Framing and Group Polarisation in Hate Speeches in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

Since the Nigerian Civil War in 1970, there has been a mutual suspicion among its three major ethnic groups, Hausa (in the North), Igbo (East) and Yoruba (West). This is not only manifest in their socio-political life but has also generated strife and hate speech, typified by context-sensitive strategies. This paper highlights the key group-motivated strategies of framing and polarisation utilized in the hate speeches raised by different groups in the Nigerian political discourse. The 2017 Kaduna declaration by a northern union (Arewa Youths), threatening to evict the Igbo living in the northern region, and response texts from other unions to the declaration constitute the data. These were subjected to content analysis with insights from van Dijk's Ideological Representation and Halliday and Matthiessen's Transitivity Theory. The findings reveal a self-preservationist frame, which is polarised in the Self/Other pattern.

INTRODUCTION

Framing as a concept has been adopted by scholars in different fields of study and this has also led to diverse modifications of its definition. For instance, Frederic Bartlett relates it to the ways the human memory functions (Pluwak, 2011). Building on this, Minsky (1975) sees framing as a term for a stereotyped situation. The central function of metaphor in communication which is to reinforce different ways of making sense of particular aspects of our lives (Semino, Demjén, & Demmen, 2018) has also been referred to, metaphorically, as "framing" by scholars like Lakoff (2004); Semino (2008) and Cameroon et al. (2010). Some other scholars have treated frame as a formal sociology (Jameson, 1976), a symbolic interactionist approach (Littlejohn, 1977; Nelson, Oxley, & Clawson, 1997), ethnomethodological and semiotic (Jameson, 1976). Highlighting the dangers of framing, Musa and Ferguson (2013) observe that it has the potential to reinforce intolerance and, possibly, amplify conflicts and spread hate.

Any discourse can translate words into action. Words are like bullets, they slay the target when used maliciously, leaving hate, animosity, and a desire for more destruction in their wake (Neshkovska & Trajkova, 2014). In these times of political, economic, and religious upheaval, therefore, the world is witnessing an increase in the use of language to discredit, dehumanize, and shame opposition groups or individuals (Gagliardone, Patel, & Pohjonen, 2014). These kinds of inflammatory rhetoric have often been referred to as *hate speech* – a term that Mari Matsuda first used in her 1989 seminal article, "Public Response to Racist Speech: Considering the Story of the Victim" (Brown, 2017).

The definitions of hate speech and the issues surrounding it are often complex and, therefore, the concept has no single unanimously accepted definition. However, there is a level of convergence in scholars' views on the major characteristics of hate speech, which includes, but is not limited to, any speech, gesture, conduct, writing, or display capable of inciting people to violence (Cohen-Almagor, 2011; Jubany, 2015; Massaro, 1991). The Council of Europe (2012) also holds that 'all forms of expressions which spread, incite, promote, or justify racial hatred, xenophobia, anti-semitism or other forms of hatred based on intolerance, including intolerance expressed by aggressive nationalism and ethnocentrism, discrimination and hostility against minorities, migrants and people of immigrant origin' constitute hate speech. The definition of hate speech proposed by the Council of Europe is adopted as an operational definition of hate speech in this study. This understanding of hate speech, as other relevant studies have alluded to, presupposes that hate speech thrives on group identities (See Smolla, 2008; Musa & Ferguson, 2013; and Chiluwa & Adegoke, 2016).

The concept of "group" has been broached by researchers from various scholarly backgrounds. For instance, Tajfel and Turner's (1979) social identity theory explains that part of a person's concept of self comes from the groups to which they belong. Similarly, John Turner (1980) also developed 'self-categorisation theory' which seeks to understand and explain the process by which people form cognitive representations of themselves and others concerning different social groups. Behavioral biases of in-group and out-group have also been explained by in-group virtues and out-group vices (Schaefer, 1998); in-group love and out-group hate (Weisel & Böhm, 2015); in-group favoritism (Balliet, Wu, & De Dreu, 2014) and out-group rejection (Nawata & Yamaguchi, 2014). Evidently, in group-motivated hate speeches, the 'negative' aspects of the person(s) being perspectivised are magnified while playing down on their 'positive' parts through framing.

