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Multimodal Discourse Analysis of Nigerian Currency Notes

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Currency as a generally accepted form of money is a legal tender that serves as an individual's "life support" and gives access to necessities of life. In most parts of the world, the presentation of notes and coins in exchange for goods and services forms the basis of communication between and amongst wide range of users. To a large extent, the Nigerian naira currencies are imbued with non-verbal cues such as symbols, graphics, images, text, colour and other super-imposed inter-related elements of composite language which provides various forms of meaning potentials. Apparently, the sole study of language via syntax cannot achieve the requirements of a comprehensive interpretation of the meaning of the expression in the various modes. Hence, this paper leans on multimodal discourse analysis as a theoretical basis and method of analysis by borrowing insights from Kress and van Leeuwen's (1996/2006) social semiotic visual framework and Barthes (1977) concept of anchorage and relay to analyze Nigerian currency notes with the aim of unraveling the imports of multimodality borne by the currency notes to project meaning. Eight (8) Nigerian currency notes currently in circulation are identified and analyzed qualitatively. It is observed that the currencies express the ideology of unity, socio-cultural identity, patriotism and nationalism. The paper concludes that complementary meanings are distributed in the visual and verbal contents of the notes and are purportedly produced in both convergent and divergent forms.

Introduction

The significance of language to the human world cannot be overemphasised as it is one of the chief means of communication that also reflects the culture of its speakers. Several researches on language have been conducted over the years which have intensified its relevance to human endeavours as well as provided a rich literature to draw from. Regardless of this, it is pertinent to note that language itself cannot strive on its own for successful communication. In other words, meaning is rarely made with language alone. Human needs and wants have introduced technological advancements which are imbued with various modes such as images, aesthetics etc., that produce different meaning for a robust and effective communication.

Various approaches to the study of language such as syntax, pragmatics, non verbal semantics, semiotics, amongst others have also justified the assertion that verbal or textual language is not self-reliant. Linguistic and extra linguistic elements need to be integrated to produce a total system of communication; meaning is therefore made in any form of communication in different ways. It could be through the linguistic elements or the visuals; it could also be through different modes or media in an ensemble.

Multimodal discourse analysis as an offshoot of discourse analysis envelopes the theory which accounts for multiple modes embedded in texts for creating complementary meanings. Discourses such as cartoons, billboards, songs, posters, newspapers, material objects,

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television, texts and events etc. which O' Halloran (2011) refers to as 'Multimodal Phenomena' are all multimodal in nature. Material objects such as currency notes are the basis for analysis of this study. Currency notes are embellished with various semiotic resources such as colour, texts, posture/gaze, symbols, graphics, gesture and all other visual modes. This enhances its uniqueness and the role it plays is pivotal, not only as a legal tender but as a national symbol and an embodiment of the cultural value of its users within its existent country and across the shores of the country. It is against this background that this paper is concerned to stress the central importance of social semiotic approach of Multimodal Discourse Analysis (MDA) to meaning making in Nigerian currency notes. It will also reflect on how these meanings are construed in various forms, how they are unified to provide a holistic meaning as well as how they relate to discourse situations of its users.

Multimodality: A Theoretical Overview

Several scholars have defined Discourse Analysis in different ways, each trying to enhance or improve on the inadequacies presented by previous scholars. For example, Stubbs (1995, p.1) affirms that discourse analysis studies the organization of language above the sentence or above the clause, and therefore to study larger linguistic units, such as conversational exchanges or written texts. In contrast to Stubbs's view on discourse analysis, Osisanwo (2008, p.8) stresses that that discourse analysis is concerned with what language is used for in different social contexts and not the formal properties of language, different parts of a conversation and the process of encoding and decoding in talks.

Theoretical trends from discourse analysis have emerged over the years to cater for the inadequacies of discourse analysis. Abdullahi-Idiagbon (2014, p.5) submits that the need to focus on paralanguage, multimedia and modes of communication such as voice quality, motion and still pictures and signs has led to a new form of discourse approach called Multimodal Discourse Analysis (MDA). This is in consonance with O' Halloran (2011, p.1) who states that 'Multimodal discourse analysis is an emerging paradigm in discourse studies which extends the study of language to the study of language in combination with other resources, such as images, colours, scientific symbolism, gestures, action, music and sound'. Also in defense of Multimodality, Kress et al. (1997, p.258) affirm that:

In the multimodal approach the attempt is to understand all the representational modes which are in play in the text, in the same degree of detail and with the same methodological precision as discourse analysis is able to do with linguistic text.

