responsibility, downplaying/trivialization, legitimation/ delegitimation; (ii) strategies of transformation: positive self-presentation, heteronomization or warning against heteronomy, autonomization, discontinuating/dissimilation, devaluation/negative connotation, vitalization; (iii) strategies of dismantling or destruction: discrediting opponents, negative presentation of self/others, heteronomization, assimilation, dissimilation/exclusion, discontinuation, strategy of pronouncing somebody/something ‘dead’, etc. In Gruber’s (1997) study of newspaper news reports, he identifies two major types of argumentation strategies used by Australian newspapers as: strategies of group definition and strategies of justification. His strategies of justification are similar to those discussed by van Dijk and Wodak. They are (i) Trivialization: Rationalization, Scapegoating/Blaming the victim, Ridiculing/Devaluating; (ii) Disavowal of guilt/responsibility, Blaming the victim, Construction of conspiracy theories against the in-group (through exaggerated discursive presentation of hostile/negative characteristics of the out-group), (iii) Denial of responsibility (refusal to face a reproach) (Gruber, 1997: 143–6). In Teo’s (2000) study of ideological construction of racism in Australian newspaper reports on Vietnamese gang conflict, he discovers that bias occurs in a systematic ‘othering’ and ‘stereotyping’ of the ethnic community by the white majority. The strategies used to protect the interests of the in-group are Positive Us-presentation and Negative Them-presentation, Generalization, Stereotyping, Denial of minority voice and Othering: by means of over-lexicalization.

## **2.5 Discourse Analysis**

Discourse analysis is a broad field of language analysis that serves for analysing written or spoken language use. Since its introduction in the early 1950s by Zellig Harris, discourse analysis has been widely used in the analyses of text. Generally, discourse analysis is conceptualised in two different ways, as (a) an analysis of language beyond sentence level (Stubbs, 1983; Brown and Yule, 1983), and (b) an analysis of language in use (Tannen, 2000). The common denominator to the two definitions is that discourse analysis examines language. However, while the first conception views discourse analysis as examining language higher than the sentence, the second states that discourse analysis

concentrates on language (even shorter constructions) use in context. The definition of discourse analysis that is found appropriate in this study is that of Fairclough (1995). According to Fairclough (1995a: 7), ‘discourse is the use of language seen as a form of social practice, and discourse analysis is analysis of how texts work within sociocultural practice.’ What this definition entails is that in doing discourse analysis, texts are not isolated from the surrounding situation in which the texts are produced. Rather, the context in which the texts emanated is considered. Thus, in analysing media texts (reports), socio-political and economic contexts from which the texts emanate are considered. Various approaches to discourse analysis have been identified in the literature. They are pragmatics, interactional sociolinguistics, the ethnography of communication, conversation analysis, variation analysis and critical discourse analysis (CDA). Amongst these approaches, CDA is relatively new and the only approach that is primarily concerned with exposing underlying ideologies in texts.

## **2.6 Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)**

The idea of critical discourse analysis started from Fowler et al (1979) ‘critical linguistics’; an interdisciplinary study that incorporates sociology, history, psychology, linguistics to the analysis of underlying ideology. According to Wales (1997), critical linguistics (CL) was first proposed in 1979 by Roger Fowler and his colleagues at the University of East Anglia, whose work centred on language and ideology; and the way social pattern can influence thought. As an approach to linguistic study, CL sets out to respond to the problems of “fixed, invisible ideology permeating language” (Fowler, 1991:67). It is founded on the notion that our words (language) are not neutral or innocent but display the interests and values of those who use the language. Supporting this view, Sheyholislami (2001) argues that the way we write, and what we say, is not arbitrary—it is purposeful whether or not the choices are conscious or unconscious. One of the major figures of CDA, Fairclough (1995b:132-133), states that

CDA is the study of often opaque relationships of causality and determination between (a) discourse practices, events and texts, (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 relations of power and struggles over power, and to explore how the opacity of these relationships between discourse and society is itself a factor securing power.

Fairclough's (1995b) definition above presupposes that CDA focuses on the hidden relationship between the discourse practice, events and text, on the one hand, and the wider socio-cultural context, on the other hand. It is the ideological meaning that exists in the hidden relationship that harbours 'unsaid said'. The 'unsaid said' of any text must be seen from the socio-cultural background that informed the construction of that text. Thus, CDA goes beyond the grammatical structure (grammar or the morphology) of a text to analysing the larger discourse context (rhetorical intent, coherence and the worldview) that the speaker/writer and the hearer/reader bring to the text (Taiwo, 2007).

Critical discourse analysis is an interdisciplinary approach to the study of discourse that sees "language as a form of social practice" (Fairclough 1989:20) and focuses on the idea that social and political dominion is reproduced by 'text and talk.' The idea of dominion gives credence to power which may be ideologically based. According to Luke (1997), power exists in words, whether spoken or written. In the context of the above, CDA seeks to reveal the ways discourses are used everyday for power relation, and by extension, for signification and the construction of new knowledge. Thus, van Dijk (1988b) observes that CDA studies and analyses written texts and spoken words to reveal the discursive sources of power, dominance, inequality and bias, and how these sources are initiated, maintained, reproduced and transformed within specific social, economic, political and historical context. What obtains here is that CDA helps to legitimate the voice of the marginalized; and by extension, to take the voice of those in power into question; and by so doing, reveal the hidden agenda and motives that serve sectional or self interests which help to maintain and subjugate the others. It thus, illuminates ways in which the dominant forces construct texts that favour their interest.

The objective of CDA is to uncover the ideological assumptions that are hidden in the words of our text in order for us to resist and overcome various forms of power over or to gain an appreciation that certain people are exercising power over us (Fairclough, 1989). Thus, CDA aims at demystifying the text to expose various linguistic manipulations of power imbalances, social inequities and other injustices in the hope of spurring people to corrective actions (Fairclough, 1993; Wodak 2001b). By unmasking such practices, CDA scholars aim to support the victims of oppressions and encourage them to resist domination and subjugation. This idea of unmasking elements of domination in texts anchors on how analysis of language use can bring out a different perspective and deeper understanding of whose interest is being served in texts. Thompson (2002) maintains that CDA helps to clear the connection between the use and the exercise of power. This is because the words of those in power are taken as self – evident truth, and the words of those who are not in power are dismissed as irrelevant, inappropriate and without substance (van Dijk, 1988b). Thus, our words are politicized, even if we are aware of it or not.

In order to investigate and reveal how power and discriminatory value are inscribed in and mediated through the linguistic system, CDA interrogates text at two levels: macro and micro (van Dijk, 1993). Macro-level features include organizational and contextual features of discursive events which limit the speaker's control of the contexts. These macro-level features are the discursive effects of institutional power structures; and these include: expertise, social status and race. The micro-level features include: syntactic, pragmatic, phonological and semantic properties. These features are examined to determine the production and reproduction of power and dominance. In line with these features, Fairclough (1989: 26) suggest that the analyses should be undertaken at three stages: "description, interpretation and explanation." Description is the stage which is concerned with the formal properties of the text. Interpretation deals with the relationship between text and interaction – with seeing the text as a process of production, and as a resource in the process of interpretation. Explanation is concerned with the relationship between interaction and social context – with the social determination of the processes of production and interpretation, and their social effects. Analysing texts at these three stages assists in unearthing underlying ideologies.



In spite of the fact that CDA is relevant in unmasking instances of abuse of power, domination and prejudice in text, it is not free from criticisms. One of the major criticisms is that it dwells on controversial and difficult concept of ideology (Malmkjaer, 2002). In addition, CDA is considered to be judgmental. According to Wardhaugh (2006:15), CDA is ideologically positioned and judgmental, thus, claiming “high ground on issues.” By being judgmental, CDA accuses the dominant group in a text of bias; thus, having the moral authority of protecting the receptor group who are the victims of the manipulation of power and dominance. Because of this position, some scholars like Martin and Rose (2003:264) regard CDA as too critical and separatist in nature. This means that CDA practitioners doggedly subject the dominant discourses of authoritarianism, capitalism and militarism to linguistic critique. This, thus, makes CDA uni-directional or one-sided approach, as it limits its focus only on the dominant group in the text. Also, CDA is accused of not having its own linguistic resources but uses the resources of another existing theory like the Systemic Functional Linguistic theory to advance its cause. According to Malmkjaer (2002:102), “Critical Linguistics is a socially directed application of linguistic analysis, using chiefly concepts and methods associated with the ‘Systemic-functional’ linguistics developed by M.A.K. Halliday.”

Despite these criticisms, CDA has been developing fast and wide. It enjoys wide acceptance in current linguistic research due to its prospects. The main prospect is that CDA is multidisciplinary. That is, it does not have a unitary methodology but combines a lot of theoretical perspectives. Thus, researchers using CDA draw insights from different theoretical backgrounds such as pragmatics, ethnography, anthropology, sociolinguistics, psychology and other social sciences. In line with the multidisciplinary nature of CDA, Threadgold (1997) gives a nod to CDA as a theory as its interaction with SFL provides a methodology that is replicable, systematic and verifiable. Based on different theoretical methodologies, several approaches have emerged within CDA paradigm.

## **2.6.1 Approaches to Critical Discourse Analysis**

There are different approaches to doing critical discourse analysis. However, three established approaches have been popular and influential in the analysis of texts. These are, the discourse-historical approach developed by Wodak (1996; 2001), the socio-cognitive approach introduced by van Dijk (1993; 1998; 2006) and the socio-semiotic approach favoured by Fairclough (1989, 1995, 2003). These approaches have been oriented, respectively, towards “a socio-philosophical critique of public discourse, a cognitive view of discourse, [and] a Hallidayian linguistic study of discourse” (Maalej, 2007). We shall start with a brief discussion of Fairclough’s and Wodak’s models, and then a detailed discussion of van Dijk’s models which is the theoretical framework adopted for this study.

### **2.6.1.1 Wodak’s Discourse - Historical/ Discourse - Sociolinguistic Approach**

Discourse-historical/ discourse- sociolinguistics approach is one of the major directions in CDA associated with Wodak and her colleagues in Vienna (The Vienna School of Discourse Analysis). Wodak (1995: 209) situates her CDA model "on sociolinguistics in the Bernsteinian tradition and on the ideas of the Frankfurt school, especially those of Jürgen Habermas". According to Wodak (1996), discourse Sociolinguistics is an approach capable of identifying and describing the underlying mechanisms that contribute to the disorders in discourse which are embedded in a particular context--whether they be in the structure and function of the media, or in institutions such as a hospital or a school--and inevitably affect communication. Consequently, in order to expose the underlying ideologies in the discourse, Wodak prominently concentrates her researches on social issues such as sexism, racism and anti-Semitism. It is one of her researches on the discourse of anti-Semitism in 1990 that informed her recent model *discourse historical approach*.

In the *discourse historical approach*, Weiss and Wodak (2003) focus on the ‘historical’ contexts of discourse in the process of explanation and interpretation of texts. The term *historical* which occupies a unique place in her approach denotes an attempt on the part of her approach "to integrate systematically all available background information

in the analysis and interpretation of the many layers of a written or spoken text" (Wodak, 1995: 209). Wodak (1989) argues that the inclusion of the historical perspective is necessary in CDA as "social processes are dynamic, not static" and this "has to be reflected in the theory and in the methodology" (Wodak, 1989: xvi). Thus, analysis of historical context which makes Wodak's approach unique has a significant impact on the structure, function, and context of the anti-Semitic utterances (Wodak et. al., 1990). Wodak & Ludwig (1999: 12) support this that, discourse is always historical since 'it is connected synchronically and diachronically with other communicative events which are happening at the same time or which have happened before'.

In Wodak's (2001) discourse-historical approach to the modelling of context, spoken and written language are viewed as social practices (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997) and it emphasises the centrality of interdisciplinarity as well as stresses the need to consider diachronic sociopolitical dimensions when theorising context. Wodak's argument is that interdisciplinarity is a necessary and logical corollary if context is to be considered as more than merely situation in a spatial or temporal sense, but a concept that requires much deeper theoretical description and justification. Thus, in their analysis and interpretation of a specific discursive occasion, Weiss and Wodak (2003: 23) 'attempts to transcend the pure linguistic dimension and to include more or less systematically the historical, political, sociological and/or psychological dimensions'. In most of her studies using discourse-historical approach, Wodak has been able to show that discourse embodies ideology but the implicit ideologies that are part of the member's mental models are not given adequate attention. That is, Wodak's approach pays little attention to the cognitive dimension of ideology.

### **2.6.1.2 Fairclough's Socio-semiotic Approach**

Fairclough's (1989: 20) socio-semiotic model of CDA is an interdisciplinary approach to the study of text and talk, which views "language as a form of social practice". As a multidimensional analysis, Fairclough's, (1995b) model addresses three parts of a discourse: text, discourse practices, and social practices. The text which is the object of analysis involves the analysis of verbal, visual or verbal and visual texts at the vocabulary,

grammar, semantics, phonology level of text (Fairclough, 1995b). Discourse practices involve the processes of text production, distribution and consumption, and the social practices include the social and cultural structures which give rise to the communicative event (Fairclough, 1995a; Chuliaraki & Fairclough, 1999). According to Chuliaraki and Fairclough (1999), CDA of a communicative interaction sets out to show that the semiotic and linguistic features of the interaction are systematically connected with what is going on socially, and what is going on socially is indeed going on partly or wholly semiotically or linguistically. In other words, what CDA seeks to do is to systematically chart relations of transformation between the symbolic and non-symbolic, between discourse and the non-discursive (Chuliaraki and Fairclough, 1999: 113). In line with Chuliaraki and Fairclough's submission, Fairclough concentrates on analysing linguistic features of texts in relation to their context.

Fairclough's (1989) model is well known for its interrogation of the questions of language, power and ideology. His major interest is on uncovering the manner in which language is involved in ideology, identity formation, and relations of power, and also he is committed to a more equitable distribution of social power. According to Fairclough (1995), power is not just a matter of language; it is ideology that is the main way consent and acquiescence is manufactured. To him, an awareness of unequal relations of power in society involving hierarchical dimensions of domination and subordination, and a consciousness of how language contributes to the domination of some people by others is the first step towards emancipation. Thus, Fairclough is particularly committed to the 'emancipation of the oppressed', of the underprivileged, and of unequal and dominated groups and individuals in our society. Fairclough (1989: 15) notes that 'language connects with the social through being the primary domain of ideology, and through being both a site of, and a stake in, struggles for power'. Thus, in his study, he is particular concerned with the way ideologies as representation contributes to establishing and maintaining relations of power, domination and exploitation.

Fairclough's objectives and models in terms of liberation of the oppressed are similar to van Dijk's. Each of them has three parts to the analyses of underlying ideologies in texts. What differentiates the two models is that while van Dijk perceives social

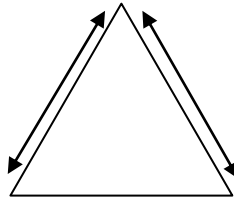
cognition and mental models as mediating between discourse analysis and social analysis, Fairclough believes that discourse practices of text production and consumption mediate between text and social practices. As such, Fairclough concentrates on discovering discursive practices that inform text and social practice, with little focus on the socio-cognitive models of discourse users.

### **2.6.1.3 van Dijk's Socio-Cognitive Approach**

van Dijk's socio-cognitive model is one of the most widely used models in critical studies, especially in the media discourse. van Dijk (1995) essentially perceives discourse analysis as ideology analysis; as ideology is ever present in any communicative text. According to him, "ideologies are typically, though not exclusively, expressed and reproduced in discourse and communication, including non-verbal semiotic messages, such as pictures, photographs and movies" (van Dijk, 1995: 17). The argument here is that no text is ideologically neutral.

Ideology occupies a prominent position in van Dijk's model. According to van Dijk (1991), ideologies are frameworks of interpretation which coordinate attitudes of groups in societies of the modern world. van Dijk's (2001: 12) multidisciplinary theory of ideology sees ideology as a special form of social cognition shared by groups that informs the basis of their social representations and practices. In order to explain the process of unearthing ideology in discourse, van Dijk (1991, 2001) provides a conceptual triangle that links society (societal structure), discourse (textual structure) and social cognition (cognitive structure). The cognition-discourse triangle reproduced below consists of three parts of analyses: social analysis, cognitive analysis, and discourse analysis.

### Cognition (Mental Model) analysis



Discourse (linguistic) analysis

Social (context) analysis

### (van Dijk's (2001) society-cognition-discourse triangle)

In the above diagram, the bidirectional arrows indicate a dialectal relation between textual structures (micro-level) and social structures (macro-level) mediated by social cognition. In line with van Dijk's (2006) conceptualization, analysis using the textual-cognitive-social structure framework has three parts: 'social analysis, cognitive analysis, and discourse analysis. *Social analysis* deals with examining the entire societal structures (mainly, the non-linguistic context), such as institutional/group structures and relations: identity, tasks, goals, norms, position, and resources. *Discourse analysis* primarily investigates the lexicon, syntax, topics, schematic structures of the text, etc. Finally, *cognitive analysis* involves analysis of *social cognition* and sociocultural values and knowledge (van Dijk, 2006). The cognitive analysis, which consists of prejudiced social representations shared by groups, is what distinguishes van Dijk's approach from other critical discourse analysis approaches (van Dijk, 1997). He argues that, without cognitive analysis, critical discourse studies "can not reveal how societal structure influence discourse structure, and how then these structures in turn are enacted, legitimised, instituted, and confirmed or challenged by text" (van Dijk 1997: 266). Thus, van Dijk believes that it is the *sociocognition* (both social cognition and personal cognition) that mediates between society and discourse.

van Dijk (1997: 18) perceives social cognition as "the system of mental representations and processes of group members" and is socially and ideologically conditioned and shared. It thus means that these mental representations influence and control how people act, speak or write, or "how they understand the social practices of others" (van Dijk, 1997: 2). In line with the above views, van Dijk (1997: 22) opines that

mental representations “are often articulated along Us versus Them dimensions, in which speakers of one group will generally tend to present themselves or their own group in positive terms, and other groups in negative terms.” These mental representations reflect the overall polarisation strategy of positive ‘self’ and negative ‘other’ representations. van Dijk (1998: 61- 63) lists the following ways as steps to analysing and making explicit the ideological dichotomy of Us versus Them in discourse:

- a. Examining the context of the discourse: historical, political or social background of a conflict and its main participants
- b. Analyzing groups, power relations and conflicts involved
- c. Identifying positive and negative opinions about Us versus Them
- d. Making explicit the presupposed and the implied
- e. Examining all formal structure: lexical choice and syntactic structure, in a way that helps to (de)emphasize polarized group opinions

In general, van Dijk (1998: 126) argues that ‘in order to explain the proper nature of ideologies and their relation to social practices and discourse, we first need a revealing insight into the mental or cognitive dimension. Fairclough (2001: 16) supports this view that in CDA, the analyst should be concerned not only with texts themselves but also with the processes of producing and interpreting those texts, and with how these cognitive processes are socially shaped and historically changed. The main point here is that ideologies indirectly influence the personal cognition of group members in the act of comprehension and production of discourse. Thus, by analysing the cognitive dimensions of ideologies in texts, an analyst can show how they can affect society and its members and at the same time how they may also be reproduced or legitimised or challenged in society.

van Dijk’s socio-cognitive theoretical framework that lays emphasis on the cognitive interface between discourse structures and social structures is relevant in analysing news reports on conflicts. The relevance of van Dijk’s model could be

recognised when we consider the imperativeness of groupness (or shared belief) in conflict discourse and the need for each country's media house to exhibit patriotism and prejudice in their reports. The underlying ideology are analysed and exposed at the contextual, lexical, and grammatical levels. Our assumption here is that news reports are ideologically embedded socio-cognitive and political practice. Thus, ideologies of specific groups are encoded in their language use and presented to everyone in society (such as news reports). In addition, these ideologies are what indirectly influence the personal cognition of group members in the act of comprehension and production of discourse as well as their actions. It thus becomes necessary to look at the interface between ideology and cognition.

## **2.7 Ideology and Socio-Cognition**

Ideology has been the central interest of linguists, especially critical discourse analysts. Since its introduction into the linguistic studies, ideology has been variously conceptualised. Traditionally, ideology is mainly perceived in terms of legitimisation of dominance by the ruling class and elite groups. This view is similar to critical discourse analysts' opinions of existence of implicit ideology and unequal power relations in discourse. Hence the main concern of critical discourse analysis is to examine 'the way social power abuse, dominance and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context' (van Dijk 2001: 352).

The term 'ideology' has a whole range of useful meanings, and thus, no single definition has been comprehensive to capture its meaning. To indicate its variety of meaning, Eagleton (1991: 1-2) provides a list of definitions on ideology:

- (a) a process of production of meanings, signs and values in social life;
- (b) a body of ideas characteristic of a particular social group or class;
- (c) ideas which help to legitimate a dominant political power;
- (d) false ideas which help to legitimate a dominant political power;
- (e) systematically distorted communication;
- (f) that which offers a position for a subject;
- (g) forms of thought motivated by social interests;



- (h) identity thinking;
- (i) socially necessary illusion;
- (j) the conjuncture of discourse and power;
- (k) the medium in which conscious social actors make sense of their world;
- (l) action-oriented sets of beliefs;
- (m) the confusion of linguistic and phenomenal reality;
- (n) semiotic closure;
- (o) the indispensable medium in which individuals live out their relations to a social structure;
- (p) the process whereby social life is converted to a natural reality.

A critical look at the definitions reveals that some views of ideology are compatible with one another while others are incompatible. For instance, the view of ideology in (g) as forms of thought motivated by social interests does not simply imply the view in (d) that ideologies are ideas which help to legitimate a dominant political power. The definitions of ideology in (i) as ‘socially necessary illusion’ and (k) as ‘the medium in which conscious social actors make sense of their world’ are mutually compatible since both views entail modes of sense-making.

Our conception of ideology combines some of the views articulated above. We view ideology as a social and cognitive phenomenon which influences the social attitudes expressed in discourse structure, and also influences the mental processes involved in discourse production and comprehension. Supporting this view, van Dijk (2001d: 115) defines ideology as “the basic social representations of social groups... the basis of the knowledge and attitudes of groups.” He goes on to state that ideologies are not personal beliefs, but a special form of social cognition that refers to any kind of socially shared mental representations (van Dijk, 2001b, 2001c). One characteristic view in ideology is that it is implicit.

The three prominent figures of CDA (Fairclough, Wodak and van Dijk) support the existence of implicit ideology and unequal power relations in elites’ discourses. However, while Fairclough and Wodak relate implicit ideology to unequal power relations, van Dijk

perceives implicit ideology in terms of mental models. According to Wodak (1996:18), ideologies are ‘particular ways of representing and constructing society, which produce unequal relations of power, relations of domination and exploitation’. In the same vein, Fairclough (2001) opines that, implicit ideologies give sustenance to power inequalities and thus serve political purposes. Thus, both Fairclough and Wodak believe that the voices and ideologies of the dominant group are projected in discourses. van Dijk (2001), on the other hand, states that power relations is important in ideological representations. To him, ‘ideology may ... serve to establish or maintain social dominance, as well as to organize dissidence and oppositions (van Dijk 2001: 14). He stresses that, under specific conditions, ideologies serve to organize the social thoughts and practices of any social group.

van Dijk’s (2001) view implies that ideology performs social as well as cognitive functions. The social function of ideologies is to co-ordinate the social practices of group members for the effective realization of group’s social goals, and the protection of their interests. From a cognitive point of view, van Dijk (1998) argues that the social functions of ideologies are embedded in their cognitive structures. The thrust of his argument is that ideologies have a socio-cognitive basis in the individuals, are produced by societies, and require discourse in order to be manifested and represented (van Dijk, 1998). In other words, ideologies are mentally present in individuals, and are socially constructed and shared. What this implies is that people belong or form groups based on the fact that they share the same ideology and this manifest in their discourses.

Since ideology controls social practices and discourse, ideologies have the specific function of optimally helping to realise group goals and interests and defining group cohesion and solidarity. In this case, ideologies function to organize and legitimise the actions and practices of a group, as well as their interactions with other group members. In the interaction among groups, van Dijk (1998) opines that ideologies function as the mental dimension of a biased representation among them. He stresses that the cognitive underpinning of many ideologies has biased polarized ‘good self’ and ‘bad other’, and ‘positive us’ and ‘negative them’. In line with this, van Dijk (2006) provides a basic self-schema for categorising the link between a group’s ideology and their cognition. To him, the features fundamental to group members’ identification and categorisation include;

Membership criteria: Who does (not) belong?

Typical activities: What do we do?

Overall aims: What do we want? Why do we do it?

Norms and values: What is good or bad for us?

Position: What are the relationships with others?

Resources: Who has access to our group resources? (van Dijk 2006: 18)

van Dijk's (2006) schema above represents the kind of questions that are typically associated with group's identity and hence their ideologies. Thus, group membership entails who belongs to us, and who does not, and how we distinguish ourselves from others by our actions, aims and norms, as well as our resources and positions. In addition, these categories summarise groups' collective beliefs and hence, the criteria for group members' identification. They thus, define what it means for members of a group to jointly feel as 'one' group. Thus, as people engage in interactions, they speak and write as group members and their discourses display these categories. Recognising the fact that our words are never neutral but convey how we see ourselves in terms of our profession, identity, knowledge, values, beliefs, and our truths, each group's discourse permeates everything they do. Thus, members of groups speak about themselves and others as in-group and out-group respectively.

According to van Dijk (2006), this schema of six categories does not only organize collective and individual action, but also organizes the ideologies of our mind. These ideologies are in the form of biased mental models of positive representation of self and negative representation of other. van Dijk (2006), therefore, presents the schema as an ideological square, thus:

Emphasize Our Good Things, and Their Bad Things

De-emphasize Our Bad Things, and Their Good Things

The overall positive 'self' and negative 'other' representation strategies embedded in the ideological square is expanded as:

Say positive things about Us; Say negative things about Them

Do not say negative things about Us; Do not say positive things about Them

In reporting conflicts, reporters display underlying biased mental models of the events. Their expressions implicitly and explicitly show instances of positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation of the actors in the group conflict. Thus, different lexis and structures are employed to emphasize and deemphasize either our good or their bad things. Ideologies underlie the lexis and structures of the reports.

Ideologies are foundations of the social representations shared by groups (van Dijk, 1998). They form the basis of specific group attitudes, which in turn influence group members' individual opinions, constructions or interpretations of specific events, as well as the social practices and discourses in which group members engage. Discourses of and about war and conflict are profoundly interconnected with representations of social actors and events. The discourses perform socio-cognitive, political and ideological functions as the news reporters often times try to describe and tag the warring parties either positively or negatively. If the conflict is between two countries, the media seeks to discredit the actors from other side (or country) and credit the actors from their side favourably. These processes involve selecting emotive language to appeal to the emotions of the readers as well as using negative tags to harm the reputation of 'opponents'. The representation of the actors and events adhere to the overall positive 'self' and negative 'other' ideological polarization (Chilton, 2004; van Dijk, 1997).

Positive 'self' and negative 'other' ideological representation are macro-semantic argumentation strategies of representing in-group favourably and out-group, unfavourably. According to van Dijk (2006), positive self presentation takes a more individual form of face-keeping or impression management; a more collective form in which the reporters emphasizes the positive characteristics of the actors from their own group or country. In this instance, the representation (tagging) of in-group often manifest empathy, or compliance with the law or international agreements (van Dijk, 2006). On the other hand, negative other-presentation strategy is complementary to positive self-presentation strategy and involves drawing readers' attention to the negative characters and attributes

of the actor from out-group. Representing participants and actions are achieved at the thematic, lexical and grammatical levels. Certain positive and negative lexical items (or tags) are employed to represent the actors and their actions. The representations are often times bias and display a positive ‘self’ representation and negative ‘other’ representations.

A critical discourse analysis of the language use in representing (or tagging) participants and their actions needs to be complemented with a grammatical theory at the micro-level of analysis. According to Weiss and Wodak (2003), CDA is an interdisciplinary study that relies on a variety of grammatical approaches and methodologies for its analysis. Thus, in the next section, we review the grammatical theory, Halliday’s Systemic Functional Linguistics, which we employed in doing the linguistic analysis.

## **2.8 Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL)**

In recent time, linguistic studies have undergone two stages of development. The first stage is the period of mere description of language by the structuralists while the second stage goes beyond ordinary description to accounting for language faculty in human beings (Song, 2005). Chomsky’s Transformational-Generative grammar (TGG) and Halliday’s Systemic-Functional Grammar (SFG) belong to the second stage of language study. Chomsky’s TGG is a formalist approach to language study that explains only the structure of language and ignores its social function while Halliday’s SFG places emphasis on the function of language (Zhuanglin Hu 2002). In this study, our focus is not on the formal structure of language alone, but on the social functions of the structures of language. Thus, we employ SFG to show what language does and how it does it in social situations.

Halliday’s Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG) is a sociological approach to language study that investigates the relationship between linguistic structures and socially constructed meaning in texts (Matthiessen 1995). Halliday started the theory in 1967 as ‘Scale-and-Category theory’ and later developed it into ‘systemic functional theory’ (Berry, 1977; Bloor and Bloor, 1995). According to Halliday (1973: 7), the preoccupation of his theory is

...investigating how language is used: trying to find out what are the purposes that language serves for us, and how we are able to achieve these purposes through speaking and listening, reading and writing

Thus, Halliday is interested in explaining the nature of language in terms of how language functions in relation to the context of use. That is, he seeks to explain how the structures of language have been shaped by the goals and needs of language users (Matu, 2008). In line with this concern, Halliday (1994) outlines three metafunctions that language performs as interpersonal, textual and ideational.

In interpersonal metafunctions, language resources are used in performing social roles, such as establishing, exchanging, and maintaining interpersonal relations in interactions. These functions are the meanings of the social relations established between participants in making statements, asking questions, etc. Interpersonal functions are realized in the systems of *Mood* and *Modality* (Egins, 1994). Textual metafunction is concerned with the thematic structure of the text. According to Egins (1994), through the textual metafunction, language is organized into coherent texts. That is, it shows how parts of a text are related to other parts. Textual function is realized in the Systems of *Theme* and *Rhyme*. Theme is the point of departure of a message (i.e. the given information) while Rheme is the remainder (i.e. the new information) (Halliday and Matthiessen, 1997).

The ideational metafunction is concerned with 'ideation' grammatical resources for representing our experience of the world around us and inside us. According to Halliday and Matthiessen (1997), it is through ideational metafunction that a speaker or writer expresses his/her experience of the external world and his/her own world of consciousness. Transitivity is the grammatical system for realizing ideational function.

Transitivity is the part of ideational metafunction which is concerned with the transmission of ideas and representation of reality (Matu, 2008). It clearly shows how speakers and writers encode in language their mental picture of reality and how they account for their experience of the world around them. According to Halliday (1985: 101),

‘A fundamental property of language is that it enables human beings to build a mental picture of reality, to make sense of their experience of what goes on around them and inside them. ... Our most powerful conception of reality is that it consists of ‘goingson’: of doing, happening, feeling, being. These goings on are sorted out in the semantic system of the language, and expressed through the grammar of the clause.’

