

**LANGUAGE USE IN CONFLICT SITUATIONS: A CASE
STUDY OF THE JOS CRISES (1994-2010)**

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this work is the product of my own research efforts undertaken under the supervision of Professor Macpherson Nkem Azuike, and has not been presented elsewhere for the award of a degree or certificate. All sources have been duly distinguished and appropriately acknowledged.

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CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that the research work for this thesis and the subsequent preparation of this thesis by Augustine Ambrose Fodang (PGAR/UJ/00195/10) were carried out under my supervision.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to God Almighty for His grace and protection over me. Also, to the loving memory of my father, late Nde Ambrose Fodang who sowed the seed of scholarship in me, though he could not live to reap much from it.

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ABSTRACT

This work examines language use during the crises that erupted in Jos from 1994 to 2010. Generally speaking, language is at the centre of virtually every aspect of human life, and operates on different levels and in different forms, according to the context in which it is used. The aim of the study was to examine the several factors that have determined the linguistic choices of the parties to the Jos conflicts which are different from ordinary day-to-day conversations, and the effects of these choices on the conflicts. Although several studies have been carried out on the Jos crises, direct exchanges between the parties in conflict have not been collated and analysed. This study analysed the features of the language used by the parties in conflict, as well as their perception of language and communication in conflict situations. The fundamental theory adopted in this study is the Systemic Functional Linguistic Theory which asserts that language use is determined by the prevailing circumstances surrounding it. Since context determines language use, the type of language employed in conflict situations is certainly different from that used in ordinary everyday conversations. The study made use of two primary instruments of data collection. One was the collection of samples of utterances, remarks or comments by parties in conflict and also by third parties as recorded in reports of commissions of inquiry into the conflicts, conference proceedings as well as newspapers. The other major instrument is the questionnaire. The structured type of the questionnaire was used to obtain information about how language was used during the conflict as well as the perceptions of the people on particular linguistic choices and patterns of communication. In addition, the interview technique was also employed where twelve people, made up of some leaders and other members of the feuding communities, were randomly selected and interviewed on the role language played in the crises. The effects of the use of language are felt in two opposite ways: they may be constructive and positive or may be destructive and negative. The analysis of the features of the language

used during the Jos crises reveals that language played a major role in the eruption and escalation of the conflicts which bedeviled the area during the years under examination. Foul and inappropriate language use contributed greatly to the crises, and in many instances, it was solely responsible for igniting trouble. Responses to items in the questionnaire indicate further that communication between the feuding parties was greatly strained while the conflicts lasted. This led to resentment, mutual suspicion and distrust among the people which also resulted in polarized settlement patterns in the metropolis. Effective language use and proper communication between parties to a conflict have been found to be a panacea for all forms of conflict. The study posits that effective communication by parties in conflict is an essential tool in conflict resolution. Just as language can create or escalate a conflict, it can also be used to defuse tension and tame even the fiercest temper. The study has established that crisis situations, such as those witnessed in Jos and environs during the period under study, are responsible for the type of language used in such situations. In addition, it has revealed that language itself is an instrument for creating situations of conflict. All this implies that effective communication and proper use of language can go a long way in solving most, if not all, of society's social problems.

CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Language is the medium through which humans express their ideas, emotions, experiences and expectations. It is a system of conventional spoken or written symbols by means of which human beings as members of a social group and participants in its culture communicate. Language is therefore species-specific to man (Bamgbose 4). In consonance with the assertion that language is uniquely a human endowment, Afolayan states that,

Language is the unique property of the human being. The development of man, be it intellectual, moral, political, social or economic depends very largely on the instrumentality of language. It is with language that man recognizes himself and socializes with others, understands, masters and utilizes the environment around him (38).

Language is the expression of ideas by means of speech sounds combined into words which are further combined into sentences. It is a system of arbitrary vocal symbols by means of which a social group cooperates (Romain 20). This underscores the importance and necessity of language in human life. Different systems of vocal communication are found in different languages.

Human beings are unrestricted in what they can communicate about. No area of experience is necessarily incommunicable though one may have to adapt one's language in order to cope with new discoveries or new modes of thought. In the Greek intellectual tradition, Aristotle declares that 'speech is the representation of the mind' (Robins,19). Every physiologically and mentally normal person acquires the ability to use language both as a speaker and a hearer. In this way, he is able to impart information, to express feelings and emotions, to influence the activities of others, and to comport himself to

varying degrees of friendliness or hostility towards persons who use the same set of linguistic items.

Language interacts with every other aspect of human life in society, and it can be understood only if it is considered in relation to society. Each language is both a working system of communication in the society in which it is used and also the product of its past history and the source of its future development. Human life generally would be impossible without the existence of language. There is no characteristic of a society which is as distinctive as its language, or as important for its functioning (Hudson: 4). Thus, it forms a central part of every society. Every language is viewed in relation to the society which uses it. This is to say that language and society are inseparable. Language is part of society, just as the existence of any society inevitably necessitates the existence of language with which members of that society interact. To this effect, Hudson maintains that:

Speech is crucial in a number of social activities, including socialization... and it is hardly necessary to stress the general importance of speech in social life. Speech allows us to communicate with each other at a much more sophisticated level than would otherwise be possible, and since communication is a social activity it could be said that speech is also social (106).

Human beings interact and communicate at different levels, with different people in different ways and for different reasons. People use language to communicate one form of meaning or another. Language is not only instrumental to socialization, but is used in different ways to achieve different goals. Apart from conveying information, language can perform various other functions. While it can signify friendship, togetherness and mutual understanding on the one hand, it can also signify distance, suspicion or exclusion on the other. It can be used to achieve different communication

needs. In this way, it is very crucial in deciding the direction of social disorders and crisis situations. What is said or heard has a lot of effect on either reducing or exacerbating tension during moments of disagreement.

All communication has two parts: a sender and a receiver. The sender has a message he intends to transmit, and he puts it in words which, to him, best reflect what he is thinking. But many things can intervene to prevent the intended message from being received. If the communication is verbal, tone of voice can influence interpretation. Non-verbal cues such as posture and facial expression also determine the way a message is interpreted. If the message is ambiguous, the receiver is especially likely to clarify it for himself in a way which corresponds with his expectations. If, for instance, two people are involved in an escalated conflict, and they each assume that the other is going to be aggressive and hostile, then any ambiguous message will be interpreted as aggressive and hostile, even if it was not intended to be that at all.