Thus, Multimodal discourse analysis holds that meanings are created in texts and interactions in a complex interplay. Paltridge (2012, p.170), opines that multimodal research aims to describe the socially situated semiotic resources that we draw on for communication. Following O' Toole (1994), Kress and van Leeuwen (1996, 2006) are the precursors of Multimodal research drawing up on Halliday's (1978, 1985, 1994) social semiotic approach to language which model the meaning potential of words, sounds and images as set of interrelated structures and systems that are bound by three fundamental metafunctions of systemic functional linguistics which are : The ideational metafunction, the interpersonal metafunction, and the textual metafunction. These metafunctions operate in the semantic of every language and are defined as:

- i. The ideational metafunction: This refers to the resource for the representation of experience: our experience of the world that lies about us and also inside us, the world of our imagination. It is meaning in the sense of content.
- ii. The interpersonal metafunction: This is the resource for meaning as a form of action. The speaker or writer doing something to the listener or reader by means of language.
- iii. The textual metafunction: This is the resource for maintaining relevance to the context both with the preceding and following text and context of situation.

Kress and van Leeuwen (2001, pp 16-18), however, label the three metafunctional meanings as representational, interactive, and compositional meanings and affirm that they work together to disseminate a cultural and ideological world view of the designer- encoder. In like manner, O' Halloran (2008) asserts that "the major strength of SFL theory for multimodal discourse analysis (MDA) is Halliday's metafunctional principle which provides an integrating platform for theorizing how semiotic resources interact to create meaning" (p. 445).

Scholars have devised means to cater for multiplicity of meaning in texts by developing theories to integrate and interacts modes of linguistic and pictorial modalities for effective multimodal analysis. To mention a few, van Leeuwen (2004) proposes communicative acts to incorporate verbal features of a text which are traditionally regarded as speech acts and non verbal acts such as images, symbols, colours and so on. Similarly, Royce (1998) proposes an 'intersemiotic complementarity' which describes the deployment of intersemiotic resources in a multimodal text, Lim (2004) also adopts an 'integrative multisemiotic model' in print. Further to this, Thibault (2000) uses 'phase theory' to effectively conceptualize a framework to analyse the integration of language, visual images, sound and music in television advertisements. It is therefore through the significance of these aforementioned that Royce's visual-verbal intersemiotic complementarity approach which accounts for both visual and verbal modalities evident in texts is also considered pertinent as a useful insight to the analysis of data.

Visual Modality

Multimodal discourse analysis is also concerned with the concept of visual modality. Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) express modality as a social semiotic approach to the question of truth. It relates both to the issue of representation; fact versus fiction, reality versus fantasy, real versus artificial, authentic versus fake'. Ideema (2003) asserts that modality does not place language over images but shows that the two are interdependent in meaning making. Machin (2007) is also of the opinion that modality is a way of analyzing images that have been inspired by linguistic analysis allowing the reader to reveal what is offered certain as opposed to what is concealed. Modality can be linguistic or visual. Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) contend that linguistic modality refers to the truth or credibility of linguistic-realised statements about the world.

Visual modality according to Bell (2001, p.30) 'is the represented realism of an image'. It concerns also whether an image is portrayed as realistic and lifelike, or as something that can be classified as either a fantasy or caricature. Kress and van Leeuwen (2006, p.115) assert that images are produced in the context of real social institutions, in order to play a very real role in social life-in order to do certain things to or for their readers, and in order to communicate attitudes towards aspects of social life and towards people who participate in them, whether authors and readers are consciously aware of them or not.