Halliday’s (1985) view of transitivity above suggests that human beings often put their experiences, values and thoughts into what they write or speak. Halliday’s conceptualization of transitivity encompasses three major components: processes (expressed by the verb phrase in a clause), the participants (the one that does, behaves or says, together with the passive one that is done to, said to, etc.) and the circumstances associated with the process (expressed by adverbial and prepositional phrases (Kress, 1990). Halliday (1994) classified transitivity processes into the following processes: material, relational, mental, and verbal, according to whether they represent processes of doing, being, sensing, and saying, respectively. We shall now look at these major processes and their participant roles.

### 2.8.1 Material Processes

Material processes are processes of doing in the physical world. According to Halliday (1985: 103), material processes express the notion that some entity ‘does’ something - which may be done ‘to’ some other entity. This implies that material processes have two participants: the Actor and the Goal. The actor is the ‘doer’ of the process while the goal is the entity (either animate or inanimate) affected by the process (Simpson 1993). In addition to these two inherent participant roles, circumstance provides supplementary information on the ‘when, where, how, and why’ of the process. The examples below illustrate the actor, process, goal and the circumstance of material process,

1. The militants	shot	the soldier	on the head.
Actor	Process: material	Goal	Circumstance: place

In the example 1 above, the ‘actor’ of the material process of ‘shooting’ is ‘the militant’ and the receiver (goal) of the process is ‘the soldier’. The circumstance provides the place where the action happened, that is, on the head. The transitivity system also provides a choice of converting this structure in the passive form, as in

2. The soldier	was shot	by the militant	on the head
Goal	Process: material	Actor	Circumstance

In example 2, the focus is on the soldier that was affected by the action of the actor and not on the actor. Using example 2 instead of example 1, the news writer foregrounds or focuses attention on the goal.

### 2.8.2 Relational Processes

Relational processes are the processes of ‘being’ in the world of abstract relations. In this process, an abstract relationship exists between two participants associated with the process; but unlike the case of material process, a participant does not affect the other participant in a physical sense. According to Simpson (1993), relational processes signal a relationship between two participants without suggesting that one participant affects the other in any way. Relational processes entail intensive verbs, and verbs indicating possessive or circumstantial relations. The participant roles include the “Carrier”, (the topic of the clause) and “Attribute” (a description of the topic). The example below illustrates this relationship between the participant roles:

The Bakassi residents	are	recalcitrant
Carrier	Process: relational	Attribute

In the above example, the relationship that exists in the relational process ‘are’ is that the Bakassi residents (carriers) carry the attribute ‘recalcitrant’.

### 2.8.3 Mental Processes

Mental processes are processes that encode the meanings of feeling, thinking, or perceiving. In contrast to the ‘externalized’ processes of doing (material) and speaking (verbal), mental processes are ‘internalized’ processes (Simpson, 1993:9). Mental



processes involve two participants: Senser (a conscious being who feels, thinks, or perceives) and Phenomenon (that which is felt, thought, or perceived by the Senser) (Eggins, 1994). The example below illustrates this:

Bakassi residents	feel	the pains of dispossession.
Senser	Process: mental	Phenomenon

In the above example, ‘Bakassi residents’ is the Senser and ‘the pains of ejection’ is the Phenomenon. The Mental process, in this situation, is realised by the verb ‘feel’. Mental action processes are important because they signify that readers are meant to see the unfolding of events through the Senser’s eyes.

#### 2.8.4 Verbal Processes

Verbal processes are processes of ‘saying’. According to Halliday (1994:107), the verbal process ‘expresses the relationship between ideas constructed in human consciousness and the ideas enacted in the form of language’. This means that it exists on the borderline between mental and relational processes. In verbal process, three participants exist. The ‘sayer’ (the individual that speaks), the ‘target’ (the addressee to whom the process is directed to) and the ‘verbiage’ (that which is said). The example below illustrates this.

The ICJ	told	Nigeria	to withdraw their troops
Sayer	Process: verbal	Target	Verbiage

Halliday (1994:140) adds that the verbiage ‘what is said’ may be either directly quoted or indirectly reported’, as in

The reporter	said	that he/she was there.
Sayer	Process: verbal	Verbiage

The reporter	said	‘I was there.’
Sayer	Process: verbal	Verbiage

The first example is an indirect quotation while the second example is a direct quotation.

Halliday's transitivity system has been widely acknowledged as an analytic tool for uncovering how certain linguistic structures of a text encode particular worldview or ideological stance of news writers. According to Fowler (1991), language does not reflect reality neutrally but embodies worldviews or ideologies of news reporters. Thus, the various transitivity selections of the news reporters reflect their specific worldviews and ideologies. Supporting this viewpoint, Reah (1998) said that by selecting from the range of processes, the producer of a text (in this instance, news reporter) can present the world to the reader with an ideological slant imposed upon it.

## **2.9 Nominalisation**

Nominalisation is a syntactic transformation whereby a clause is converted into a nominal or a noun. It is a process in which a verbal clause or verb phrase is converted into a nominal or noun-like phrase (Le and Wang 2009). According to Fairclough (1992), nominalisation is the conversion of processes into nominals, which backgrounds the process itself as its tense and modality are not indicated. In nominalisations, actions are not expressed and participants are not specified so that who is doing what to whom is left implicit. Fairclough (1989: 51) supports this by opining that, "one effect of this grammatical form is that crucial aspects of the process are left unspecified: causality is unspecified". In news reporting, nominalisation is a powerful way of representation whereby a process is converted into a product and allows agents doing the action, as well as the circumstances (the time, place, manner, and so on) to be omitted. It allows a news reporter to leave out who did the action to whom, and when or how it happened. For example, in the Bakassi peninsula conflict context, the phrase 'the resettlement of Nigeria' is a nominalised form which relegates who resettled where and when. Through the use of nominalisation, the reporter or writer creates an idea that he/she wants the reader to see.

According to van Dijk (2008), nominalisation is the common form of obfuscation to hide or downgrade the responsible agents. The two sentences below illustrate this:

- (a) The assassination of the Cameroonian soldiers
- (b) The Cameroonian soldiers were assassinated by Niger Delta militants

In sentence (a) above, the material process of ‘assassination’ is nominalised to focus attention on the victim (goal) of the violent action (attack). That is, the agent(s) who does the action of “assassinating” the soldiers is deleted entirely from the construction. In addition, the killing is made subtle by converting the verb (assassinate) to a noun ‘assassination’. However, in sentence (b), both the victims and the agents are present. The action of assassination is expressed. Sentence (b), which is in the passive form, foregrounds the victims and backgrounds the agents. Just like in sentence (a), the focus in (b) is also on the victims rather than on the agents.

## 2.10 Passivisation

Passivisation is another process of syntactic transformation whereby the goals are foregrounded and the agents are backgrounded. According to Fowler (1991), passivisation performs two functions. Firstly, it enables one to avoid indicating clearly who bears the responsibility for the action in the clause by shifting the focus from the agent to some other participant(s). Secondly, passivisation allows some information to be deleted and others to be foregrounded. In news reporting, a news reporter has the choice of presenting the participants in an event as either actors or recipients of action. Fowler’s (1991) popular example below illustrates this:

(1) Police                      shot                      boy                      from 9 inches  
*participant                      predicate                      participant                      circumstance*

(2) Boy                      was shot                      by the Police                      from 9 inches  
*participant                      predicate                      participant                      circumstance*

The two news report items above represent syntactic transformation in analysing and representing same event in two different ways. In example 1, the agent role and the action of verb ‘shot’ are assigned to the policeman while the patient role is assigned to the boy. The active voice is chosen here to focus attention on the policeman, implying clear

responsibility of the action. In example 2, which is a passive construction, the focus is on the boy rather than his alleged killer. The news reporter foregrounded the ‘goal’ (the boy) and backgrounded the ‘actor’ (the police). Coetzee (1980: 203) describes this inversion of the actor-recipient order as ‘disturbance’ of the normal word order. In the context of news reports, the use of passive structure is ideological, as the reporters do not want to focus attention on the actor but on the affected. In some cases, passive voice allows agents to be deleted, leaving responsibility unspecified. Providing the possible reasons for the deletion of the agents, Fowler (1991: 78) opines that agents are deleted because ‘agency is immaterial, or predictable from context, or unknown...’ However, it should be noted that in most of the newspaper headlines, agents are deleted not because they are unknown but because the agent can be inferred from general knowledge of the actions and context.

Passives can also allow for deletion of agents. That is, agentless passives foreground the goals and delete the agents. For example

(3) The boy            was shot            from 9 inches  
       *participant*        *predicate*            *circumstance*

In example (3), the reporter (ideologically) deleted the agent of the action of shooting, leaving the readers to conjecture the agent either through mutual contextual knowledge or from the context.

The discussion has shown that transitivity system, nominalisation and passivisation make options available for news reporters to represent the states of being, actions, events and situations concerning a given society. To Fowler (1991), every representational process choice in the news report has an implicit and dominant ideology. This is true as language use is never neutral but has underlying bias, manipulation and ideology (Matu, 2003). Bearing in mind that news reports are constructed ‘stories’ told from a particular point of view, a critical analysis of them is expected to reveal abundant examples of the ideological mind-set and worldviews of the news reporters.

## **2.11 Metaphors**

A metaphor is a word or a phrase representing one aspect which is used to signify another aspect. According to Matheson (2005: 180), a metaphor is “a word or image which is able to stand for another, because it is analogous to it in some aspect, but is not usually connected with it. It therefore works rhetorically to emphasize that aspect”. Metaphors are part of everyday usage in language in which we compare one thing to another. In the media, metaphors play significant roles in representing events as the choice of metaphors add much to the message that the media is presenting. For instance, in reporting of displacement of people such as in refugee cases, media can use different nature metaphors to compare events to natural phenomena. In such case, the media can report “floods of refugees”, “returnees stream” and “the victims storm”. Here, the migration of refugees is described as floods and the water metaphor ‘stream’ also captures the overflowing. Storm metaphors are used to describe the victims coming to register their grievances.

According to Lakoff and Johnson (1980: 16), mankind’s conceptual system is largely metaphorical and “the way we think, what we experience, and what we do every day is very much a matter of metaphor. In line with this, Lakoff and Johnson (1980) classify metaphors into two types: structural and orientational. Structural metaphors are metaphors that construct the way we see and live life. On the other hand, orientational metaphors deal with spatial orientation and assist in the definition of one’s self in relation to others and to objects. The submission of Lakoff and Johnson (1980: 5) is that metaphors are very important as they assist in ‘understanding one thing in terms of another’. In the analysis of the media reports, we seek to explore how that media in their reporting of events in the social world compare one thing to another.

## **2.12 Lexis as a Level of Systemic Functional Linguistics**

Within the systemic functional linguistics, lexis is the level of linguistic description that is concerned with vocabulary, its choices and collocations. The study of lexis and its meaning entails the use of terms such as lexical decomposition, semantic fields and denotation and connotation. Lexical decomposition is a lexico-semantic model in which words are broken down into its composite parts.

### 2.12.1 Lexical Decomposition: Componential Analysis

Lexical decomposition is an approach to the study of words and their meanings. Here, words are broken down into constituents and components; hence it is also called componential analysis. Componential Analysis (CA) is an approach to the study of meaning which reduces ‘a word to its ultimate contrastive elements’ (Leech, 1974: 91). According to Richards et al. (1987: 530), componential analysis is ‘an approach to the study of meaning which analyses a word into a set of meaning components or semantic features.’ That is, as a semantic (meaning) approach, CA deals with breaking down sense and meaning of a word into its minimal components. In doing componential analysis, the meaning of a word is described by developing semantic features to define the word. For instance, the word *freedom fighter* can be described as a set of the following semantic features [+ force], [+ armed] and [+ revolution]. In Goddard’s (1998: 43) view, CA is ‘a part of the structuralist semantics that is concerned with comparing and contrasting related words and summarising the similarities and contrasts in the most economical way. Goddard (1998) goes further to state that, in componential analysis, each word is viewed as a bundle of features of meaning called ‘components’ and the purpose of CA is to break down the meaning of a word into its underlying component parts and assign them semantic features. From Goddard’s view above, three major tactics are employed by componential analysts in their study of meaning. They are: (a) binary opposites, (b) reduction and (c) specific versus general components.

Binarism is one of the tactics of componential analysts to the study of meaning. In binarism, the componential analyst is concerned with the binary features of semantic components of words which are realised in the presence (plus-sign) or absence (minus-sign) of a given feature. For instance, to analyse the semantic features of the following three words ‘pirates’ ‘militants’ and ‘gunmen’, we have

- (a) Pirates:        +human + force + robbery - revolution + marine
- (b) Militants:    +human + force - robbery + revolution - marine
- (c) Gunmen:       +human + force + robbery - revolution ± marine

The three words above stand in binary opposition to one another: they differ in meaning in terms of the presence or absence of certain features (e.g. + robbery vs. –

robbery). However, the words *pirates* and *gunmen*, for instance, share the feature – revolution and + robbery. The words *pirates* and *militants* stand in opposition to one another and are distinguished by the features: robbery and revolution. It should be noted that all the three items belong to the field of ‘violence’ as indicated by the [+ force] features common to all.

Another tactic of CA is the reduction of words to its minimum meaning. According to Cruse (2000: 242), ‘one important aim of the many componentialists...has been to achieve a genuinely reductive analysis of the realm of meaning’. Thus, in CA, words are decomposed to smaller units. For instance, the word ‘native’ can be decomposed as [indigenous] [human] [occupants].

Also, CA makes distinctions between components which are ‘specific’ and ‘general’ to words within a particular field. According to Lyons (1977a: 326), specific components are ‘minimal distinctive features of meaning that are operative within a single field’ while general components are ‘additional features used for and which belong to several lexical fields’ (Adetunji, 2006: 177). In line with this definitions, the features [long term stay] and [indigenous] could be said to be specific to the lexical fields of ‘natives’ or ‘indigenes’ respectively while the features [occupants] and [humans] are general or common to several different fields such as ‘settlers’, ‘residents’, ‘inhabitants’, etc.

### **2.12.2 Semantic Fields**

A semantic field (also known as lexical field or a lexical set) is ‘the organization of related words and expressions into a system which shows their relationship to one another’ (Richards et al, 1987: 53). According to Finnegan (1994: 164), a semantic field is defined as ‘a set of words with identifiable semantic affinities.’ What this entails is that words that are semantically similar are organised together under a semantic field. In doing semantic analysis, words are classified into groups called lexical fields, with various members giving off different shades of meaning, but with central relation to the central fields. For example, the semantic field of adjectives describing human suffering states has the following lexical items: ‘traumatised’, ‘devastated’, ‘downcast’, ‘destitute’, ‘stranded’,

‘embattled’, ‘haggard-looking’ while the semantic field of nouns naming human actors as resistant includes the following: militants, rebels, freedom fighters, activists

### **2.12.3 Denotation and Connotation**

Denotation and connotation are two layers of meaning of words. The denotation of a word is the core, central or referential meaning of the word found in a dictionary. In English, a content word (such as noun, verb, adjective or adverb) may have its denotation described in terms of a set of semantic features that serve to identify the particular concept associated with the word. The connotation of a word is the additional meaning that the word has beyond its denotative meaning. It refers to the psychological or cultural aspects; the personal or emotional associations aroused by words. It shows people’s emotions and/or attitudes towards what the word refers to.

For example: the word ‘resident’ is denotatively described as [+human], [+occupant] and [±male]. Under a certain circumstance, resident may positively be connoted as [+cooperative] or [+innocent]. Under another circumstance, resident may negatively be connoted as [+stubborn] or [+irritating]. Also, the word ‘police’ is denotatively described as [+human], [+security] and [+legal]. Under a certain circumstance, police may positively be connoted as [+devoted] or [+peaceful]. Under another circumstance, ‘police’ may negatively be connoted as [+wicked] or [+riotous/aggressive]. The denotation of a word can easily be found in a dictionary while its connotation(s) depends on the context of use, both linguistic and socio-cultural context. Also, connotation depends on the intentions of the user(s).

### **2.13 Summary and Conclusion**

This chapter has reviewed related literature on media reporting of conflicts as well as the theoretical perspectives. It reviewed language of news reporting in the media, media representations of conflict and literature on the Bakassi Peninsula border conflict. It also discussed approaches to news discourse concentrating on critical discourse analysis, systemic functional linguistics and the theory of lexical decomposition. In the next chapter, we examine the methodology and analytical framework for the analysis.



## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter explained the methodology adopted in collecting the data and carrying out the analysis. The chapter began with a presentation of the pilot study, its results and implications for the research. It then discussed the sources of the data for the research and the method of extracting and analyzing the data. Finally, the analytical framework designed for the analysis was presented and explained.

#### **3.1 The Pilot Study**

A pilot study was conducted to find out the nature and composition of the data, as well as to gain insights into the actual study. Specifically, the purpose of the pilot study was to critically examine the linguistic features of the Nigerian and Cameroonian newspaper reports on the Bakassi Peninsula border conflict with a view to uncovering the underlying ideologies. To achieve the aim, four news reports were selected: two from Nigerian and Cameroonian privately-owned newspapers. The news reports were purposively sampled based on the major themes of violence and dispossession. The data were analysed within the socio-cognitive model provided by van Dijk (1995; 2006), complemented by Halliday's (1994) concepts of transitivity, passivisation and nominalisation. The linguistic features (lexical choices and syntactic structures) were first examined and then insights from the historical, political and social context aided further qualitative interpretation.

At the lexical level, the study revealed the use of a great number of words to represent people and their actions. The words which were qualified by adjectives corresponded to the topics of the news reports. For example, in the news reports on violence, words such as ‘attackers’, ‘killers’, ‘gunmen’ were deployed to characterise people as violent while adjectives like ‘rampaging’, ‘dreaded’ reinforce the description. In the same vein, reporting on dispossession, the media categorised people as the dispossessed using words like ‘refugees’, ‘victims’, ‘the displaced’, etc. These words were also qualified with adjectives such as ‘traumatised’, ‘embattled’, ‘stranded’, ‘distressed’, etc.

At the grammatical level, the study found a preponderance use of the transitive material and mental processes, nominalisation, passivisation and metaphors, particularly of water. Material processes of doing such as ‘attacked’, ‘invaded’, ‘carted away’, ‘opened fire’, etc. represented actions of people as violent while mental processes such as ‘agonised’, ‘worried’ etc. showed the emotional torture experienced by the dispossessed. Strikingly, the processes tilted towards positive ‘self’ and negative ‘other’ representation. Agentless passives and nominalisation played down the actors and foregrounded the affected. They were also deployed to obscure media bias and to play down media involvement. The underlying ideologies uncovered were humanitarianism and positive self and negative other.

The results of the pilot study necessitated major decisions for the main study. From the findings, the study considered it necessary to expand data sources to include government-owned newspapers from both nations. Also, the study decided to employ insights from the theory of lexical decomposition to distill the semantic properties of the words used in describing and categorising people into different groups. This would help in classifying the words into different semantic fields and patterns of representation of people and their actions. In addition, the study decided to undertake a content analysis of the reports to identify the recurring dominant themes and also to examine the link between themes and the patterns of representations. Halliday’s lexico-grammatical framework and van Dijk’s socio-cognitive model of critical discourse analysis were retained as the theoretical frameworks.

### **3.2 Sources of Data for the Research**

The data for the study were newspaper reports on the Bakassi Peninsula border crisis published between August 2006 and August 2010. The data were sourced from three Nigerian (*Nigerian Chronicle*, *The Guardian* and *The Punch*) and three Cameroonian (*Cameroon Tribune*, *The Post* and *The Eden*) national English-medium newspapers. While *The Guardian*, *The Punch*, *The Post* and *The Eden* are privately-owned newspapers, *Nigerian Chronicle* and *Cameroon Tribune* are government-owned. *Cameroon Tribune* appears daily in French and twice weekly in English. Most of its publications are in both French and English. As a government newspaper, the paper serves as the channel for government opinions and statements. *Eden* and *The Post* are published only in English. *Nigerian Chronicle* is a government-owned newspaper which is published weekly. The newspapers were selected because they are national newspapers and are among the largest media outlets in terms of circulation and wide readership in their respective countries. The period (August 2006 and August 2010) covered the partial handover of Northern part of Bakassi to Cameroon in August 2006, the final handover of the Southern part of the peninsula to Cameroon in August 2008, the evacuation and resettlement of Nigerian Bakassi inhabitants, the withdrawal of Nigerian army from Bakasi in 2008 and the signing of Green Tree Agreement in 2006. This period was also chosen because it was the time the media consistently reported on the turnout of events (happenings) which emanated from the conflict.

### **3.3 Method of Data Collection**

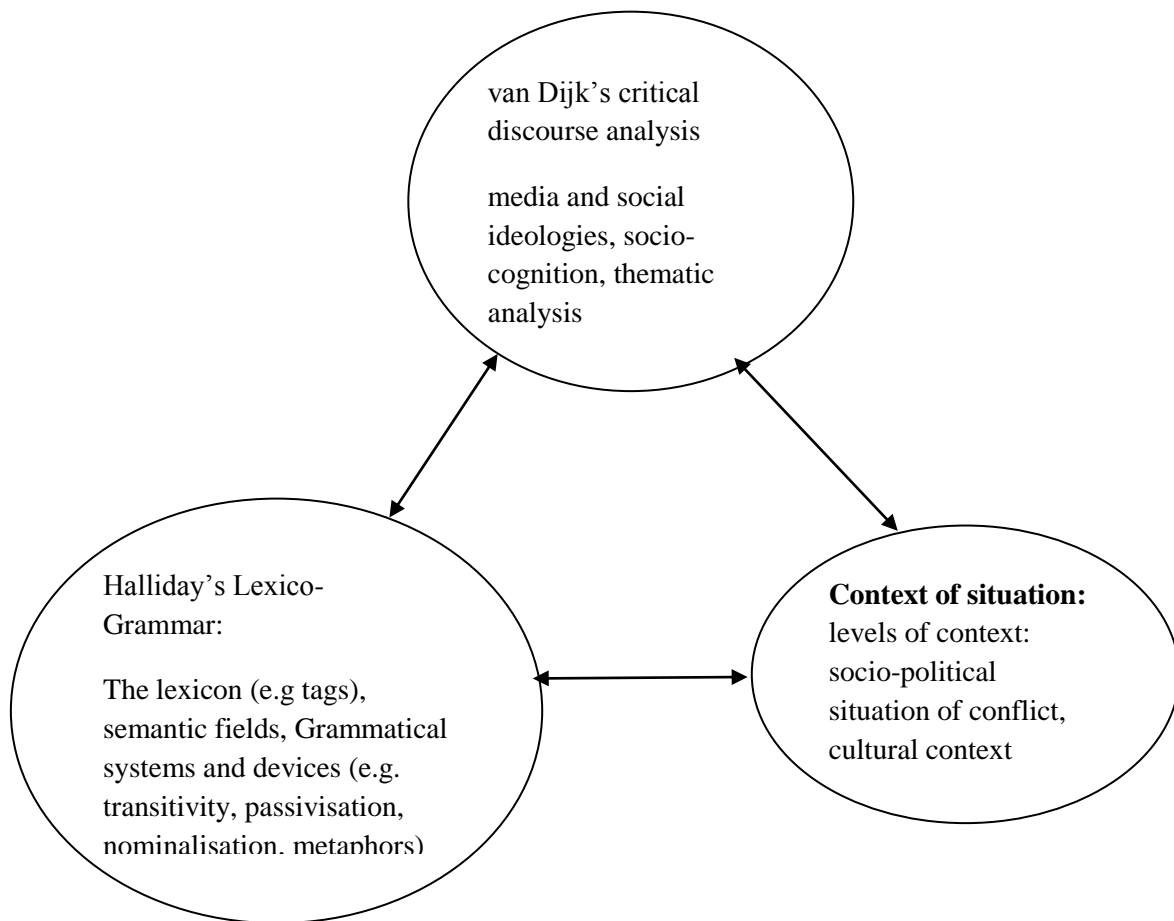
The data for the study were collected from the newspapers through a purposive sampling technique. Over six hundred and fifty published news reports on the Bakassi peninsula conflict were gathered from both Nigerian and Cameroonian newspapers. Out of these, a corpus of one hundred and sixty-four was purposively selected based on the subject matter of violence. Out of the corpus, seventy seven (77) were from Cameroonian newspapers and eighty seven (87) from Nigerian newspapers. The newspapers were mainly hard (print) copies. However, where the hard copies of the newspapers reports were not accessible, sites of the publications on the internet were visited.

### **3.4 Methods of Data Analysis**

This study adopted both quantitative and qualitative approaches to data analysis. Insights from Halliday's (1994) systemic linguistics, van Dijk's (1995; 2006) socio-cognitive approach of critical discourse analysis and the theory of lexical decomposition were employed to analyse media representation of people and their actions in the Bakassi peninsula border conflict. The data were first content-analysed to determine the recurring dominant themes. This was followed by a frequency analysis of conflict-related lexemes to determine the relevance of such words in relation to the recurring themes. A componential analytical method of lexical decomposition was used to break down the words into their component parts. This was followed by a detailed qualitative analysis using Halliday's lexico-grammatical model. At this micro-linguistic level of analysis, there was a systematic interpretation of the lexico-semantic and grammatical features and patterns prominent in the data. At the lexico-semantic stage, words within the same semantic field were analysed in line with their semantic properties, collocations, context (co-text), lexical fields, etc. At the grammatical level, transitivity, nominalisation, passivisation and metaphors provided the basis for the interpretation of structure. The micro-linguistic level was followed by the macro level of analysis. At this level, the analysis transcended the textual analysis to identifying and discussing issues on socio-political and ideological motivations underlying the linguistic features. The macro-level which relied on van Dijk's concepts of socio-cognition and ideology was concerned with uncovering underlying ideologies in the various forms and patterns of representing people and their actions in the conflict situation. However, the two levels of analyses (micro-analysis to macro-analysis) were presented in an order approximately reflecting the media's representations and ideologies along a continuum, and not as two distinct analyses.

### **3.5 Analytical Framework: A Synthesis of Insights**

Having reviewed the theoretical orientations for the study in chapter 2, a synthesis of theoretical insights derived from van Dijk's socio-cognitive model of critical discourse analysis, Halliday's systemic linguistics and the theory of lexical decomposition was constructed for the analysis. This is presented in the diagram below.



**Figure 3.1: Analytical Model**

Figure 3.1 above consists of three interconnected and interrelated concepts, namely (a) ideology and socio-cognition, (b) the lexicon and grammatical devices and systems and (c) context of situation. It shows the interrelatedness and interconnections between the three components used for the interpretation of the news reports at both the macro and micro levels of analysis. At the apex is ideology and socio-cognition which are components of van Dijk's socio-cognitive model of critical discourse analysis. Ideologies are the hidden beliefs and values that influence how language is used to project various socio-political and economic issues. Thus, in the diagram, ideologies mediate between language and context of situation. Ideologies and socio-cognition, which include the dominant socio-political ideals, are deployed in interpreting the data at the macro-level of

analysis. At this stage, attempts are made to harmonise linguistic features and social contexts. The social contexts are the wider socio-political and economic situation. The thematic analysis included at the apex relates the discussion of the dominant socio-political and economic issues within the Bakassi peninsula border conflict context.

At the left flank is Halliday's lexico-grammatical model which consists of lexicons (tags), semantic fields, grammatical systems and devices (e.g. transitivity, passivisation, nominalisation and metaphors). This stage of analysis involves a close examination of micro-linguistic features at both the lexical and grammatical levels. First, selected recurring dominant words (lexemes) within same or related semantic fields are broken into their component using insights from Halliday's lexico-grammar and then, the lexico-semantic choices are further interpreted based on form and function analysis, words associations and relationships including co-texts and collocations, and context. Furthermore, at the grammatical level, Halliday's transitivity, passivisation, nominalisation and metaphor are used to account for other features beyond the lexical level.

At the right flank is context of situation comprising levels of context: socio-political and economic situation of conflict, cultural context. Context is very important for the interpretation of the data as meaning emanates from it. Context in this case encompasses the socio-political reality of conflict between Nigeria and Cameroon. Thus, the analysis of the news reports involves situating the data within the context of Bakassi peninsula conflict. Insights from the wider social context of border and environmental disputes assist in explicating the various linguistic choices and hidden ideological preoccupations of the news reports.

### **3.6 Summary and Conclusion**

This chapter has explained the methodology adopted in collecting the data and carrying out the analysis. It presented the pilot study carried out on sample data and the results which informed many decisions for the main research. It also discussed the sources of the data and the method employed in sampling and analyzing them. In addition, it presented, in a tabular form, the frequency of occurrence of words and grammatical features deployed in representing people and their actions. Finally, it discussed the analytical framework adopted for the analysis and how it would be applied.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **THEMES AND LINGUISTIC TAGGING OF PEOPLE AND ACTIONS IN THE NEWS REPORTS ON THE BAKASSI PENINSULA BORDER CONFLICT (BPBC)**

#### **4.0 Introduction**

In this chapter, we present, in a tabular form, results of the content and frequency analyses of recurring lexical and grammatical features deployed in representing people and their actions. We also identify and discuss the dominant themes which constitute the various socio-political and economic interests of the stakeholders in the news reports on the Bakassi Peninsula border conflict. In discussing the themes in relation to representation of people and their actions, we explore relevant features of the reports and analyse these at both lexical and grammatical levels.

#### **4.1 Results of the Content and Frequency Analyses of Words (Tags) used in Representing People**

Table 4.1 below presents the results of the content and frequency analyses of words (tags) used in representing people in both the Nigerian and Cameroonian newspapers. The analyses are carried out by a simple percentage of recurring lexemes or words suggesting distinct tags.



**Table 4.1: A Frequency Analysis of the Occurrences of Lexical Tags**

Lexical Tags	Nigerian Newspapers				Cameroonian Newspapers			
	Punch	Guardian	Nigerian Chronicle	Total	Post	Eden	Cameroon Tribune	Total
Terrorists	9	-	1	10 (2%)	48	57	18	123 (46%)
Militants	9	29	1	39 (9%)	51	45	3	99 (37%)
Possessors (Owners versus Non- owners)	42	75	43	160 (36%)	17	11	10	38 (14%)
The Dispossessed /victims	99	103	29	231 (53%)	2	2	4	8 (3%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>440</b> 100%	<b>118</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>268</b> 100%

**Key words signaling the tags are listed below:**

**A: Terrorists** (E.g., assailants, attackers, criminals, gunmen, assassins, killers, pirates);

**B: Militants** (E.g., the militants, the rebels, the freedom fighters, the activists);

**C: The Possessors** (E.g., the indigenes, the natives, the residents, the inhabitants)

**D: The Dispossessed/Victims** (E.g., the returnees, the refugees, the victims, the displaced persons);

Words used in categorising people into distinct groups are identified and classified under the following semantic fields: terrorism, militancy, possession, and dispossession/suffering.