A major reason why the received message may not be the same as the one transmitted is that all forms of communication have some degree of noise (obstacles to effective transfer of messages). Even when the transmitted and received messages are identical, the received one may be different from the original intention. Furthermore, the speaker and hearer may be using codes that are different, and this may lead to misunderstanding. When lexical items and certain ideologies are not mutually shared, the application of a term may generate different meanings and may be taken as antagonistic. An instance of this is found in a remark made during the Cold War. At its peak, an offhanded comment by Soviet Premier Nikiti Khrushchev to a British diplomat translated as "We will bury you". According to Alan K. Melby, in the context of a conversation about the competition between Communism and Capitalism, Khrushchev's remark simply meant a restatement (in clearer language) of Marx's claim of Communism's historic inevitability. Although "we will bury you" is an acceptable literal meaning of

Khrushchev's words, an equally accurate, and contextually more appropriate, translation would have been "we will be present at your burial" meaning that Communism had no need to go to war before overcoming Capitalism, since it (Capitalism) would eventually destroy itself. However, in the United States of America, and for many in the Western world, the phrase signified USSR's malevolent intentions to destroy the US (Krauss and Morsella:134). Our expectations work as blinders or filters that distort what we see so that it fits our preconceived images of the world. Because of the tendency to hear what we expect to hear, it is very easy for people in conflict to misunderstand each other. Communication is already likely to be strained, and people will, most likely, want to hide the truth to some extent. Thus the potential for misperceptions and misunderstandings is high, which can make conflict management or resolution more difficult.

The greater percentage of man's waking life is spent communicating. Communication is the art of managing messages for the purpose of bringing about meaning; and it is considered one of the basic functions of human needs and the basis for interpersonal relationship. Yet communication discourse is replete with misunderstandings, and many people find the effort unsuccessful and worthless. When two or more people interact and perceive incompatible differences or threats to something they value, there is communication conflict. Conflict is a likely factor in every interpersonal relationship. Problematic communication interactions permeate even the healthiest of relationships, causing misunderstanding between the sender and receiver of the message. Misunderstanding in communication is one of the strongest sources of conflict, just as many individuals fail to recognize that other people interpret and convey meanings differently from them. As a result, they make the mistake of assuming that other people usually think and behave like them. It is therefore important for a speaker to appreciate his partner's point of view and realize that differences exist.

Language differences also have effects on the way people behave in conflict situations. According to Azuike,

When we understand the language and literature of a people, we appreciate and understand them better and are able to rationalize their wishes, fears, hopes and aspirations which underpin their actions and reactions. This has potentials for improving communication and reducing mistrust (66).

Language and cultural differences between parties in conflict often result in differences of perceptions about particular utterances. Furthermore, more than just a common language is needed for a successful communication exercise. The hearer should be able to identify the speaker's intentions on the basis of the words uttered. In human communication, the same message could be understood to mean different things in different contexts and this usually brings about a difference between the literal meaning of the message and its intended meaning. In essence, therefore, there needs to be a shared system of cultural knowledge (beliefs and inferences) between the speaker and the hearer, which functions as communicative strategies. This is especially important in the use of language in conflict situations, particularly when the conflict stems from differences in intentions, goals, values and ideologies. When this knowledge is removed, many utterances will not be correctly understood, or worse still, may be interpreted incorrectly leading to further damage on the intended message. Individuals may also differ as to the significance attached to certain messages communicated within the context of a dispute. On this note, Azuike continues that, 'the daunting intricacies of conflict resolution in some instances require that the language of arbitration and mediation should reflect the minutiae involved which must be presented with linguistic circumspection shorn of deliberate semantic obfuscation'. (69)

Attitudes to linguistic behaviour also vary from one culture to the other. Cultural differences in attitudes towards linguistic behaviour can contribute to cross-cultural misunderstanding or even communication breakdown. According to Thomas,

Our attitudes can also be a reflection of the social groups we associate particular words or kinds of linguistic behaviour with; negative evaluations are often associated with stigmatized or less powerful groups... Attitudes are consistently held and widely spread within various communities and attitudes to languages or language forms are inextricably linked to attitudes to the speakers.(58)

These attitudes can be related to social and cultural identity, to power and control, and to ideas of prestige and control. The way in which something is said is as important for the message as what is said. An individual's attitudes and behaviour regarding communication values develop from social influences, personal philosophies and learned responses. A person's values, perceptions, and even expectation of others are a result of the social influence of one's environment; though it should be noted that no two people in the same environment have exactly the same set of values or perceptions. Usually, regardless of the content of the dispute, how one disputant communicates with the other has a significant impact on the outcome of the problem at hand. Disputes that start with one issue often evolve into two or more different issues when either of the disputants exhibits certain behaviour traits.

Cohen (12) gives a distinction between a dispute and conflict. He states that 'dispute' is a disagreement or quarrel that touches on important issues, such as people's livelihoods, but does not possess the connotation of belligerence attached to 'conflict'. A dispute may involve heated debate, high stakes, and tense confrontation, but it is assumed that the opponents will solve their differences of opinion through non-violent methods. 'Conflict' can overlap with 'dispute' and is used to refer to a general clash of

interests or views. Yet it often retains a flavour of its original violent sense of an encounter with arms, 'a fight, a battle'.

Conflict is a pervasive occurrence in human societies. It cuts across the psychological, political, social and anthropological aspects of human life. It starts at the individual level with the possibility of its extension to the society at large. Because of its protean nature, it is difficult to find a single definition for conflict. At the psychological level, "conflict is the arousal of two or more strong motives that cannot be solved together" (Dasyuva130). The world is constantly enveloped in conflicts of diverse dimensions, ranging from conflict of interest which may be personal, group, ethnic, regional, political, economic or religious to several other forms of conflict. Every region of the world, indeed every human society, has its fair share of conflicts. Conflicts are inevitable in human life, and man can only hope to reduce, resolve, contain and manage them in the best possible way he can (Azuike 6). In every society, an inherent difference of people and recurrent facts of life make conflicts between individuals and among different societies inevitable. People who live together never agree about everything; but if they are to live together, they cannot wholly disagree in their aims. This disagreement arises from situations of incompatibility of goals between individuals or groups.

Mangywat maintains that conflicts have been part and parcel of man right from the beginning of time. They are inherent in the Adamic nature of human beings, and have pervaded all aspects of human life in the areas of inter-faith relations, intra-family arrangements, inter-ethnic or inter-communal discourses and a host of others (xxii). Interpersonal conflict arises where there is interaction between at least two individuals or groups whose ultimate objectives differ. It is a situation of interaction involving two or more parties in which actions in pursuit of incompatible objectives or interests result in varying degrees of discord.

People in conflict tend to think that everyone sees the situation in the same way as they themselves do. They do not realize that other people are in different situations, and so have different interests, needs, values and experiences. This is why it is highly unlikely for people on both sides to define the problem in the same way. These differences in perception call for effective communication, though effective communication is usually absent in conflict situations. People are likely to cut off communication with the other side, which limits the parties' ability to learn enough about the opponent's view of the situation in order to face the problem effectively.

Social conflicts involve challenges to values, mores, customs, norms, laws etc of the contending parties. Often, participants try to demonstrate their beliefs and /or positions to make others aware of their concerns and motivate them to action. Social conflicts often involve some misunderstanding. Conflict parties communicate by what they say (or do not say) and how they behave toward one another. Even normal interaction may involve faulty communication, but conflict seems to worsen the problem. At every stage and level of conflict, clear communication among parties usually works to reduce unwise decisions by the participants.