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Barthes (1977) explains in '*Rhetoric of the Image*' that there are three messages that images yield. The linguistic message refers to the text that clarifies ambiguity in images. The symbolic message is the pure image aside from linguistics that offers symbols (signifiers) that relate to or reveal some sort of concept (signified). The literal message is what is left when we remove the linguistic and symbolic content. It identifies what is actually present in the image. Olowu and Akinkulore (2015) also citing Barthes, remark that in analysing images, it is necessary to account not only for their cultural norms, but also for their perceptual qualities. Visual texts differ from verbal texts because they are communicative across cultural codes while also carrying culturally specific meaning. Barthes study of visual communication is also guided by two separate levels of connotation and denotation. He claims that when we read sign and sign complexes, we can distinguish between different kinds of messages. Denotation is the literal or obvious meaning or the first-order signifying system while connotation refers to second-order signifying systems, i.e. additional cultural meanings we can also find from the image or text. Odebunmi (2001) cited in Adedimeji (2007, p.152) explains that denotation is the cognitive, conceptual, basic or logical meaning; the meaning of which is descriptive and often objective in nature also citing (Crystal 1992), Connotation is used to refer to all kinds of association a word or substance may evoke whether emotional or situational.

Barthes also made a distinction between text and image which he termed anchorage and relay. According to him, all images are polysemic; they are open to basically endless numbers of different meanings because of this, a linguistic message is usually associated with every image to guide their interpretation. Anchorage provides an insight to the meaning of an image through text. The text anchors the response to the image to a fair limited view. Thus, the function of anchorage is to clarify or emphasize something in the image. It is the most frequent function of the linguistic message... (Barthes 1977, p.40). Relay refers to the interpretation of an image separate from the meaning of the text. The text does not necessarily function to represent the image but rather to imply a separate meaning to the image. The relay identifies the message by providing text for the viewer to understand in relation to the image. According to Barthes (1977), with relay, "text and image stand in a complementary relationship" (p. 41).

The pivot of this distinction according to Barthes is that the meaning of images as well as other codes are related and mostly dependent on language for fixing their meanings. Kress and van Leeuwen (1996, p.17), however place themselves at variance with Barthes (1977) view of the meaning of the image on the notion of dependency between image and verbal text. According to them, the visual component of a text is an independently organized and structured message connected with verbal text, but in a way dependent on it and similarly the other way round... the implication here is that both verbal and visual codes are seen to express the same kinds of meanings but by different methods which draw on different semiotic systems.

In any particular cultural context, there may be a considerable degree of congruence between the two codes. There may also be areas of difference where the verbal can express itself and the visual cannot and vice versa' (Royce 1998, p. 54). The paper thus seeks to validate both claims.

Nigerian Currency Notes as a Multimodal Data

A currency refers to a system of money or monetary units in common use. It can also be referred to as money in any form when in actual use. Brue and McConnell (1990, p.280) defines

currency as coins and paper money in circulation. Nigerian naira, South African rand, UK pound sterling, European euro, US dollars etc. are examples of currency. Money or currency acts as a medium of exchange, unit of account and store of value to its users (Lipsey and Chrystal 2011, p.448).

The official currency of Nigeria is the naira and its sole issuer as a legal tender currency in Nigeria is the central bank of Nigeria. Its first official issuance in coins and notes is dated 1959 by the Central bank of Nigeria and has witnessed several modification and devaluation over the years especially in the form of introduction of higher denominations and the gradual dominance of the naira notes over coins in the country as a legal tender money in addition, the naira has been significantly deployed to honour some of Nigeria's heroes and cultural heritage.

Methodology

Since currency notes are semiotic constructs which are richly embellished with linguistic and visual semiotic resources for communicating meaning, the paper thus set to focus on all of the 8 (eight) Nigerian naira bank notes currently in circulation within the country, Nigeria. We establish on the communicative imports of the visual and non-verbal resources that characterise the discourse and how they inform discourse situations of its user's by adopting social semiotic approach to multimodality which was developed by Kress and van Leeuwen in line with Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics from which they take their analytical principles. We also incorporate Barthes (1977) concepts of anchorage and relay to the analysis of the data in order to reveal the syntagmatic relationship between the verbal and the non-verbal meanings in the text. The data are obtained from www.nigerianfacts.com

Data Presentation, Analysis and Discussion

Each of the naira notes in ascending order of value is analysed and discussed by identifying the relevant and appropriate modes employed. The horizontal method of analysis utilised in the paper makes it possible to analyse effectively and discuss each sampled data for clarity. Every sampled data is indicated with fig. 1 and fig. 2 to indicate both sides (frontal and reverse) of the currency notes. In each of the sampled data, we identify their semiotic features and forms as well as their socio-cultural relevance to the Nigerian setting.