#### **4.1.1 Terrorism and the Tag of Terrorist**

In Table 4.1, the result of the frequency count of words used in representing people as terrorists reveals that the words occurred 123 times (46%) in the Cameroonian news reports and 10 times (2%) in the Nigerian news reports. The constant use of the words in the Cameroonian reports shows the attitude of the media towards Bakassi people.

Cameroonian media perceive the actors as violent, thus, the frequent use of ‘pirates’, ‘assailants’, ‘killers’, ‘gunmen’, and ‘attackers’ implying robbery, murder, killing. Specifically, words such as ‘assassins’, ‘killers’, and ‘gangs’ which are only used in the Cameroonian reports are significant as they reveal the dispositions of the Cameroonian media towards the people. The people are seen as hired political killers determined to sabotage the sovereignty of the Cameroonian government over the peninsula. The use of the words in the reports is unconnected with the fact that in the Bakassi peninsula conflict, the Cameroonian armed forces seem to be on the defensive while the Bakassi actors (mainly Nigerians) are labelled as the offenders. Nigerian news reports record a low frequency in the use of the words of terrorism to tag Bakassi actors. The few instances of the use of the words ‘gunmen’, ‘attacker’, ‘pirates, and ‘assailants’ show that Nigerian print media also recognise the presence of the insurgents in the area. However, the absence of the use of some words like ‘killers’, ‘assassins, ‘hoodlums’ and ‘gangs’ to represent people reveals that the Nigerian media did not perceive the people as murderers. Rather, they associate most of the attacks and killings with the Cameroonian gendarmes.

#### **4.1.2 Militancy and the Tag of Militant**

Table 4.1 show high occurrence of words used in representing people as militants in the Cameroonian news reports. The percentage of the usage is given at 37 from the total of 99 appearances of such words. On the other hand, Nigerian reports feature this usage 39 times with a percentage of 9. The frequent use of the words to characterise the people by the Cameroonian media shows the print media’s attitude and perception towards the people represented. Specifically, the Cameroonian print media perceive the people as armed revolutionaries fighting against instituted authorities. Through the words, the people are represented as militants fighting against the decision of the World Powers (that is, the International Court of Justice’s ruling) and the governments of Nigeria and Cameroon Green Tree agreement. The few instances of the use of such representation in the Nigerian reports also reveal the disposition of the Nigerian media towards the people. Though the Nigerian media recognised the existence of militants in the area, they still did not engage the words frequently in describing the people. Specifically, the fact that the

words such as ‘militants’ and ‘rebels’ are deployed in both nations’ reports suggest that both nations believe that the militant group are a nuisance to the inhabitants of that region.

#### **4.1.3 Possession and the Tag of Owners versus Non Owners**

The frequency of occurrence of the words used in representing possession shows that Nigerian reports use the words 160 times with 36% while the Cameroonian reports engage the words 38 times giving the percentage at 14. The use of the words emanates from the media’s knowledge of the economic potential of the area that could be appropriated by the owners and possessors of the area. Specifically, the words categorise the people into two groups: owners (indigenes and natives) and non-owners (inhabitants and residents). ‘Indigenes’ and ‘natives’ suggest ownership while ‘residents’ and ‘inhabitants’ entail non-ownership. Nigerian reports use more of words suggesting ownerships than words indicating non-ownership. This is because the Nigerian media perceive the people as aboriginals and owners than tenants in the peninsula. On the contrary, the Cameroonian reports deploy more of non-ownership words than ownership words to describe the people. This is because the Cameroonian reports see the people as mere occupants of the peninsula who have to leave the peninsula after the handover to Cameroon. This view is supported by the few instances of the word ‘indigenes’ and the absence of the word ‘natives’ in the Cameroonian news reports.

#### **4.1.4 Dispossession/Suffering and the Tag of the Dispossessed/Victims**

The result of the frequency of words occurrence used in representing people as the dispossessed and victims also shows that the Nigerian reports describe people with the words 231 times at 53% more than the Cameroonian reports of 8 times at 3%. The high frequency of the representation of dispossession and suffering in the Nigerian reports could be attributed to the thematic preoccupation of the media who concentrated on the displacement and suffering of Nigerian Bakassi inhabitants. The Cameroonian reports record few instances in denoting dispossession and suffering. This is because the media give little attention to the issues of dispossession and suffering and focus on militancy and terrorism that threatened the peaceful handover and resolution of conflict.

**Table 4.2: A Frequency Analysis of the Occurrence of Grammatical Features**

Table 4.2 below presents the results of the content and frequency analyses of two grammatical features (nominalisations and agentless passives) used in representing actions in both the Nigerian and Cameroonian newspapers.

Grammatical Features	Nigerian Newspapers				Cameroonian Newspapers			
	Punch	Guardian	Nigerian Chronicle	Total	Post	Eden	Cameroon Tribune	Total
Agentless Passives	58	44	18	120 (24%)	159	189	32	380 (76%)
Nominalisations	105	83	28	216 (54%)	78	72	34	184 (46%)

In the table above, the Cameroonian reports have a larger concentration of agentless passives of 76.0% than Nigerian ones of 24.0%. Also, nominalisations are deployed more in the Nigerian reports at 54.0% than in the Cameroonian ones of 46.0%. The use of agentless passives and nominalisations are to obscure media bias and to play down media involvement respectively. The detail analyses of the use of the grammatical features are found in the exploration of the themes of resistance and terrorism.

#### **4.2 Themes in the News Reports on the Bakassi Peninsula Border Conflict (BPBC)**

Themes refer to the diverse socio-political and economic issues around which the various stakeholders in the BPBC struggle express various beliefs and interests. The beliefs and interests are often ideologically motivated and are expressed in concrete linguistic terms as points of views. In the news reports on BPBC, five dominant themes, namely, economy, dispossession, suffering, resistance and terrorism are identified, each of which are now discussed with illustrations from the data:

##### **4.2.1 Economy, Territorial Ownership and Non-Ownership**

The theme of economy is central to all the other themes in the reports. This means that it motivates and informs other themes around it. Economy refers to spatial and natural resources such as territorial and maritime potentials available in Bakassi Peninsula for

exploration and management. It includes the expanse of space measuring about 1000km<sup>2</sup> (Aghemelo and Ibhasebhor, 2006) which could be developed for several economic purposes such as agriculture and tourism. This space has been a home to approximately 300,000 people (Nigerians and Cameroonians) over a long period of time (Mbaga and Njo, 2007). The inhabitants have found the peninsula to be suitable habitation especially because it guarantees them all life sustaining daily businesses such as fish farming. The economic relevance of Bakassi extends beyond the territorial or spatial value as explained above. It includes natural resources such as the water way via the high seas and especially a considerable concentration of oil deposits in the area (Mbuh 2004). The perceived associated financial and other benefits to both the people and the government to manage this naturally endowed geo-political space as rightful owners is the bone of contention among several interest groups from both nations. While Nigerian and Cameroonian government are interested in the oil deposits, it can be said that the people of Bakassi (including indigenes and residents) are concerned with the space (land and water) as habitat and means of livelihood. Indeed, for these and perhaps other socio-politically motivated reasons, many Bakassi inhabitants know no other place as home than the peninsula and would do everything to remain there. Similarly, governments of both nations would not yield to any persuasion to surrender the territory. Understandably therefore, economic interest among contending groups brought about the conflict which results in dispossession of the inhabitants, which logically leads to suffering for the dispossessed, resistance by the aggrieved groups through acts of militancy and climaxing at terrorist activities in the region.

Economy dominates both Nigerian and Cameroonian reports on the conflict which focused on ownership and non-ownership of the territory. In representing the theme, people are described with words of territorial ownership. The words sort people into two broad categories: aboriginals and tenants. While aboriginals represent land owners, tenants describe non land owners. In the data, headlines and words of territorial ownership and non-ownership are deployed in representing the theme of economy.

**Table 4.3: Headlines Depicting Territorial Ownership and Non-Ownership**

<b>Nigerian Newspapers</b>	<b>Cameroonian Newspapers</b>
One year after, Bakassi people eager to reclaim ceded Peninsula ( <i>The Punch</i> , August 14, 2009)	Nigerian Senate Renews Claim to Bakassi ( <i>The Post</i> , November 26, 2007)
Nigeria loses Bakassi at 11am tomorrow ( <i>The Punch</i> , August 13, 2008)	Bakassi Nigerians Disavow Cameroon’s Take Over ( <i>The Post</i> , August 18, 2006)
From Bakassi, they cry still ‘dis na our land’ ( <i>The Guardian</i> , August 12, 2008)	US Stands by Biya over Bakassi ( <i>Eden</i> , August 11, 2008)
Bakassi monarch queries ceding of territory to Cameroun ( <i>The Guardian</i> , June 14, 2006)	Nigeria to Withdraw in 60 Days ( <i>Cameroon Tribune</i> , June 13, 2008)
Bakassi: Why we surrendered – Obasanjo ( <i>Nigerian Chronicle</i> , August 23, 2006)	Bakassi: Nigeria Quits At Last ( <i>Cameroon Tribune</i> , August 15, 2008)

The selected headlines above overtly portray the theme of economy, territorial ownership and non-ownership. Apart from the fact that these headlines express the contention over a particular territory, they (in clear terms) reveal the present owners of this highly contested territory. It however implies that citizens of either country will become either landlords or tenants. Verbs like “surrender”, “quits”, and “loses” suggest that Nigeria has given up contention over the ownership of the territory. On the other hand, phrases like “eager to”, “cry still”, “renews claim” “disavow...take over” imply the fresh urge and consciousness of the Bakassi people to claim possession of the ceded/lost territory. The choice of the verbal phrase “cry still” and “eager to reclaim” portray the Bakassi people’s adamant and insistence on retaining what they termed ‘their heritage’. This view is supported by the phrase in pidgin ‘dis na our land’.

#### **4.2.1.1 Words of Territorial Ownership and Non-Ownership**

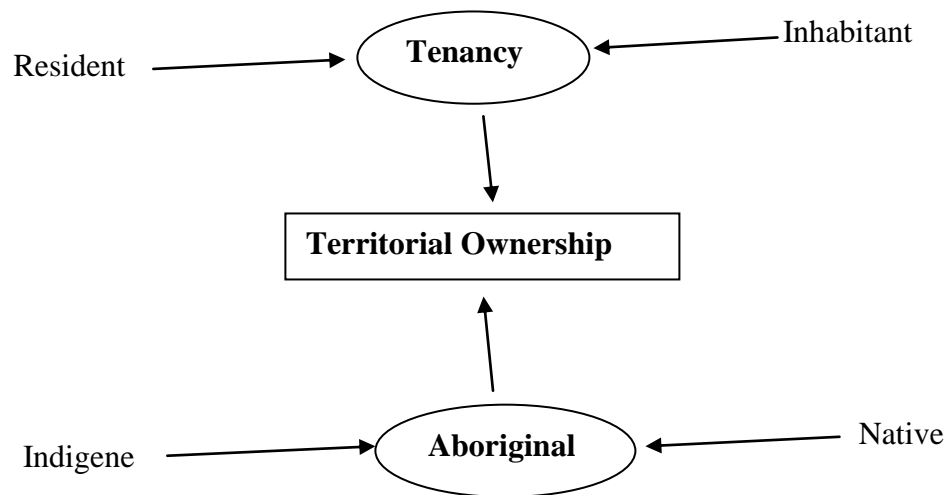
Words of territorial ownership and non-ownership characterise people as owning or occupying the peninsula either as landlords or tenants. The representation is that landlords possess a place by inheritance while tenants acquire by rents. The words include

‘natives’, ‘indigenes’, ‘inhabitants’ and ‘residents’. By means of the componential analysis, the semantic properties of the words are illustrated below.

**Table 4.4: A Componential Analysis of Words of Territorial Ownership and Non-ownership**

Words	of Person who owns a particular place	Person born in a particular place;	Person living in a place (not necessarily original inhabitant) for a considerable period of time
The Native	+	+	-
The Indigene	+	+	-
The Inhabitant	+	-	+
The Resident	+/-	-	+

The interconnections and distinctions among the words of territorial ownership and non-ownership are represented in the figure below:



**Figure 4.1: Words of Territorial Ownership and Non-Ownership**

Table 4.4 demonstrates the semantic properties of the words of territorial ownership and non-ownership while Figure 4.1 shows the interrelationships and

distinctions of the words. The results from both presentations reveal a convergence on territorial ownership. That is, all the people represented by the words own a particular territory. However, the nature of ownership differs. While ‘inhabitant’ and ‘resident’ own a place as tenants, ‘indigene’ and ‘native’ own an area as aboriginals. Generally, the words categorise people into two: landlords (‘indigene’ and ‘native’) versus tenants (‘the inhabitants’ and ‘the residents’). The implication of using these words in characterising people becomes significant as the struggle for peninsula revolves around territorial and maritime ownership which obviously houses the oil wells. Representing people as either aboriginals or tenants entails the perception of the media towards the people. This brings to mind the question of legitimate owners and temporary/mere occupants. We shall discuss first the use of words of territorial ownership then those of non-ownership.

One of the words that show territorial ownership is ‘native’. A native is a person who is born in or originates from a particular place. In the text below, *The Punch* uses this word in describing a Nigerian senator, Ita Giwa.

### **Text 1**

Ita Giwa, who is a **native** of Bakassi, said it was painful that the ancestral homes of the Bakassi people were being handed over on Monday (*The Punch*, August 14, 2006)

‘Native’ in *The Punch* news excerpt above describes Ita Giwa as a *local* inhabitant of the Peninsula. Through an adjectival clause, Ita Giwa is qualified as a native of Bakassi. By the word ‘native’, she is seen as belonging to Bakassi by birth, hence, has right to the peninsula and its resources. A loss of the area with the numerous resources it possesses she describes as rather unfortunate. This is the view projected in the text where Ita Giwa laments the ceding of the region as ‘painful’. The painful loss, in this case, is not only the losing of the potential oil deposits in the area but also the habitat and means of livelihood. In Africa, a person’s identity is linked to their place of origin. Thus, natives of Bakassi (whom Ita Giwa is part of) consider it a loss to be detached from their ancestral roots by ceding the land to Cameroon. This is aside the fact that the place provides them with their daily sustenance.



In the text below, *Cameroon Tribune* also uses the lexeme ‘native’ to describe Senator Ita Giwa.

### **Text 2**

Senator Florence Ita Giwa alias Mama Bakassi. Though not a **native** of Bakassi, she has succeeded in carving for herself a role as spokesperson for the displaced Nigerians of the area. (*Cameroon Tribune*, August 8, 2008)

Just like *The Punch*, *Cameroon Tribune* in Text 2 employs the word ‘native’ to characterise some Nigerian territorial owners. However, the representation here, unlike in *The Punch*, is the characterization of Senator Ita Giwa as a non territorial owner. Ita Giwa, popularly referred to as ‘Mama Bakassi’ because of her representational role on the issues concerning Bakassi people is singled out as a ‘non-native’ of the peninsula. However, qualifying Nigerians with the attributive adjective ‘displaced’ suggests that they were once natives and inhabitants of the Peninsula and have lost the economic benefits accruing to aboriginals. Thus, there is the need for a spokesperson, which Ita Giwa represents. A ‘spokesperson’ of the displaced has some political and economic implications. As the person authorised to speak and negotiate on behalf of others, a spokesperson gets preferential treatment.

The word ‘indigene’ also describes people as original inhabitants of a territory.

### **Text 3**

The Bakassi **indigenes**, on August 14, 2008, were given two options – staying back in their homeland and becoming part of Cameroun or coming to Nigeria where they would be resettled. A year after their territory was ceded to Cameroun, **indigenes** of the peninsula are still living in abject conditions (*The Punch*, August 17, 2009)

‘Indigenes’ is used in *The Punch* above to describe former land owners of the peninsula. An indigene is a person who occupies a territory from the earliest times, hence, an owner of the land. Referring to some people as ‘indigenes’ of Bakassi, *The Punch* characterises them as indigenous people who originate from the region. This is reinforced with the noun

‘homeland’, which connotes a place where one is born. Representing the people as ‘indigenes of the peninsula’ after one year of the handover, *The Punch* still classifies them as owners of the peninsula who have been dispossessed from the peninsula. *The Punch* also projects the economic status of these once land owners as those that need serious attention. It can be inferred, therefore, that the loss of their territorial space which once housed their economic benefits is a major factor for their present economic status after one year of resettlement as Nigerians.

*The Guardian* also describes people as landowners using the word ‘indigenes’ in text 4.

#### **Text 4**

At this point, it was clear to Nigerians and **indigenes** of Bakassi that their days were numbered in oil area despite their clamour for the rejection of the ruling and government’s earlier assurance to the people of the area. To finally seal the deal and fate of the **indigenes** of Bakassi, Obsanjo on 12 June, 2006 at Green Tree New York signed an agreement with his Camerounian counterpart Paul Biya on the implementation of the judgement (*The Guardian*, August 9, 2008)

‘Indigenes’ as used in Text 4 depicts Nigerians as landowners who have been circumstantially forced out of the ‘rich’ peninsula. It is worthy of note that emphasis is placed on the economic value of the region which is captured with the noun “oil area”. With this, the reader becomes aware of the economic strength of the region (oil) and likely questions the action of the Nigerian government captured with words like “seal”, “deal”, and “fate”. The nouns ‘deal’ and ‘fate’ respectively foreground transaction and destiny of the people. The transaction is the contract between the governments on how to share the peninsula. Such arrangement can be described as unhealthy for a people who are about to lose their major source of livelihood hence, “their clamour for the rejection of the ruling [of the ICJ]”.

*Nigerian Chronicle* also represents people with words of territorial ownership ‘native’ and ‘indigene’.

### Text 5

Cross River governor, Senator Liyel Imoke has assured the displaced Bakassi **natives** of his administration's commitment towards their proper resettlement. Imoke gave the assurance on Monday while addressing the chiefs, elders and **indigenes** of the area at the Government Primary school, Ekpri-Ikang... (*Nigerian Chronicle*, September 5, 2007)

Natives and indigenes in *Nigerian Chronicle* have been used to describe Nigerians as indigenous people in the peninsula hence are entitled to certain economic rights and privileges as articulated by the governor of Rivers State. With the choices of 'Bakassi natives' and 'indigenes of the area', *Nigerian Chronicle* efficaciously projects claims that are entitled to a territorial owner if displaced. This is however captured with the use of the noun phrase "proper settlement" suggesting the 'economic' cushioning to enhance not only their social well-being but boost their economic status.

The Cameroonian media also recognises the presence of indigenous people in the struggle for the peninsula by using the word 'indigenes' in their reports to describe Nigerians.

### Text 6

... most of the opposition on the handover of Bakassi to Cameroon had come mostly from Nigerian **indigenes** of the peninsula, who see themselves as not having any future in Cameroon, and some top Nigerians legal luminaries like Olisa Agbakoba, SAN., and the opposition Action Congress (AC). (*Eden*, August 20, 2008)

*Eden*, from the above excerpt, does a clear description of the opposing forces to the ceding of the oil rich Bakassi to Cameroon. The first class of opposing force identified is the Nigerian Indigenes. This class is categorised as territorial owners hence a justification for their opposing the ceding of their homestead. The second class of opposition is projected by legal luminaries who perhaps are kicking against the social and economic injustice that the Nigerian indigenes may face if the peninsula is ceded to Cameroon. The third opposition mentioned in the excerpt above can be classified as political as the

aforementioned Nigerian political party (AC) is often known for agitations and propaganda. The striking opposing force is the Nigerian indigenes that are quick to identify the untold economic hardship and neglect they will face if they lose their status as aboriginals. Identifying this fact are the interpreters of the law- legal luminaries who see the urgency to protect the rights of these indigenes from such unfortunate decisions of the Nigerian government.

‘Indigene’ in the text 7 below also designates people as landowners.

### **Text 7**

It recalled that some Nigerians, whom he referred to as Bakassi **indigenes**, had strongly protested the handover last year of the peninsula to Cameroon and had vowed to fight to get back what they claimed was their land, and to declare it an independent state (*The Post*, November 16, 2007)

Though indigenes denotes people who first exist in a place, *The Post* distances itself from the BBC reporter’s claim that some Nigerians are the Bakassi ‘indigenes’ through the use of the relative clause ‘whom he referred to as Bakassi indigenes’. Identifying them as indigenes (as done by the BBC reporter’s) bestows on the people some right to the lands and its resources, hence the rebuff by *The Post*. That the people believe to have ancestral tie to the land and its resources is the unabated drive to fight and repossess it. It becomes obvious that ownership and possession of the peninsula is contentious between Nigerians and Cameroonians. But with the ICJ proclamation that the land belongs to Cameroon, the report deems it right to counter the demand for their heritage (land) by the so-called ‘indigenes’ as unsubstantiated. The clause ‘what they claimed was their land’ supports this view.

Apart from the lexical choice of territorial ownership (‘indigenes’ and ‘natives’), words of non-ownership are also deployed in characterising people. Here, the words ‘residents’ and ‘inhabitants’ describe people as mere occupants and tenants of the peninsula. For example,

## Text 8

Bakassi: From Nigeria To The Republic of Cameroon. And finally, Nigeria lost the oil-rich Bakassi Peninsula to the Republic of Cameroon. SUNDAY ORISAKWE who visited the island writes on the feelings of loss that have engulfed the **residents** since the handover, even as they make plans, based on government promises, on how to move ahead with their lives. (*The Guardian*, August 19, 2006)

The word ‘residents’ is used to describe occupants of Bakassi peninsula. Residents are long-term dwellers of a place (not necessarily original inhabitants). In the text, residents epitomises Nigerians still living in Bakassi after the August 14, 2006 handover of the peninsula to Cameroon. Referring to the people as residents, *The Guardian* portrays them as occupants who have lost properties, opportunities, and means of livelihood. As such, their stay in the area has been short-lived. Considering the time the report was written, it becomes glaring that the people who were ‘indigenes’ before the handover are now referred to as residents after the handover. This is due to a change in the ownership status of the peninsula. When Nigeria was administering the area, Nigerians in the area were ‘indigenes’ and had equal rights to the economic boom but after Nigeria handed over to Cameroonian government; the people became residents and lost economic relevance in that region. This drives the ‘residents’ to make plans on how to survive that is, ‘to move ahead with their lives’. The phrase ‘oil-rich’ depicts the economic resources in the peninsula which the supposed ‘residents’ no longer have claims to. Thus, the residents are engulfed by the ‘feeling of loss’ after the handover of the peninsula to Cameroon.

*The Punch* also uses the word ‘residents’ to describe Nigerians after the handover in the text below

## Text 9

A batch of Nigerian **resident** in Bakassi, a territory ceded to Cameroon by Nigeria in 2008, had last year arrived Ikang, New Bakassi Local Government Area of Cross River State, alleging that they were being harassed, maimed and killed by the gendarmes (*The Punch*, May 2, 2010)

After the August 2008 final handover of the peninsula to Cameroonians, *The Punch* refers to Nigerians occupying the peninsula as residents. ‘Residents’ characterise them as tenants living in the peninsula on terms and agreement. As tenants, they do not have much power in the ‘foreign’ land thus; they can be subjected to different forms of discriminations mentioned including maltreatment by their landlords. This explains the forms of torment that made them relocate to ‘New Bakassi’ where they were resettled.

Cameroonian media also deploys residents in describing people in Bakassi. For instance,

#### **Text 10**

Meantime, some of the Bakassi’s Nigerian **residents** have relocated back home while others have decided to remain, despite being classed as foreigners under the agreement (*The Post*, July 28, 2008)

*The Post* uses the word ‘residents’ to describe Nigerians who live in the peninsula. Residency here suggests tenancy. Using the word to describe Nigerians before the final handover in August 2008, *The Post* succinctly refers to the Nigerian resident as non-territorial owners. Thus, Nigerians are living in the area for a fixed period of time which expires at the handover day. At the expiration, they are expected to pack out of the area. This informs the claim that some of the “residents” have relocated back home and that others who decide to stay will be categorized as “foreigners”, a status backed by the Green Tree Agreement signed by both Nations. The idea of relocating to their ‘homes’ also reinforces the claim that Nigerians are neither natives nor owners of Bakassi.

*Eden* also represents people as tenants using the word ‘residents’

#### **Text 11**

He added that when finally a Cameroonian territory, Bakassi would help in relaunching the Cameroonian economy judging that the Peninsula is endowed with rich natural resources. He disclosed that the Nigerian **residents** in Bakassi have three options, to wit, returning to Nigeria, remaining in the area like all other Nigerians in the country, or solicit Cameroonian nationality. (*Eden*, August 13, 2008)

In the text above, ‘residents’ refers to Nigerians who have been asked to leave the resource-rich area. Just like in *The Post* report, the word is used to describe Nigerians before the August 14, 2008 final handover. As residents (not owners), Nigerians have been given terms to choose from. The terms include returning to their country, staying in Bakassi as foreigners or changing their nationality and not have legitimate claim to the natural resources as expressed in the text. Of all the options given to Nigerian residents, the inclusion of them benefitting from the Cameroonian economy is downplayed to show the contrast between privileges of a territorial owner and non-territorial owner. This view of non-territorial ownership expressed with the word “vacate” is projected in the text below.

### **Text 12**

It further noted that if for any reasons the UN wants the **residents** of Bakassi to vacate the land for Cameroon to take over full control; it should be through proper negotiations (*Eden*, July 16, 2008)

The verb ‘vacate’ supports the description of the people as residents. ‘To vacate’ means to give up occupancy of a place. The view projected in the text is that the residents already accept their fate as temporary occupants but are seeking a benefiting negotiation before relinquishing their occupancy.

‘Inhabitants’ is another word of territorial non-ownership employed in describing people as temporary occupants of the peninsula. This word is specific to the Cameroonian media who describes Nigerians as ‘tenants’ in Bakassi.

### **Text 13**

According to BBC online news, the predominantly Nigerian population is unhappy about the handover. Nigerian **inhabitants** have been given the option of staying in the peninsula under the Cameroonian authority or be resettled in Nigeria. But some Nigerian citizens are torn between leaving the place to be resettled under the Nigerian administration and staying in their ancestral land rich in fish as foreigners in Cameroon (*The Post*, August 17, 2006)

*The Post* describes Nigerians as inhabitants just a day before the partial handover of the peninsula to Cameroon. By this label, Nigerians are described as ‘renters’ caught between the decisions of identity. The two alternatives of living in the area under Cameroonian authority or resettling in Nigeria become difficult as either choice will have an adverse effect on their social and economic affiliations. Thus in the text below, the Nigerian “inhabitants” are reported to be resistant to Cameroonian policies.

#### **Text 14**

He continued that the predominant Nigerian population of Nigerians resident in Bakassi, were hostile to the Cameroon administration and so the enemy was difficult to trace because investigations were marred by the non-cooperation of the **inhabitants**... However, the current barbaric attack had not derailed the complete handing over of the disputed Bakassi Peninsula to Cameroon on 14 August 2008, the SDO said. He equally revealed that the killers remained unknown and prior to the shooting, many Nigerian **inhabitants** of the zone had surreptitiously moved out (*Eden*, June 23, 2008).

The resistance by Nigerians to Cameroonian policies is pointers that these dwellers referred to as “inhabitants” are yet to come to terms with not only the idea of losing their homes, property and means of livelihood but to be governed by a new government. Just like in other countries where foreigners are usually the first suspect of violence, the Cameroonian government is almost going to label the Nigerians as being responsible for the skirmishes in the region as they are accused of withholding useful information; “investigations were marred by the non-cooperation of the inhabitants...”

From the discussion above, it is observed that in representing the theme of economy, the Nigerian and Cameroonian media describe people with words of territorial and maritime ownership and non-ownership. The effect of economic interests and struggle among the various stakeholders (the Nigerian and Cameroon governments and resistant groups) reveal to have led to the dispossession of the occupants of the peninsula. The picture below captures Nigerian inhabitants described with the territorial ownership and non-ownership word.





Bakassi Inhabitants

(Bakassi Nigerians Disavow Cameroon's Take over; *The Post*, August 17, 2006)

The picture above represents a group of Bakassi dwellers. The dwellers which include children, youth and adults are represented in the picture as Bakassi inhabitants. The postures of the people show dejection and hopelessness after the lost effort in reclaiming their 'ancestral land'. Signs of misery preoccupy the facial expression of the inhabitants. The location where these inhabitants are settled suggests the absence of government presence. The caption 'Bakassi Nigerians disavow Cameroon's takeover' suggests opposition and resistance of Bakassi Nigerians to vacate the peninsula.

#### **4.2.2 Dispossession**

Dispossession has been identified as one of the themes in the news report on the Bakassi Peninsula border conflict. The theme is observed to be the direct effect of the economic interests of Nigerian and Cameroonian governments. The struggle for the rich peninsula was resolved with the ICJ pronouncement that sovereignty over the peninsula lies with Cameroon. Consequent upon this judgment, thousands of Bakassi dwellers (aboriginals

and tenants) were dispossessed of their habitat and means of livelihood. However, issues on dispossession dominated news reports when Nigerian government signed a Green Tree Agreement on peaceful withdrawal of its soldiers and the handover. The media reported on ‘ejection’ of Bakassi dwellers from their supposed ‘ancestral’ land and their resettlement in Nigeria. Several news reports represent the relocation and resettlement of Nigerians as displacement. In addition, Cameroon soldiers who supposedly are in Bakassi to secure it for Cameroon were also represented as agents that enforce the act of dispossession. Generally, dispossession is represented as depriving people of their possessions. It is realised in the data by words of dispossession, metaphors and verbs signifying mental conditions and the headlines below.

**Table 4.5 Headlines Depicting Dispossession**

<b>Nigerian Newspapers</b>	<b>Cameroonian Newspapers</b>
Booted out of Bakassi ( <i>The Guardian</i> , June 14, 2008)	Nigeria Bids Bye to Bakassi ( <i>Eden</i> , 20 August, 2008)
Bakassi...Returnees Flood Cross River, Akwa Ibom State: 57,000 Returnees Recorded in Mbo Council; Akpabio Calls for Urgent FG Assistance ( <i>The Guardian</i> , August 17, 2008)	Alleged Killing of Six Sends Many Fleeing ( <i>Eden</i> , August 18, 2008)
20,000 Nigerians chased out of Bakassi ( <i>The Punch</i> , March 21, 2010)	At Last! Cameroon Assumes Total Control Over Bakassi ( <i>The Post</i> , August 15, 2008)
Bakassi: More displaced indigenes stream into A’Ibom ( <i>The Punch</i> , August 11, 2008)	Nigeria Respects August 14 Bakassi Handover Date ( <i>The Post</i> , July 28, 2008)
Imoke re-assures Bakassi natives, Pledges prompt re-settlement ( <i>Nigerian Chronicle</i> , September 5, 2007)	

As explained above, the theme of dispossession is the after effect of the territorial handover to Cameroon. In order to take full control of their now ceded territory, Nigerians resident in Bakassi were ejected from their former dwelling. The headlines above however do not only reflect dispossession but also portray the manner in which Nigerian residents in Bakassi were dispossessed. Verbs such as “booted out” and “chased out” explicitly capture how the residents were forcefully thrown out of the area. These verbs simply

create the action and condition in which these Nigerians had to leave Bakassi. Verbs like “flood”, “stream” measure the rate at which these dispossessed citizens evacuated Bakassi. The factor responsible for this massive return can be tied to the fact the dispossessed are already suffering from the plague of rejection associated with their dispossession. The headlines from the Cameroonian newspapers reflect peaceful and mutual departure between the two nations. For instance, ‘bids bye’ and ‘respects’ suggest mutual understanding in the handover that led to dispossession.