At the cultural level, different people have different values, and they behave mostly according to their respective cultural values. According to Williams,

Cultural conflicts arise because of the differences in values and norms of behaviour of people from different cultures. A person acts according to the values and norms of his/her culture; another person holding a different world view might interpret his/her behaviour from an opposite standpoint.

This situation creates misunderstanding and can lead to conflict (26).

Sometimes, parties in conversation may make great effort to communicate as clearly as possible, but cultural differences or language barriers obstruct clear understanding. Even within the same cultural group, there can still be misunderstandings because of different

personal communication styles. This is why, in communication generally, people often misunderstand each other and then tend to take words or expressions as offensive even if the speaker did not intend them to be so. What may follow then is that the other person(s) will react violently or in an unfriendly manner, making the first speaker feel offended again. This can be regarded as a failure to understand communication, and not failure to communicate entirely. In most cases, this is what lies at the root of conflicts, although in very serious conflicts there may be other sources of conflict at play.

It is erroneous for a speaker to assume that what one says is exactly what is heard by the listener. It is very unlikely to have such unfiltered exchange. To put it more objectively, the listener interprets the transmitted words or signs according to his or her experience. So it is not likely that they will both interpret the information in the same way, especially if emotions are involved or where the topics are ambiguous. Words convey different ideas and feelings to different people, and it can take many different attempts before an idea is clearly understood. The more there are cultural differences between speakers, the more frequently they will have to consider and sort out differences of meaning between them.

Language and culture are integral aspects of ethnicity and they therefore greatly affect whatever information is being passed across or received. Understanding a message is a matter of the receiver correctly decoding it, so that the meaning derived from it matches the sender's intention. The encoder and the decoder will react in a similar way only if they share the same experiences and frames of reference. According to Cohen, 'cultural similarity provides a shared frame of reference, while individuals from different cultures are more likely to have different experiences and frames of reference'(3). Culture covers a very wide area of human life, and behaviour and languages are evidently a part, probably the most important part, of it. Gee posits that:

The meanings of words are not stable and general. Rather, words have multiple and ever changing meanings created for and adapted to specific contexts of use. At the same time, the meanings of words are integrally linked to social and cultural groups in ways that transcend individual minds.... The features associated with different contents which trigger the appreciation of a word are not just a random list. Rather, they “long together” to form a pattern that specific socio-cultural groups of people find significant (48).

When opposing groups confront or refer to one another, they may engage in negative labelling (name-calling and insults), sarcasm, threats, and/or in the most extreme cases, physical violence and/or property damage against those on the ‘other side’. This has been the case with the crises on the Jos Plateau, which have led to colossal loss of life and property.

No matter how peace-loving people are in a society, they could exhibit violent tendencies when some core values are tampered with. The crises in Jos are multidimensional, though they manifest themselves mostly along ethnic and religious differences. Kaigama notes that apart from political factors, most of the crises experienced in Jos and environs could largely be traced to the fear of domination and perceived injustice in policy formulation and implementation, religious hate, ethnicity, poverty and politicization of religion. Commenting on the January 17, 2010 crisis, he maintains that,

... the real causes of the crisis are multidimensional and therefore no single factor can be said to be the isolated cause. The crises were triggered by the interplay of political, ethnic, socio-economic and cultural factors, and like the previous crises it took on a religious dimension. Certain conflicts may

appear religious but may after all be a façade for pursuing narrow political, ethnic or economic objectives (39).

For him, while religion cannot be excluded as a contributing factor to the crises so far witnessed, the fact remains that there is a struggle for territorial control, political power, ethnic identity and relevance. Fundamentally, the mobilization of ethnic and religious identities has been central to issues of politics, access to power, patronage and solidarity in Jos and Nigeria in general. Samuel *et al* argue that the politicization of ethnic and religious identities as found in the Jos conflict has become a major tool for the political elite in their desire to hold on to the control of the society (184).

The Plateau Indigenous Development Associations Network (PIDAN) has remarked that:

Amidst conflicting reports of the actual incidents by the print and electronic media, several misconceptions about the underlying issues surrounding the recurrent conflicts have continued to dominate the front burner of international and national discourses. While some commentators have tried to speculate about the true situation by portraying religion as the cause of the crisis, others have accorded an ethnic coloration to it. Much still, some have pinned it down on the indigene-settler syndrome (10).

In consonance with the above remark, Mangvwat comments thus: “indeed the twaddle called indigene-settler syndrome which has been at play is a formidable factor behind the intermittent crises in Jos”(xxiii). Animasaun identifies two main groups in the Jos crises to be the indigenous groups on the one hand and the Hausa settlers on the other. He notes that a major reason for the violent conflict between the Hausa and the host community is the control of land resources and economic activities. He also observes that one feature of a conflict is the use of narratives by the two groups. The

forms and functions of narratives include the discovery, revelation, and presentation of truth and the enactment of interest or the wielding of power. However, narratives are not without consequences. Animasaun further quotes Adebani as stating that ‘in addition to suggesting an interpretation for a social happening, a well-crafted narrative can motivate belief and action of outsiders towards the actions and events caught in any plot’ (146).

For Samuel *et al*, the political control of the area has been the main source of conflict as the indigenous groups the Berom, Anaguta and Afizere, (mostly Christians), and the Hausa-Fulani (predominantly Muslims) often engage each other in violent clashes. Ethnicity and religion have thus become the major instruments of mobilization by the feuding parties for the achievement of their aims, hence the nomenclature ‘ethno-religious’ conflicts of Jos (184).

Prior to the violent eruptions in Jos, the city, and indeed the entire state, had earned for itself the name ‘Home of Peace and Tourism’ basically because of the abundant tourism potentials in the area, and more importantly, because of the peaceful coexistence of the ethnically and religiously diverse inhabitants. Unfortunately, this peaceful scenario was shattered when issues of political control of Jos North Local Government Area, which was created in 1991 out of the defunct Jos Local Government Area, developed into violent conflict in 1994. This was followed more intensely by the violent September 7, 2001 crisis. These two crises of 1994 and 2001 are believed to have laid the foundation for the other violent eruptions in 2002, 2008 and 2010.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Man functions in society with the use of language which operates in two opposite directions. It can serve to promote peaceful co-existence and cooperation among members of a given society on the one hand, and can also be a source of disagreement or resentment on the other hand. This dual attribute of language is the main problem that is being investigated in this study as it is a central issue around which other problems

revolve in the Jos crisis. The most common aspect of human life is the fact that we talk. It is so common that we take it for granted, just as we can breathe, sleep, eat, walk or engage in any of our natural activities. Although it is common and effortless to talk, using language successfully is a very complex enterprise. Besides the ability to speak a language, much more is needed in order to use it. The use of language determines, to a very great extent, the closeness or distance among members of a particular society. Language can be used to achieve both positive and negative goals. Thus it has the potential of fuelling or quelling conflict in whatever ramification. Such is the power of the tongue. The use of language has had both positive and negative impacts on the crises in Jos. While it has helped to soften emotions in some instances, it has also inflamed anger and hatred in other situations, leaving in its trail violence and destruction of lives and property. Researches have been carried out on the use of language by media outfits on the Jos crises and other crises in Nigeria and beyond where results have shown that patterns of reportage have worsened the situations in most cases. Language use through the social media especially conversations through twitter and Facebook have also been analyzed. Results have shown that insurgents and their sympathizers as well as those against have stated and maintained their positions. Other instances of conflict around the world have been analyzed and language is found to have played a significant role.