Presentation and Analysis of Datum 1



Fig. 1: Picture of N5 note- front view

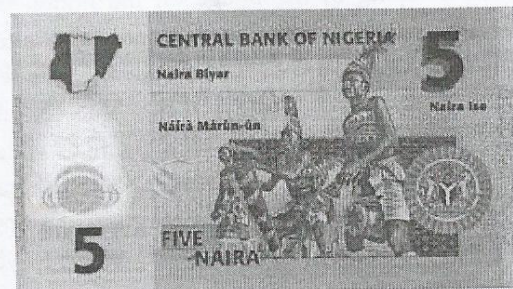


Fig. 2: Picture of N5 note- back view

The signifier, that is, the currency note holds an aesthetic appeal as we can identify the figure 5 in bold in both edges and either sides of the note. This verbal expression serves as the anchorage in the text. We can also identify the uppercase lettering of the **Central bank of**

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Nigeria centralized at the frontal and reverse top of the text, next to it is a symbol (fig.1) signifying Central Bank of Nigeria. In the symbol is also the reiterated verbal message, 'Central Bank of Nigeria, this symbol is a relay to the major financial institution as the sole issuer of the currency note. The texts on both sides of the note; frontal and reverse that is, the value written in the three major ethnic languages in Nigeria, the coat of arms, the two portraits (past political leader and a group of drummers) the Nigerian flag, the CBN Governor signature and directors signatures serve as the relay on the semiotic ensemble as they both provide complementary information about the signification in the ensemble. For example, personal indexical 'Alhaji Abubakar Tafawa Balewa 1912-1966' inscribed below the portrait that relates with the image. His dressing especially the wrapped turban on his head symbolises the Hausa people of Nigeria and this reinforces the meaning potential of the image. The value (fig. 2) inscribed on the note in the languages of the three major ethnic groups in the country gives further information to the anchorage 5 by functioning as a symbol of nationism and for easy interpretation for non-English speakers of the country.

In fig. 2, the Nigerian map uniquely stands out in its official colours green white and green from the brown background colour of the naira note, these colours symbolises agriculture (green revolution introduced by former President Obasanjo) and relative peace among the geopolitical zones of the country, Nigeria. The unique coat of arms is not left out as it blends with the brown -hued background of the text while the coat of arms and the Nigerian map are signs and symbols of Nigeria as a nation. The portrait of the three men engaging in drumming activity with their drumming instruments in fig. 2, is a signification of one of the many economic activities that are predominant in the rural areas of the Nigerian nation.

Presentation and Analysis of Datum 2



Fig. 1: Picture of N10 note- front view



Fig. 2: Picture of N10 note- back view

The datum indicates multiple intersemiotic resources embedded within one another. The value of the note is boldly written in form of the figure 10 in the upper and lower parts of both edges of the text as presented in Fig 1. and Fig. 2, it is the anchorage of the entire visual communication. It contains the central signified in the image. We can identify the uppercase lettering of the **Central Bank of Nigeria** centralised at the frontal and reverse top of the text, next to it is a symbol (fig.1) signifying Central Bank of Nigeria. In the symbol is also the reiterated verbal message, Central Bank of Nigeria. This symbol is a relay to the major financial institution as the sole issuer of the currency note. Two major portraits are embellished on the notes. Fig 1., shows the portrait of Alvan Ikoku a renowned educationist in Nigeria inscribed below the portrait is 'Alvan Ikoku 1900-1971' which provides further information into the

visual text also on the reverse side of the note in (Fig 2.) is a portrait of Nigerian Fulani Milk maids.