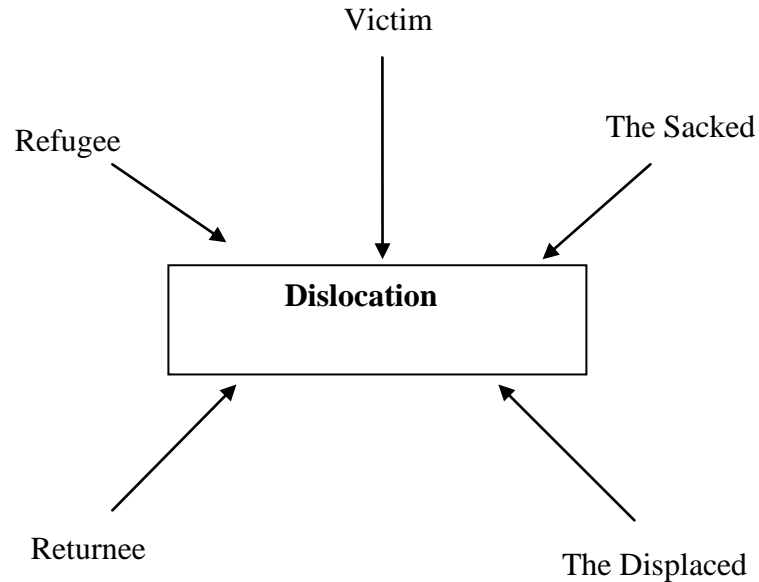
#### 4.2.2.1 Words of Dispossession

Words of dispossession are used to describe people as ‘the dispossessed’. The words include ‘refugees’, ‘returnees’, ‘the displaced’, ‘the sacked’ and ‘victims’. A componential analysis is carried out to reveal the semantic properties of the words.

**Table 4.6: A Componential Analysis of words of Dispossession**

The Dispossessed	Somebody who experiences adverse conditions	A person who is constrained to relocate to another place for safety, protection or comfort	A person, harmed by another or adversely affected by an incident or a situation	Somebody who unwillingly returns to a place after leaving it	A person removed from a place; usually forced out of his/her dwelling
Refugee	+	+	-	-	-
Victim	+	+/-	+	-	-
Returnee	+	+	-	+	+
The Displaced	+	+/-	+/-	-	+
The Sacked	+	+/-	+/-	-	+

The relationship of the words of dispossession as we find in Table 4.6 above is further illustrated in Figure 4.2 below:



**Figure 4.2: Words of Dispossession**

Table 4.6 and Figure 4.2 above show the areas of convergence and divergence among the words that convey ‘dispossession’. The common semantic core for all is dislocation. ‘Refugees’ and returnees describe people who are constrained to relocate by circumstances, ‘the displaced’ and ‘the sacked’ are forced out of an area. However, all have an element of dislocation.

Instances of the use of the words in describing people in BPBC include

**Text 15**

The stranded and destitute **returnees** arrived Calabar on Wednesday at about 12 noon on board M/F Angel Gabriel Vessel and are currently being camped at the Government Primary School Barrack Road Calabar (*The Guardian*, August 25, 2006).

‘Returnees’, a derivation from the verb ‘return’, describe people who go back to a place after leaving it. In the context of the Bakassi Peninsula conflict, ‘returnees’ refer to Bakassi dwellers that have now left the peninsula and are being resettled in Nigeria. *The*

*Guardian* uses the word to characterise displaced Nigerians in Bakassi who have been dispossessed of their homes in Bakassi and are ‘camped’ in Calabar, Nigeria. To be camped in a primary school shows that the people are homeless and can no longer afford alternative accommodation hence the use of the two context-bound adjectives ‘stranded’ and ‘destitute’. The use of these qualifying adjectives in *The Guardian* report suggest that the people did not return willingly but constrained by the unpleasant and inhabitable conditions in Bakassi. While ‘stranded’ entail entrapment and confusion, ‘destitute’ reveals impoverishment. The view here is that the returnees are trapped in Bakassi, thus, they relocate to Nigeria where they are ‘currently being camped at the Government Primary School’. As destitute, they cannot afford decent accommodation; hence, living in the camp is the only alternative.

*Nigerian Chronicle* also describes some Nigerians who were residents in Bakassi as returnees. Here, the main reason for the ‘returnees’ coming back to Nigeria is Cameroon’s restrictions.

### **Text 16**

Earlier, the spokesman for the **returnees**, Mr Innocent Asuquo Bassey informed the Governor that they were stranded in the area as they were restrained by the Gendarmes through constant harassment while trying to continue in their occupation (*Nigerian Chronicle*, August 18, 2008)

‘Returnees’ in the text above represent Nigerians who have, out of unfortunate circumstance, returned to Nigeria. In the report, the situation surrounding their return is constant harassment by Cameroonian gendarmes who occupied the area after the handover. Thus, the soldiers restrained them from engaging in their daily business activities, which made them stranded. The ill-treatment and restraints prompted them to ‘return’ to Nigeria where they seek safety and protection. Obviously, they left behind some of their belongings (homes and means of livelihood).

In *The Punch* report below, ‘returnees’ is consistently used to describe Nigerians who have been dispossessed.

### Text 17

200 more Nigerians flee Bakassi for alleged harassment. Another batch of 200 **returnees** has fled the Bakassi Peninsular over alleged continuous harassment and torture of Nigerians by the Cameroun gendarmes. Our correspondent learnt that the latest development has swelled the number of **returnees** at a refugee camp in Ekpri Ikang, Cross River state to 1,500. Sources from the state's Emergency Management Agency complained that the camp initially built to accommodate only 400 **returnees** had been congested (*The Punch*, November 23, 2009)

Here, 'returnees' refer to Nigerians who ran away from the peninsula over alleged Cameroonian soldiers' maltreatment. On arrival in Nigeria, the 'returnees' settled in the camps as refugees. Describing them as returnees, *The Punch* construes them as the dispossessed. The use of figures '200', '1500', etc shows upsurge in the large numbers of Nigerians 'forcefully' displaced in the peninsula. Increase in the numbers of returnees is captured with the metaphor 'swelled' giving the reader the vivid picture of the ugly conditions constantly suffered by these returnees. In other words, 'Swelling' depicts an unprecedented increase in the number of people dispossessed of their lands and homes.

'Returnees' in the *Cameroon Tribune* also describes Nigerians who have been dislocated from the peninsula.

### Text 18

With a federal government ever ready to address the plight of **returnees**, it can only be normal that the situation in Bakassi, seen from the Nigerian side, is dramatized. (*Cameroon Tribune*, August 22, 2008)

Nigerians who are resettled in Nigerian camps after their dispossession are described as 'returnees'. The dispossession brought suffering to the people who are dislocated from their origin and places of business. However, through the lexical choice 'dramatized', *Cameroon Tribune* projects the view that the supposed effect from the dispossession of the returnees has been exaggerated and sensationalized by Nigerians in the media. As part of the provision in the Green Tree Agreement, it was recorded that the Nigerian government

already mapped out a new area for the displaced people. *Cameroon Tribune* however projects the view that the trauma of dispossession suffered by the Nigerian returnees is one the government will readily tackle. Thus, they aver that the situation in the Bakassi has been overstated.

‘Refugees’ is another word that describes people as the dispossessed. In *The Guardian* text below, refugees describe Nigerians who escaped from the peninsula to seek protection in Nigeria.

### **Text 19**

Most of the **refugees** fled without picking anything, as the Camerounian gendarmes stampeded them out with gunshots and horse whips (*The Guardian*, June 14, 2008)

In text 19, *The Guardian* describes Nigerians forcefully ejected from the peninsula as refugees. A refugee is a person who is seeking refuge in another place, especially to avoid war or persecution. The verb phrase ‘fled without picking anything’ captures the haste and pressure with which the refugees escaped from the peninsula. The unprepared exit is caused by panic from the gendarmes who frightened, attacked and evicted them with military weapons. The period towards the handover, Cameroonian gendarmes were reported as ejecting the inhabitants of Bakassi in order for Cameroon to occupy the area. The phrasal verb ‘stampede out’ tells the level of aggression engaged by the soldiers who forcefully dispossess the inhabitants of their possession. Thus, refugees were dispossessed of everything they have: their personal belongings, homes and lands.

*The Punch* also describes the people who escaped Cameroonian soldiers’ hostilities and seek refuge in Nigeria as refugees.

### **Text 20**

However, the alleged harassment of the Camerounian gendarmes had forced many Nigerians in the area to flee to Nigeria and settled in camps as **refugees** (*The Punch*, March 21, 2010)

Refugees in Text 20 describe Nigerians who have been forced to leave their homes as a result of the maltreatment they suffered from Cameroonian gendarmes. By referring to them as ‘refugees’, *The Punch* subscribes to the view that seeking protection in another place is a behavioral tendency of the dispossessed. The verbs ‘forced’ and ‘flee’ support the view that the people became refugees as a result of the ‘alleged’ threats and torments they received from the Cameroonian gendarmes.

*Eden* also describes people who have been displaced from the peninsula and are seeking protection in Nigeria as refugees.

### **Text 21**

Meantime, more than 1000 **refugees**, mostly women and children, are reported to have arrived Ikang Central in the New Bakassi Local Government area in Cross River State, Nigeria.... A **refugee**, Godwin Edet Bassey, is quoted by *Thisday* to have said he escaped last Tuesday night from Archibong Town through a bush path to the sea because the gendarmes had blocked all exit points in the village. He said he witnessed the Monday clash between the Cameroon security forces and the militants. (*Eden*, June 16, 2008)

Since refugees refer to people who seek or take refuge in another country in conflict situation, *Eden* uses the word to describe people who escaped from the peninsula in the heat of clash between the gendarmes and the militants. In the report, one of the refugees took the risk of ‘escaping’ through a bushy path because the gendarmes had cordoned all exit points in the village. Due to violence in Bakassi, the Cameroonian gendarmes barricaded the northern axis of the peninsula already handed over by Nigeria on 14 August 2006 in order to fish out perpetrators of violence in the area. As a result of constant clash between the soldiers and the militants, some people (refugees) had to leave the area to seek protection and comfort in Nigeria. Referring to the people as refugees and opining that they have arrived Ikang Central in the ‘New Bakassi Local Government’ entails dispossession and resettlement. The people (refugees) have been displaced and resettled in a new area.



The word ‘victims’ is specifically used by Nigerian media to describe people who were dispossessed in Bakassi.

### **Text 22**

He commended the crucial role the state government has been playing in helping to resettle the **victims** in spite of the lean resources at its disposal, regretting that the federal government has left a big burden on the state oblivious of its financial status (*Nigerian Chronicle*, August 5, 2009)

Victims in *Nigerian Chronicle* refer to some Nigerian residents displaced from the Bakassi peninsula. In the text, catering for the people is observed to be a burden for the state. The burden is occasioned by the fact that they have lost their property and means of livelihood to Cameroon as a result of the Federal government ceding of the Peninsula to Cameroon. Thus, they entirely depend on the (state) government for sustenance. By referring to them as ‘victims’, *Nigerian Chronicle* implies that they have suffered adverse affect from their dispossession. Hence, there is the need for compensation especially by the Federal Government.

*The Guardian* also describes them with the word ‘victims’ in the text below.

### **Text 23**

Aquah assured them of adequate attention, saying machinery of the agency was already in place to ensure adequate accommodation, feeding and other necessary comfort for the **victims** (*The Guardian*, November 7, 2009)

From Table 4.6 above, a victim refers to a person who is adversely affected by an incident or situation. The situation of adverse effect in the *The Guardian* report is displacement from homes, lands and means of livelihood. As a result of the dispossession, hunger and other psychological ills and discomfort set in. Thus, there is government’s assurance of cushioning these effects by providing basic necessities such as shelter and food.

Cameroonian media also describes people who suffer misfortunes as victims in text 24 below

## Text 24

Meantime, the Ministry of Defence has released the names of the **victims** of the June 9 attack in Bakassi. The corpses of the **victims** have all been found and were taken to the Limbe Hospital mortuary on Tuesday, June 17. But *The Post* learnt that the bodies of the **victims** were mutilated and it would require the help of experts to fully identify them. Some of the corpses are said to be in an advanced state of decomposition. The **victims** are: Felix Fonya; Divisional Officer of Kombo a Bedimo.... (*The Post*, June 20, 2008)

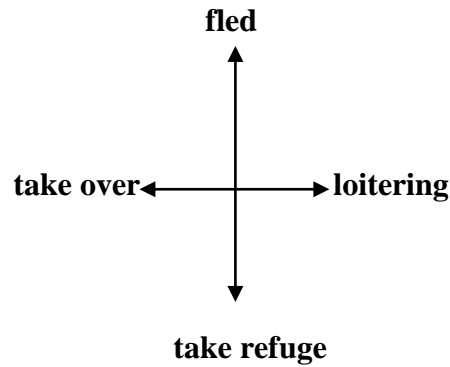
In Text 24 above, victim refers to Cameroonian soldiers who have been dislodged from existence. Unlike in the Nigerian news reports where victims describe Bakassi inhabitants who have been dispossessed of their lands, victims here are Cameroonian soldiers who suffered violent attacks leading to their death. As victims, the soldiers suffered misfortune ranging from violent attacks to death. The view of violent attacks is corroborated by the fact that their bodies were ‘mutilated’. By repeating the word “victims” four times, attention is drawn to the fact that Cameroonian soldiers experienced misfortunes from attacks.

Other words of dispossession specific to the Nigerian media report in describing people as the dispossessed are ‘the displaced’ and ‘the sacked’.

## Text 25

As at yesterday, no fewer than 1,000 Nigerians had fled the peninsula for fear of being killed. They took refuge at the Primary school in Ikang in the disputed new Bakassi. Large number of **displaced** Nigerians have literally taken over the entire three classrooms while others were seen loitering around in an apparent state of despondency (*The Guardian*, July 12, 2008)

‘Displaced’ describes Nigerians as the dispossessed in the text above. The verbs “fled”, ‘took refuge’, ‘taken over’ and loitering’ suggest dispossession. Through the description ‘displaced’ and the actions of the displaced, Nigerians are represented as victims of dispossession. The relationship that exists between the four actions reinforces dispossession. This is represented below



The relationship between ‘fled’ and ‘take refuge’, ‘take over’ and ‘loitering’ is captured in seeking ‘safety’ and ‘settlement’ respectively. The Nigerian actor *fled* Bakassi to *take refuge* in Nigeria. The implication of ‘fled’ and ‘take refuge’ is to project the image of fear and insecurity that engulfed them in Bakassi. That is, they were in ‘apparent state of despondency’. ‘Despondency’ is used to illustrate hopelessness occasioned by discomfort. It shows the misery the displaced Nigerians face in their ‘unequipped’ camp. By collocating ‘despondency’ with ‘apparent state’, the report has substantiated their findings that the people were in great despair.

### **Text 26**

It was further gathered that **the displaced** persons reportedly brought some corpses to the Island of Atabong, where they were buried (*The Punch*, November 24, 2009)

Dispossession can be said to have extended to the dead. Since the returnees have been dispossessed of their lands, they can no longer bury the dead in the area. Thus, they brought the corpses to the Island of Atabong for burial. That the ‘displaced’ could not bury the dead in the Bakassi further tells the story of an agonized people who had to move with dead on their journey to safety. The reader is also introduced to their plight and their emotions aroused as they are moved by this unfortunate story. It can also be interpreted that the lack of time and pressure on the displaced to leave the Bakassi made it impossible for them to bury the dead.

### Text 27

Amidst the killings and torture, the **sacked** Nigerians have returned home from the ceded Peninsula with tales of agony, as a result of the inhuman treatment meted to them by the gendarmes (*The Guardian*, November 7, 2009).

For the ‘sacked Nigerians’ to tell tales of agony suggest that the experience in the Bakassi after the ceding was horrifying. The collocation ‘tales of agony’ has been logically used by *The Guardian* to expose the different forms of afflictions meted on them. The afflictions are the height of inhuman treatment which include ‘killings’ and ‘torture’. These torments are obviously responsible for their return.

Cameroonian news reports describe people who are dispossessed as ‘fleeing’. There is a conscious avoidance of the use of the words ‘victims’, ‘the displaced’ or ‘sacked’ in referring to the people. The absence of these referring expressions could be understood in the wider context of the conflict as a political dispute between the two nations. The adjective, ‘fleeing’, reconstructs the people as escaping intentionally from the peninsula due to fear. Thus,

### Text 28

What is glaring to a visitor is a scenario of abandoned houses by **fleeing** people for fear of the unknown (*Eden*, August 13, 2008)

*Eden* qualifies people who were displaced from the peninsula as ‘fleeing’ people. By using the adjective ‘fleeing’, *Eden* projects the view that the people are ‘runaways’. This waters down the violent act of dispossession from the Cameroonian soldiers and places it on the people who have decided to ‘flee’ based on reasons best known to them. That is, the people are frightened by the attacks of the unknown ‘killers’ in Bakassi and decided to seek refuge elsewhere.

## 4.2.2.2 Grammatical Choices in the Representation of Dispossession

### 4.2.2.2.1 Transitivity of the Material Process

At the grammatical level, material process is utilised in representing people as the dispossessed who are idling about.

#### Text 29

Some of the children of the embattled returnees were seen playing football on the beach sand, while others engaged in playing table tennis. Parents were seen playing the ludo game to while away the time (*The Punch*, August 10, 2008)

Actor	Material Process	Goal	Circumstance
...children of the embattled returnees	were... playing	football	on the beach
...others	engaged in playing	table tennis	
Parents	were...playing	ludo game	to while away the time

The material process ‘playing’ which is repeated three times is used to describe the activities of the returnees in the camp as one usually associated with the ‘dispossessed’. Dispossession in this case is captured as joblessness. Games (‘football’, ‘table tennis’ and ‘ludo game’) in which the returnees engage also foreground their idleness. An emotive adjective ‘embattled’ qualifies the returnees as being besieged by the trauma of dispossessing them of their land and means of livelihood.

In *The Guardian* report below, the material processes ‘crowding’ and ‘waiting anxiously’ depict dispossession.

#### Text 30

As at yesterday, the returnees were seen **crowding** the primary school **waiting** anxiously for their state to come and evacuate them while their mostly “Ghana-must-go” luggage were assembled in the middle of the small field facing the classroom blocks (*The Guardian*, August 25, 2008)

<b>Actor</b>	<b>Material Process</b>	<b>Goal</b>
...returnees	were... crowding waiting ...	the primary school for their state to come...

The returnees are represented as homeless and restive through the material processes of ‘crowding’ and ‘waiting’ anxiously. The coinage ‘Ghana-must-go’ also point to the fact that the people are dispossessed. ‘Ghana-must-go’ is a type of low-cost bags that Ghanaians used for their property when they were ‘ejected’ from Nigeria. Thus, the view here is that the people who are dispossessed packed their belongings in that type of bags indicating their departure.

In *The Post* report below, the material processes ‘fleeing’ and ‘escaping show dispossession

### **Text 31**

Meantime, there are reports of an upsurge of frightened Nigerians in Bakassi who have since been **fleeing** the area. They are said to be **escaping** to Iking and other areas in Nigeria (*The Post*, July 31, 2008)

<b>Actor</b>	<b>Material Process</b>	<b>Goal</b>
...frightened Nigerians	have... been fleeing escaping	the area to Iking

The processes ‘fleeing’ and ‘escaping’ illustrate the manner at which the displaced Nigerians left the Bakassi Peninsula. To ‘flee and escape’ show sudden departure and exit from a place. This description corroborates with the depiction of Nigerians as ‘frightened’. Thus, their exit is as a result of fear of the attacks in the area by militants and not from the Cameroonian soldiers. Unlike in the Nigerian reports, Cameroonian reports aver that the Nigerian inhabitants left of their own accord.

#### 4.2.2.2.2 Passivization portraying Dispossession

In representing dispossession, the Bakassi people are projected as the dispossessed through passive structures with agents and agentless passives. For instance:

##### Text 32

So far, over 3,300 Nigerians **have been displaced** by the Cameroon Gendarmes in the Bakassi Peninsular while the death toll has risen to 23 (*The Guardian*, December 18, 2009).

Goal	Material Process	Actor
...over 3,300 Nigerians	have been displaced	by the Cameroon Gendarmes

##### Text 33

The leader of the Inspection Committee on Bakassi, Mrs. Moremi Soyinka-Onijala has said that no fewer than 200,000 Nigerians who are residing in the Bakassi Peninsula, have been **chased out** by the Cameroon Gendarmes (*The Punch*, March 21, 2010)

Goal	Material Process	Actor
...over 200,000 Nigerians	....have been chased out	by the Cameroon Gendarmes

In texts 32 and 33 above, there are passive structures with explicit agents. Through passivisation, the dispossessed Nigerians are brought to the fore. The material processes of ‘displaced’ (text 32) and ‘chased out’ (text 33) depict dispossession of Nigerians. Both suggest that Nigerians are ‘pursued’ out of the peninsula. Cameroonian gendarmes who are alleged to have ejected Nigerians are backgrounded. The reason behind this is that the Nigerian print media want to focus attention on the victims of the dispossession. The inclusion of figures ‘3, 300’ and ‘200, 000’ also buttresses the point that the Nigerian

newspapers are interested in the dispossessed Nigerians. By using the preposition ‘over’, the media intensify the number of people dispossessed as well create the effect that many Nigerians are homeless.

Text 34 is also a quasi passive structure with one participant. The participant is both the agent of ‘squatting’ and receiver of the effects of dispossession.

#### **Text 34**

The Bakassi people have been **squatting** in Akpabuyo Council and Calabar because of delay in rebuilding New Bakassi. (*The Guardian*, September 4, 2007)

The text could be described as a quasi agentless passive as the goal occupies the subject position. The material process ‘squat’ depicts homelessness. By squatting it means that the people are not in their homes but in a temporary accommodation.

#### **4.2.2.3 Metaphors signifying Dispossession**

Dispossession is captured by metaphors. Water metaphors such as ‘stream and ‘flood’ conceptualise outpouring of Nigerians in large numbers from Bakassi into Nigeria.

#### **Text 35**

As the August 14 hand-over date of Bakassi Peninsula to Cameroon draws near, thousands of displaced indigenes are still **streaming** into Ibaka Beach in Mbo Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State (*The Punch*, August 11, 2008)

In Text 35, the metaphor of water ‘stream’ captures the constant flow of displaced indigenes of Bakassi into Akwa Ibom State. Here, *The Punch* maps the continuous running of streams onto the movement of the indigenes. Thus, the image of ‘running water (stream)’ is used to describe the displacement of the indigenes. That the indigenes are still ‘streaming’ shows the magnitude of people who have been displaced and the level of untold suffering they experience in the region. *The Guardian* also shares the view that the displaced have overflowed that part of Nigeria in Text 36 below



### Text 36

The first wave of returnees saw many **flooding** the bordering states of Cross Rivers and Akwa Ibom. The Mbo council alone in the latter saw about 57, 000 Nigerians suddenly become refugees (*The Guardian*, September 7, 2008)

‘Flooding’ illustrates the large number of returnees recorded in Nigeria. Just like flood, the returnees are too many that they have ‘flowed’ to the neighbouring states of Cross River and Akwa Ibom. Through the ‘flood’ metaphor, *The Guardian* report depicts the outpouring of the returnees as natural disaster which demands urgent attention. It also symbolizes the return of the returnees as an unstoppable threat to Nigeria which might "drown" the affected states. This is supported by the use of the figure 57,000 to depict the increasing rate at which the people are being displaced. The adverbial ‘suddenly’ show the unexpected and speedy manner by which Nigerians were departing the peninsula in large number.

#### 4.2.2.4 Verbs Signifying Mental Conditions

Certain verbs are used to show the mental conditions of the dispossessed. In this case, the dispossessed are represented as suffering depression as a result of their dispossession. For example:

### Text 37

**Frustrated** and **traumatized**, this 70-year old man simply sat and folded himself in the corridor of a curved, partially-completed storey building, supporting his chin with his left palm. He was far gone in thought and oblivious of some children playing hide-and-seek around him. His fishing tools were gone, his house burnt and his six children forced out of school and scattered. He could not fathom how suddenly his world had collapsed: from being a breadwinner to a mere beggar. He now lives on handouts (*The Punch*, January 10, 2010)

*The Punch* captures the mental condition of one of the returnees as ‘frustrated’ and ‘traumatised’. The two verbs “frustrated” and “traumatized” show the state of the mind of an old man who is lost in thought having lost almost everything he has laboured for in life. The loss of his fishing tools, house and not being able to train his children in school created severe emotional breakdown to the extent that he could not discern what is happening in his immediate environment. His former and present situations are contrasted with the polar antonyms ‘breadwinner’ and ‘beggar’ showing a contrast between prosperity and destitution. ‘Breadwinner’ and ‘beggar’ are two parallel engagements and occupations. While a breadwinner earns wages from employment, a beggar depends on goodwill for sustenance. By contrasting the two ‘workers’ a downward change of status from independence to dependence is illustrated. The dependency status of beggar is reinforced with the adjective ‘mere’ which likens him to a ‘common’ beggar. Thus, the collapse is disastrous and entails hardship for a common beggar who depends on arms for survival. All these contributed to his frustration and trauma.

From the discussion, it is certain that in representing dispossession, the Nigerian and Cameroonian media describe people with words suggesting dislocation. Dispossession is also captured in the picture below:



**Nigerians Ready to Leave (*The Post*, 23 November 2005)**

The picture above is a representation of displaced Nigerians with the caption 'Nigerians Ready to Leave'. From the picture, personal belongings of the displaced are packed in bags known as 'Ghana-Must Go' symbolic of the era when Ghanaians were asked to leave Nigeria or better still dislodged. The location in the picture also depicts a typical refugee camp where things are in disarray. The presence of both adult male and female in the same hall show the composition of a typical refugee camp. The position and activity in the hall reveals further the discomfort experienced in a refugee camp as campers are mostly unsettled in such locations.

### **4.2.3 Suffering**

Suffering is one of the topical issues in the news reports on the Bakassi Peninsula border conflict. Suffering is a consequence of dispossession of Bakassi people. Following the displacement of Bakassi dwellers from the area, many of the dispossessed were subjected to different forms of suffering. The suffering manifests at two levels: physical and psychological. Physical suffering has to do with bodily injuries while psychological suffering entails emotional trauma and distress. Both types sometimes lead to death of the sufferer. Issues on suffering are particularly newsworthy as they are preoccupied with human afflictions and torments. Thus, the theme of suffering occupies a considerable percentage in the news reports on the conflict. In representing the theme of suffering, news reports focus attention on pains, distress, plight, woes and sorrows, neglect and deaths that Bakassi dwellers experienced in the conflict processes. Some of which are attacks, deprivation, deaths, etc. The suffering is mainly at the refugees' camps. The theme of suffering also extends to loss of lives of soldiers from attacks of some aggrieved Bakassi dwellers. Suffering is picked out by headlines, words of affectedness, metaphors and verbs signifying mental conditions.

**Table 4.7: Headlines Conveying Suffering**

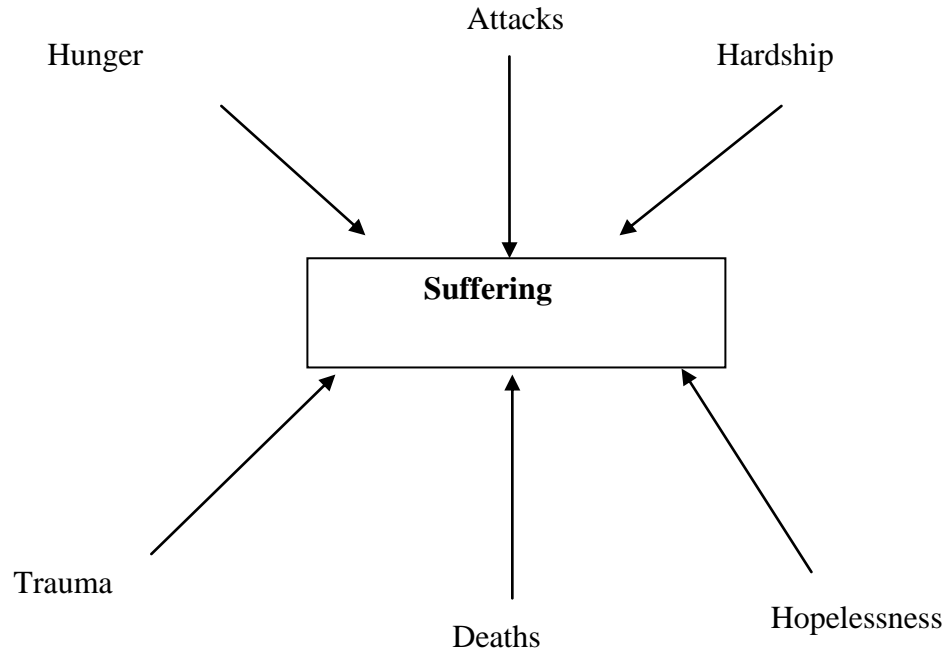
<b>Nigerian Newspapers</b>	<b>Cameroonian Newspapers</b>
Give us daily bread, Bakassi returnees cry out ( <i>The Punch</i> , August 25, 2010)	At Mixed Commission Meeting: Nigeria Decries Gendarmes Harassment of Citizens ( <i>The Post</i> , September 7, 2006)
One year after, Bakassi indigenes still tell tales of woes ( <i>The Punch</i> , August 17, 2009)	Observer Mission to Monitor Abuses in Bakassi ( <i>The Post</i> , September 11, 2006)
From Bakassi With Tales of Sorrow ( <i>The Guardian</i> , November 7, 2009)	Slain DO, Soldiers Laid to Rest ( <i>The Post</i> , June 23, 2008)
Nigerian returnees stranded in Calabar ( <i>The Guardian</i> , August 25, 2006)	After Bakassi Attack: Govt Confirms Recovery of Corpses: 15 Fleeing Nigerians Die in Boat Mishap; 300 Others Missing ( <i>Eden</i> , June 16, 2008)
Bakassi returnee battles flood in Akpabuyo ( <i>Nigerian Chronicle</i> , July 23, 2010)	Six Bakassi Dead Buried Without Decorations - Killers Remain Unknown ( <i>Eden</i> , June 23, 2008)

The headlines above explicitly express the untold suffering and anguish surrounding the ceding of Bakassi as both civilians and military officers are recorded to have lost their lives. The level of deprivation is captured with the popular maxim “give us our daily bread”. This maxim however suggests poverty, hunger, deprivation and marginalization that characterise the situation of the masses who were once owners of Bakassi. Specifically, ‘tales of woes’ and ‘tales of sorrow’ capture misfortune that have befallen the people

#### **4.2.3.1 Words of Suffering**

Though words of dispossession (‘refugee’, ‘returnee’, ‘the displaced’, ‘the sacked’ and ‘victim’) are observed to convey elements of suffering recorded in the news reports, emphasis in the theme of suffering is placed on not only the sufferers but the different kinds of suffering meted on the victims. Thus, the words of suffering constitute of two

broad types: physical and psychological. While attacks, hardship, hunger, death comprise physical suffering, trauma, distress, hopelessness, make up psychological suffering.