While different scholars and analysts have written about the crises witnessed in Jos, direct responses from the parties involved have not been obtained and analysed, neither have direct exchanges between the feuding parties been collated and analysed. This study therefore seeks to analyse the peculiar features of language use by the parties in the Jos conflict, as well as their perception of language and communication in conflict situations in general.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study is guided by the following research questions:

1. In what way or manner is the news of the Jos crisis communicated?
2. What is the pattern or level of communication by parties in conflict in the Jos crises during conversations with unfamiliar or unknown individuals or groups?
3. What are the preferences made by parties in conflict during conversations within their own groups on the one hand, and with the opposing groups on the other during the crises in Jos?
4. What are some of the linguistic and paralinguistic features of communication during conflicts as witnessed in Jos?
5. What are the features or peculiarities of language use in conflict situations as against the language of ordinary day-to-day conversations?
6. To what extent can the use of language by third-party individuals or groups defuse or exacerbate a conflict as witnessed in the crisis in Jos?
7. What is the trend of movements and settlement patterns during conflicts in Jos and environs, and why so?
8. How often have residents of Jos witnessed crises?

1.4 AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Language is not used in a vacuum. It is context-bound, and so operates within a social context. In any communicative event, several factors come into play, such as the situation, and other variables. The main aim of this study is to examine those variables that determine the choice of linguistic elements and patterns of communication by the parties involved in the crises that have erupted in Jos and environs. The specific objectives of the study are therefore to:

- i. investigate the way or manner in which information about a crisis is disseminated.
- ii. assess the pattern or level of communication among the feuding parties.
- iii. examine the choices and preferences made by parties in conflict during conversations.
- iv. analyse the peculiar features of language use and communication during conflicts that are different from ordinary daily conversations.
- v. assess the level of interaction among the parties in conflict, and the contributions (positively or negatively) of third parties to the conflict.

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Of the many contributions that have been made to the study of conflicts and crises on the Jos Plateau, to the best of this researcher's knowledge not much attention has been given, at Ph.D level, to the role of language as a tool for starting, increasing, reducing or quelling crises. Attention has mostly been given to the nature of the conflicts themselves and the attendant destruction of life and property. This study explores the various ways people in conflict use language among themselves, and about one another, with particular reference to Jos. It examines the use of language in mediation and peacemaking efforts by the different actors involved. When these language-related problems are identified, solutions will be proffered to solve existing problems and to forestall future occurrences. This will help immensely in ensuring that the right level and pattern of communication is established among the people which will further build mutual respect and trust among the parties involved, thereby reducing drastically the likelihood of any further conflict. It should be noted, however, that this study is not an exhaustive work on the problems identified. It generally provides a base for future research in this area of human struggle.

It opens a window to the fact that language use is not only determined by context, but language itself also creates the situation. The study is useful to researchers in peace and conflict resolution and also to the government. It will also awaken the awareness in people about the positive and negative sides of language.

1.6 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The basic theory adopted for this study is the Systemic Functional Linguistics evolved by M.A.K Halliday. This theory accounts for how language is used in social context, by maintaining that everything that is said is conditioned by the social situation in which it is said. Halliday states that:

Language has evolved to satisfy human needs; and the way it is organised is functional with respect to these needs – it is not arbitrary. A functional grammar is essentially a natural grammar, in the sense that everything in it can be explained, ultimately, by reference to how language is used... a theory of language as a means of getting things done(xiii).

This means that the choice of words or other linguistic elements during a conversation is determined by the function they are to perform. It is not enough to know the structure of a language and be able to organise the grammatical elements correctly, but more importantly it is required that there should be knowledge of the appropriate use of language in particular social contexts and environments. When people communicate, they do so in particular situations and for particular goals to be achieved. In that way, the form or pattern of the language that they use is determined by the prevailing circumstances in which they find themselves. Adopting Halliday's approach to language, T. Bloor and M. Bloor add that:

Since a speaker's or writer's choice of words is constrained by the situation of utterance, and since words and groups of words take on

special significance in particular contexts, the grammar must be able to account for the way in which the language is used in social situations (4).

This theory of functional linguistics by Halliday forms the underlying model upon which this study is set. The use of language in our area of study is analysed based on the various social circumstances surrounding it. It is further based on the principles of sociolinguistics, which is basically the study of language in relation to society.

1.7 SCOPE AND DELIMITATION OF STUDY

The area under study covers the entire city of Jos in Jos North Local Government Area and Bukuru and environs in Jos South Local Government Area. Although other parts of the state have had their fair share of the conflicts, our study is restricted to the mentioned area for ease of analysis. 'Jos' as is used here does not cover the entire state as some newspapers erroneously describe it in some of their reportage. When reporting conflict in any of the local government areas of the state, some media outfits, especially the print media, have Jos included in the caption, which is inappropriate. The focus of this study is on the use of language by the parties in dispute, during the crisis and after, when resolutions are sought. Attention was also paid to the use of language by third-party bodies and individuals who may have helped to reduce or escalate the conflicts. Language use in mediation exercises was also analysed. Also, the study concentrated only on major conflicts between 1994 and 2010.

CHAPTER TWO LITERATUREREVIEW

2.1 LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION IN SOCIETY

Language is that quality in humans which makes man a distinctive and superior being over all creation. It is said to be the major distinguishing feature between man and other creatures. Because man is the only creature that can deliberately manipulate words to convey whatever message he has to pass across, he has been regarded as ‘a talking being’ (Adedimeji 6). Language is so pervasive that human society essentially depends on it for its continued survival. The importance of language as the basis for all human activities also points to its role in making the society better. Language has been described as a bridge between speaker and hearer whereby “private” ideas are communicated by “public” sounds, which function as the vehicle for communicating the relevant message (Akmajian *etal* 363). It is so much part of man that sometimes we talk to particular persons, sometimes to anyone who will listen; and when there is no one to listen, we still talk even to ourselves.