Alvan Ikoku was one of the people who introduced education into Nigeria during the colonial era. He is a true educationist and his dressing in the 10 naira note signifies this. He can be seen in suits and tie with reading glasses on especially in those days when Western education is at its early stage in Nigeria. His outfit reflects his educational status and social class. The attire of the Milk maids is also symbolic. The calabash, headgear short top and wrapper show an association with the Hausa-Fulani people of Northern Nigeria. One of the values of the naira note is also written on the reverse side of the text (fig. 2): '*Naira Goma*' constitutes the relay to the portrait of the two milk maids. In fig. 2, the Nigerian map uniquely stands out in green, white and green from the orange background colour of the naira note. These colours symbolises agriculture and peace which are peculiar to the Nigerian nation. The coat of arms embedded with the verbal inscription 'unity and faith peace and progress' in the Nigerian map are signs and symbols of Nigeria as a united nation. The semiotic resources of colour, lettering, and various symbols such as the Coat of Arms, CBN and Nigerian map, the fulani milk maids firmly embedded in the note constitute the relay of the visual texts as they interact with the verbal language for meaning production.

Presentation and Analysis of Datum 3



Fig. 1: Picture of N20 note- front view



Fig. 2: Picture of N20 note- back view

From the illustration (fig. 2), the green colour of the Nigerian map and the Coat of Arms blend with the green background colour of the naira note to richly signify Nigeria as an agrarian nation. The white colour in the flag emphasises peace among the different ethnic groups in the country. The symbols of the Coat of Arms, map of Nigeria, CBN in figs. 1 and 2 and their embedded linguistic features possess intersemiotic complementarity in symbolising Nigeria's rich cultural heritage and nationalistic identity. The portrait in the frontal part of the note in Fig. 1, is that of a Nigerian past military president, below the portrait is inscribed 'General Muritala R. Muhammed (1938-1976)' which provides further interpretation to the image. His mode of dressing is associated with the military while the number of stars on the shoulder of his attire further solidifies his position in the Nigerian military as a brigadier-general, thus the title: 'General'. On the reverse side of the note is a portrait of a famous potter engaging in her pottery work. Inscribed below the visual image is the indexical 'Ladi Kwali (pottery works)'; a woman who contributed immensely not only to Nigeria but African culture aesthetics at large. The words referring to the referent is a relay which acts as an anchorage through which the designer of the note (encoder) is trying to inform us (decoder) what the visual

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is all about (that is the woman's name, her profession and the act she is engaged in). Just like data 1 and 2, the portrait symbolises an economic activity in the rural areas of Nigeria. With similitude to data 1 and 2, the anchorage which is the bolded '20' inscribed on either sides of the note, narrows the viewers perspective of the image to the significant idea of the value of the currency while other semiotic resources on the note inform the relay. For instance, the value 20 (fig. 2) inscribed on the note in the languages of the three major ethnic groups in the country is a relay to the anchorage- 20. This is significant as it not only signifies Nigeria's rich cultural heritage but also enhances easy interpretation between its users.

Presentation and Analysis of Datum 4



Fig. 1: Picture of N50 note- front view

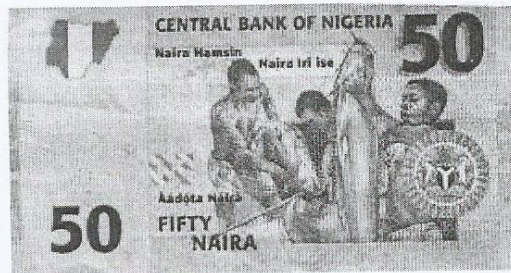


Fig. 2: Picture of N50 note- back view

The value of the note is boldly written in form of the figure 50 in the upper and lower parts of both edges of the text as presented in Fig 1. And Fig. 2, it constitutes the anchorage of the entire visual communication. It contains the central signified in the image. We can identify the uppercase lettering of the **CENTRAL BANK OF NIGERIA** centralised at the frontal and reverse top of the text, next to it is a symbol (fig.1) signifying Central Bank of Nigeria. In the symbol is also the reiterated verbal message, Central Bank of Nigeria. This symbol is a relay to the major financial institution as the sole issuer of the currency note. The portrait of four men and a woman in different traditional attires is portrayed on the note, the difference in their attire is a symbol of the different ethnic groups in which they belong to (that is, Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba) and suggests Nigeria's unity in diversity.