Ethno-political suspicion, hate speech and media discourse in Nigeria

The cultural, religious, and social heterogeneity of Nigeria have remained agents of division rather than unity. Continued attempts at unifying the ethnic groups have not yielded the anticipated political dividend. The country has battled with the unification of over two hundred and fifty languages and ethnic groups without success. An attempt at unifying the thirty-six states of the federation, the North—South geopolitical duality, and a bipolar Christian and Muslim religious stratification into a single, indivisible state has also failed. Many of the internal conflicts witnessed in the country are the aftermaths of the above polarisation.

For instance, the Niger Delta people located in the South-South geo-political region of Nigeria epitomize the struggle for political and economic emancipation. Years of exploitation of the natural resources that abound in their region by oil exploration companies have culminated in a situation of despair for the people. Similarly, the Nigerian Civil War which was fought between July 1967 and January 1970 has been viewed as a major struggle for the survival of the Igbo in Nigeria (Duruji, 2009). Following the end of the civil war in which over three million Igbo died, another 'war' seems to have begun (Aneke, 2007) which has been described as 'the Igbo question in Nigeria' (Ojukwu, 2009). For Uwalaka (2003), it is a war against the Igbo psyche, self-consciousness, and economic welfare. Nearly all the ethnic groups in Nigeria, like the Igbo, feel that there is a war against their psyche, self-consciousness, and economic welfare; each feels marginalized (Ojukwu, 2009). The above feeling has led to the formation of different tribal-centric groups like the ones whose declaration, on the one hand, and response texts, on the other hand, constitute the data for this investigation.

Literature Review

Engaging relevant literature, we observed that the nexus between framing and hate speech in recent years has attracted the attention of a great volume of scholarship from

linguistic and non-linguistic perspectives. The latter category, constituting a larger body of scholarship, spans works from political scientists (Ikeanyibe, Ezeibe, Mbah, & Nwangwu, 2017); lawyers (Terfa, Philip, & Junatu, 2017); psychologists (Kaminskaya, 2014); anthropologists (Bangstead, 2017) and historians (Brown, 2017). The former (linguistic) category includes the works on framing and stereotyping in areas such as journalism (e.g. Deji, Ogundele, & Olaleye, 2006; Musa & Ferguson, 2013), and insurgency (e.g. Okoro & Odoemelam, 2013; Odebunmi & Ajiboye, 2015; Patricia & Ojomo, 2015). As earlier observed, many scholars have also directed attention to hate-inducing speeches, such as Virginia and Olanrewaju (2017)—pragmatic; Mafeza (2016) —discursive, and Chiluwa and Adegoke (2016) —pragma-rhetoric.

Musa and Ferguson (2013) explored the reporting of sectarian conflicts in Nigerian newspapers. The work seeks to find out how enemy frames and stereotypes are created in the journalistic process. The investigation postulates that Nigerian newspapers use enemy frames and stereotypes to demonize "other", reshape their readers' impression of "other", reinforce intolerance, and, possibly, spread hate and amplify conflicts. Odebunmi and Folashade (2016) focused on the frames and pragmatic strategies in Nigerian newspaper reports on the Boko Haram insurgency. The work uses a combination of framing theory, pragmatic act, systemic functional grammar, and multimodal approach to critical discourse analysis to explore the Nigerian journalistic dealings with a terror situation. The paper submits that effective approaches to handling the Boko Haram crisis should not be devised broadly as a terrorist-targeted solution but as a specific tool taking into account the different manifestations of Boko Haram as attackers, villains, killers, insurgents, political thugs, criminals, and religious extremists. Similarly, Okoro and Odoemelam's (2013) investigation of print media framing of the Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria is targeted at identifying the pattern of frames adopted by Nigerian newspapers in the coverage of the Boko Haram insurgency in four newspapers (*The Guardian*, *Daily Sun*, *Vanguard* and *THISDAY*). The researchers observed that ethnic and religious frames have manifested very conspicuously in their data.

Exploring the nexus between framing and hate speech Virginia and Olanrewaju (2017) embark on a speech act analysis of hate speech in the 2015 general election campaign speeches in Nigeria. Utilizing Searle's (1969) speech acts of the assertive, directive, commission, declarative, expressive and Austins' (1962) verdictive category for explication of data, they noted with regret that the 2015 general election in Nigeria was characterized by the campaign of calumny, full of verbal attacks on perceived political opponents' Similarly, Rasaq (2017) examines the role of media and politics in the promotion of hate speech in Nigeria using insights from Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and Critical Race Theory (CRT.). The paper accuses the media of aiding hate speech by failing to sanction what they produce for people's consumption even when there is a clear case of vituperation by politicians against perceived opponents.