**Figure 4.3: Kinds of Suffering**

Figure 4.3 above shows the interconnections among the different kinds of suffering that the dispossessed are subjected to. All the words converge on suffering. This entails that all are different forms of pains (physical or psychological) as a result of dispossession. We shall start the analysis of suffering with aspects of physical pains before discussing aspects of psychological suffering.

Attack is a type of physical pain suffered by the dispossessed. It manifests in the forms of beating, torture, deaths, etc. For instance:

**Text 38**

While displaying their wounds, the victims said clubs, belts and knives were used in **beating** them, especially when they failed to comply with demands from the policemen (*The Punch*, October 29, 2009)

In text 38, ‘beating’ describes the type of attack on the displaced Bakassi people. To ‘beat’ means to hit somebody or something repeatedly with weapons. In the report, the people are described as ‘victims’ who have been subjected to ‘beating’. By referring to the people as ‘victims’, the report describes them as having been harmed by another person. Thus, the victims displayed the injuries they sustained on account of being beaten with different weapons by the gendarmes. The weapons ‘clubs, belts and knives’ are considered as dangerous weapons capable of inflicting serious injuries on the victims. Text 38 also foregrounds the people as being in danger and vulnerable due to lack of protection. This is also the view in text 39

### **Text 39**

The sacked Nigerians displayed wounds sustained as a result of the **torture** from the gendarmes, saying clubs, belts and knives were used in **beating** them, especially when they failed to comply with the gendarmes’ unwarranted demands of huge sums of money to secure their freedom (*The Guardian*, November 7, 2009)

Here, *The Guardian* also depicts the suffering of the displaced Nigerians as torture and beating. In text 39, suffering is extended to extortion. The police are represented as tyrants who have misused their legal and official powers of protecting lives to taking lives. They are portrayed as subjecting the unarmed and defenceless civilians to beating in their bids to extort money from them in exchange of their freedom. The view of extortion is implicitly represented by the phrase ‘unwarranted demands of huge sums of money’. Thus, in addition to physical suffering the people also suffer economic woes.

Torture and death are other forms of attack suffered by the people. Text 40 illustrates this:

#### **Text 40**

Some of them, who had wounds allegedly inflicted on them by the gendarmes, narrated how Nigeria were **tortured to death** on board their canoes and boats, some **thrown into the sea**...Mr. Etim Edet, one of the returnee said apart from being **tortured** by the gendarmes, he witnessed the **torture** of others with lethal weapons. He said each time such weapons were used, blood gushed out of the bodies causing their death (*The Guardian*, November 23, 2009)

Attacks on the Bakassi returnees are described as 'torture'. To 'torture' is to inflict extreme pains or physical punishment on a person. Extreme torture, in most cases, leads to death. In text 40, the gendarmes are alleged to have tortured the returnees with dangerous weapons which caused their deaths. The verb 'witnessed' lends credence to the plausibility of this claim. The phrase 'blood gushed out of their bodies' is dramatically used to vividly present the cruelty of the police who tortured the returnees to death. Torture is an act that is applied by police on 'hardened' criminals in order to get information from them. It is usually used as a last resort. Thus, to torture Bakassi returnees with lethal weapons depict the extent that the police have gone in order to cause harm to the supposed 'unarmed' civilians. Apart from being tortured to death, some of the returnees were also 'thrown into the sea'. All these acts are supposedly targeted at dispossessing them from the region.

Hunger and hardship are forms of suffering experienced by the dispossessed. Text 41 illustrates this:

#### **Text 41**

However, the returnees, who fled the peninsular, following continuous harassment by the gendarmes, claimed that since the government was yet to fulfill its promise, they now battled with **hunger** and **hardship**...To be able to feed, he said the returnees had been converted to casual farm workers, who would occasionally go to weed, pick palm fruits and harvest other farm products in exchange for a fee of between N200 and N500. (*The Punch*, August 25, 2010)

‘Hunger’ and ‘hardship’ depict suffering, outright helplessness and adverse state of pain of the people. Both forms of suffering are context-bound synonyms as they relate to adversity. The synonyms represent the ugly experiences of the returnees as a result of their dispossession from their land and means of livelihood. Through these synonyms, the difficulties encountered by the displaced Bakassi inhabitants are foregrounded. The metaphor of ‘battling with hunger and hardship’ conceptualises a struggle over poverty and deplorable conditions. Their poor and deplorable state is further depicted by describing them as “casual farm workers” who sometimes engages in menial work to earn a living. To ‘occasionally go to weed, pick palm fruits and harvest other farm products in exchange for a fee of between N200 and N500’ portrays destitution and hardship of people who were once ‘full time’ farmers before their dispossession.

Deprivation (hunger and hardship) as a form of suffering is extended in text 42 to include psychological suffering from lack of care.

#### **Text 42**

But investigations by SUNDAY PUNCH revealed that since the returnees were moved to the housing estate in January, both the federal and state governments have abandoned them to their fate. Presently, **hunger, frustration and despair**, it was gathered, have topped the situation report following unusual circumstances that forced them to abandon their sources of livelihood in Bakassi peninsula....The haggard-looking returnees were seen **languishing** in the bushy estate which lacked portable water and medical facilities (*The Punch*, May 2, 2010)

In text 42, the returnees are represented to be suffering from hardship and deprivation through the verb ‘languishing’. To ‘languish’ means to undergo hardship as a result of being deprived of something valuable. Deprivation, in this case, is the basic necessities of life – good housing, water and health care. Thus, the text has it that ‘returnees were seen languishing’ in an abandoned estate that lacked the necessities of life. Suffering is also foregrounded by an emotive adjective ‘haggard-looking’. This adjective brings to mind the poor state of the returnees who are unkempt and untidy. That is, the adverse situation in the ‘bushy’ camp and the trauma of the dispossession contributed the ‘worn-out’ look of



the returnees. Text 42 also shows the adverse psychological state and fate of the returnees. This is captured in the words ‘hunger, frustration and despair’. These words which depict misery show the depressed situation of the people after being deprived of their lands and means of livelihood.

Hopelessness is another form of suffering the refugees experienced. Text 43 captures this

### **Text 43**

At their temporary refugee camp at the Government Primary School, Ikang Central, the refugees looked **despondent** and **lost** in their land, virtually littering everywhere in the primary school with no beds or mattresses to sleep on (*The Guardian*, June 14, 2008)

‘Despondent’ and ‘lost’ are related in meaning in text 43 as they describe the hopeless state of Nigerian refugees in their temporary refugee camp. The two context-bound synonyms entail dejection and abandonment. After the handover of Bakassi, displaced Nigerians in Bakassi were resettled in a temporary refugee camp in Nigeria. However, due to the dilapidated state of the camp and alleged neglect of their welfare by the Nigerian government, the refugees suffered an adverse psychological state of hopelessness in the camp. Suffering is visible in their ‘miserable’ look of ‘despondency and lost’. Thus, comparing the refugees with ‘litters’, *The Guardian* tells how the people have been dehumanized.

Text 44 also captures hopelessness using the words “disillusionment” and “abandonment”

### **Text 44**

The refugees who spoke through their various state leaders said the lack of sensitivity to their plights by their home states creates **disillusionment** and **abandonment**, which they claimed affects them psychologically. (*The Guardian*, December 18, 2009)

Hopelessness is a psychological suffering experienced by the refugees. The synonyms ‘disillusionment’ and ‘abandonment’ in *The Guardian* excerpt above capture this form of suffering. The synonyms depict the psychological trauma the Bakassi residents

experienced in their camps. Through the use of these synonyms, the mental and psychological torture of the people is foregrounded. Their suffering is as a result of their respective state government's insensitivity to their plight. Lack of care to assuage the effect of dispossession degenerated into trauma for the people.

*Nigerian Chronicle* in text 45 describes the people with the adjective 'traumatized' suggesting that the people experienced some form of trauma as a result of their dispossession.

#### **Text 45**

Accompanied by the wife of the state Deputy Governor, Mrs Glory Effiok Cobham, the Governor's wife on Christmas day gave the **traumatized** people a surprise package of food items including bags of rice, beans, salt, sugar, garri, tubers of yam... (*Nigerian Chronicle*, December 30, 2009)

'Traumatized' is an adjective that qualifies Bakassi 'people'. In Text 45, it is used to refer to the displaced Nigerians in Bakassi. The adjective therefore describes the people as distressed and troubled. By using the adjective, the devastated state of the people is foregrounded. The situation is as a result of losing their land and means of livelihood. Consequently, they suffered intense hunger and starvation. Being aware of their ugly situation, the wife of the governor attempted to ease their suffering with a 'surprise' food package. 'Surprise' suggests the amazement of the people who never expected such gifts. This is because they believe the government has abandoned them.

Other emotive adjectives such as "distressed and destitute" also describe Nigerians as suffering.

#### **Text 46**

On August 23, about 2000 **distressed** and **destitute** Nigerians had arrived in Nigeria amidst stories of exorbitant taxes, torture and harassment in the hands of gendarmes in Cameroon. Out of this figure, 1600 were adults while 400 were children (*The Guardian*, August 30, 2006).

The adjectives ‘distressed’ and ‘destitute’ are context bound synonyms used to qualify Nigerians in text 46. They describe the miserable state of Nigerians in Bakassi after the handover. Through the adjectives, a reader gets insight into the horrors that the inhuman treatment of Cameroonian gendarmes has caused Nigerians. They suffered different maltreatment such as extortion, harassment and torture. The adjectives are geared towards whipping sentiments for the traumatic and distressed situation of the victims. Thus, emotions, passions and sympathy are triggered.

Text 47 uses a collection of adjectives to describe Nigerians as ‘sufferers’.

### **Text 47**

If the troops will ever get back there, they will be going back to meet a **terribly tortured, harassed and frustrated** group of Nigerians. This is why the locals have begged the Nigerian government to ensure that they were relocated immediately to avoid further harm from the Cameroonian gendarmes who have been **exploiting** them and making sure they did not fish in the Bakassi waters without **pains** (*The Punch*, August 19, 2006).

*The Punch* describes Nigerians suffering extreme harassment, torture and frustration. The noun phrase ‘a terribly tortured, harassed and frustrated group of Nigerian’ used in describing Nigerians shows the extent of the agony that they have gone through in the area. Due to the extent of suffering, the people ‘begged’ to be relocated immediately to escape the intense torture and exploitation in the hands of the Cameroonian gendarmes.

In the Cameroonian news reports, suffering is also captured as attacks. Text 48 illustrates this:

### Text 48

In a chat with the press after the meeting, Ajibola added that videotapes of thousands of Nigerians returning from Bakassi and other parts of Cameroon have been projected on Nigerian televisions. Some of the returnees with **swollen eyes** and **battered bodies**, he stated, testified to what happened to them...Ajibola, however, described the recent maltreatment of Nigerian citizens as a slight shortcoming of the withdrawal exercise, noting that the Cameroonian side at the Mixed Commission took a decision to seriously investigate into the allegations. (*The Post*, September 11, 2006)

In *The Post* report, suffering in the form of attacks is captured by the phrases ‘swollen eyes’ and ‘battered bodies’. Through these phrases, *The Post* captures the physical injuries that Nigerians in Bakassi experienced. The bodily injuries, ‘swollen eyes and battered bodies’, show the extent of torture and harassment that the returnees were subjected to in the process of their ejection from the peninsula. However, in the report, there is an omission of the actors responsible for the torture. The agents can only be retrieved from the testimonies of the returnees. Also, the testimonies are omitted in the report.

‘Mutilated’ in text 49 also suggests attacks.

### Text 49

A military source said of the six officials who were kidnapped with the D.O, Fonya Felix Mofor was taken to a separate direction from the others. He said the corpses of the five officials were buried in the mangroves and covered with leaves while that of the DO was discovered meters away. All the corpses, our source who frequents the Bakassi area said, were badly **mutilated**. He gave the impression that they were interrogated before their lives were taken away. (*Eden*, June 18, 2008)

*Eden* uses the word ‘mutilated’ to show the nature of attacks that Cameroonian soldiers suffered before their death. Through agentless passive structures, the victims are foregrounded and the agents responsible for the actions are deleted. Attention is focused

on the victims and the actions. The attack on the soldiers is intensified with the adverb ‘badly’ showing the severe nature of the maiming.

#### **4.2.3.2 Grammatical Aspects of Representing Suffering**

At the grammatical level, suffering is picked out by metaphors and verbs signifying mental conditions.

##### **4.2.3.2.1 Metaphor signifying Suffering**

Metaphors are also used to capture suffering. In this wise, metaphor from the field of insect ‘swarm’ is used to portray the manner in which the dispossessed throng to air their views. This mode of expression is captured as confused and disorderly. The text below throws light on this:

##### **Text 50**

Soon they were **swarming** around, all wanting to air their views, which were similar - that they were leaving their fatherland, come August 14 (*The Guardian*, August 12, 2008).

‘Swarm’ in the text depicts the dispossessed as restless. They are confused on how to go about the impending dangers of their dispossession. That they were ‘swarming’ shows that they were hopeless and moving in disoriented way.

‘Stormed’ is another metaphor that depicts suffering. Storm is the outburst or strong outpouring of feelings in reaction to something bad or ugly. Texts 51 and 52 throw more light on this

##### **Text 51**

Our correspondent gathered that the women numbering 40, **stormed** the Calabar office of the Cross River State’s Commissioner for Local Government Affairs, Mr. Edem Ekong, on Thursday to register their grievances (*The Punch*, July 8, 2009)

## Text 52

...more than 800 Bakassi returnees yesterday **stormed** Government House, Uyo to protest alleged government neglect in their camp (*The Guardian*, September 23, 2008)

The use of 'storm' metaphor from both excerpts captures the protests of the Bakassi returnees and women against alleged government's insensitivity to their plight. That the returnees 'stormed' the offices of the governor and commissioner shows that they had 'bottled up' and endured too much suffering. Thus, just like storm, they decided to pour out their grievance in anger.

### 4.2.3.2.2 Verbs showing Mental Conditions

Suffering is realised in the verbal processes of 'lament' and 'agonised' in text 53.

## Text 53

"We have lost everything" **lamented** one of the women who claimed that the only things she has left are the clothes on her. Clutching her six-month-old baby, Mr. Glory Dagbara, an Ogoni from Rivers State **agonised** "for over 25 years we have been in Godfift fishing port and had lived all our lives there. But now see how we have been dispossessed of everything we worked for" (*The Guardian*, June 14, 2008)

The verbs 'lamented' and 'agonised' show the mental conditions of one of the returnees who was displeased with the dispossession. In the text, the returnee experiences an ordeal of losing everything she has worked for in life. The text which is a direct quote of the returnee captures her expression of pain and distress in her present situation. The fear of the unknown fills her expression as the future is uncertain. *The Guardian* gives the name of the woman to drive home the story as not being fictitious. The reader easily affiliates with the name and is moved with emotions.

In the same vein, text 54 also describes the emotions of the dispossessed.

## Text 54

At Archibong Town, venue of the handover ceremonies, the children **wept**, apparently because they believed they had been sentenced to life imprisonment in the hands of Camerounian gendarmes. The elders **mourned**, not just because they **felt** their country had given them away, but also because they were **confused** about how they would be able to take with them, their ancestors' graves. Most of them stayed back in their houses in Calabar, crying. It was a black Monday (*The Punch*, August 19, 2006).

Senser	Mental Process	Phenomenon
The children	wept	
They	believed	they had been sentenced...
The elders	mourned	
They	felt	
They	were confused	

*The Punch* selects the mental processes to give the readers insights into the feelings and states of mind of the dispossessed. Through the mental processes of 'wept', 'believe', 'mourned', 'felt' and 'confused', the displaced indigenes are represented as grieving over the loss of the peninsula. Through the verbs, the mindset of indigenes who see the handover as catastrophe is revealed. This is also buttressed with the description of the day as 'black Monday'.

'Black Monday' is a metaphorical expression that captures the hopeless state of the Bakassi. By referring to the day of the handover as 'Black Monday', the report is of the view that the day signifies the end of all hopes for the people. Before the handover of Bakassi, there were hope and rumours that the Nigerian senate would stop the handover over non-ratification of the Green Tree Agreement. However the hopes were dashed when the Nigerian government withdrew its soldiers. Consequently, the Bakassi people who were initially full of hopes could only shed tears as there was no more hope. The indications of hopelessness are 'weeping', 'mourning', 'confusion' and 'crying'.

Also, *The Punch* uses the verbal processes of ‘lament’ and ‘decry’ to show the mental state of the returnees in the camps.

**Text 55**

Similarly, a female returnee, who hails from Cross River State, and identified herself as Veronica Edet, said life was hard at the camp, **lamenting** that it was difficult to buy staple food like garri to feed the children. She urged the government to provide them with daily feeding allowance to enable them to solve the problem of hunger pending their proper rehabilitation. In the same vein, another male returnee, Mr. Timothy Endurance, **decried** government’s delay in fulfilling its promise to resettle them, adding that it was wrong to put the returnees in camp without making provision for their daily feeding (*The Punch*, August 25, 2010).

<b>Actor</b>	<b>Verbal process</b>	<b>Verbiage</b>
... Veronica Edet	...lamenting	that it was difficult to buy staple food
She	urged	the government to provide them with daily feeding
Timothy Endurance	decried	government’s delay in fulfilling its promise

The verbal processes of saying - lamenting, urging and decrying - are employed to ‘voice’ the suffering of the Nigerian actors in their camps. The suffering are realised in the verbiage. The news report also individualises the actors by including details such as their names, gender and state of origin. This is a ploy to give credibility to the report that the people are suffering.

The representation of suffering is captured in the picture below:





Give us daily bread, Bakassi returnees cry out

(*The Punch*, Give us daily bread, Bakassi returnees cry out; 25 August, 2010)

The Photograph show a group of Bakassi returnees who are ‘waiting for their daily bread’ from the Nigerian government. The picture which is captioned “Give us daily bread, Bakassi returnees cry out” captures the returnees as stranded and in want. The pictures which are three in one show the poor health condition and poor standard of living of the returnees through their postures, facial expressing and clothing.

#### 4.2.4 Resistance

Resistance is one of the themes in the Nigerian and Cameroonian news reports on BPBC. Resistance refers to acts of militancy, opposition and confrontation. Resistance becomes a recurrent theme and point of discussion in both countries’ print media. These reports were centered on stiff confrontation of aggrieved parties that opposed the handover of the peninsula to Cameroon. During the period of signing the Green Tree Agreement (GTA) between Presidents Obasanjo and Biya and the time of handover in August 2006 and 2008, some aggrieved Nigerians, especially the Niger Delta youth openly rejected the agreement and subsequently resisted the handover. The youth were reported to have been fighting to retain their (ancestral) land and means of livelihood. Consequently, there are instances of threats, insistence, challenge, protests and sometimes attacks from the youth. In the data, resistance is projected five distinct words denoting resistance which describe the youth

and their actions. The descriptions are further corroborated at the grammatical level by transitivity, nominalisation and passivisation.

**Table 4.8: Headlines Depicting Resistance**

<b>Nigerian Newspapers</b>	<b>Cameroonian Newspapers</b>
Militants in fresh bid to declare Bakassi Republic  ( <i>The Punch</i> , March 30, 2007)	Rebels Declare ‘Independence’ of Bakassi  ( <i>The Post</i> , August 1, 2008)
Bakassi: Fresh agitations over Green Tree agreement  ( <i>The Punch</i> , June 17, 2008)	Court Overrules Nigeria’s Opposition to Bakassi Handover  ( <i>The Post</i> , June 20, 2008)
Bakassi: Militants Threaten Attack. Nigerian Warships End Patrol of Territory  ( <i>The Guardian</i> , August 16, 2008)	Bakassi Rebels Renew Threats on Hostages: But Govt Reassures Their Safety  ( <i>Eden</i> , November 3, 2008)
Bakassi: To Quit or not to Quit  ( <i>The Guardian</i> , August 6, 2008)	Bakassi Rebels Threaten Another Attack in 15 Days  ( <i>Eden</i> , December 10, 2008)
18 Die As Militants, Gendarmes Clash in Bakassi  ( <i>The Guardian</i> , July 23, 2008)	As Deadline For Nigeria’s Withdrawal Draws Near: Oil Installations Attacked in Bakassi  ( <i>Eden</i> , January 30, 2008)

The headlines on Table 4.8 centre on resistance. The nouns ‘militants’ and ‘rebels’ are deployed to represent people as actors of militancy and rebellion. Through the phrases ‘...declare Bakassi republic’, ‘...declare independence of Bakassi’, ‘opposition to Bakassi handover’, the news reports capture the contention of the resistance group to the ceding of the peninsula to Cameroon. The verbs ‘clash’, ‘attacked’, and verbal phrase ‘threatened attacks’, ‘renewed threats’ portrays fierce opposition and rebellion.

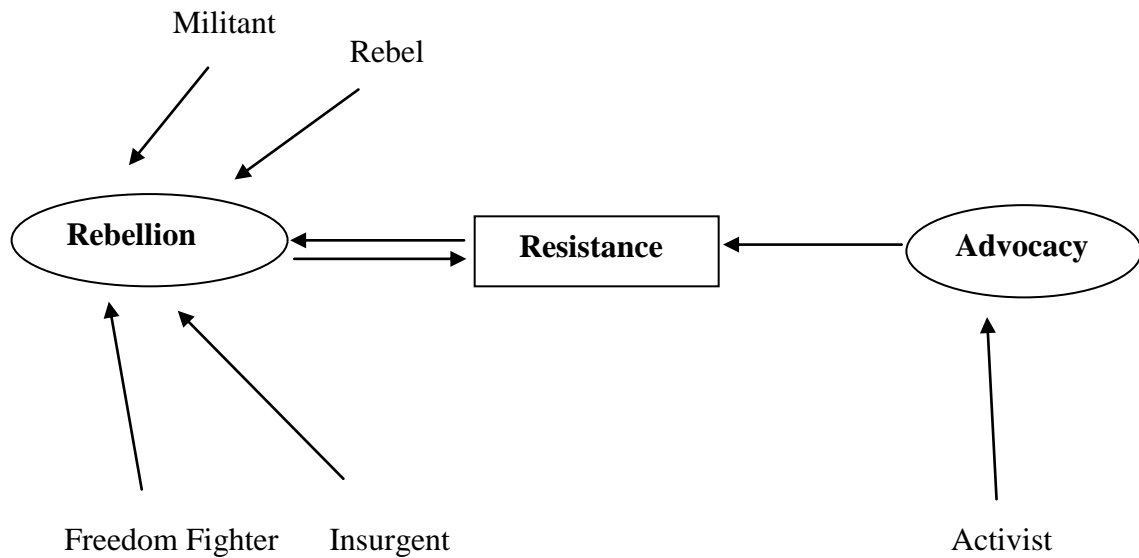
#### 4.2.4.1 Words Denoting Resistance

Words denoting resistance in the news reports include militant, rebel, activist, freedom fighter and insurgent. Using the componential analysis approach, the semantic properties of the words are illustrated below

**Table 4.9: A Componential Analysis of Lexemes of Actors of Resistance**

Words Denoting Resistance	Person who engages in revolutionary acts or advocates drastic change in social or political system using force	Person who is engaged in fighting or warfare,	Person who attempts to overthrow a government or other authority by the use of violence	Person involved in armed revolution against a government or political system regarded as unjust	Person who vigorously pursue a political or social change, without the use of arms
Militant	+	+	+/-	+/-	-
Rebel	+	+	+	+/-	-
Activist	+	-	-	-	+
Freedom Fighter	+	+	+/-	+	-
Insurgent	+	+	+	+/-	-

The interconnections and distinctions of the words denoting resistance as we find in Table 4.9 above is further captured in Figure 4.4 below.



**Figure 4.4: Interconnections of Words Denoting Resistance**

Table 4.9 presents the semantic features of the lexemes of resistance while Figure 4.4 provides the interconnections and distinctive characteristics of the actions of the actors. The central engagement of the actors is resistance. That is, each of the actors pursues either a political or social change. However, the manner and means of the pursuit differs. While militants, freedom fighter, rebels and insurgents use arms, activists do not make use of arms. Activists as Table 4.9 and Figure 4.4 reveal engage in resistance through advocacy. The excerpts below illustrate the use of the words in both Nigerian and Cameroonian media to describe people and their actions in BPBC.

**Text 56**

Unconfirmed reports claimed several lives have been lost as **militants** in the Niger Delta engaged the Camerounian forces in gun duel (*The Guardian*, June 18, 2008)

‘Militants’ in the text above describes people who fought the Cameroonian soldiers. From the componential analysis table, a militant is a person who engages in fighting or warfare. This view is captured in *The Guardian* text. Thus, as aggressive revolutionaries, the ‘militants’ fight against ceding Bakassi to Cameroon. Fighting is captured by the verb phrase ‘engaged the Cameroonian forces in gun duel’. Militants here are Nigerians,

specifically of the Niger Delta. Niger Delta area is widely recognised as having many ethnic militias who fight against oil exploration, exploitations and environmental degradation (Chiluwa, 2011). These groups popularly called ‘Niger Delta militants’ sometimes attack oil installations and kidnap expatriates for ransom. Recognising the presence of the group in the Niger Delta (which is close to Bakassi), *The Guardian* describes the attackers of the Cameroonian forces as ‘militants in the Niger Delta’. The militants, in this case, are fighting against ceding of Bakassi which they believe is part of Niger Delta. Thus, they try to repress the Cameroonian soldiers sent to safe-guard the area. *The Punch* also employs the word ‘militants’ to describe the people who oppose and fight against the ceding of Bakassi.

### **Text 57**

A BBC reporter, who paid a visit to the peninsula on Friday, a day after the handover, said the Bakassi people had fled because they were afraid of being caught in the crossfire of likely clashes between Niger Delta **militants**, who opposed the handover, and Camerounian soldiers (*The Punch*, August 16, 2008)

Just like in *The Guardian*, ‘militants’ describe a group of Niger Delta youth who ‘opposed’ the handover of Bakassi to Cameroon. Expression of the opposition is through violence, hence, the choice of the lexical items ‘crossfire’ and ‘clashes’.

The word ‘militants’ is also employed in the Cameroonian media in describing people and their actions. For instance

### **Text 58**

Security contractors are quoted to have said that 30 suspected Nigerian **militants** in speedboats attacked the Mv Sil Tide in the early hours of Saturday morning around 14km (9 miles) from the coast of Bakassi, on the Nigerian-Cameroonian border (*Eden*, March 16, 2009)

Here, ‘militants’ describes the people who attacked a Cameroonian boat in Bakassi. Nigerian militants (particularly in the Niger Delta region) are often seen as group of

people who attack oil installations and kidnap oil workers for ransom. Thus, the act of attacking a Cameroonian boat 'Mv Sil Tide' is attributed to them. *The Post* is convinced about the identity of the militant hence they refer to them as 'Nigerian militants'.

### **Text 59**

But Nigerian media making reference to "other sources" claim the Niger Delta **militant** group launched the attack and killed no fewer than 15 Cameroonian military officers and three civilians including a pregnant woman...The GUARDIAN described the situation as tense, stating that if nothing urgent is done, the attacks may escalate into full-scale war between the **militants** and the Cameroonian military.... There are allegations that the **militant** group is determined to disrupt the planned August 14 handover, unless the Cameroon government sits around a negotiating table with them. (*The Post*, July 28, 2008)

*The Post* expressly used the word "militants" in the text above to describe the Niger Delta radicals who display their resistance to the handover through violent attacks. The 'militants' are linked with attacking and killing at least 15 Cameroonian soldiers who are sent to Bakassi to provide security. The synonymous relations in 'launched the attack' and 'killed' depict violent resistance. This corroborates the description of the people as 'militants', involving in extreme revolution. As revolutionaries, the militants are represented as planning to disrupt the handover.

'Rebels' is another word indicating resistance. In *The Punch* below, people are described with the word.

### **Text 60**

Cameroon authorities have blamed previous violence in the Bakassi peninsula, whose waters contain oil deposits, on **rebels** from Nigeria's oil-producing Niger Delta, where armed militant groups often attack oil installations (*The Punch*, July 15, 2008)

The word 'rebels' together with 'militant' describes people who perpetuate violence in the Bakassi Peninsula. Rebels represent Niger Delta aggressors who fiercely oppose and

protest against ceding Bakassi to Cameroon. As people involved in armed revolution, the Nigerian ‘rebels’ and militant groups’ are portrayed as rebellious and violent. That is, they are linked with violence and insecurity in the area. Niger Delta is widely reported in the news as constituting of rebellious groups who fight for the control of oil resources in the region. Since Bakassi is situated close to the region, the media attribute violence to the radicals in the area. The word ‘rebel’ also represents Niger Delta youth who oppose and fight the government. By the word, the youth are portrayed as rebellious and violent. Thus, violence, tension and insecurity in the area are attributed to them. The idea expressed in the text is that the armed militants are from the Niger Delta region. This might be due to the fact that Bakassi is very close to the region.

The word ‘rebels’ also features in the Cameroon reports describing Bakassi actors as revolutionaries. In the text below, *The Post* construes their rebellion as troublemaking.