The value of the naira note is also written on the reverse side of the text (fig. 2) in these three major indigenous languages, this constitutes the relay to the portrait of these people. The lone woman amongst the men on the left margin of the note signifies that she appears as a fixture of Nigerian society and signifies gender inequality and 'attempted involvement' that the average Nigerian woman faces. This is symbolic of the expressed patriarchy in Nigerian post-colonial society. In fig. 2 The Nigerian map uniquely stands out in green white and green from the blue background colour of the naira note. These colours symbolises agriculture (green revolution-Obasanjo) and relative peace among the geo-political zones of the country, Nigeria. The unique coat of arms is not left out as it blends with the blue -hued background of the text. The coat of arms and the Nigerian map are signs and symbols of Nigeria as a nation. The portrait of the three men engaging in fishing in fig. 2 signifies one of the many economic activities such as the 'Argungun' fishing ceremony- a notable cultural event in Nigeria, that are predominant in the rural areas. Other discourse elements like colour, lettering, symbols of the coat of arms, CBN and Nigerian map, the four people dressed in traditional attires firmly embedded on the note constitute the relay of the visual text as they interact with the verbal language for meaning production. They are also symbolic of Nigeria's identity and cultural

heritage and an appeal to Nigerians to embrace diversity and industry as a means to peace and progress.

Presentation and Analysis of Datum 5



Fig. 1: Picture of N100 note- front view



Fig. 2: Picture of N100 note- back view

The Nigerian one hundred naira currency note is a banknote equipped with security features which the central bank (encoder) designed for medium of exchange of goods and services. In fig.1, the anchorage i.e., **₦100** is written in figure not only at the equidistance topmost sides of the instrument but also at the down left part. The value is a suggestive signification of both verbal and non-verbal cues imbued to communicate the denomination. Fig.1 also features two phrases: the first written in bold, "CENTRAL BANK OF NIGERIA" at the top right part; and the second, "One Hundred Naira" in calligraphic lettering are the relational elements which further emphasised the meaning making modes holistically embedded in a composite form. Both texts are superimposed on the currency note to give the value and identity of the bank note as Nigerian property.

Again, the picture of the veteran politician, Nigerian nationalist and statesman from the western region, Chief Obafemi Awolowo superimposed on the note is a relay in the meaning making venture of the banknote. It is historical and therefore repository of knowledge for generations yet unborn. The picture no doubt is a compensation for his immense contributions especially during the movement for Nigeria's independence. However, the colours with different shades (orange, brownish red, chocolate, off-white), the image, and other salient features makes the note unique in its entirety as Nigerian 100 naira currency note, hence, any other type is seen as counterfeit. Another unique feature of the note is the linguistic inscription "Ajami" script written centrally at the lower part of fig.1, meaning "naira deri" i.e., One Hundred Naira. All these multifaceted modes (verbal and non verbal) convey the meaning intended to users that the note is not only secured as a legal tender within the territory, Nigeria but passes across other salient eccentric meanings of socio-political values.

In fig. 2, Nigeria's Zuma rock (sometimes referred to as "Gateway to Abuja from Suleja") is conspicuously depicted as a cultural heritage and as well serves as tourist attraction. The Coat of Arms as symbol of Nigeria with different multimodal modes placed beneath the rock and the calligraphic lettering at the lower part attest to the authenticity of the value of the note. The anchorage is therefore the figure where the naira sign (₦) 100 is boldly written. Meanwhile, the relay is envisioned through the Nigeria's national motto since 1978: "Unity, and Faith, Peace and Progress" which was formally written as "Peace, Unity, Freedom".