Several linguists have come up with various functions which language performs in society, as captured by Adedimeji. He quotes Hymes as stating that language functions include the emotive function (to communicate the inner state or emotion of the speaker), the conative function (to call on someone to note or act on something), the phatic function (for social reasons), the poetic function (choosing a particular form as the message) and the metalinguistic function (focusing on the code itself, to clarify it or negate it).

On his part, Halliday gives three functions of language which are ideational (to express the content or message), interpersonal (to share one’s feelings, ideas or emotions with others), and textual (to create a text, and establish a link between language and situation) (16). Brown and Yule argue that language performs two major functions: transactional and interactional. The transactional function is the passing of information

across, giving instructions, socialization etc. The interactional function, on its part, helps in establishing and sustaining social relationships (5). Crystal breaks these functions into eight. He explains that language is used to communicate ideas, to express an emotion or state, it is used for social interactions, for the sheer power of language itself to perform things, to record facts, for expressing our identity - who we are and where we belong (116).

Central to all the functions of language given above is the fact that it is the main pivot around which man's activities and entire existence revolve. In other words, human society would be inconceivable without the instrument of language, and that language exists only where humans exist. Hudson refers to language as a social attribute since it is always defined in terms of the group that speaks it. Language performs a social function both as a means of communication among people, and also as an instrument for identifying every social group (3). Language use differs from one environment to another and from one culture to another. The intention and ultimate aim of a speaker determine his choice of linguistic items.

Fasold points to Hymes as suggesting an interconnected hierarchy of units called the speech situation, speech event, and speech act, describing the speech situation as a situation associated with (or marked by the absence of) speech, as found in ceremonies, fights, hunts or love-making (42). A speech situation is not purely communicative, but it may be made up of both communicative and other kinds of events. A speech event is both communicative and governed by rules for the use of speech. It takes place within a speech situation, made up of one or more speech acts. For example, a particular remark or a joke could be a speech act within a longer conversation (speech event) which takes place at a meeting, party, religious celebration etc (speech situation). A speech act can itself also be a speech event when it is the only event in a speech situation.

However, as simple and minimal as the speech act appears in this context, it has a slightly different meaning in the study of the ethnography of communication from the meaning given to the term in linguistic pragmatics. For Hymes, a speech act gets its status from the social content as well as from grammatical form and intonation.

Language is more than the expression and communication of internal thought. It is part of culture. "Culture" here refers to all aspects of human life in so far as they are determined or conditioned by membership in a society. Culture means the manner in which life is lived; not just why things are done. Culture covers a very wide area of human life and behaviour, and language is evidently a part, perhaps the most important part, of it. Culture plays a large role in shaping an individual's character. The more different people are, the less tendency there is for them to share similar experiences. They are likely to interpret utterances and the environment in the same way only if they share experiences and have similar frames of reference. Cultural similarity provides a shared frame of reference, while individuals from divergent cultures are more likely to have different experiences and frames of reference (Cohen 4). Communication can be greatly affected by differences in cultural conventions, norms, meanings, assumptions, ideals and perceptions.

As societies become increasingly multicultural with globalization leading to greater and more frequent contacts across societies, differences become evident. Ironically, as the international system seems to create a global community, there is a greater tendency for conflict. As much as contact promotes understanding among diverse communities, it also brings about contention. From the linguistic perspective, the meaning of a word is found within the way of life of the society which speaks a particular language. Languages do not exist in isolation as abstract systems of signs but within unique environments. This means that language and culture are inseparable; language reflects and expresses culture, and culture is reproduced by language. This

explains why if certain concepts are transferred from one language to another without appropriate equivalents, their essence may be lost in translation. The greater the differences among cultural groups, the farther apart the gap between them in meanings of concepts. Only a close study of these culturally determined differences can solve the problem.

Language functions in remarkable ways. Whenever we speak or write to communicate, we design what we have to say to fit the situation or context in which we are communicating. But, at the same time, situations and contexts sometimes do not have to be there to govern the way we speak. The way we speak or write itself can create the situation or context. Therefore, we choose our language according to a situation or context which our language actually helped to create. This creates a chicken-and-egg scenario where it is difficult to tell which one should come first (Gee 16). The fact is that language and situation bring each other into existence in a reciprocal process through time. For example, the use of formal forms of address in a social gathering or a family circle which ordinarily should be an informal situation, eventually creates a formal situation, in the same way that a formal or official function automatically determines the language to be used.

Communication is also a social affair, and it usually takes place within the context of a fairly well-defined social interaction. Communication is said to be successful when the receiver gets the message as originally transmitted by the speaker. Therefore, there is a communication breakdown if the message understood by the hearer is different from the one intended by the speaker. Since linguistic elements are inherently ambiguous, the hearer has to determine which of the possible meanings of an expression is likely to convey the speaker's intention depending on the situation, the occasion and experiences of the hearer. Transmission of the message should also employ the principles of contextual appropriateness to pave the way for better and quicker understanding by

the recipient(s). A speaker can use the same sentence or expression to convey different messages depending on the context. For the hearer to clearly identify the speaker's intention, there needs to be a shared system of beliefs and inferences between them to make communication flow smoothly.

Language can be used to perform both positive and negative functions in a society. It sometimes works in ways that are beneficial to man; but at other times works in devastating capacities to the detriment of the society. Jowitt (5) confirms that language function changes like a chameleon wearing different colours at different times and situations. The things we do with words are unlimited - to inform, describe, narrate, encourage, to express love, forgiveness, repentance, obedience etc – all these to foster better cooperation and relationship among humans. On the other hand, negatively, language can be used to threaten, denounce, mock, vilify to express anger, hatred, self-pity and despair; to lie, flatter and seduce (1). Depending on the use one makes of language, it can cause widespread devastation just as it can also be a resource for peace and harmony. Language is a double-edged sword that can destroy relationships or build them up for peace.

Adedimeji (6) cites Ayero as observing that some assumptions about communication, which is the most important function of language, are that: all of the problems of this world are communication or language problems; all the problems of this world can be solved by more and better communication; and the study of communication or language is about producing more effective messages. Man's nature is such that is capable of doing both good and evil. Language, being a distinctively human endowment, can thus be used to do either good or evil.

Humanity has found itself in a fix as to the use of language. We now have a powerful tool, our ability to use language and symbols, which is a strong constructive as well as destructive force in our dealings with our physical and social worlds. While

humanity has developed the intellectual capacity to use language to advance in technologies resulting in modern infrastructure and diverse equipment and to form communities or nations, we have also developed the tendency to fragment ourselves into separate and opposing identities, created weapons of mass destruction, dictatorships and several terrorist groups.

Jowitt adds that “Language function can further be complex by performing both positive and negative function at the same time, as when it is used to rebuke, criticize, or to satirize. It is here negative because somebody or an institution is attacked, and it is positive because the main aim is to correct a fault and to bring about some social improvement”(2).

The notion is also corroborated by Abdulrahman: ‘communication is therefore a double-edged sword in the sense that it serves as essential for peaceful coexistence, exchange and development; while on the other hand it is the source of conflict among people of diverse orientation’(67).