Other linguistic studies on the inter-connectedness between framing and hate speech abound. They include Arofah (2018) whose work on rhetorical analysis of hate speech submits that hate speech rhetoric neglects the ethos and logos aspects and mostly relies on pathos aspect to persuade its readers to hate; Simon (2019) who worked on self-restraint on hate speech, arguing that individuals may freely choose not to speak hatefully about others, anchoring it on three analytically distinct categories of normative codes of civility, ethics, and morality; Jamekolo (2017) who argues that the media have the potential to accentuate hate speech through news reporting and advocated socially responsible political journalism to ensure media compliance with legal provisions applicable to hate speech in Nigerian politics, and Kareem (2018) whose work on online communication opines that Islam and Muslims are

the target of some Facebook posts whose language and semiotic details represent hate speech which may sometimes amount to a call for genocide.

Some of the works reviewed are related to the present investigation in some ways. For instance, Rasaq (2017) relates to the present study in that it adopts an ideologically based approach to van Dijk's approach (socio-cognitive), but also differs from it because the present investigation utilizes a combination of van Dijk's (2006) approach to critical discourse analysis and transitivity theory of Halliday and Matthiesen's (2006) systemic functional grammar. Similarly, Virginia and Olanrewaju (2017) relates to the present work in its use of the theory of context (Searle, 1969) for explication of data but also differs from it in two significant ways: as distinct from the present investigation, it is an analysis of instances of hate speech as reported in some selected newspapers and magazines in Nigeria while the present investigation is focusing on a "Declaration" straight from first-order text producer(s) and free from the stints of media reportage. Likewise, while it (Virginia & Olanrewaju, 2017) is a study of the use of hate speech in the 2015 general election campaign speeches in Nigeria, the present study focuses on the 2017 Kaduna declaration by Arewa youths asking the Igbo to vacate northern Nigeria, and response texts to the declaration, as group-based hate speech.

In Nigeria, the division among many tribes, classes, and religions has created many frames and labels of the discourse participants which constantly play up in every discourse situation: political, religious, and the like. These frames, as observed in previous literature, are the major cause of ethnic suspicion, and hence hate speech and crimes. However, linguistic scholarship on hate speech has principally focused on the speech act types that characterize hate speech in political discourse (e.g. Virginia & Olanrewaju ,2017) and the role of the media and politics in the promotion of hate speech (e.g. Rasaq, 2017). Linguistic research effort on hate speech has not prioritized group profiling/framing as a major constituent of hate speech. The above gap necessitated the present research. The present research hopes to bridge the above gaps by identifying the frames deployed in the hate speeches making up the data; revealing the pragmatic strategies through which the frames are constructed; highlighting the role relations of the participants in the negotiation of the frames, and accounting for the linguistic forms that characterise the frames and pragmatic strategies

Theoretical Framework

This paper draws insights from a combination of theories, namely, van Dijk's (2006a) Ideological Representation in his Socio-cognitive Approach to Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and Halliday and Matthiessen's (2004) Transitivity Theory. CDA provides a great theoretical insight for this study. In CDA, for example, analysis of discourse is not merely transparent; it is instead a perspective and committed approach that includes examining the web of social processes and ideologies implicated in discourse (Wodak, 2001).

Van Dijk (1995a) views ideology as the attitude a group of people hold towards certain issues. To uncover ideology generated in discourse, van Dijk resorts to social analysis, discourse analysis, and cognitive analysis of text. The social analysis is adapted to context analysis and discourse analysis to text analysis in the traditional method of interpreting the text (van Dijk, 2006b). His most outstanding contribution to CDA is the third level of analysis, the cognitive analysis. He defines cognition as "the system of mental representations and processes of group members" (2006b, p. 18). Following his definition of cognition, he defines ideology as "systems that indirectly influence the personal cognition of group members" (2006b, p. 19). The notions of ideology and context bring about the notion of the *model* which deals with the representation of individuals within a social action or interaction which also relates to framing.

Van Dijk (2006a) nominates twenty-six analytic categories of ideological discourse analysis. They are actor description, consensus, counterfactuals, disclaimers, illustration, generalization, hyperbole, metaphor, self-glorification, negative other-presentation, norm

expression, presupposition, victimization, vagueness, authority, burden, categorization, comparison, euphemism, evidentiality, implication, irony, lexicalization, number game, polarisation, and populism.