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Presentation and Analysis of Datum 6



Fig. 1: Picture of N200 note- front view

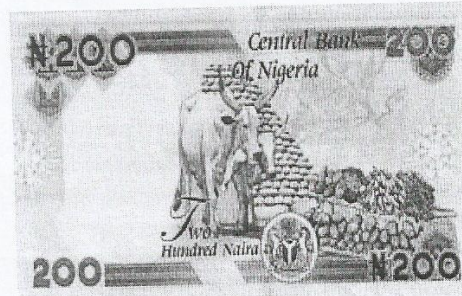


Fig. 2: Picture of N200 note- back view

The two-hundred naira currency note is the second higher denomination with different linguistic and semantic interpretations especially within the context (background knowledge) Nigeria. In fig. 1, it is denotative to note that the anchorage ₦ 200 appeared two times with the naira symbol at the topmost parts (both right and left) sides and also two times without the symbol at the lower parts. Other linguistic and semiotic signs and letterings include the emphatic assertion **Central Bank Of Nigeria**, i.e., the sole issuer of legal tender throughout the Nigeria federation, both signatures of the Central Bank Governor and the Director of Currency respectively, the calligraphic phrase: **Two Hundred Naira**, that is, the amount of the legal tender and the “*ajami*” inscription- “*naira deri biyu*” which literarily means two hundred naira in Hausa language are all complementary as relay which further gives a wholesome meaning to the note type.

Further still, the currency note type is adorned with the picture of Sir, Ahmadu Bello, a Nigerian politician who was the first and only premier of the Northern Nigeria. His mode of dressing particularly the turban depicts his tradition, ethnic group and entrenched the historicity of the country. The dressing speaks volumes of his background as a clan of Hausa tribe. The picture also serves as a relay to the conglomerates of signs, image and letterings and hence, foregrounds the anchorage.

On the reverse side of the note, fig. 2, there are pyramids of bags of agricultural commodity, fruits, vegetables, cattle and livestock farming. These images serve as relay and, connotatively showcase the country as an agrarian nation. The anchorage, i.e., 200 written in figure with naira sign appeared four times to complement the value of the note written in calligraphic letterings. The phrase written in initial caps, **Central Bank Of Nigeria**, further foregrounds the fact that the currency is a Nigeria property. And the Coat of Arms, an emblem of the Nigerian Armed Forces further reinforces and authenticates the note type as Nigeria property.

Presentation and Analysis of Datum 7



Fig. 1: Picture of N500 note- front view

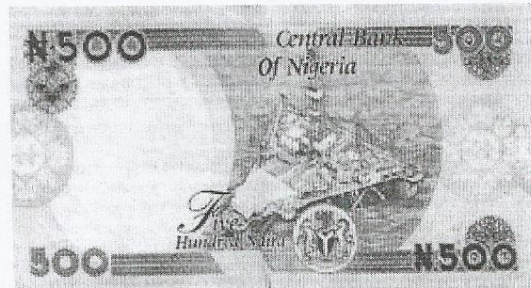


Fig. 2: Picture of N500 note- back view

Another higher Nigeria currency note type is the five hundred naira. In fig. 1, the note type has different connotative and denotative signs and symbols which complement each other to buttress multimodality. At first, the anchorage is written as ₦ 500 with the naira sign symmetrically at the equal edges of the top part. Letterings such as the **Central Bank Of Nigeria** and **Five Hundred Naira** written in calligraphic styles form the relay of the datum.

In fig. 1, the image of the first President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe embellished the note type not only to uphold its aesthetics but to also celebrate past nationalists. The picture and other semiotic signs, letterings (signatures of both Central Bank Governor and the Director of Currency), and symbols added value to the relay. The “ajami” script for instance, “*naira deri biyar*” which means Five Hundred Naira is a relay that complements the anchorage.

In fig. 2., the anchorage appeared four times each at the edge of the rectangular note shape with only two with the naira sign. The two appeared diagonally (one on the top left and the other, at the lower right part). The former is complemented with the words **Five Hundred Naira** on the down part centre of the datum and this form part of the relay. Fig.2. also features offshore oil rig platform which denotes the fact that NIGERIA is blessed with natural resources such as crude oil.

Presentation and Analysis of Datum 8



Fig. 1: Picture of N1000 note- front view



Fig. 2: Picture of N1000 note- back view

Like other Nigeria currency notes, the value of the highest note is superimposed on right part of the note type, (See fig. 1) without the naira sign. The figure **1000** is the anchorage whose relay appears at centre down part, **ONE THOUSAND NAIRA** in upper case. The figure appeared three times. The front side also featured engraved pictures of Alhaji Aliyu Mai-Bornu and Dr. Clement Isong, the first and the second indigenous Governors of the Central Bank of Nigeria respectively. Their modes of dressing reflect the culture of the northern and southern

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part of Nigeria. This however further buttresses the fact that past nationalists are celebrated and their pictures serve as repository of knowledge thereby advocating patriotism.