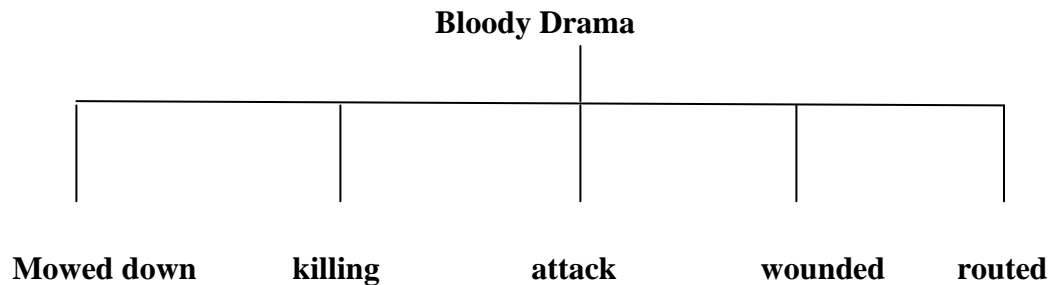
#### **Text 61**

It should be recalled that the Bakassi **Rebels** began fomenting trouble in the peninsula shortly before its official handover to Cameroon by Nigeria on the August 2008. Their first attack was last year, which led to the death of 21 Cameroonian soldiers (*Eden*, December 10, 2008)

The constant troublemaking of the rebels resulted in the killing of 21 Cameroonian soldiers. Such acts are typical of rebels who are antagonistic to established forces, this *Eden* describes as “fomenting trouble”. Text 62 further affirms the unabated attacks and demands of the rebels from oil companies and government of the day.

## Text 62

The **rebels** have also called on all foreign oil exploiting and exploring companies who have not consulted with the "competent authorities" (meaning the **rebels**) to quit. The declarations came in the wake of a sustained bloody drama that began in November 2007 when 21 Cameroonian soldiers were mowed down by **rebel** fire, the June 10 killing of five military officials and a Divisional Officer. In yet another attack, three Cameroonian soldiers were wounded and the others routed. (*The Post*, August 8, 2008)



Also in text 62, a succession of attacks between the rebels and established authorities is described as “Bloody drama”. It is used metaphorically to represent the series of deadly confrontations by the rebels. ‘Bloody drama’ serves as the superordinate term with ‘mowed down’, ‘killing’, ‘attack’, ‘wounded’ and ‘routed’ as co-hyponyms. The violent acts are different forms of resistance which are subsumed under bloody drama. Just like drama, rebellion is acted through series of ruthless hostilities and attacks. ‘Rebel fire’ in the text above is metaphorically constructed as the bulldozer used in mowing down the Cameroonian police. That is, just as bulldozers cut down (or mow) tall grasses so also do rebels gun down the police.

Freedom fighters also describe the people as constituting resistance groups whose aim is to disrupt the handover. Text 63 throws more light on this:



### **Text 63**

Bakassi rebels under the banner of the Bakassi **Freedom Fighters** have issued a 15-day ultimatum to the government of Cameroon. The ultimatum is contained in a warning letter from the Commander Ebi Dari of the Bakassi **Freedom Fighters**, dated 7 December 2008, a copy of which was emailed to Eden. (*Eden*, December 10, 2008)

*Eden* report represents the youth as “rebels” ‘freedom fighter’. These words correspond with the issuance of a 15-day ultimatum. An ‘ultimatum’ is a demand by threat that one may be harmed if one does not adhere to the instruction. That the fighters issued an ultimatum classifies them as organized freedom fighters who are fighting for a justified course. Thus, the youth who issued this threat through ‘a warning letter’ are described as ‘rebels’ and ‘freedom fighters’.

A freedom fighter is a name used to describe a person or group of people who use violence to try to remove a government from power. Since the activity of this group is illegal, the group was disbanded. Text 64 illustrates this:

### **Text 64**

The governor gave the assurance while addressing the returnees and the members of the disbanded Bakassi Freedom Fighters separately at the resettlement camp at Ekpri Obutong in the local government area (*Nigerian Chronicle*, August 18, 2007)

Just as *Eden* in Text 63 classifies the activities of these fighters as rebellious, *Nigerian Chronicle* in Text 64 also foregrounds the suspension of the fighters through the choice of the adjective “disbanded”. However, unlike in *Eden* where the group is projected negatively as an opposition to the Cameroonian government, in *Nigerian Chronicle*, Bakassi Freedom Fighters are represented as those fighting against the injustice meted on Nigerian Bakassi inhabitants. It can further be inferred that in as much as the Nigerian government recognises the agitations of the freedom fighters whose activities have been ‘disbanded’, the need to however fulfill their demands which include “resettling” the returnees are among the issues the government intends to address. This goes to show that

the Nigerian government to an extent identifies with the agitations of these fighters by assuring them of an alternative means of livelihood for the displaced Nigerians in that region.

Activists describe another set of revolutionaries. Activists, unlike other actors of resistance, advocate for a political or social change without the use of arms. The text below re-enforces this

### **Text 65**

Following the hoisting of the Cameroonian flag on the peninsula last year, marking the beginning of the withdrawal of Nigerian troops in tandem with the Green Tree Agreement, some **activists** reportedly issued tracks in the area, swearing that they would do everything to protect Bakassi against the ownership of Cameroon (*The Post*, December 1, 2007)

Activists are represented as resistant actors in the text. Their resistance is foregrounded by the phrase ‘issued tracks’ and ‘swearing’ to go to any length to protect Bakassi against the ownership of Cameroon. ‘To swear to do everything to protect something’ entails that the group has vowed to go to any length, including demonstration, to secure Bakassi. That is, their activism goes beyond mere demonstration with placards, sharing of tracks to gaining the attention of the International Court of Justice.

### **Text 66**

After the attack on Limbe banks on 27 September, Niger Delta **activists** under the name of Bakassi Freedom Fighters had denied involvement but promised not to give up the fight and to strike at their own convenience (*Eden*, October 20, 2008).

The grammatical connective realized as coordinating conjunction ‘but’ is used to join the arguments that the activists are a resistant group. Through the conjunction, the activists are represented as unrepentant. The projection is that despite the activists’ denial, they are still ready to continue with their activism. Through the use of the coordinating conjunction, the Niger Delta activists are presented as

militants. The inhabitants are labelled as activists who hid under the label Bakassi Freedom Fighters. They frequently ‘fight and strike’ in Bakassi except stealing from banks.

### **Text 67**

For long, Bakassi had become a milking cow for many politicians and **activists**. The Bakassi region had become a beehive for such **activists**, the best known being Senator Florence Ita Giwa alias Mama Bakassi (*Cameroon Tribune*, August 15, 2008)

The view in text 67 is that Bakassi peninsula has become an area that houses many political activists who desire to secure economic advantages from the government.

### **Text 68**

**Rebels** Declare ‘Independence’ of Bakassi: **Militant** youths in the Bakassi Peninsula, Friday, July 25, declared the oil rich area independent. According to a Nigerian newspaper, the "Sunday VANGUARD", a group calling itself the Bakassi Movement for Self-Determination, **BAMOSD**, said it had joined forces with the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta, **MEND**, in carrying out the secession. (*The Post*, August 1, 2008)

The youth in Bakassi are represented as militants with the words ‘rebels’ and ‘militant youths’ in text 68. Militancy, in this case, corresponds with declaration of ‘independence’ and carrying out ‘secession’. Secession, a formal withdrawal from a country, is unacceptable when it comes from rebels. Rebels cannot declare a part of nation independent of the other. Thus, the media sees the group as revolutionaries whose actions do not conform to established societal principles. In addition, the recalcitrant activities of the group are also unjustified and considered as militancy as the group is linked to the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta, a well known militant group in Nigeria.

In the news reports, especially Cameroonian, these words used in representing people as actors of resistance are modified by emotive adjectives. Such adjectives and the words

they modify include: ‘*dare devil rebels*’ (*The Post*, 28 July, 2008), ‘The *battle-pitching* militant group from Nigeria’, (*Eden*, 30 January, 2008), ‘*ever-present pirates* (*Cameroon Tribune*, 21 October, 2008), ‘*marauding rebels* (*The Post*, 27 April, 2009), ‘*notorious Niger Delta rebel group*’, (*Eden*, 23 November, 2007), ‘*notorious group of militants from the Niger Delta*’ (*The Post*, 16 November, 2007) and ‘the *insurgent Niger Delta forces*’ (*The Post*, 16 November, 2007). These adjectives are used to show the combative and aggressive nature of the groups. For instance,

### **Text 69**

The November and June rebel attack had been brisk and took the Cameroonian forces unawares. But the Head of State ordered for the displacement of a contingent of soldiers to reinforce the marines who have been serving in the area. But the **dare-devil rebels** in a bid to prove that they were undaunted decided to strike again but this time at a loss (*The Post*, July 28, 2008)

‘Dare-devil’ is an adjective that qualifies ‘rebels’ in the text. It depicts the fearlessness with which the rebels frequently carry out their opposition against the Cameroonian soldiers. By describing the rebels as dare-devil, the Cameroonian media perceives them as bold and dangerous. This view is substantiated with the fact that they had attacked Cameroon twice and also attempted to continue with their attacks before they were over-powered.

The only instance in the Nigerian report in which the group is described with an adjective is in the text below.

### **Text 70**

The governor gave the assurance while addressing the returnees and the members of the **disbanded** Bakassi Freedom Fighters separately at the resettlement camp at Ekpri Obutong in the local government area (*Nigerian Chronicle*, August 18, 2007)

‘Disbanded’ is an adjective that qualifies ‘Bakassi Freedom Fighter’. Through the adjective, the Nigerian government, through its media foregrounds their non-recognition

of the group. ‘Freedom Fighters’ is a group of Bakassi youth who claim to fight for the welfare of civilian population in Bakassi. After the handover, the government disbanded the group and its activities.

#### 4.2.4.2 Grammatical Aspects of Representing People and their Actions

##### 4.2.4.2.1 Transitivity System representing resistance

Material processes are deployed in representing resistance. Here, the actions of the actors of resistance are portrayed as rebellion. The text below illustrate this

#### Text 71

As if this was not enough, the Bakassi rebels on 31 October 2008 **kidnapped** oil workers from oil rigs off the shores of Cameroon. They **demand** immediate holding of negotiations with the Cameroon government and **threatened to kill** them one after the other if this was not done. (*Eden*, December 10, 2008)

Actor	Material Process	Goal	Circumstance
... Bakassi rebels	kidnapped	oil workers	from oil rigs
They	demand	...negotiations	
	threaten to kill	them...	

*Eden* utilises the material processes of doing to represent resistance in the text above. The processes of ‘kidnapped’, ‘demanded’ and ‘threatened to kill’ represent the Bakassi rebels as militants who oppose the Cameroonian government. Unlike in the representation of terrorism, these violent acts are rebellious. The ‘Bakassi rebels’ want Cameroonian government to negotiate with them on how the affairs of the area will be run. All the actions describe rebels who oppose the policies of government over the region.

In text 72, *The Guardian* also describes Bakassi actors as resistant group through the material processes.

## Text 72

Even as the handing over ceremony was going on in Calabar, the militants are reported to have **attacked** the gendarmes in the peninsula but no details on casualties. The Guardian gathered that the entire peninsula was tensed, with the militants **carrying out patrol activities** while the locals were happy that the ceremony did not take place in Abana, where they **have threatened** violence...Initially, the ceremony was scheduled to take place in far away Abana, the headquarters of Bakassi, but because of security reports and threats from militants, who have **laid siege** to the peninsula; the venue was yesterday morning changed to Calabar (*The Guardian*, August 17, 2008)

Actor	Material Process	Goal	Circumstance
...the militants	...attacked	the gendarmes	in the peninsula
...the militants	carrying out patrol activities		
they	have threatened	violence	
...militants	laid siege		to the peninsula

The militants are the actors of the processes while the Cameroonian soldiers are the goals. By placing them at the subject position, *The Guardian* foregrounds them as the agents of the material verbal actions of attacks and threat.

In a similar representation, Text 73 shows resistance as a dislike for peace. Thus, the militants are represented as attempting to disrupt the handover.

## Text 73

There were speculations that the event may take place in Iking as suspected militant allegedly **laid ambush** in the creeks to **frustrate** the handover. (*The Guardian*, August 14, 2008)

<b>Actor</b>	<b>Material Process</b>	<b>Goal</b>	<b>Circumstance</b>
...suspected militants	...laid ambush		in the peninsula
	...frustrate	the handover	

The material processes ‘laid ambush’ and ‘frustrate’ are used to represent the militants as recalcitrant and rebels who wanted to disrupt the handover process.

#### **4.2.4.2.2 Passivization Portraying Resistance**

Resistance is marked at the grammatical level through passivisation. For instance,

##### **Text 74**

Some 21 Cameroonian soldiers have been killed, wounding many others in the Bakassi peninsula, Tuesday, November 13, by suspected Nigerian rebels. (*The Post*, November 13, 2007)

The text is a passive structure with the goal ‘some 21 Cameroonian soldiers’ occupying the subject position while the agents of the actions ‘suspected Nigerian rebels’ occupies the object position. Through passivisation, attention is focused on the goals or objects of attack while the actors are backgrounded. The militants ‘Nigerian rebels’ as well as their resisting acts are not foregrounded.

Passive structures without agents are deployed in representing resistance. For instance,

##### **Text 75**

Cameroon said 21 of its soldiers were killed in the 12 November cross-border raid, which militants and oil industry sources in Nigeria have blamed on a faction of the rebel Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND). (*Eden*, November 27, 2007)

In *Eden* text, the resistant act of killing does not have any actor. What is obtained is that the victims are foregrounded while the actors are deleted. However, the actors could be retrieved through the verb ‘blame’ from the militants and the oil industry sources. Thus, if

the submissions of the militants and the oil industry sources are true, then the attack is from the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta.

#### 4.2.4.2.3 Nominalisation Portraying Resistance

Nominalisation is a grammatical device that is also used to represent resistance. Nominalisation is a process of turning verbs into nouns, thereby making an action into an abstract thing.

##### Text 76

A Cameroonian military source in Yaounde, who asked not to be named, told Reuters **the clash** involved "a suspected militant group from Nigeria" and that 21 Cameroonian soldiers were reported killed in **the fighting**. (*The Post*, November 13, 2007)

In text 76, 'the clash' and 'the fighting' are nominalised from verbs making their actions unexpressed. The nominalisations foreground resistance of 'suspected militant group' from Nigeria. 'Clash' and 'fighting' are actions that involved two parties, however, in the text, through nominalisation, the acts are presented as involving only the militants. The nominalisation allows *The Post* to play down the media's involvement in the report.

*The Punch* also nominalises the two verbs 'fight' and 'clash' to extricate itself from the report.

##### Text 77

More than 20 Camerounian soldiers have been killed **during fighting** in the Bakassi Peninsula near the border with Nigeria, Cameroun army officials have said. Though details of **the clash** remain unclear as at press time, Camerounian military sources however told the British Broadcasting Corporation that the attackers wore Nigerian military uniforms and ambushed a boat. But the Nigerian Army had blamed militants from the volatile Niger Delta for the attack. (*The Punch*, November 14, 2007)



In text 77, *The Punch* plays down its involvement in the report. Instead of reporting, “Nigerian militants fought and killed more than 20 Cameroonian soldiers”, *The Punch* nominalises fight as ‘fighting’. Through this, *The Punch*’s involvement in the report is minimized. Both ‘fighting’ and ‘the clash’ allow the media to delete the agents involved in the brawl.

Text 78 presents the Niger Delta militants as battle-ready to attack both Nigerian and Cameroonian governments.

### **Text 78**

The "Sunday VANGUARD" also reported that the group stated that it had deployed its members in the creeks and was ready to do battle with any government that opposes its action. The group warned the Nigerian government not to send its troops to attack the members "because such action would spell dire consequences both for the soldiers and the government." (*The Post*, August 1, 2008)

In text 78, the militants are represented as rebellious groups who are ready to attack any government that counters their ‘independent’ struggle. Through the choices of ‘ready to do battle’, and ‘warned’, the group is represented as not only to have threatened to confront with the governments but are ready to withstand them. The representation of the battle-readiness of the militants is captured in the picture below:



**Niger Delta militants (*The Punch*, 30 Mar 2007)**

The picture above is a representation of militancy. The picture also shows that the ‘masked’ people are battle-ready with a display of their heavy arms and ammunition. The caption identifies them as Niger Delta militants. In the picture, the militants wore several bullets on their shoulders and wrists indicating ‘battle-readiness’. This is in addition to the Ak-47 rifle positioned for ‘action’.

#### **4.2.5 Terrorism**

Terrorism is one of the themes which feature frequently in both Nigerian and Cameroonian news reports on BPBC. It refers to extreme violent behaviours and attitudes ranging from attacks, kidnapping, harassment, torture, maiming to killing. Whenever such acts are perpetrated, the attention of the media (Nigerian and Cameroonian) is awakened and their reportage is expressed from certain ideological perspectives using various linguistic means. The media reported on incessant violence and clashes that emanated from the camps of Nigerian ethnic militia and Cameroonian gendarmes. In trying to establish its presence in Bakassi after the ceding and handover, Cameroon suffered a lot of violent attacks and killings from (Nigerian) Bakassi ‘terrorists. On the other hand, Cameroonian soldiers (also known as gendarmes) are reported to have subjected Bakassi inhabitants to various forms of torture and harassment in their bid to occupy the area.

Terrorism however includes different forms of violence that copiously featured in the reports. In our data, the theme of terrorism is observed to be expressed by eleven distinctive words of violence which provide specific descriptions of people and their roles in the conflict. The descriptions are further illustrated through transitivity system, nominalisation and passivisation.

**Table 4.10: Headlines Portraying Terrorism**

<b>Nigerian Newspapers</b>	<b>Cameroonian Newspapers</b>
Camerounian Gendarmes kill 17 Nigerians in Bakassi  ( <i>The Guardian</i> , December 1, 2009)	Pirates Attack Bamusso Gendarmes Brigade  ( <i>Eden</i> , April 5, 2010)
23 Nigerians killed in Bakassi, 3,300 Displaced  ( <i>The Guardian</i> , December 18, 2009)	Bakassi Boils Again: 21 Cameroonian Soldiers Killed  ( <i>Eden</i> , November 16, 2007)
Bakassi: Three Camerounian soldiers wounded in raid  ( <i>The Punch</i> , July 15, 2008)	More Trouble in Bakassi: One Pirate Killed, Several Wounded  ( <i>The Post</i> , October 20, 2008)
Gendarmes terrorise Nigerian fishermen in Bakassi  ( <i>The Punch</i> , August 16, 2006)	Up to 21 Cameroonian troops killed in Bakassi  ( <i>The Post</i> , November 13, 2007)
Cameroon Gendarmes on the Prowl Again – Kills Two Fishermen  ( <i>Nigerian Chronicle</i> , November, 2006)	Bakassi: Pirates Will Not Have Their Way  ( <i>Cameroon Tribune</i> , October 21, 2008)

Table 4.10 presents headlines that centre on the theme of terrorism. Terrorism involves violence or the threats of violence, especially through attacks and killing. In the headlines, the verbs ‘kill’, which occurred frequently and ‘terrorise’ are violent acts. In addition, the nouns ‘prowl’ and ‘raid’ point to the violent activities of terrorist groups in Bakassi.

#### 4.2.5.1 Words Denoting Terrorism used in Representing Actors of Violence

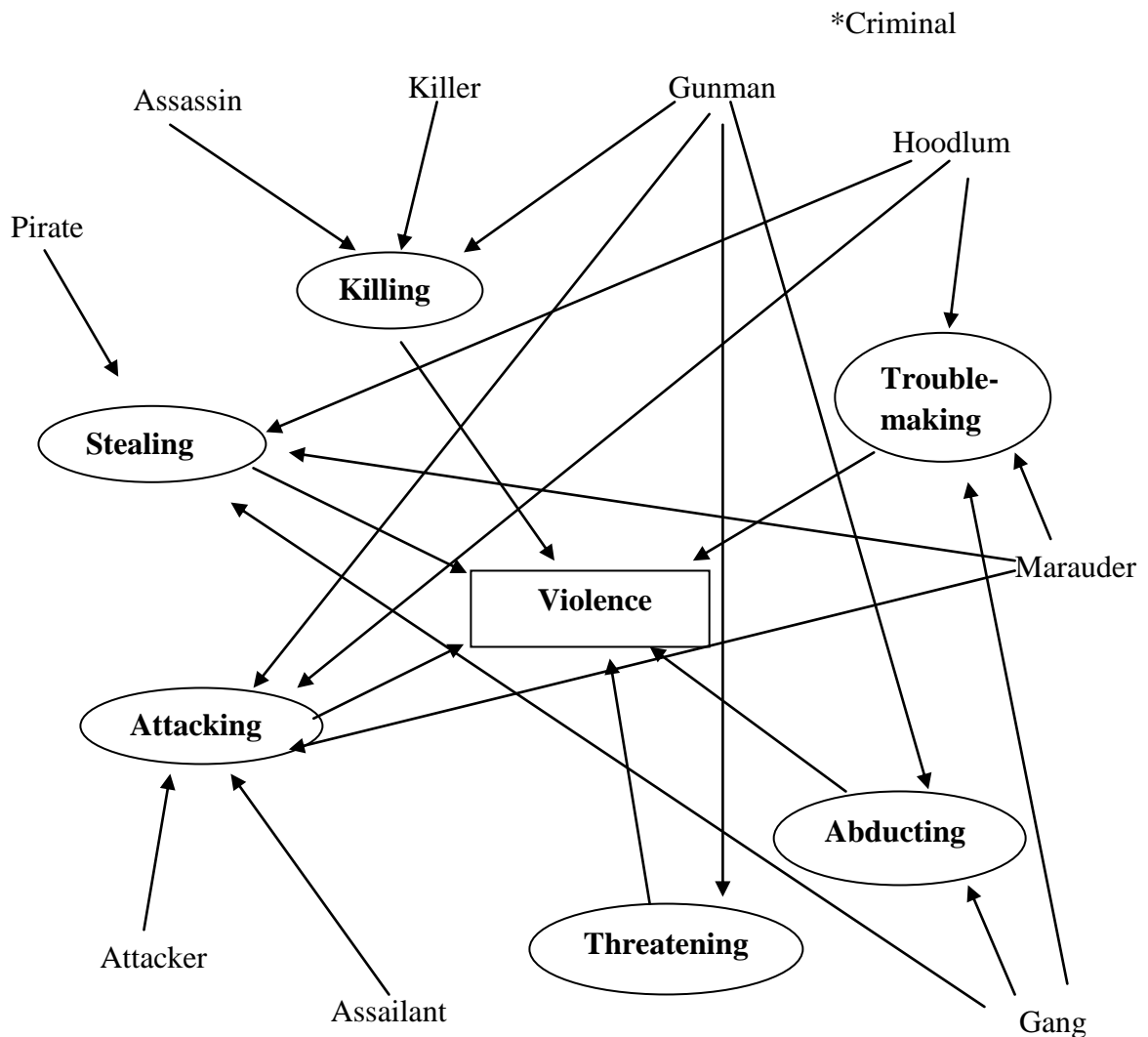
Words denoting terrorism used in representing actors of violence in the news reports include assailant, gunman, pirate, criminal, attacker, assassin, killer, gang, hoodlum, marauder and \*gendarmes. Using componential analysis, the semantic properties of the words are illustrated below

**Table 4.11: A Componential Analysis of Words Describing Actors of Violence**

Words	People	Person	Person	Person	Person	Person	Youth
Describing	who are	who	who	who	who	who	involved
Actors	of involved	attacks	steals	kills	abducts	uses	in trouble-
Violence	in	another	either	another	another	gun to	making
	violence	person or	on land	person	person	threaten	
		group of	or sea	or	or	others	
		people		group	group		
		with or		of	of		
		without		people	people		
		physical					
		injury					
Assailant	+	+	-	-	-	-	-
Gunman	+	+	-	+	+	+	-
Pirate	+	+/-	+	-	-	+/-	-
Criminal	+	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-
Attacker	+	+	-	-	-	-	-
Assassin	+	+/-	-	+	-	-	-
Killer	+	-	-	+	-	-	-
Gangs	+	+/-	+	-	+	-	+
Hoodlum	+	+	+	-	-	-	+
Marauder	+	+	+	-	-	-	+
*Gendarmes	+						

\*Gendarmes are Cameroonian police officers/soldiers but are also represented as actors of violence in BPBC.

The relationship and distinctions of the words in the semantic field of violence as we find in Table 4.11 above is further corroborated in Figure 4.5 below



**Figure 4.5: The Interrelationships of Words Describing Actors and Acts of Violence**

Through a componential analysis, Table 4.11 presents characteristic features of words describing actors of violence in terms of relationships and distinctions. Figure 4.5 further illustrates the interrelationships of the actors and acts of violence. In the figure, all the negative acts converge on violence. The actors are represented with their specific acts. For instance, while gunman, pirate, criminal, gang, hoodlum and marauder are linked with *stealing*, killer, assassin, attacker and gunman are associated with *killing*. Also, assailant, gunman and gangs are connected with *kidnapping*. ‘Criminal’ is the prime actor of

violence as the entire acts amount to crimes. The excerpts below illustrate the use of these words by both Nigerian and Cameroonian media in describing people in the conflict.

### **Text 79**

Suspected Nigerian **gunmen** killed up to 21 Cameroonian soldiers in Bakassi, a border region that was handed back to Cameroon by Nigeria last year, Nigerian and Cameroonian sources said on Tuesday.... According to sources, the **gunmen** attacked a Cameroonian military boat carrying food destined for soldiers on the peninsula. They then killed the Cameroonian soldiers on board, put on their uniforms, proceeded to the peninsula, shot and wounded soldiers before carrying away some military equipment...Nigerian Defence spokesman Solomon Giwa-Amu said the Cameroonian gendarmes could have been attacked by Nigerian **criminals** but details of the clash were unclear. ...The Bakassi issue was separate from the Niger Delta crisis and since the handover of Bakassi, there has been no known case of an attack by Niger Delta **criminals** on Cameroonian troops (*The Post*, November 13, 2007)

Text 79 is one among several others where the Cameroonian media describes some Bakassi actors as gunmen and criminals. From the componential analysis on Table 4.5.1, a gunman denotes a person who uses a gun to threaten, attack and kill others. By engaging the word 'gunmen' to describe Nigerian Bakassi actors, *The Post* categorises them as actors potentially dangerous to Cameroonians. Thus, in the text, the Nigerian "gunmen" are linked with violent actions such as "killed up to 21 Cameroonian soldiers", "attacked a Cameroonian military boat" and "shot and wounded (Cameroonian) soldiers before carrying away some military equipment", all of which depict violence. The picture painted in Text 79 is synonymous to terrorism suggesting that the perpetrators are terrorists. Since terrorism involves violence or threats of violence then the associated violent acts of the 'gunmen' depict them as terrorists. These acts range from disguise, stealing, attacks to killing. The use of the adjective 'suspected' shows that the identity of the gunmen is unconfirmed. Through this, the media guards against libellous and seditious publications.

The word “criminal” also connote violence. A criminal is a person who is prone to committing various crimes. By referring to the Bakassi actors as ‘Nigerian criminals’ and ‘Niger Delta criminal’, *The Post* characterise them as people disposed to violence. Thus, in the text, they are associated with attacks on Cameroonian soldiers. The overriding idea in the text is that violence in the peninsula is perpetrated by Nigerian actors. This informs the explicit choice of the identifying adjectives ‘Nigerian’ in faces behind the attacks.

The Nigerian media also describe the actions of some Bakassi actors as violent using words denoting terrorism.

### **Text 80**

Three Camerounian soldiers were wounded when unidentified **gunmen** attacked their post near the Nigerian border on Sunday... The gendarmes told hospital authorities in Douala that Sunday’s attack took place at Munya, close to where **armed men** killed five Camerounian soldiers and a local government official in a raid last month... Suspected Nigerian **pirates** or rebels kidnapped five soldiers and a senior official in the Bakassi peninsula in June. Their mutilated and bullet-riddled bodies were later discovered buried in mangrove swamps (*The Punch*, July 15, 2008).

*The Punch* uses the words ‘gunmen’ and ‘armed men’ in the text above to describe the ‘unidentified’ group of Bakassi actors as violent. As in *The Post*, the labels bring to bear in a descriptive manner a group of people who use arms (guns) to attack, wound and kill. However, in *The Punch*, the identities of the group are masked hence, implicit. That is, the Nigerian media though in a strident manner condemns the nefarious activities of the gunmen are silent about the identity of the gunmen, describing them as “unidentified”. The less concern given to the identity of the perpetrators takes the attention of the reader away from the nameless “gunmen” but to the victims of the conflict--Cameroonian soldiers. This can be inferred as a conscious effort by the Nigerian Media to present the Cameroonian soldiers as casualties of terrorism. A second reason to inhibit naming the gunmen especially as Nigerians could be to save the image of the Nigerian comity to the world as events have it that the attacks took place “near the Nigerian border” invariably; there is a high probability that the ‘unidentified’ gunmen are Nigerians. Interesting is the

fact that the Nigerian media, just like the Cameroonian, has labelled some Bakassi actors as ‘gunmen’ (armed men) since their activities are presumed to be carried out with the use of guns or arms.

‘Pirates’ is another word describing actors of violence used in the above report to describe a group of Bakassi actors. Pirates are sea robbers who operate from a ship on the ocean. Due to the riverine terrain of Bakassi, both Nigerian and Cameroonian media describe actors of violence as pirates. In the text, *The Punch* uses pirates and rebels (words of militancy) to represent abductors of five (Cameroonian) soldiers. By referring to them as pirates, the Bakassi actors are considered as thieves. The act of stealing, in this case, is kidnapping probably for ransom. Using the label ‘pirates’ and the verb ‘kidnapping’ respectively to describe the people and their actions, *The Punch* associates the Bakassi actors with violence. The view of violence is further heightened by the recovered bodies of the soldiers that are ‘mutilated’ and ‘bullet-riddled’. This captures the ruthless nature of the attacks on the soldiers using arms.

The identity of the supposed pirates or rebels shrewdly linked to the Nigerian soil. The adjective ‘Nigerian’ brands the violent actors as Nigerians. However, the authenticity of the branding wears off with the introduction of another adjective ‘suspected’. ‘Suspected’ places the true identities of the actors as contentious, still making them ‘unidentified’. Similarly, the co-coordinating conjunction ‘or’ used in providing alternatives for the description of the actors suggests a lack of exactitude on the mission and activities of the two distinct groups. While pirates are established thieves, rebels are revolutionaries. Thus, *The Punch* characterise the acts of kidnapping with the labels ‘pirates and rebels’.

The words ‘gunmen’, ‘pirates’ and hoodlums’ also feature in the Cameroonian media description of actors of violence in Bakassi.