2.2 CONFLICT IN SOCIETY

A conflict is a problem of social relations between individuals or groups in a given society. It is considered as a serious disagreement between people, which directly or indirectly affects the existing quality and quantity of mutually beneficial interactions. According to Ovie-D’Leone, conflicts ‘are degenerate variables that cause dysfunctional exchanges in social relations. Also, they generally occur in social contexts –that is, actors must be actively engaged in some form of mutual exchanges that ordinarily provide the basis for them to disagree over certain vital issues in the first place’ (81). Generally, conflicts usually come up as a result of differences of opinions, cultural practices or particular interests being pursued by the parties involved.

The human society is characterized by conflicts of one type or the other, and at one time or another. Abdulmalik observes that:

Humanity has grown to accept conflict as part of its nature. Indeed, conflict remains the most permanent characteristic that makes humanity convinced that growth and development are predicated on conflicts. Conflict is perceived to be largely as something devastating, abnormal, dysfunctional and therefore detestable. Yet, conflict is a fact of life and could be a precursor of positive change(63).

Therefore, if conflict is unavoidable, and it can also lead to positive things, then what must be looked into is not conflict per se, but the way man responds to it. According to Weber, 'People are related to each other in a way that has a transcended nature, and conflict should be seen as a gift providing a rich opportunity, potentially to the benefit of all, to attain a higher self'(512). In as much as conflict is an unpleasant fact of life, it is impossible to avoid it as long as the human society is concerned. Therefore, the challenge is to learn how to handle it effectively. When handled well, conflict can develop stronger and more satisfying relationships, serving a constructive purpose. It shows then that if conflict is constructively handled, it can become an agent of growth and development. This is why Salihu emphasizes that:

Conflict is natural in life. It is usually a reaction to change, and can be as mild and localized as blinking or as widespread and violent as war. Peace and cooperation between two people or communities does not mean that they have no conflict, but rather, it represents their ability to sensibly and peaceably resolve their differences, by making compromises in a way that is fair and acceptable to all involved. Conflict degenerates into open hostilities when the parties involved refuse to cooperate (74).

Conflict between people is a fact of life, not necessarily a bad thing. It is even possible to find a relationship with frequent conflict to be healthier than another without an observable conflict. This is because conflicts handled well produce stronger and more enduring relationships. Conflicts can occur at all levels of human interaction – at work, among friends, within families and between relationship partners. Conflicts may either weaken or strengthen relationships; thus it is a critical event in the course of human interaction. While it can cause resentment, hostility and perhaps the ending of a relationship, when handled well it can be productive – leading to deeper understanding, mutual respect and closeness. Whether a relationship is healthy or unhealthy depends not so much on the number of conflicts that occur between participants, but on how the conflicts are resolved.

Sometimes people try to avoid conflict, because they may think that their anger may go out of control if they open the door to conflict. In this case, they see conflict as an all-or-nothing situation, whereby it is either they avoid it completely or they end up in an all-round combat, regardless of the seriousness of the conflict. Furthermore, people tend to handle conflict in different ways which do not bring permanent solutions. They may avoid or deny that the conflict exists; but this may only make the conflict linger on and can lead to further tension. Another way is where a person accuses and blames the other partner, trying to see conflict to be the same as anger. This will only increase the level of friction between the two parties. A third method is by using power and influence to win at the other person's expense. Here, the conflict is never actually resolved, since the 'loser' will continue to nurse dislike or resentment. We may be so entangled by our own immediate interests that we destroy our relationships. Bellafiore argues that;

If we disregard or trivialize the position of the other person, if we use intimidation or power to win, or if we always have to get our own way, the other person may feel cheated and offended and this may damage the

relationship. In the same way, if we always give up just to avoid the conflict, we are giving the person what he wants to hear at our own expense. Instead, it is better if both parties open up honestly and accept each other's position. (42)

Conflict ranges from minor differences to disputes that can threaten people's relationship. Conflicts with a close friend are different from negotiating with a stranger. But the essential thing in all successful conflict resolution is that both parties need to see their conflict as a problem to be solved mutually, so that they can arrive at a solution which is acceptable to both of them. Mutual trust and respect, with positive attitudes, are essential ingredients in all relationships.

Although conflict may portend danger, it is possible to transform it in a way that it will respond to positive management and resolution, with the willingness and cooperation of the parties involved in the conflict. For this to be possible, the conflict parties have to make compromises and concessions to reach a settlement. Most of the time, protracted conflicts fail to come to an end because the parties involved are not willing to shift ground and allow the conflict to be resolved, not only because their needs are not met or cannot be met. It is always possible to resolve a conflict if there is genuine cooperation between the parties. Conflict should not be seen as a monster that is unapproachable. Best argues that:

The predominantly confrontational image of conflict, and its sometimes being easily equated with fighting, crisis, destruction, war, misunderstanding, etc is responsible for the negative feelings about conflict. Many would see conflict as destructive and something to be avoided, prevented, fought, resolved, managed, etc... yet, not all conflicts carry such effects, or may be considered destructive.... Thus while admitting that conflict could be negative and destructive, there is a sense

in which the other side of the coin views conflict as potentially positive and constructive; an opportunity that can be exploited by parties to bring about positive change and transformation (23 - 24).

Best further distinguishes between two (2) forms of conflict as follows:

- i. **Functional Conflict:** This is referred to as positive conflict which also brings about positive change. This form of conflict needs to be tolerated and accepted as natural; and it should also lead to questions being asked, injustices being challenged and corrected, and the issues generally addressed.
- ii. **Dysfunctional Conflict:** This is known as negative conflict. It is commonly characterized by violence which leads to problems and breakdown in relationships, destruction of property and the lives of the parties themselves or even the lives of others not directly or primarily part of the conflict. This form of conflict should be discouraged through the use of appropriate conflict management strategies.

Although it is argued that conflict, by definition, is an intrinsic and inevitable part of human life, violent conflict is not inevitable (Francis: 20). It is only when a particular conflict is not handled well that it will degenerate into violence. To this effect Falet observes that:

Conflict is mostly depicted as if it is totally negative. This is not always the case. Depending on how it is handled, it can either be constructive (positive) or destructive (negative). It is as common to come across suggestions that conflict can be used constructively to explore different solutions to a problem and stimulate creativity by recognizing and sensitively exposing conflicts as a way of bringing emotive and non-rational arguments into the open while deconstructing long-standing tension (36).

Where conflict becomes destructive, it retards societal progress and development. At this level, individuals exhibit unfriendly behaviour, and emotions are considered above reason. The likelihood of conflict escalation depends on the way the parties involved react in response to others. When parties or institutions are unable to manage conflict situations well, or if they react with force negatively, conflict can escalate. However, this can be averted if appropriate steps are taken.