In addition, the phrase CENTRAL BANK OF NIGERIA – (underlined) which appears at the top left part in fig. 1 is a relay and this reiterates the function of the highest bank as the sole issuer of legal tender in the country. The “ajami” script “*naira dubu*” meaning one thousand naira is a relay. The complementarity of all the modes (verbal and non-verbal) makes the naira note unique and composite of different interpretations especially with background knowledge.

On the back view, the picture of CBN’s corporate Head Office in Abuja, Federal Capital Territory of Nigeria is strategically placed at the centre to show the country’s ingenuity for infrastructure. This is a relay in the information structure of the naira note. Thus, fig. 2 also featured the Nigeria Coat of Arms with a relay written as “Unity and Faith, Peace and Progress”.

All these foreground the fact that the currency note is a legal tender and can only be used for transactional purposes within the confines of the country, Nigeria.

Findings

It is observed from the analysis of the data that the value of the notes in addition to **Central Bank of Nigeria** is established in bold and in block letters; these are to lay emphasis on the semantics of the word by drawing the viewers of the naira notes to the centrality of the image. Kress and van Leeuwen (1996, p. 206) in their analysis of centrality of image stress that anything central involves being the most important element and in some way symbolic; it is the “nucleus of the information which all other elements are in some sense subservient”. This is evident in all the currency notes.

We also identify divergent ideological imports of the currency notes. The eight (8) data combined to give coordinated messages. First, the pictures present fallen heroes of Nigeria. Second, the images represent the six geo-political zones in the country. The currency notes also represent sense of unity, patriotism and serves as a symbol of nationism. The currency notes symbolises unity in diversity especially as represented on the #50 note and affirms that Nigeria is telling her history through the currency notes. In addition, the note like any other symbols is symbolic. For instance, anybody who touches and uses it is inadvertently agreeing to the formation and identification of the Nigerian state.

The presence of ‘Ajami scripts’ (a language which comprises Hausa and Swahili used for writing African languages) on the paper note types as evidenced in datum 5(100 naira), 6 (200), and 7(500), with the exception of datum 8 (1000), the reiterated value of the currency in calligraphy, the italicised value of the note in figure in addition to the signatures of the CBN governor and Director of Currency are all indicative of its rich aesthetic appeal.

It is revealed that colour plays an important role in the currency note identification. The colour of each note is a distinctively unique semiotic mode that draws the reader or decoder to the locution being made that is, the value of the note. The data clearly showed that the lower denominations that is, Data 1,2,3,4, are of the polymer currency note distinct from data; 5,6,7,8, which are the paper type. The notes in the first category are mostly used between and amongst people like hawkers, traders, and beggars etc. to prevent wear and tear which is the sole purpose behind its production.

The paper has been able to reiterate and validate the acknowledged assertion that currency notes and coins are designed to suit each nation's culture and history of which Nigeria is not an exception as the data highlights major political, economic and social-cultural history and events in the Nigerian context. Chandler (2007) cited in Abdullahi-Idiagbon (2013, p.3) suggests that "the interpretation and the analysis of visual texts in human manual interpretation is determined by the code the interpreter has access to" This is true of the context of the data; the Nigerian context has facilitated the connotative interpretation of the currency notes.

Conclusion

The paper has been able to attempt a multimodal analysis of the semiotic modes in Nigerian currency notes. Multimodal discourse has made it possible to expunge the plethora of both salient and silent information inherent in visual messages. The application of Kress and van Leeuwen's social semiotic approach and Barthes' dichotomies of anchorage and relay portray that, the semiotic modes in the currency notes are interacted in various ways, both verbal and visual for the projection of meaning in the text. These non-verbal elements transport messages with the linguistic components to form a coherent whole. The meanings are not only distinctive to each of these notes but also integrated. The currency notes informs and bring into light the Nigerian culture, economic and political situation as well as the ideology of unity, patriotism and nationism.

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