## Text 81

Unidentified **gunmen** considered to be **pirates** have attacked the Bamusso Gendarmerie Brigade in the Bakassi area. The assault on the security office was carried out last Sunday 28 March 2010. The **pirates** are said to have carted away at least 20 guns belonging to the brigade. Eden also gathered that the **hoodlums** equally took away two speedboats belonging to the Divisional Officer, DO, of Bamusso and the Gendarmerie Brigade.... It should be noted that this is the umpteenth time **pirates** are wrecking havoc in the Bakassi area. Shortly before the official handover of the peninsula by Nigeria to Cameroon, **pirates** launched an attack that led to the death of the Divisional Officer of Kombo Abedimo, Felix Morfaw and 21 Cameroonian soldiers. After that the **pirates** carried out other attacks and sometimes took hostages from oil installations. (*Eden*, April 5, 2010)

Three words denoting violence (gunmen, pirates and hoodlums) are used in describing Bakassi actors in the text above. However, ‘pirates’ is the dominant description. *Eden* describes a group of ‘unidentified’ gunmen that attacked Cameroonian soldiers as pirates. In the text, “pirates” is used to state the kind of violence as mainly stealing and sea attack. The report is however quick to measure the level of attack meted on the Cameroonian soldiers with verb phrases as ‘wrecking havoc’, ‘launched attack’, ‘carried other attacks’ and ‘took hostages’. As the componential analysis Table 4.5.1 reveals, pirates include the semantic feature of stealing. This is made explicit in the text through the verb phrase “carted away at least 20 guns.”

The word ‘hoodlums’ is also used synonymously with ‘pirates’ in the text. The synonymous relationship between ‘pirates’ and ‘hoodlums’ is that both share the semantic property of *stealing*. However, while pirates rob people mainly on the sea, hoodlums steal from people both on land and sea. In the text, the verb phrases “carted away at least 20 guns” and “took away two speedboats” respectively represent the activities of pirates and hoodlums as robbery. The use of the definite articles ‘the’ in qualifying pirates and hoodlums particularises them. Thus, despite the projection of the undisclosed nature of the actors, there is still element of identity.

The words ‘assassins’ and ‘killers’ which feature only in the Cameroonian reports describe some Bakassi actors as murderers. In the text below, *The Post* describes the people who ‘murdered’ six Cameroonian soldiers in Bakassi Peninsula as assassins.

### **Text 82**

The corpses of DO of Kombo Abedimo, Felix Fonya Morfaw, and five soldiers, murdered by unknown **assassins** in the Bakassi Peninsula, June 9, were removed from the Limbe Provincial Hospital mortuary June 20 for burial (*The Post*, June 23, 2008).

By labeling the people as assassins, *The Post* sees them as political murderers. This view is substantiated with the fact that the border dispute is a political conflict between Nigeria and Cameroon. The implication of the label could suggest that the murderers are probably hired by Nigerian government to fight the ceding of Bakassi. The final handover of the peninsula was barely two months to the time the soldiers were killed. Thus, the ‘assassins’ or covert ‘political killers’ are instruments for fighting political ‘enemies’. The choice of the verb ‘murdered’ also supports the view of ‘intentional’ or ‘planned’ killing. Murder designates the crime of killing another person intentionally and not in self-defense. In its own report below, *Eden* also shares the view that the murder of Cameroonian soldiers is intentional by describing the people as ‘killers’.

### **Text 83**

The Ndian SDO Irénée Ngalim told pressmen after the occasion that the **killers** have not yet been identified. He continued that the predominant Nigerian population of Nigerians resident in Bakassi, were hostile to the Cameroon administration and so the enemy was difficult to trace because investigations were marred by the non-cooperation of the inhabitants. He equally revealed that the **killers** remained unknown and prior to the shooting, many Nigerian inhabitants of the zone had surreptitiously moved out. Many observers have drawn similarity with the earlier Bakassi killing. In both, the **killers** remain unidentified. During the last killing, a senior military official, Major Metiege Ebong was killed and in the second, Major Charles Mongon suffered the same fate. (*Eden*, June 23, 2008)

A killer, just like an assassin, is a person who kills another intentionally. In the text, *Eden* consistently describes the people who murdered Cameroonian soldiers as ‘killers’. The “killers” are associated with violent activities such as “shooting” and “killing” of Cameroonian soldiers. The word ‘killers’ is substantiated with its variants ‘killing’ and ‘killed’. Just like *The Post* identified the assassins as ‘unknown’, *Eden* describes the killers as ‘not yet been identified’, ‘unknown’ and ‘unidentified’. However, the situations surrounding the constant shoot-out between the Cameroonian soldiers and the gunmen can be traced to Nigerians who have ‘surreptitiously moved out’ prior to killings. Through the word ‘assassins’ and ‘killers’, both newspapers describe the people as intentional murderers. Obvious from both reports is the presence of ‘assassins’ and ‘killers’ who attack and murder only Cameroonian soldiers.

‘Attackers’ and ‘assailants’ are also words of actors of violence. While both the Nigerian and Cameroonian media describe Bakassi actors as ‘attackers’, only the Cameroonian media uses ‘assailants’ to identify them. The text below illustrates this

#### **Text 84**

Accounts gathered by *The Post* say the soldiers had not even had time to offload their guns and ammunition from the boat when the **assailants** opened fire. A few of them dived into the sea and swam to safety while others sustained injuries. The **attackers** are said to have fled as soon as they were done. It is yet to be fully ascertained who the **attackers** were but the Nigerian government is said to have attributed the attack to the insurgent Niger Delta forces. (*The Post*, November 16, 2007)

The words ‘assailants’ and ‘attackers’ describe people who violently attack others, usually causing physical injuries. The result of the componential analysis shows that both actors of violence share the semantic property of violent attacks. In the text above, *The Post* identifies people who violently attacked Cameroonian soldiers as assailants and attackers. The assailants ‘ambushed’ the soldiers by opening fire on them on their arrival. This surprise attack inflicted injuries on the soldiers as they seek safety. In its report, *The Punch* uses the word ‘attackers’ to describe the people who ambushed a Cameroonian boat.

### Text 85

Camerounian military sources said that the **attackers** wore Nigerian military uniforms and ambushed a boat. (*The Punch*, November 15, 2007).

Though the source of the news is from the Cameroonian military, *The Punch* simply sees the offenders as attackers hence the adoption of the word ‘attackers’ corresponds with disguising and staging a surprise attack ‘ambush’.

‘Gang’ is a word used to describe actors of violence by the Cameroonian media. A gang is a group of youth involved in trouble-making. One of which is dangerous attacks. In *Eden* text below, people who attack Cameroonian soldiers and gendarmes are described as armed gangs.

### Text 86

Unfortunately, the average Nigerian, especially those who have lived on the island from time immemorial, either doing fishing or engaged in other businesses, have remained disgruntled with their government for accepting the terms of the ICJ verdict and the Greentree Accord.... It is within this context that supposedly unknown armed **gangs** have continued to inflict frequent bloody raids on Cameroonian soldiers and gendarmes in the area, leading to enormous loss of human lives (*Eden*, August 11, 2008).

By engaging the word ‘gang’, *Eden* represents the Bakassi actors as violent and dangerous. The phrase ‘inflict frequent bloody raids’ shows the extent of evil unleashed by these actors. ‘Bloody’ as the adjective that qualifies ‘raids’ in the text depicts the extent of cruelty and ruthlessness suffered by Cameroonian military. The verb phrase ‘have continued’ and the adjective ‘frequent’ collectively foreground the unending act. The yet to be identified members of the gang is a huge concern to both the government and the citizens. Again through anaphoric reference, the gangs are suggested to be Nigerians. This is because of their ‘disgruntled’ opinion on the ceding of Bakassi to Cameroon.

The word ‘gendarme’, which represents a French police officer, is also used in the Nigerian reports to describe a group of Cameroonian soldiers who are involved in violence. The text below suggests this

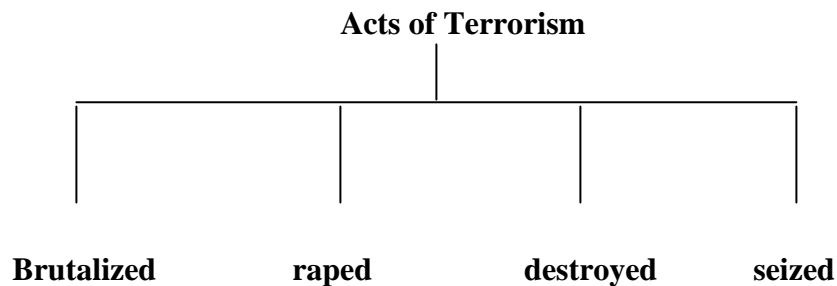
### Text 87

We are in danger – Bakassi natives cry out ...as Camerounian **gendarmes** terrorise them. There is palpable fear among Nigerians currently living in some parts of the southern Bakassi, following the terrorist acts of the **gendarmes** from Cameroon, who invaded the place since Thursday. (*The Punch*, August 13, 2006)

In Text 87, *The Punch* associates gendarmes with violence in Bakassi. Here, the gendarmes are represented as terrorising Bakassi natives after invading the area. Invasion is a hostile entry by members of armed force into an area. Referring to the gendarmes' entry as hostile underscores the 'aggression' by which they conquer the area. Thus, their presence and 'terrorist acts' portend dangers to the natives. Terrorist acts is captured in the text below as brutality, raping, destruction and seizing of property of Nigerians

### Text 88

In fact, the entire camp reverberated with how the **gendarmes** brutalized, raped, destroyed and seized the property of Nigerians living in the peninsula (*The Punch*, January 10, 2010)



In the diagram above, 'acts of terrorism' is a superordinate term with 'brutalized', 'raped', 'destroyed' and 'seized' as co-hyponyms. The superordinate term together with its co-hyponyms paints the picture of the violence executed by the gendarmes on Nigerians in Bakassi. Contrary to the stipulations of the Green Tree Accord and the International Court of Judgment that Nigerians in Bakassi are free to stay in the area after the handover, the gendarmes (Cameroonian soldiers) staged violent attacks in order to dislodge Nigerians from the area. These attacks manifest in different forms subsumed under the superordinate

term ‘acts of terrorism’ *The Guardian* also uses the word to describe people who involve in violence.

### **Text 89**

Quoting the Secretary General of the Nigerian Union in Cameroun, Mr. Aston Arung said, many Nigerians were killed by the **gendarmes** between September and November this year and many more are being hunted down as they flee Abana, Atabong East/West and others areas in the crisis-torn Peninsula. (*The Guardian*, December 1, 2009)

In Text 89, the acts of killing and hunting down suggest violence as both entail termination of lives. By associating the gendarmes with these acts, *The Guardian* represents them as murderers. The opinion here is that the gendarmes are terrorists who also are involved in killing.

Evaluative adjectives are also employed in describing the Cameroonian soldiers as actors of violence in the conflict. Such adjectives include ‘rampaging’, ‘overzealous’, etc. For instance:

### **Text 90**

Ikang in Akpabuyo Local Council of Cross River State is overwhelmed with over 3,000 Nigerian refugees who escaped the **rampaging** Cameroonian soldiers, who attacked their fishing ports abode (*The Guardian*, June 14, 2008)

The adjective ‘rampaging’ describes Cameroonian soldiers as violent. By ‘rampaging’ the soldiers are perceived as riotous and maniacs. This representation corresponds with the action of ‘attacking’ Nigerian fishing ports. The view here is that the soldiers were obsessed with occupying Bakassi peninsula after it was ceded to Cameroon by the International Court of Justice. The obsession resulted into violent acts such as ‘invasion’ and ‘attacks’.

#### 4.2.5.2 Grammatical Aspects of Representing People and their Actions

At the grammatical level, people and their actions are represented through the transitivity processes, passivisation, and nominalisation.

##### 4.2.5.2.1 Transitivity of the Material Process Representing Terrorism

Material processes as elaborated in section 2.8.1 are defined as processes of ‘doing’. The material processes of “doing” in the text below are observed to foreground terrorism as well as corroborate representation of people as violent in the news reports. For instance

#### Text 91

The Post learnt that five assailants, said to be Niger Delta rebels, in two speed boats, **opened fire** on Cameroonian soldiers at a fishing port called Jabane by 11 am, Saturday, October 18. According to a military source in Bakassi, some five assailants in two speed boats **attacked** a fishing boat on the Cameroonian territorial waters in a boundary area between Cameroon and Bakassi before Cameroonian soldiers pushed back the rebels shooting three out of the five assailants.... According to a communiqué signed by Cameroon's Minister of Defense, Remy Ze Meka, the assailants who were on board two speed boats **attacked** and **wounded** some of the Cameroonian soldiers. The communiqué states that the Cameroonian soldiers reacted by pursuing the assailants who fled towards Nigeria. (*The Post*, October 20, 2008)

The material processes “opened fire”, “attacked”, and “wounded” describe the actions of Bakassi actors as violent. The transitivity analysis table below illustrates this

<b>Actor</b>	<b>Material Process</b>	<b>Goal</b>	<b>Circumstance</b>
... five assailants, said to be Niger Delta rebels	opened fire...	Cameroonian soldiers	at a fishing port
...some assailants in two speed boats	five attacked	a fishing boat	on Cameroon territorial water
...assailants	attacked and wounded	and some Cameroonian soldiers	

In the illustration above, the actors are ‘(five) assailants’, the material processes are ‘opened fire’, ‘attacked’ and ‘wounded’ and the goals include ‘(some) Cameroonian soldiers and their fishing boat’. By placing the “assailants” at the subject position of the processes, responsibility of action is shifted to them. In other words, the assailants are held responsible for all the nefarious acts in the Bakassi region. It is therefore safe to say that the violent actions correspond with the labeling of the actors as assailants.

In the Nigerian reports, material processes of doing are also employed in representing the gendarmes as violent.

### **Text 92**

He said a gendarmes patrol team had **accosted** him at sea and **demande**d N10,000 which he did not have, following which the officer **tore** his fishing nets, **removed** his 40HP engine, **sank** his boat and later **beat** him and **abandoned** him thinking he was dead (*The Guardian*, December 1, 2009).



Actor	Material Process	Goal	Circumstance
... gendarmes patrol team	had accosted	him	
	demanded	N10,000	
Officer	tore	his fishing nets	
	removed	his 40HP engine	
	sank	his boat	
	beat	him	
	abandoned	him	

Through the material processes, *The Guardian* portrays Cameroonian soldiers as extortioners and brutal; a behavior alien to the security profession. The Nigerian media in this report gives details of all the illicit actions of the Cameroonian force. This could however be a deliberate account to show the world the untold suffering the Nigerian citizens experience in a region which was once theirs and also to portray them as victims of circumstance. Furthermore, terrorism is a function of terror and fear occasioned by a state of violence. In the text, the material processes ‘accosted, demanded, tore, removed, sank, beat, and abandoned’ illustrate violence. The Cameroonian actors are positioned at the subject positions as the doers of the actions. In the text, the Cameroonian gendarmes are the actors of the processes while the Nigerian returnee and his fishing tools are the goals that the processes are directed to. Through the material processes, attention is focused on the actors and the actions as violence.

#### 4.2.5.2.2 Passivisation Portraying Terrorism

Terrorism is also illustrated through passivisation. Passivisation is manifest at two levels: agentless passives and passive structures with agents. In Text 93, *Eden* uses agentless passives to project acts of terrorism in its reports.

### Text 93

They were **killed**, their bodies **dumped** in mangroves, their boat and ammunitions **taken away**, Irénée revealed. The bodies were only discovered nine days later. (*Eden*, June 23, 2008)

Goal	Material Process	Actors	Circumstance
They	were killed		
Their bodies	dumped		in mangroves
Their boat and ammunition	taken away		
The bodies	were discovered		nine days later

*Eden* emphasises acts of terrorism through the use of material process in the passive voice. Passive voices foreground the goal (the Cameroonian soldiers) and background the actors. In the table, Cameroonian soldiers who are the receivers of the violent acts are foregrounded. Through this, attention is focused on them as victims of the killing, dumping, and dispossession of their boat and ammunition. Through a syntactic parallelism, the violent acts are presented in a sequence. The sequence heightens the emotion and awakens the consciousness of the reader to the level of agony suffered by the Cameroonian soldiers. In other words, the reader is moved by the intensity of suffering meted to these soldiers. The circumstances realised ‘in mangroves’ and ‘nine days later’ are also selected to bring to the fore a mental picture of the extent of trauma surrounding the death of the soldiers.

Text 94 is also an agentless passive structure in which the goal is foregrounded and the agent deleted. In the text, the act of assassinating the soldiers is intensified with an adverb.

#### Text 94

The six Cameroonian patriots **savagely** assassinated in Bakassi recently were given military honours in Limbe last Friday 20 June, but with no posthumous decorations. (*Eden*, June 23, 2008).

The adverb 'savagely' qualifies the verb 'assassinated'. Savagely denotes brutality and severity of attacks. Through the adverb, *Eden* portrays the violent act as cruel. In addition, it magnifies the act. The essence is to whip sentiments and emotions for the killed soldiers and Cameroon for the lost

In the Nigerian reports, passive structures with agents are deployed to describe Cameroonian soldiers and their actions as violent. For instance,

#### Text 95

The people alleged that three weeks ago, six Nigerians, who went beyond the Nigerian territory into Cameroonian side to retrieve their logs from the forest in Archibong town area, were **attacked** by the gendarmes and four of them were **killed**, while two managed to escape. In yet another incident, the Iking people at the beach averred that two Nigerians who were searching for oyster and periwinkles, were also **attacked** and **killed** for no just cause, as up till now, they have not come back home. It brings to six, the number of Nigerians allegedly **killed** by the Cameroonian gendarmes barely two months after handover. (*The Guardian*, November 7, 2009)

Goal	Material Process	Actors	Circumstance
six Nigerians	were attacked	by the gendarmes	
...four of them	were killed		
...two Nigerians	were also attacked and killed		for no just cause
Nigerians	killed	by the barely two months	
Nigerians	killed	Cameroonian gendarmes	after handover

In text 95, some Cameroonian soldiers are represented as terrorists who engage in the violent acts of attacks and killing. Through the repetition, Cameroonian gendarmes whose duty is to maintain law and order in the area are portrayed as violators and killers through constant attacks and killing of Nigerian civilians ‘barely’ two months after handover. The repetition of ‘attacked’ and ‘killed’ supports the view of constant violence by the soldiers.

#### 4.5.2.3 Nominalisation Portraying Terrorism

Nominalisations are also used to portray terrorism. Nominalisation is a process of turning a verb into a nominal or noun. It allows a news reporter “to leave out who did the action to whom, and when or how it happened” (Matheson, 2005: 180). In text 96, ‘the assassination of 21 soldiers’, the murder of 21 Cameroonian soldiers’ and ‘the abduction and killing recently’ are nominalisations used to delete agents and focus on actions and victims.

#### Text 96

The MP mooted the idea in the wake of **the assassination of 21 soldiers** in Bakassi Peninsula last November 12, and five others including the Divisional Officer, DO, for Kombo Abedimo on June 9. ...Making references to **the murder of the 21 Cameroonian soldiers** and five others recently including DO, Felix Fonya Morfaw; **the abduction and killing recently**, of some 10 Cameroonians in the Far North Province... (*The Post*, June 23, 2008)

Through these nominalisations, the agents of the ‘assassination’, ‘murder’, ‘abduction’ and ‘killing’ are deleted. In addition, the actions are abstract and unexpressed. Thus, *The Post* focuses attention on the terrorist acts and the Cameroonian soldiers who were the victims of the attacks. The emphasis is not on the actors as there is no one identified as being responsible for the violence; rather it appears that the actions have just occurred of their own agency.

Nigerian media also employs nominalisation to depict terrorism. For instance:

### **Text 97**

Following **alleged harassment and torture of Nigerians** living in the ceded Bakassi Peninsula, a socio-political group, Nigeria Union in Cameroun, has urged Nigeria to check **the activities of gendarmes against her citizens**.  
(*The Punch*, November 2, 2009)

‘Alleged harassment and torture of Nigerians’ and ‘the activities of gendarmes against her citizens’ are nominalisations. The first nominalisation deletes the agents and focuses attention on the actions and the victims. The second nominalisation has both the agent and the victims. However, it still obscures certain features of the sentence like when, how and where the actions took place.

In the *Eden’s* report below, ‘the growing insecurity’ and ‘persistent attacks and killings of Cameroonian soldiers’ are nominalisations.

### **Text 98**

In riposte to **the growing insecurity** in the zone as indicated by **persistent attacks and killings of Cameroonian soldiers**, the Cameroonian military Etai Major under the instructions of the Head of State last week announced the creation of a special force in Bakassi known as the Rapid Intervention Battalion, RIB. (*Eden*, July 21, 2008)

In Text 98, the first nominalisation ‘the growing insecurity’ is used to depict crisis in Bakassi as something that is rising and increasing. Through this syntactic process, the effects of certain acts are cushioned and other components of the sentence such as “who

does the acts of violence” are concealed. In the same vein, the second nominalisation ‘persistent attacks and killings of Cameroonian soldiers’ allows for the deletion of the agents of the continuous violent acts. Through the nominalisation, *Eden* focuses attention on the acts as well as the victims (Cameroonian soldiers). The nouns ‘attacks’ and ‘killings’ nominalised from the verbs ‘attack’ and ‘kill’ are in the plural form indicating several cases of the attacking and killings. This view of numerous incidents of violence is corroborated with the adjective ‘persistent’.

From the discussions on the theme of terrorism and linguistic tagging, it is obvious people and their actions are represented as violent. Thus, violence is a principal tag in BPBC. The tag of violence is captured with the picture below



Pirates: An increasing menace in the Bakassi Peninsula

(*The Post*: More Trouble In Bakassi:One Pirate Killed, Several Wounded; 20 October 2008)

The picture above graphically communicates a trend of violence hence the representation of terrorism. The photograph which *The Post* labels as “Pirates: An increasing menace in the Bakassi Peninsula” captures a group of pirates on the high sea. The pirates who are about nine are on motion for an operation. The representation of a group of armed men on the high seas shows that they are pirates and suggestively, sea robbers. The heavy arms

and ammunition in the photographs support their intention to steal, and probably kill. The red bands tied around their arms indicate danger and charms for protection. By covering their faces, the identities of the armed group are hidden. This also underscores their operation as illegal.

#### **4.2.5.2.4 Conclusion**

In this chapter, we identified and discussed five dominant themes – economy, territorial ownership and non-ownership, dispossession, suffering, resistance and terrorism - in the reports. The representation of people and actions at the lexical and grammatical levels correlated with the five themes. The themes with their corresponding representations are: ‘terrorism: violence’, ‘resistance: militancy’, ‘dispossession: the dispossessed’, ‘suffering: the victims’ and ‘economy: ownership and non-ownership.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **IDEOLOGIES AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON THE LINGUISTIC TAGGING OF PEOPLE AND THEIR ACTIONS IN THE MEDIA REPORTS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, the ideologies underlying the linguistic tagging of people and their actions in the media reports are identified. Ideology is a system of beliefs and values shared by a group of people. It includes perceptions and assumptions that provide members of a group with an understanding and an explanation of their world. As a set of norms that guide the actions and activities of a group, ideology influences social attitudes and the manner in which a group of people represent social reality. For instance, the media as a social/professional group hold specific ideologies which determine the way and means through which events are processed by them. That is, the media describes or portrays people and their actions in a news event based on their own ideological affiliations.

Functionally, ideologies are used to frame, legitimise, or validate opinions and actions in the domain to which they are applicable (Hodge and Kress, 1993). These ideas form the basis for social behavior and thus, indirectly, control how people plan and understand their social practices, including their use of language. Language use can never be 'neutral' for it bridges the gap between our personal and social worlds (van Dijk, 1988). What this implies is that language deployed in representing people and actions, for instance, can never be totally free of the socio-political and cultural influences and economic interests in which it was produced and disseminated. Thus, ideology always lives or lies beneath patterns and forms of representations.



Generally, ideologies are hidden, implicit and latent. Though ideologies are not overtly stated in the reports, our analysis of the linguistic context (co-texts), collocations, repetitions of words and socio-political context assist in uncovering the underlying ideologies. In the analysis that follows, we consider ideologies as system of socio-political and economic ideas by which the media legitimises and validates their claims. In tagging people and their actions in the Bakassi Peninsula border conflict, Nigerian and Cameroonian media were observed to be motivated by the following ideologies: economic interest, altruism, social justice, pacifism and patriotism.

## **5.2 Economic Interest as a Factor that Motivates the Conflict and the Struggle for the Peninsula Influences the Linguistic Tagging of Territorial Ownership and Non-Ownership.**

Bakassi Peninsula is generally acclaimed as potentially endowed with natural and material resources. Available literature claims that the coast off the peninsula is estimated to hold oil deposits of hundreds of millions of barrels, contains gas beds of trillions of cubic feet of gas and rich in shrimp, fish and other marine resources (Mbuh 2004; Price 2005; de Konings 2008, Ogen 2010). All these resources are disposable for any nation that controls the peninsula.

Economic interest influenced the tagging of territorial ownership and non-ownership in the news reports on the Bakassi peninsula conflict. Here, Bakassi dwellers were characterised and polarised as ‘landlords’ and ‘tenants’. The representation is that landlords have right to the resources in the area while tenants are mere ‘occupants’ of the region. In the reports, the words ‘natives’ and ‘indigenes’ represent territorial ownership (landlords) while ‘inhabitants’ and ‘residents’ show territorial non-ownership (tenants). For example,

## Text 99

He (Cameroon's communication minister) added that when finally a Cameroonian territory, Bakassi would help in relaunching the Cameroonian **economy** judging that the Peninsula is endowed with **rich natural resources**. He disclosed that the Nigerian **residents** in Bakassi have three options, to wit, returning to Nigeria, remaining in the area like all other Nigerians in the country, or solicit Cameroonian nationality. (*Eden*, August 13, 2008)

The word 'residents' is a non-ownership tag used in *Eden* (Cameroonian newspaper) to describe Nigerians in Bakassi. Representing (tagging) Nigerians as non-owners even before the supposedly August 14, 2008 handover was motivated by economic interests. The conflict over the peninsula was centred on who owns and controls the material and natural resources in the territory. The text puts it that the peninsula is 'endowed with rich natural resources'. Describing Nigerians as residents (non-owners) exclude them from the privileges of a citizen to the economy wealth of a nation. With Nigerians excluded from the ownership of the Peninsula and Cameroonians become the likely owners, appropriating the resources would be able to re-launch the Cameroonian economy. However, for some Nigerians to still benefit from the resources, the choice of the third option of soliciting Cameroonian nationality becomes viable. The first and second options also exclude them from partaking in the largesse. Phrases like "relaunching the Cameroonian economy...", "rich natural resources...", point to the economic interest and motives which triggered the representation of ownership.

In like manner, economic interest also motivated the representations of Nigerians with non-territorial ownership tags in *The Post*.

## Text 100

According to BBC online news, the predominantly Nigerian population is unhappy about the handover. Nigerian **inhabitants** have been given the option of staying in the peninsula under the Cameroonian authority or be resettled in Nigeria. But some Nigerian citizens are torn between leaving the place to be resettled under the Nigerian administration and staying in their ancestral land **rich** in fish as foreigners in Cameroon (*The Post*, August 17, 2006)

In the text above, *The Post* characterised Nigerians as tenants of the oil-rich peninsula using the word ‘inhabitants’. The idea behind this is to emphasize the privileges of a territorial owner from non-territorial owner especially on the economic advantages of the region and to show distinction between those who have better material possession over the other. Nigerians are represented as inhabitants with less material possession hence there is a huge limitation to the access to wealth and resources in the region. Aware of this fact, the “Nigerian inhabitants” are described with the adjective “unhappy”. To express their economic interest, the Cameroonian authority gives the Nigerians resident in Bakassi two dialectical difficult options to choose. Both options they know will only protect the rights of Cameroonian citizens and loss of economic rights to Nigerians. The first was to leave the endowed area and be resettled in Nigeria. The second option was to stay back in the rich area as foreigners. These options are unacceptable to the inhabitants who were unhappy about the loss either ways. Thus, they were ‘torn’ between choosing the red sea and the devil.

The tagging of territorial ownership and non-ownership in the Nigerian news reports was also motivated by the ideals of economic interest. We see this in the text below:

### Text 101

Bakassi: From Nigeria To The Republic of Cameroon. And finally, Nigeria **lost** the **oil-rich** Bakassi Peninsula to the Republic of Cameroon. SUNDAY ORISAKWE who visited the island writes on the feelings of loss that have engulfed the **residents** since the hand over, even as they make plans, based on government promises, on how to move ahead with their lives. (*The Guardian*, August 19, 2006)

In Text 101, *The Guardian* describes Nigerians still in Bakassi after the first handover of the peninsula on 14 August, 2006 as residents. The tagging presents them as non-owners since Nigeria has already “lost the [economic right of] the oil-rich peninsula to...Cameroon”. With the use of this tag, the paper brings to light first, the economic loss of the country, Nigeria and then, the effects on its citizens with the phrase “feelings of loss”, subordinate clause “how to move ahead with their lives ” and the verb “lost”. The deliberate focus on the economic loss brings to the fore, the reason of contention over the region which is economic interest. As residents, Nigerians who before the handover were supposedly indigenes no longer have hopes of maximizing gains in their ‘ancestral lands’ but are engulfed in the ‘feeling of loss’. That the residents express such feelings suggest their detachment from the economic rights or claim to proceeds from the “oil-rich” region. Loss to the resident, in this case will be the provision of their daily substances got from fishing as Bakassi encloses a large variety of fish.

‘Indigene’, a word for territorial ownership used in *The Punch* in describing people can possibly be linked with economic motives.

### Text 102

He wondered why it had taken the government a long time to seek permanent solution to the plight of its **indigenes**, who were evicted from their ancestral home and subjected to intimidation, torture and killing by the gendarmes (*The Punch*, August 25, 2010)

In Text 102, Nigerians are presented as “indigenes” that have lost economic relevance in their former settlement, Bakassi. In this report, *The Punch* with the use of the

verb “evicted” explains how these indigenes lost their economic value in that region and why their economic rights lies somewhere else. *The Punch* reveals the fact that the economic rights of these citizens are however not protected by their own government implying a double tragedy for them. Nouns like “intimidation”, “torture”, “killing’ were used to portray the level of economic neglect suffered by these Nigerians. Also, the description of the people as ‘indigenes’ of a ‘rich’ peninsula suggest ownership and rights to the resources hence a loss of that status will require adequate compensation. The indigenes were reported to have been unfairly treated by both Nigerian and Cameroonian governments despite the fact that they had a heritage that was potentially endowed. The maltreatment included dispossession of their land and delay in making up for their resources.