Conflict is inherent in human existence and occurs where there are differences in interests and means to achieve them. These interests include basic human needs, identity, and justice, among several others. Every society is plagued by some form of conflict, which can lead to social change. What matters, however, is how the conflict in a given society translates or escalates into a violent form, which then poses serious challenges to human society, as it has the potential to retard development and to promote disorderliness and poverty. Life is a competitive process, but conflict may be contained if appropriate measures are taken.

Conflicts have been viewed from different perspectives. Ovie-D' Leone (81) presents them in seven approaches as follows:

i. The Historical Approach

Proponents of this approach argue that there is hardly any human society that is perfect and therefore free of conflicts at any given moment in time. To them, what readily generate conflicts are the usually unstable manners human societies have evolved over time resulting in the so-called 'historical accidents' that usually result in conflict outbreaks. Such accidents are also the results of oversight or failure of the political elite to aptly respond to events, or when they do, the measures often adopted are relatively inadequate to prevent the slide toward social and political anarchies most time.... Therefore, conflict outbreaks generally are said to result from the manner in which the elite seek to respond to such changing phases of human history.

There appears to be a link between the unique patterns of Africa's historical evolution and colonial experiences across the continent, as well as the seemingly uniformed patterns of responses by the early nationalist elite and statesmen in tackling emergent accidents in such historical processes of evolution in their individual states. The logic of colonial rule premised on the 'Indirect Rule System' has also meant the exaltation of ethnicity into the national political calculus across Africa. This has overtime been known to generate intense competitiveness between the composite ethnic groups within each state in post-colonial Africa. This approach is corroborated by Bamgbose's view that:

The colonial legacy has left Africa with many artificial nations in which several ethnic groups have been brought together under one administration within a single territory. Not only do those groups see themselves as distinct socio-cultural entities (e.g. Hausa, Igbo, Yoruba in Nigeria, etc), there are even sub-ethnic groups that previously saw themselves as distinct. (16).

This situation has been a major setback in the feeling of nationality in Nigeria and many other African countries that were colonized by the British. Attachment to ethnic identity has mainly been responsible for such countries to adopt a single language for national identity.

ii. The Sociological Approach

Marginalization and the oppression of minority groups are some of the prevalent factors known to have triggered off conflicts across Africa over the years. A feasible response to conflict outbreaks on the continent would therefore be more effective when a vital aspect of an agreement between disputants is dialectically tied to the dire need to shorten the relative gap of 'expectants' and inherent 'power capabilities' of each composite group within any given state structure. Such social re-arrangements also have

a tendency to influence the psyche of members of such groups over time. A peace overture would also necessarily have to redress the psychological aspects of long years of socio-economic and political denial suffered by such minority groups over time.

This school tries to establish a vital linkage between the character of cumulative social relations between actors within a social setting, how such contextual locales have evolved overtime and the inherent possibilities for conflict outbreak generally. Ovie-D'Leon remarks that R.J. Rommel is a key proponent of this school of thought, which has premised its argument on the vital links between the manner a society has evolved overtime with emergent conflict outbreaks.

iii. The Psychological Approach

Proponents of this school of thought premise their argument on the notion that the nature of man is generally full of evil, destructiveness, selfishness, egotism and competitiveness. Such a character is what brings him into relations of constant aggression with others as they jostle for dominance over territories, power and resources. Here, the general tendency has always been a resort to the use of force in a scenario that late nineteenth-century evolutionists called the 'Survival of the Fittest'. Later, Sigmund Freud asserted that "conflicts of interests among mankind are in the main usually decided by the use of force. This is true of the whole animal kingdom from which mankind should not be excluded' (Ovie -D'Leone, 10).

Kenneth Waltz also alludes to the nature of man as a principal factor in conflict outbreaks in the society. For instance, he asserts that "according to the first image The locus of the important causes of war is [to be] found in the nature of man. Wars result from selfishness, from misdirected aggressive impulses, [and] from stupidity. Other causes are secondary and have to be interpreted in the light of these factors". This school of thought argues mainly that the human psychological composition at any

moment in time does also have a vital role to play in any conflict outbreak scenario. War and peace are compatible with human nature [or his mindset].

iv. The Mass Media Approach

The manner in which information is manipulated by the mass media is also contingent upon how conflicts could break out generally within a social context. This approach maintains that wars and other conflicts generally stem from deliberate misinformation or misconceptions about an enemy's inherent capabilities and intentions. For instance, trends leading to the outbreak and escalations of the Rwandan genocide in 1994, where the Rwandan National Radio (RNR) played an active role in misinforming the populace and in mobilizing the Hutus against the Tutsi minority, is a good example of the illicit use of the information media to generate and also escalate a conflict generally.

Any response to such a conflict outbreak ought also to urgently provide a credible alternative channel and logistics for counter mass communication needed to balance such misinformation dissemination by the protagonists in a conflict.

v. The Political Economy Approach

Karl Marx and Max Weber are some notable thinkers who have established such a dialectical linkage between the specific patterns of productive economic activities, property ownership, class formation and how these variables connect to conflict outbreaks in the society. The interplay between these factors forms the central point of the arguments proposed by the political economy approach. This school is of the notion that emergent inter-class competitions between the property owner and the labour class are the basis for conflict outbreaks in an organized society. It also submits that peace can only be created if the ensuing disputes stemming from the interface between 'labour exploitation', 'capital production' and 'profits' are equitably resolved in the interests of all parties involved in such lopsided economic exchanges.

In this sense, a person's class location has a direct connect to possibilities of emergent conflict outbreaks as well as the character of such an actor's involvement in it. This is to say that a person's class location is defined by their relation to property which systematically affects material interests in this sense and when material interests so defined do influence actual behaviour.

Responding to conflict outbreaks across Africa, for instance, by using this theory, would invariably warrant a dire need to redress age-long inter-group social inequalities on the continent where one group perpetually oppresses and predisposes to lord it over others because it has been privileged to inherit control of the instruments of state power and authority from the departed European colonialists.

Ideally speaking, there are really no generic social class systems across Africa that are premised on the variables utilized elsewhere across the world. What Africans have at hand are amorphous political class systems created by the granting of false political independence and political authority to preferred ethnic groups across the continent that merely enables them to exercise solitary controls or even weak claims to ownership rights over even their natural resources which fuel the industrial productive activities in the capitalist core states.

vi. The Malthusian Approach

The strategic link between hunger-starvation-deprivation and conflicts has resonated in the views of many scholars focusing on conflict analyses in emergent states in recent times. This thinking owes its root to Thomas Malthus, who is generally considered one of the principal proponents of this school of thought. A central theme here is premised on the notion that general lack due to an over-bloated national population and grinding poverty leading to pervading hunger, are some of the principal causes of conflict outbreaks in human society. As groups and individuals compete intensely for access to such scarce natural resources within a state, conflict outbreaks

will certainly be some of the unpleasant outcomes. Trends in Africa tend to also give credence to such a position as canvassed by this school. There is a growing consensus among scholars on this.

vii. The Anthropological School

There are two branches in this school. One branch premises its arguments on the functionality of conflicts in the historical processes of the evolution of human societies from the primitive age to the modern era. Proponents of this school claim that conflicts are vital for a system's healthy maintenance functions over time. The focus of this approach has been greatly influenced by the 'structural-functional' analysis of human social systems in addition to the 'psycho-analysis' of the human personality – which has recently placed emphasis on 'frustration - aggression' hypothesis that seeks to explain prevalence of competing human personalities in relation to conflict outbreaks in the society.