Ten of them are found to be relevant to the present work. The relevant categories include: 'comparison'—evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of two or more discourse participants; 'implication' —the meanings that are deducible from certain utterances or actions; 'lexicalization' —the use of specific lexical items to express underlying concepts and beliefs; 'self-glorification' —positive description of 'self' and negative description of 'other'; 'norm expression' —a reference to the norm as justification for certain action or proposition; 'consensus' —an attempt to legitimize certain actions by claiming that it has the endorsement of all concerned; 'generalization' — used to formulate prejudices about generalized negative characteristics of a group; 'self-glorification' —positive references to or praise for oneself or in-group; 'authority' —a reference to constituted authority to sustain ideology and 'vagueness' —expressions that do not have well-defined referents, or which refer to fuzzy sets.

The categories in van Dijk's (2006a) work selected for analysis in this paper are realized through different processes and participant roles. For instance, vagueness is realized through agency passivation, consensus through agency generalization, and self-glorification through agency activation. The theory of the transitivity system plays an important part in the ideational function of language, by which the grammatical system is achieved. Transitivity is a semantic notion, and the transitivity system refers to a system for describing the whole clause as observed by Halliday (1994). He maintains that the transitivity system construes the experience of the world through a manageable set of process types. He identifies six processes: material processes, mental processes, relational processes, behavioral processes, verbal processes, and existential processes (Halliday, 1994). A few examples are bellowed the six process types.

Material processes are processes of doing. They express the notion that some entity does something that may be done to some other entity (Halliday, 1994), as shown in the following examples: He (actor) bought (process: material) the Yoruba boy (beneficiary) a car (goal). Mental process refers to a process of sense that is concerned with the sense of thoughts, observations, and sentiments. It is a reflection of people's awareness of states of being, as in We (sensor) love (process: mental) our southern brothers (phenomenon). Relational Process involves states of being (including having). In a relational process, a relationship is being set up between two separate entities, but without suggesting that one entity affects the other in any way: The Igbo leaders (carrier) were (process: relational) silent (attribute). Behavioral processes are processes of physiological and psychological behavior, like breathing, dreaming, smiling, looking, listening, and pondering, as in They (behaver) made (process: behavioral) a negative sign (range). A verbal process is the process of saying. "Saying" conveys any kind of symbolic exchange of meaning. Verbal process exists on the borderline between mental and relational processes. A good example is the sentence: The report (sayer) tells (process: verbal) us (receiver) that there is tension there (verbiage) while existential process represents processes of existing and happening. It expresses the existence of an entity without predicting anything else of it, as in: There is (process: existential) trouble (existent) in North East (circumstance).

The researcher hopes that these theoretic perspectives will help to reveal the frames deployed in the hate speeches making up the data, identify the pragmatic strategies through which the frames are constructed, and account for the linguistic forms that character

The 2017 Kaduna declaration asking the Igbo to vacate northern Nigeria and response texts to the declaration constitute the data for this study. The data were collected, using the purposive sampling technique, from selected Nigerian newspapers and other textual sources

like official websites, YouTube, and Facebook pages of different ethnically inclined groups in Nigeria. The data collection spans sixteen months (10th June 2017 —13th December 2018). They include the Kaduna Declaration, the Youths Of Oduduwa Republic Lagos Declaration, the O'odua Nationalist Coalition, (ONAC), Declaration, The Middle-Belt Patriotic Front (MB-PF) Press Conference, and Nnamdi Kanu's Aggitative Text. The data are thereafter transposed to a Microsoft Word document labeled "KD1—through MNK126" for convenience in analysis and referencing.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis begins with the presentation of a table marked 'Table 1' for a graphic representation of the group-motivated frames raised in the Kaduna declaration and other response texts to the declaration.