### **5.3 Altruism, a Cultural Ideal that Shows Concern to the Wellbeing of Others Motivates Linguistic Tagging of Dislocation**

Altruism is simply a belief in acting for the good of others. According to Chaturvedi (2000: 11), it is a ‘concern for the interests and welfare of others. Based either upon enlightened self interest, or a belief in a common humanity; the responsibility of each for every other human being’. The ideology stems from the social values that showing concern for others, especially those suffering is right. The basic concern for an altruist is to see the problems of others solved. Though the media is not a humanitarian organisation that engages in charitable endeavours, it shares in the ideology of improving the lives of the affected. One way of showing concern to the suffering of others is the constant reporting of the ills and neglect, thereby projecting the need for a proper care. In the struggle for the Bakassi Peninsula, Bakassi inhabitants (mainly Nigerians) were displaced and dispossessed of their lands and means of livelihood. This brought a lot of suffering to the people who no longer have access to their homes and businesses. In reporting on their dispossession and suffering, the Nigerian media is motivated by the cultural ideal of elevating the living conditions of the victims. Nigerian media is observed to have been motivated by the ideology of altruism by reporting the events from the Bakassi from a human angle point view. In most of the reportage on dispossession and suffering, issues

bothering on clothing, shelter and food are projected for immediate attention. For instance,

### Text 103

But investigations by SUNDAY PUNCH revealed that since the returnees were moved to the housing estate in January, both the federal and state governments have **abandoned** them to their fate. Presently, hunger, frustration and despair, it was gathered, have topped the situation report following unusual circumstances that forced them to abandon their sources of livelihood in Bakassi peninsula. It was observed that the **isolated** estate which has been overtaken by vegetation, **lacked** basic amenities to sustain healthy living. The haggard-looking returnees were seen **languishing** in the bushy estate which **lacked** potable water and medical facilities. They were also seen fetching and drinking from **untreated** stream water which is located many kilometers away from the estate. (*The Punch*, May 2, 2010)

In the report, *The Punch* portrayed the suffering of the returnees by painting vivid pictures of their adversity. There is a concentration on words portraying lack of care and concern for the well-being of the ‘returnees’. Adjectives like ‘haggard-looking’, and nouns such as ‘hunger’, ‘frustration’ and ‘despair’ were employed to describe the unfortunate conditions of the ‘returnees’, focusing on the ills of the returnees. Linguistic items that show neglect include “abandoned”, “isolated”, “lacked” “untreated”. The choice of these words in describing the situation of the returnees is motivated by an awareness that the people who have been displaced should be adequately catered for. Thus, an absence of this care is portrayed to draw the attention of the Nigerian government.

Similarly, *The Punch* also shows special interest in and concern for people who are poorly assisted by their government and society in the text below.

### Text 104

A journey to the beach shows the state of **squalor** and **poverty** the returnees now find themselves. Many of them are **without food** to eat and worse, they sleep in open spaces, a situation that has left many of their children **sickly**. Surprisingly, as the returnees face **deplorable conditions** at Ibaka, more speedboats loaded with Bakassi returnees are still berthing at the beach, creating a kind of **population explosion** in Mbo LG (*The Punch*, August 10, 2008)

Text 104 provides the reader with details of the traumatising experience encountered by the ‘returnees’. This description is observed to expose the woes of this group of people with a glaring intention to attract redress. Through the choice of the lexical items, ‘squalor’, and ‘poverty’, which are context-bound synonyms, the report presents the physical suffering that the people are subjected to as a result of their dispossession. Being aware of the lack of basic necessities of lives for the returnees, *The Punch* is emotional by the level of suffering witnessed on visits to the camp site. The concerns raised are projected in expressions as ‘without food to eat’, ‘sleep in open spaces’ and ‘their children sickly’. These phrases have elements of altruism, as they not only establish a graphic picture of the ‘deplorable conditions’ and congestion in the camps but also draw the attention of the government to the need to intensify efforts in addressing the sufferings of the people. The choice of the phrase “population explosion” also lent credence to the impending dangers that awaits the returnees at the camps.

*The Guardian* also displayed altruism in the representation of dislocation. Just like *The Punch*, *The Guardian* also portrays the suffering of the refugees based on the ideas that refugees should be cared for. Text 105 below shows this.

### Text 105

At their temporary refugee camp at the Government Primary School, Ikang Central, the refugees looked **despondent** and **lost** in their land, virtually **littering** everywhere in the primary school with **no beds or mattresses to sleep on** (*The Guardian*, June 14, 2008)

The adjectives ‘despondent’ and ‘lost’ describe the hopeless state of the refugees while “littering everywhere” and with “no bed or mattresses to sleep on” show neglect and dejection. *The Guardian* portrayed the ideology of altruism to argue and express dismay on the improper resettlement of the refugees. The report presented the dilapidated state of the camp where the refugees were resettled. This is as a result of neglect on the welfare of the refugees by the Nigerian government. Through this, *The Guardian* invariably advocates for a proper resettlement of the refugees and provision of good accommodation to ease their suffering.

The need for provision of good accommodation is also projected in Text 106 below.

#### **Text 106**

Large number of displaced Nigerians have literally taken over the entire three-classroom while others were seen **loitering** around in an apparent state of **despondency** (*The Guardian*, July 12, 2008)

The words “loitering” and “despondency” suggest neglect. The refugees who are not comfortable sleeping were wandering. This paints the picture of people who were once in the comfort of their homes and are now being subjected to acute discomfort. The discomfort, in this case, includes exposure to cold, mosquito bites, noise and fear of armed robbery. The ideology behind this is for the people to be better cared for. Thus, absence of this showed in their “apparent state of despondency”. The reference to the number of returnees is to show further the possibility of an epidemic and suffocation. It also suggests a looming danger in the health of the campers appealing again to the psychology of the government and the need for them to respond swiftly. The motivation is a concern for the suffering of distressed people.

#### **5.4 Social Justice, a Belief in Fairness and Respect for Human Rights Underlies the Linguistic Tagging of Dislocation**

Tagging of dislocation is also motivated by the need for social justice. Social justice is an ideology that believes in equity and fairness to all. That is, every individual has fundamental human rights, and justice has to be evenly distributed to all. Human rights



include right to own a house and stay in a particular region or country without abuse. Nigerian news reports on the Bakassi Peninsula border conflict displayed the ideals of social justice in their tagging of dislocation. In representing dispossession and suffering, the Nigerian media implicitly advocates for equality and respect of the fundamental human rights of the individual. These rights extend to security, shelter and good standard living conditions as stated in the United Nation 1948 declaration on human rights. Bearing in mind that these rights seem to have eluded the displaced Bakassi inhabitants, the Nigerian media frequently reported on human rights abuses, especially in the case of dispossessing people of lands and means of livelihood. For instance,

### **Text 107**

No fewer than 17 Nigerians have reportedly been killed by the Cameroonian gendarmes in Bakassi, following the sacking of Nigerians in the peninsula. To date, over 2000 Nigerians have been **sent packing** from the peninsula by Cameroonian authorities... The treatment by Cameroonians in Bakassi has been termed a **violation** of the Green Tree Agreement which says that Nigerians are free to remain where they are in Bakassi without any **molestation** (*The Guardian*, December 1, 2009)

The lexical choices “sent packing”, “violation” and “molestation” suggest abuse of human rights. As part of the stipulations in the Green Tree Agreement, Nigerians have the right to remain in the peninsula after the handover. However, they were allegedly ejected from the peninsula through constant harassment and torture. *The Guardian* expressed the ideals of social justice to argue for Nigerians freedom from such injustice meted them by the Cameroonian soldiers. Recognising that Nigerians are no longer free to live in the peninsula, the newspaper raises alarm over the breach of agreement (Green Tree Agreement) suggesting (possibly) the need for the Nigerian government to take legal actions against the Cameroonian authority. This is with the intent that the right of the people be respected. Concerning social protection in general, including for citizens and non-citizens, article 22 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 states that ‘everyone, as a member of the society, has the right to social security’.

*The Punch* also projected human rights violations in its reports. For instance

**Text 108**

If the troops will ever get back there, they will be going back to meet a terribly tortured, harassed and frustrated group of Nigerians. This is why the locals have begged the Nigerian government to ensure that they were relocated immediately to avoid further harm from the Camerounian gendarmes who have been **exploiting** them and making sure they did not fish in the Bakassi waters without pains (*The Punch*, August 19, 2006).

The words “exploiting”, ‘tortured’ and ‘harassed’ suggest an abuse of the right to dignity of human person under the Nigerian Constitution of chapter 4 sub-section 1(a) which states that: ‘every individual is entitled to respect of the dignity of his person and accordingly – (a) no person shall be subject to torture or to inhuman or degrading treatment’. The Nigerian print media is observed to have consciously engaged these words to draw the attention of the Nigerian government to the infringement of rights of her citizen. In the text, the Cameroonians soldiers are alleged to be taking advantage of Nigerians after the handover. To exploit means to take an unfair advantage of another person. Exploitation extends to physical abuse. The physical abuse is captured in the present state of Nigerians as ‘terribly tortured, harassed and frustrated’ as already mentioned. These adjectives show the extent of harm that has been meted on the people as a result of exploitation from the Cameroonians soldiers. *The Punch* which believes in fair treatment articulates the ideology of social justice to portray the abuse of Nigerians in their representation of dispossession.

Social justice also extends to a consideration of the requirements of justice applied to the benefits and burdens of a common existence. This view is in line with the United Nations 1948 Universal Declaration on Human Rights in Article 1 which states that ‘all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and right. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood’. The text below no doubt exposes the breach of this declaration as the Cameroonians soldiers are portrayed

as harassing ‘returnees’ and also as the Nigerian government failed to meet the basic needs of the displaced.

### **Text 109**

Indications to this emerged on Saturday as SUNDAY PUNCH gathered that the state was yet to resettle the returnees two years after Bakassi peninsular was officially handed over to Cameroon by Nigeria. Over 5000 of the returnees who fled Bakassi due to alleged harassment by Cameroonian gendarmes have been living in a deplorable condition at Ekpri Obutong resettlement camp in Bakassi Local Government Area. SUNDAY PUNCH had exclusively reported that the camp lacked basic facilities to sustain healthy living, even as the inhabitants were faced with frustration. (*The Punch*, June 13, 2010).

Phrases from text 109 to include ‘yet to resettle’, ‘lacked basic facility’, ‘deplorable condition’ are pointers to the breach of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights. It becomes obvious that the Nigerian print media is particular about the bad state of the living conditions of the displaced and the need to attend to this need if it requires the United Nations to step in.

### **5.5 Patriotism, a Political Ideal of Showing Allegiance, Loyalty or Devotion to a Country Motivates the Linguistic Tagging of Militancy.**

Patriotism is an ideology that encompasses proud loyalty and devotion to one’s nation. According to McLean (1996: 366), patriotism is “love of one’s country or zeal in the defence of the interest of one’s country”. A patriot is a person who supports his/her country all the time and has the conviction that his/her country is superior to others. Thus, to be patriotic means to promote and commend the virtues of the country and its citizens. In the Cameroonian news reports on resistance, patriotism motivated the tagging of militancy. That is, the Cameroonian media consciously projected Cameroonian soldiers as heroes fighting to protect the territorial space of the nation. There is a deliberate effort to project the victims as the enemy/rebel thus endorsing the actions of the soldiers such as

killing, maiming and combating Nigerian ‘residents’ (as reported in the Nigerian media) as brave and gallant.

### **Text 110**

The release stated that Cameroon military forces stationed in Jabane, informed of the attacks, **went on a manhunt** for the assailants and **succeeded** to sink one of their boats while the other is reported to have escaped towards the Nigerian end of the Peninsula. This time around there was no material or human casualties on the Cameroonian side. (*Eden*, December 10, 2008)

Acts of heroism trail the prompt response of the soldiers in text 110. The media in the above excerpt commended the swift response of the soldiers that saw the end of a supposed attack by ‘assailant’ on national property. The verb phrase ‘...went on manhunt’ and the verb “succeeded” not only help to echo the fact that the soldiers are capable of restoring sanity to the turbulent region but as warning to the supposed troublemakers of that region tagged as ‘rebel’, ‘militant’, ‘assailant’, and ‘pirate’. This idea however represented the soldiers as die-hard patriot who upon receiving information of an attack had courage to pursue the attackers. By extension, sinking of supposed Nigerian boat and possibly drowning its occupants is also considered bravery as there was neither material nor human loss on the Cameroonian side. Not recording any casualty does not only show a nod for triumph but also reveals patriotism. *Eden* projects the view that the soldiers have come out triumphantly as they could tame Niger Delta insurgents in Bakassi.

*Eden* in Text 111 also displayed patriotism by revealing the level of bravery paraded by the Cameroonian soldiers as they report on militant unrest in Bakassi.

### **Text 111**

It should be recalled that in riposte to the several attacks by the Nigerian pirates and continuous menaces, the Cameroonian army on Thursday 24 July **went all out for action**, killing about ten of the pirates, seizing their ammunitions and held others in captivity (*Eden*, July 28, 2008)

Bravery is captured in the assertion that the soldiers “went all out for action’ and emerged victorious. The representation here is that the army is forced to engage the pirates in a face off; thus, they are excused for alleged brutality in the Cameroonian newspapers. That is, the action of retaliation by the soldiers is justified since they have been attacked severally by some supposedly notorious groups disturbing the peace of nation. The killing is a way of ridding or sanitizing the area of the frequent pirates’ attacks. As patriotic gesture, the soldiers are represented as heroes who are able to defeat the pirates in a battle. Thus, the submission in *Eden* representations is that the Cameroonian soldiers are superior to their counterparts (the militants) in terms of military powers.

In its representation, *The Post* also subscribes to the view that the Cameroonian soldiers are better than the Nigerian rebels. Thus,

#### **Text 112**

They were captured after **reinforced** Cameroon military forces in the Bakassi zone **beat back** an early morning incursion at their position by the Nigerian Niger Delta rebels (*The Post*, July 28, 2008).

In the text, the “reinforced” Cameroonian military forces are able to overpower and thwart the activities of the Niger Delta rebels who have been invading the Bakassi peninsula area. To “beat back” means to defeat and be able to overpower a supposed terror. As far as the Cameroonian newspapers were concerned the Niger Delta rebels were militants and threat to the peace of their nation so the fact that the soldiers have started to capture them is a relief and beginning of a safe nation. Thus, as combatants, the soldiers have been able to crush rebels’ invasion.

#### **Text 113**

According to a military source in Bakassi, some five assailants in two speed boats attacked a fishing boat on the Cameroon territorial waters in a boundary area between Cameroon and Bakassi before Cameroon soldiers **pushed back** the rebels shooting three out of the five assailants (*The Post*, October 20, 2008).

In the text, Cameroonian soldiers' retaliation to attacks from the rebels is described as 'pushing back' the rebels. Through the choice of 'push back', the soldiers are exonerated from the blames of possible killing of three rebels as it is seen as resistance in self defence and a responsive mechanism. That is, the soldiers promptly defended attacks from the rebel and are able to thwart their incursion. Patriotism is embedded here as there is implicit commendation of the heroic deeds. *The Post* recognises the capability of the Cameroonian soldiers who not only defeated rebellion but close to bringing an end to further attacks.

### **5.6 Pacifism, a Belief in Peaceful Resolution of Conflicts Influences the Linguistic Tagging of Violence**

Pacifism has a variety of senses including opposition to war and violence. According to McLean (1996: 356), pacifism is a "rejection of war as a mean of settling disputes". It believes that war is unjustified. As an anti-war and anti-violence ideology, pacifism extends to using legal means (including police) to restore peace and calm in any troubled area. The central concern of the pacifists is to enforce peace and avoid wars. Thus, they oppose and try to curb any form of violence that can escalate into war. Many pacifists believe that even as efforts are made to do away with the institution of war, the use of 'force' is still an appropriate response to unjust external threats. Thus, pacifism advocates for nonviolence while explicitly supporting the use of police as an effective approach to dealing with violent conflict for the purpose of restoring law and order. Pacifism is observed to influence the tagging of violence in the Cameroonian reports. The texts below make explicit the link between the ideal of pacifism and the tagging of violence. For instance:

#### **Text 114**

Contrary to some media reports, the Cameroon Army has taken a bold step to permanently **stamp out** insurgency in the Bakassi Peninsula in the wake of incessant attacks by yet to be identified assailants ahead of the 14 August final handover. (*Eden*, July 28, 2008)

In the text above, *Eden* projects the conscious effort of the Cameroonian army to restore law and order in the troubled region ahead of the handover. Insurgency is a violent act will ordinarily threaten peace, hence the need to “stamp out” such threats. The representation is that the Cameroonian army wants to end violence. The phrase “stamp out insurgency” suggests not just an end but the eradication of violence permeated by yet to be identified assailants. Here, *Eden* projects the view that Cameroon (especially its soldiers) wants a peaceful handover on 14 August and thus, is eager to permanently end the violence that threatens the peaceful handover.

The lexical choices “clip”, “nip” and “swift interventions” also support the ideal of peace and end to violence in the text below:

### **Text 115**

The sea pirates that have been reigning terror in the zone are a real cause for concern to the governments of both Nigeria and Cameroon. The Rapid Intervention Forces therefore have the arduous task to **clip** their wings and **nip** all their actions in the bud through **swift interventions** when and wherever they attempt to stick their head (*Eden*, February 18, 2009)

The text above began by providing background information on the constant attacks and hooliganism carried out by sea pirates. This information is provided to drive home the point that both governments (Nigeria and Cameroon) are tired of these constant attacks as captured by the verb phrase ‘...have been reigning terror’ and would rather prefer the ‘force’ swing into action to curtail this menace. In the text, the force contracted by the government to restore law and order is introduced as ‘The Rapid Intervention Forces’. Engaging choices like “clip their wings” and “nip...in the bud”, *Eden*, reports on the capability of the Rapid Intervention Force in restoring relative peace in the region. It becomes obvious that the newspaper is particular about a resolution of the conflict than its escalation.

In its representation of violence, *The Post* also projects the need for peace in the area by crushing actors of violence. The text below illustrates this

### Text 116

Last Thursday, Biya appointed Lt. Col. Benedict Ayukegba to command all military operations in Bakassi ... Lt. Col. Ayukegba, it is expected, will lead the Rapid Intervention Unit, BIR, now manning the Bakassi peninsula, to **crush** the marauding rebels and bring honour to the country. (*The Post*, April 27, 2009)

The act of “crushing the marauding rebels” by the institutionalized force (Rapid Intervention Unit) shows the ideals of a pacifist who opposes violence. To “crush” means to quell or end something vicious. The Cameroonian soldiers having been charged with the task of terminating the violent activities of rebels who have been engaging in dangerous raids is also saddle with the responsibility of restoring the glory of the nation (Cameroon). Thus, arresting the nefarious activities of the rebels will guarantee an end to violence and the birth of law and order – an ideology of a pacifist. In other words, by crushing the rebels, violence which threatens peace between Nigeria and Cameroon will be eliminated. That is, instead of going to war, there is the need to suppress acts of terrorism.

Also supporting the ideal of pacifism in the text below is the use the transitive verb ‘fish out’.

### Text 117

A special team of top military officers has reportedly been assigned to Bakassi with a brief to **fish out** culprits of Monday's attack. Colonel Hypolite Ekaba of "Operation Delta," the military unit in charge of Bakassi operations, is leading the officers in the investigation (*The Post*, June 12, 2008)

In the text above, the Cameroonian military have been assigned to “arrest” the attackers of Cameroonian soldiers. By “fishing out the culprit”, the soldiers are instructed to engage force to achieve peace as the end result. The overriding idea is that Cameroon and its soldiers represent agents of peace. The text below captures this view



## Text 118

Ze Meka said despite the provocative attacks, the Cameroonian forces are **disciplined, determined and engaged** to see the conflict have a logical end. (*The Post*, June 23, 2008)

*The Post* carefully lists the good qualities the Cameroonian soldiers possess and projects their determination to see the conflict ends reasonably. The qualities include ‘discipline’, ‘determination’ and ‘commitment’. It is these attributes that motivate them in their quest for a ‘peaceful’ resolution of the conflict. Thus, they are able to resist the temptation of engaging in reprisal attack(s) that can mar peace in their conflict mediation. By extension, they are represented as sacrificing their anger on the altar of tolerance through their withstanding of all forms of provocation from their supposed enemies.

### 5.7 Conclusion

This chapter investigated the interactions between ideologies and linguistic tagging of people and actions. The study discovered that there is a dynamic interaction between linguistic tagging and ideologies. Economic interest motivated the tagging of ownership and non-ownership in both nations’ newspapers. The values of social justice and altruism mediated the tagging of dislocation in the Nigerian reports while the political ideals of pacifism and patriotism triggered violence and militancy tags in the Cameroonian reports.

## CHAPTER SIX

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 6.1 Introduction

This chapter comprises the summary, the conclusion and the recommendations for further studies. We set out in this study to investigate how the Nigerian and Cameroonian print media represented people and their actions in the Bakassi peninsula border conflict using a synthesis of insights from van Dijk's socio-cognitive model of Critical Discourse Analysis, Halliday's Systemic Linguistics and the theory of lexical decomposition. This required us to identify and discuss not only the recurring themes and forms of language used in representing people and their actions, but also to uncover the underlying ideologies that motivated the representations in both nations' reports on the conflict. We also had to examine the link between the linguistic representations of people and their actions and specific socio-political ideologies manifest in the reports. This is done in order to see whether there are differences in the underlying ideologies in the Nigerian and Cameroonian newspapers reports and to determine how the differences between them are reflected in the linguistic representation of people and their actions in the conflict situation.

#### 6.2 Summary of Findings

Having studied the selected Nigerian and Cameroonian newspaper representations of people and their actions and underlying ideologies, we present the summary of findings under the following headings:

- (1) The recurring dominant themes in the Nigerian and Cameroonian newspaper reports on the Bakassi Peninsula conflict

- (2) The specific linguistic means and forms of representing people and their actions in the reports
- (3) The specific hidden socio-political and economic ideologies underlying linguistic representation of people and their actions
- (4) The link between the linguistic forms of representing people and their actions and ideologies
- (5) The convergence and divergence of the underlying ideologies in the Nigerian and Cameroonian newspaper reports on the conflict situation.

### **6.2.1 The Recurring Dominant Themes in the Nigerian and Cameroonian Newspaper Reports on the BPBC**

The recurring dominant themes in the Nigerian and Cameroonian newspaper reports on the Bakassi Peninsula border conflict were economy, territorial ownership and non-ownership, dispossession, suffering, resistance and terrorism. Economy was instrumental to all other themes in the reports. That is, it influenced other themes around it. In line with available literature on the conflict (Ogen, 2010; Mbuh, 2004), economic determinism is said to be the cause for the struggle of spatial and marital resources which the peninsula houses while the other themes were the aftermath of the dispute. As a result of the struggle, people were dispossessed of their lands and means of livelihood. Dispossession naturally led to suffering. In order to cushion the effects of suffering, the dispossessed resisted by engaging in different acts of militancy. This finally climaxed to terrorism.

### **6.2.2 The Specific Linguistic Means and Forms of Representing People and their Actions in the Reports**

A major process and means of representing people and their actions is linguistic tagging. Four linguistic forms of tagging which correlated with the five themes were identified in the reports. The theme of terrorism took the lexical tags of violence, and resistance, the tags of militancy. Dispossession and suffering took the tags of dislocation, and economy, the tags of territorial ownership and non-ownership. People and their actions were tagged at two linguistic levels: lexical and grammatical.

At the lexical levels, people were sorted and categorised into different groups using specific lexical tags. For instance, words denoting violence such as ‘gunmen’, ‘attackers’, ‘pirates, and ‘assassins’ were used in tagging people as terrorists while those suggesting resistance such as ‘rebels’, ‘insurgents’, ‘freedom fighters’ and ‘activists’ were used in tagging people as militants. In a similar manner, words denoting dispossession and suffering were used in tagging people as the dispossessed and victims. Such words are ‘refugees’, ‘returnees’, ‘the displaced’ etc. Also words such as ‘indigenes’, ‘natives’, ‘residents’, and ‘inhabitants’ were employed in tagging people as territorial owners and non-owners.

At the grammatical level, people and their actions were further tagged by transitive clauses, passivisation, nominalisation and metaphors. The tagging of violence and militancy were reinforced by material processes of actions, agentless passives, passives and nominal clauses. The tagging of dispossession and suffering were further buttressed with metaphors, particularly of water and verbs signifying mental conditions. In addition, the tags featured emotive and evaluative adjectives and intensifying adverbs.

### **6.2.3 The Specific Hidden Ideologies Underlying the Linguistic Representations of People and their Actions**

The linguistic representations of people and their actions were observed to be motivated by five specific ideologies. The ideologies are Economic interest, altruism, social justice, patriotism and pacifism. Economic interest allied to the financial motives and gains in the contest over the region. The social ideal of altruism showed social concern for the welfare of the dispossessed while social justice revealed the abuse of human rights of the dispossessed. Political ideal of patriotism advocated national allegiance and loyalty while pacifism promoted the need for peace

### **6.2.4 The Link between the Specific Forms of Representing People and their Actions and Ideologies**

There is a dynamic interaction between ideologies and linguistic tagging of people and their actions in the news reports. Five underlying ideologies motivated different forms of linguistic tagging of people and their actions. Economic interest triggered the tagging of

territorial ownership and non-ownership. The tagging of dislocation was motivated by the cultural ideals of altruism and social justice. Pacifism mediated the tagging of violence while patriotism prompted the tagging of militancy.

### **6.2.5 The Convergence and Divergence of Underlying Ideologies in the Nigerian and Cameroonian Newspaper Reports**

The study observed areas of convergence and divergence in ideologies underlying the linguistic tagging of people and their actions in the Nigerian and Cameroonian newspapers. Economic interest was central to both nations' media representation of the conflict. In representing economy, territorial and maritime ownership, both nations' newspapers were influenced by the beliefs of economic gains that could be appropriated from the peninsula. Thus, the newspapers selected words and expressions such as 'oil-rich', 'resource-rich', etc. to reflect the economic interests while 'natives' and 'indigenes', and residents' and 'inhabitants' respectively indicated land ownership and non-ownership. Aside economic determinism that motivated the struggle for the peninsula, ideologies that influenced the tagging of people and their actions in both nations' reports were different.

In the Nigerian news reports, the values of social justice and altruism mediated the representation of dispossession and suffering. Social justice is a cultural ideal that favours fairness and equity in dealing with other people. It advocated respect for fundamental human rights, especially for the oppressed. In tagging people as the dispossessed and underserved, the values of social justice were implicit. Here, the Nigerian media employed tags of dislocation to foreground injustice and unfair treatment of the people. Such tags, which were accompanied with 'dismal' adjectives, revealed misery of the people who have been dispossessed of their lands and means of livelihood. In a similar way, altruism, the cultural ideal that shows concern for the well-being of others, also mediated the tagging of dislocation in the Nigerian reports. In the representation of the suffering of Nigerians in Bakassi, the Nigerian reports were observed to be altruistic, defending their national interests. The people were represented as undergoing both physical and psychological sufferings. The sufferings were foregrounded with 'harrowing' adjectives. Such adjectives were found in expressions like 'the traumatised people', 'the distressed and stranded returnees', 'the embattled returnees', 'the haggard-looking returnees', 'a

terribly tortured, harassed and frustrated group of Nigerians’ and ‘devastated returnees’. The representation was not only to project their sufferings but also to attract international attention to the victims.

In the Cameroonian media, political ideals of pacifism and patriotism prompted the tagging of violence and militancy respectively. Pacifism, a belief in peaceful resolution, motivated the representation of violence. The Cameroonian media through the tagging of violence projected the need for a peaceful resolution of the conflict and showed displeasure to the different forms of violence. Pacifism in the Cameroonian reports was obtained at two levels. At the first level, the media foregrounded violence by representing actors of violence with a range of distinct words denoting terrorism such as ‘assassins’, ‘killers’, ‘attackers’, etc. Violence is also brought to the fore by magnifying the effect of the acts with intensifying adverbs and adjectives as can be found in the following expressions: ‘ruthlessly assassinated’, ‘brutally killed’, ‘badly mutilated’, ‘repeated attacks’, ‘persistent attacks and killings’, ‘incessant incursions’, etc. At the second level, the Cameroonian media projected the need for curtailing violence to avoid its escalation to war and to enable peaceful resolution and handover. This process extended to the use of military and police in taming actors of violence and intervening in the crisis situation. Thus, certain words denoting suppression of violence and intervention were employed in representing the actions of the police. Some of them include ‘trap down’, ‘fish out’, ‘nip’, ‘crush’, ‘neutralise’, ‘clip’, ‘stamp out’, etc.

Also in the Cameroonian reports, patriotism triggered the tagging of militancy. Patriotism is an ideology that encompasses proud loyalty and devotion to one’s nation. Cameroonian media displayed patriotism in their representation of resistance of the rebellious groups. Here the Cameroonian media did not only refer to the actors of resistance as Nigerians but also explicitly projected and supported the supposedly “heroic deeds” of the Cameroonian soldiers in tackling insurgency. Some instances of the representations of the actors of resistance as Nigerians include ‘notorious group of militants from the Niger Delta’, ‘insurgent Niger Delta forces’, ‘Niger Delta rebels’, ‘Suspected Nigerian rebels’, ‘Supposed Niger Delta rebels’, ‘Niger Delta militant group’, ‘The battle pitching militant group from Nigeria’, ‘Nigerian Delta rebels’, ‘Notorious Niger Delta rebel group’ etc. On the other hand, the Cameroonian military forces were

represented as heroes who achieved a remarkable feat in saving situations in Bakassi. The representations were explicit allegiance and support of the Cameroonian soldiers who were represented as superior to the supposedly Nigerian ‘militants’. The actions of the Cameroonian gendarmes were represented with words such as ‘beat back’, ‘pushed back’ denoting overpowering.

### **6.3 Conclusion and Contributions of the Study**

This study has contributed to the study of ideology in the media in Nigeria. Specifically, it serves as a reference point for the study of ideology in media reports on international conflict situation through an eclectic and multidisciplinary approach. This study has applied a synthesis of insights from van Dijk’s socio-cognitive model of critical discourse analysis, Halliday’s systemic linguistics and the theory of lexical decomposition to the analysis of language use in the Nigerian and Cameroonian newspaper reports on the Bakassi Peninsula border conflict. It has established that there is a dynamic interaction between linguistic tagging of people and their actions and ideologies in print media reports.

The work has demonstrated that in reporting on diverse socio-political and economic issues in conflict situations, the media tag people and their actions with particular socio-politically-grounded values. The study has shown that the lexical and grammatical choices employed by the media in tagging people and their actions have some connection with media’s ideologies. The study has demonstrated the importance of lexical decomposition methodology in the study of ideology in the media. This is a model that has been neglected in Nigerian (critical) linguistic studies.

This work has also contributed to the study and research in media discourse on conflict situation. The multidisciplinary approach adopted has thrown further light on the linguistic role of the media in border conflict mediation and resolution in Africa. In addition, the study has shown the relevance and applicability of lexical decomposition (componential analysis) in doing critical discourse analysis.

#### **6.4 Recommendations for Further Studies**

This study has focused on linguistic tagging of people and their actions and underlying ideologies in English-medium Nigerian and Cameroonian newspaper reports on the Bakassi Peninsula border conflict, August, 2006 – August, 2010. Further work can be carried out on media representation of significant events in the conflict for a better insight into the nature of interaction between linguistic tagging and ideology. In addition, studies can also be carried out on electronic media representations of the conflict as well as on the speeches of key actors in the conflict.



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