Table 1. The Kaduna declaration (KD) and the response-texts (RT) frames in the data

Kaduna Declaration (KD) frames	Example	
'self' and 'other' frame	Forceful lockdown and denial of other people's rights by the unruly Igbo…	
Response Text (RT) frames	**Example**	
'self' and 'other' frame	The North has always been the aggressor…	
	Pro KD frames	**Examples**
	'self' and 'other' frame	We are sick and tired of the generational threats of the Igbo extraction
	Counter KD frames	**Examples**
	'self' and 'other' frame	…we the Middle Belt are ready to offer the Igbos accommodation in our land

The above table indicates that the dominant frame raised in both the KD and the RTs is the "self" and "other" frame. The table captures how the Arewa youths, in the KD, frame "self"—(the Northerners) as a people whose rights are being denied and "other" —(the Igbo) as the people involved in the said act of denying other people of their rights. Similarly, in the RTs to the KD, the "other" —(the North) is framed as the aggressor. The table also shows that the RTs are largely in asymmetric relation as some are in alliance with (pro-) KD while some others are in disagreement with (counter-) KD, all of which determine how the "other" has been framed.

The "Self" and "Other" frame in the data

A dominant frame running across the data is the "self" and "other" frame. As noted earlier, the above frame is characterized by a negative presentation of the "other" and a positive projection of the "self". The "self" and "other", as a broad frame, have also been realized in the data through two sub-frames: incriminating and warning frames. The sub-frames are specifically realized through polarisation as a pragmatic strategy where polarisation is concerned with the construction of binary identities between social actors (self and other) in the data.

Incriminating frame

Incriminating frame is realized in the data when the "other" is accused of threatening the peace of "self" by indulging in unlawful activities capable of undermining the relative peace being enjoyed by the "self". To raise the above frame, the "other" and their activities are lexicalized using negative adjectives, belonging to the semantic field of violence, such as "unruly", "forceful", "denial", "confrontational", "brutal" and others. This can be seen in the following extract labeled "KD —excerpt 1"

1.*The persistence for the actualization of Biafra by the unruly Igbo of South-Eastern Nigeria has lately assumed*
2.*another alarming twist which involved the forceful lockdown of activities and denial of other people's right to*

3free movement in the South-East by the rebel Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) and its overt and covert sponsors.
4.This latest action and similar confrontational conducts which amount to a brutal encroachment on the rights
5.of those termed as non-indigenous people residing and doing lawful businesses in those areas illegally
6.demarcated and defined as Biafra by the Igbo, are downright unacceptable and shall no longer be tolerated.
7.Concerned by this persistent Igbo threat to national integration, the above-named Pan-northern groups met
8.with several others and reviewed the current position of the North and jointly came up with the following observations:

In the above excerpt, one can readily see how the AY has framed the "other" (the Igbo) negatively. In line 1, the "other" is hastily presented as 'unruly Igbo' and to justify the above label, reference is made to the "alarming twist" in their "penchant" for infringing on other people's rights. This is fleshed out using a relative clause "*…which involved the forceful lockdown of activities and denial of other people's right to free movement*" which anaphorically points to the "unruly Igbo". The density of the above offense bothering on the violation of other peoples' rights is foregrounded by the AY as they paint a picture of an asymmetric relationship between the "threatener" and the "threatened" where the "former" is involved in "brutal encroachment on other people's rights" (line 4) and the "latter " are presented as "non-indigenous people residing and doing lawful businesses…" (line 5). A similar frame, for the Igbo, is observed in the Youths of O'dua Republic (YOR) response declaration, a pro-KD response text, labeled "YOR -extract 2".

1.In view of recent events in the political space called Nigeria, we, the youths of Oduduwa republic occupying
2.the geographical space called South West of Nigeria hereby categorically state without any reservation that we
3.are sick and tired of the generational threats of the Igbo extraction of this forced union, to go their separate
4.ways in what they call Biafra. In this threat we were born, in this threat we've lived our lives and if care is not
5.taken, in this same threat our children will grow up and give birth to their own children.

Being a pro-KD response text, the above extract, expectedly, frames the Igbo as the "other" and makes haste to label them as aggressors. The tragic significance of the threat, similar to what obtains in extract 1, is captured in its generational spread. The threat described in extract 2 cuts across many generations as seen in lines 4 and 5… "In this threat we were born, in this threat we've lived our lives and if care is not taken, in this same threat our children will grow up and give birth to their own children". The YOR seems to have clued the reader in on the central mandate of the "other" which is "to go their separate ways in what they call Biafra" (lines 3 and 4). The above reinforces the claims made by the KD who seem to have attributed the entire confrontational attitude of the Igbo to their "*persistence for the actualization of Biafra (line 1).* Of particular critical discourse effect is the AY's presentation of "self" as a people who do 'legitimate' businesses within the Igbo region, and at the same time, as law-abiding and peace-loving people. The above is meant to highlight the 'hostile' nature of the "other" and frame them as a group obsessed by violence, with the potential to radicalize the "self" against the "other".

The incriminating frame is equally utilized in O'odua Nationalist Coalition, (ONAC), Declaration; The Middle-Belt Patriotic Front (MB-PF) Press Conference, which are counter-KD response texts, and Mazi Nnamdi Kanu (MNK)'s agitative Text. Its use is demonstrated in the following excerpts labeled "ONAC-Excerpt 3", "MB-PF-Excerpt 4" and "MNK-Excerpt 5", respectively.

ONAC-Excerpt 3
1.We advise the Yoruba to begin to make alternative plans for the inevitable upheaval being promoted by the
2.Fulani oligarchy. The North has always been the aggressor because of the region's loss of power and the
3.unhidden desire to make Nigeria the irreversible extension of the Fulani emirate.
4.What we see is violent conflict of civilisations which can only be resolved when each region go her own way.
5.In the bid to keep Nigeria as one country, millions of people have been killed and the lives of children wasted,
6.the future pauperized and the potentials of Yoruba young men and women bottled or chained with fetters of
7.ironToday, we make the historic declaration that Yoruba people are ready for our own Oduduwa Republic.
8.We have watched events these past days. The cloud is getting thicker. The poisonous rain appear ready to fall.
9.It is .time for the Yoruba people to be ready to defend our homeland from being seized by local imperial

10.elements and their collaborators. We assert Yoruba self-determination and sovereignty. We shall work for it.
11.We will actualize it. It is time for the *peaceful and safe mop-up of all the remnants of the stubborn Igbos that*
12.*neglect to heed this quit notice shall commence to finally eject them from every part of the North.*

In the above lines, "self" is practed as occupying strategic position in the Nigerian socio-political composition while "other" faces eviction. *Specifically, the interpersonal function of language is manipulated to create an actor—goal* situation that ascribes ultimate power to the "self".

The warning frame in the YOR declaration, just like the above, comes with eviction as a consequence when flouted. Here, "self" prescribes for "other" a kind of linguistic template in an attempt to sensor the latter's utterances, as shown in the following: …any mention of Biafra again on our soil will automatically earn the Igbos an eviction notice from all of the six states that form ODUDUWA REPUBLIC namely, for the avoidance of doubts, Lagos, Oyo, Osun, Ogun, Ondo and Ekiti. The message here is very clear: the Igbo should be prepared to let go of all her investments in Yoruba land, especially in Lagos—a strategy explored to effectively actualize the ban on Biafran agitation. The placement of Lagos, first, in the enumeration has huge socio-pragmatic significance. The YOR intends that the recipient will make the necessary deduction concerning the commercial significance of Lagos to the Igbo.

While there is scarcely any instance of the warning frame in MB-PF, it plays up, very significantly, in MNK's agitative text. For instance, with the reference made to Israel and America, MNK invokes a serious implicature in the mind of the reader, as a warning message to "other". That America still enjoys the coveted status of world power is not in doubt and the dexterity of Israel in combat is a household knowledge in Nigeria. Consequently, MNK seems to be utilizing such references as a pragmatic ploy to invoke fear in the minds of the Nigerian people who are not pro-IPOB. He further tries to draw the attention of the reader to the semantic import of the reference made to Israel by establishing a metaphorical link between IPOB and HaMossad leModi'in ule Tafkidim Meyuhadim MOSSAD—the national intelligence agency of Israel, as captured in the expression: the efficiency of MOSAD will be replicated in Nigeria. We shall hunt everyone down to avenge the death of IPOB members.

The "self" and "other" frame is further achieved through the preponderant use of the "we versus they" and "us versus them" pronouns across the data which points back to van Dijk's concept of the ideological square. It highlights the powers of pronouns as a very strategic tool in both exclusionary and inclusionary assignments. In group-motivated hate speech, the "self" objectifies the "other' and tries to establish a common ground with the in-group through the use of the subjective inclusionary pronoun "we", functionally placed in polar relation with the subjective exclusionary pronoun "they". In the data, the use of "we" specifically signals the actions that "self" is encouraged to carry out to liberate it from the menace that has visited it, orchestrated by "other" as further shown in the following excerpt from KD, marked "KD—excerpt 6"

> *We shall commence the implementation of visible actions to prove to the whole world that*
> *we are no longer part of any federal union that should do with the Igbos*
> **we** shall no longer tolerate the madness of the Igbo region

Conversely, each time "self" is objectified in the data using the objective inclusionary pronoun "us", in asymmetric relation to the objective exclusionary pronoun "them", it is strategically used to show how much "self" has had to suffer in the hands of "other", thereby giving substance to the claims that have accompanied the framing of "other" as aggressor.

Processes and participants

We consider that the transitivity system already captured in the qualitative analysis above will be more graphic with a quantitative profile. Consequently, the transitivity system in the data is represented in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Distribution of the six process types in the text

Process	Relational	Material	Mental	Verbal	Existential	Behavioural	Total
Number	204	107	41	28	11	04	395
Percentage	52%	27%	10%	7%	3%	1%	100%

A total of 395 ranking clauses are found across the data and all six process types are found to have occurred in the data as represented in Table 2 above. Relational processes enjoy the highest frequency, accounting for 52% of all the processes. Material processes come a somewhat close second with a total of (27%). Mental processes come a distant third, accounting for 41 ranking clauses in the data representing 10% of the entire processes. Verbal, Existential, and Behavioural processes have an overall representation of 7%, 3%, and 1% respectively.

The relational process is a good choice in group-motivated hate speech. The preponderant use of this process shows that the data is characterized by "self" versus "other" framing, based on group identities. Two kinds of relational processes are identified in data: attributive and identifying processes. Another process type that is largely utilized in the data is the material process. The material encounters are significantly deployed to issue warning while the relational processes are principally utilized in indicting the "other" in the data. The material processes are deployed in two significant ways. One is to activate an agent while the other is to passivate an agent. For instance, the phrase "the unruly Igbo of Southeastern Nigeria" (KD—extract 1, line 1) is an activated agent showing discourse clarity while "other people" in "… the denial of other people's rights" is a passivated patient obstructing discourse clarity. When the patient is assigned agency status (non-indigenous people) in line 5, what we see is a quasi-agency situation as the agency status seems to have been activated by the active agent (the Igbo) using a material verb "termed" in "those termed non-indigenous people residing and doing normal business…."

The above presents us with a situation where "other" is activated as the doer of all negative acts while "self" is exonerated from such acts through agency passivation. For instance, in the KD, we read *"Igbos masquerade as Fulani herdsmen to commit violent atrocities across the country." In the above example, the "other" is made to assume the agency status while the Fulani herdsmen who have been called out for violent atrocities in the country are assigned passive status which almost exonerates them from the act. It is not surprising that there is a lesser number of mental processes in the data. This is because in presenting "other" as the polluted, "self" does not make it look like it is guessing, probably with the use of mental verbs like 'think,' 'feel,' 'assume', as in 'we think that the Igbo are….' The few mental encounters in the data utilised such categorical verbs like 'know,' 'aware,' 'certain,' as in 'we know that the Igbo are…' the later usage provokes a stronger sense of conviction compared to the earlier example.* Verbal, existential, and behavioral processes are sparingly used in the text as shown in Table 2 above. Specifically, the verbal process is used to give a negative report on the "other"; the existential process is used to capture the state of affairs in Nigeria while the behavioral process, relating to the attributive dimension of the relational process, is used to further frame the "other" negatively.

CONCLUSION

A dominant frame running across the data is the "self" and "other" frame. The above frame is characterized by a negative presentation of "other" and a positive projection of "self". "Self" and "other", as a broad frame, have also been realized in the data through two sub-frames: incriminating and warning frames. The incriminating frame is realized in the data when the "other" is accused of threatening the peace of "self" by indulging in unlawful activities capable of undermining the relative peace being enjoyed by the "self". On the other hand, the warning frame is characterized by the issuing of threat by "self" to "other" which is usually preceded by a negative representation of "other" to justify such threats.

The frames are specifically realized through polarisation as a pragmatic strategy, where polarisation is concerned with the construction of binary identities between social actors (self and other) in the data. The polarization is also achieved through agency passivation and

patient activation which presents us with a situation where the "other" is activated as the doer of all negative acts while the "self" is exonerated from such acts. The frames and the pragmatic strategy through which they are realized are further characterized by the use of negative adjectives, belonging to the semantic field of violence, such as "unruly", "forceful", "denial", and "confrontational" and with the use of "we versus they" and "us versus them" pronouns for exclusionary and inclusionary assignments.

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