This branch of the anthropological school highlights the dynamics in the structure of social relations as well as analysis of competing individual personalities as the basis for interpreting conflict outbreak dynamisms in the society.

For the African continent, the patterns of social relations are largely determined by overt sentimental attachments to ethnic chauvinism, while the most pronounced pattern of individual personality among the political elites has also been one which can be characterized as 'high-handed patrimonial authoritarianism' allowing no disagreement of any kind to constituted authority. One can then combine this with a scenario – prevalent across Africa – where politics is conducted on the basis of group attachments and ethnic determinism.

In the view of Blanton, colonial legacies and forms of neo-colonialism are a major obstacle to African stability and development. By fragmenting the traditional ethnic groups within Africa in order to divide up the continent among themselves, the

European powers created the enabling environment for ethnic conflicts. The different systems of colonial rule in Africa created different systems of ethnic stratification on the continent which left different patterns of post-colonial ethnic conflict. He states that:

When the European powers imposed formal territorial boundaries throughout the continent in 1885, the seeds for ethnic conflict in post-colonial Africa were sown. These boundaries were drawn with little or no consideration to the actual distribution of indigenous ethno-cultural groups. With the demise of colonial rule, the former colonies, with their colonial borders essentially intact, were transformed into some of the most ethnically fragmented states in the world... The structural configuration of ethnic groups—specifically, whether groups are arrayed in a ranked or unranked system of ethnic stratification – has a direct and profound effect on the willingness and ability of groups to mobilize for collective action.(482)

The British colonial system, which Nigeria experienced, practised a divide-and-rule strategy, in which the colonists deliberately maintained opposing traditional structures of control and ensured that they kept the different ethnic populations from forming a coalition to challenge their authority. By so doing, they maintained control by bringing about factional rivalries among the different ethnic groups. It is therefore safe to say that the British structured ethnic conflict into their system.

Political change has also been seen as responsible for political instability and conflict. Mousseau argues that ‘political change is a destabilizing process because it increases uncertainty about conditions of people or groups in society, creating a zero-sum environment. The establishment and interpretation of democratic culture and values require a process that might bring intense issues of conflict’ (552). This is to say that democratization brings about ethno-political conflict because the introduction of

democratic procedures in multi-ethnic states has the tendency of producing a political competition along lines of ethnicity with communal political agendas.

Citing Gurr, Mousseau further argues that democratization brings a lot of opportunities for ethnic mobilization. But, unfortunately, most democratizing states are not capable of accommodating these movements, since democratic institutions and norms are not well established in these states. Consequently, violent ethno-political conflicts are expected to be more common and frequent in democratizing states than in states with well-established and stable democracy.

2.3 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXTS OF CONFLICTS

Conflicts do not spring out of nothing. Certain variables are responsible for the emergence of every conflict. Therefore, each conflict has a specific context, history and background. The issues in contention must have sprung from somewhere, and from particular historical, cultural, political or social contexts. Knowing the background to a conflict greatly determines the understanding of the conflict itself.

Best gives three related dimensions to describe the context of any conflict. The first is the distant past, which may be a period of centuries or decades, depending on the issue at hand. The second dimension may be the immediate past, which indicates a decline in the relationship among the parties involved in the conflict. The third dimension refers to the immediate events, to include what triggered the conflict, especially if it is a violent conflict(64). The context of a conflict is not necessarily talking about the causes of the conflict, but the background and framework within which the causes came about and developed.

2.4 STAGES IN CONFLICT

Every conflict is characterized by different stages and levels of change and transformation. This is because conflict is not static, but changes in form or intensity.

Best cites Simon Fisher as identifying five stages of conflict as follows:

- (i) **The Pre-Conflict Stage:** This is a period when goals between parties are not compatible, and which can lead to open conflict. At this stage, the conflict is not well known because parties try not to make it known, but communication is strained between them.
- (ii) **The Confrontation Stage:** This is the point at which the conflict becomes manifest and is made known. This stage is marked at times by fighting, with low levels of violence, the search for supporters by the different parties, mobilization of resources, the tense relations and polarization.
- (iii) **The Crisis Stage:** This is the peak of the conflict. In violent conflict, this is the stage of wars and severe fighting, resulting in killings, injuries, large scale population displacements, and the use of small arms and light weapons.
- (iv) **The Outcome Stage:** This is the stage where the violence is decreased. It is assumed that every conflict passes through this stage, in one way or the other. Either one side wins and another loses, or a ceasefire may be declared. It is also possible that one side may surrender, or the government or other third party intervening forces may step in to impose a solution and stop the fighting.
- (v) **The Post-Conflict Stage:** At this stage, violence has either ended or reduced tremendously. This is the stage to address the underlying causes of the conflict, those incompatible goals which created the conflict in the first instance, such as the needs and fears of the parties. This is when the issues have to be addressed to avoid a relapse of the situation.

Perspectives to a Conflict

The perspective of a conflict refers to a particular way a conflict is understood and interpreted by the parties involved, and also sometimes by independent observers. Perspectives are standpoints, beliefs, opinions, values and views that the parties in conflict and other people around hold about the conflict. Most of the time, these views are in conflict with each other, mainly because they are coming from the interests and positions of the different parties in the conflict. Some perspectives may also spring from the needs of the parties. In most cases, the perspectives of parties in a conflict are different, but there could also be areas of agreement. Such areas of agreement could become useful common grounds which could help in the process of conflict transformation (Best125).

Parties to a Conflict

Parties to a conflict are individuals or groups who are involved in the conflict either directly or indirectly, based on the interests they have to pursue and protect; or because they have the opinion or belief that their interests, positions and needs are being threatened in one way or the other. Indirect parties are those allies or friends who help the main parties to achieve their interests, with the hope of fulfilling their own personal interests or benefit for it at the end of it all. It is usually necessary to capture such parties so that efforts at conflict transformation or de-escalation will include them. This will help in a peace plan.

2.5 POSITIONS, INTERESTS, NEEDS AND FEARS DURING CONFLICTS

During conflicts, the different parties involved will be pursuing one or more of certain factors. This they do either consciously or unconsciously, in order to justify their involvement in the particular conflict. These factors have been identified as positions, interests, needs and fears of the parties involved (Best 130).

The positions of parties are the stands which the opposing parties take and maintain about the particular issue in contention. They are usually very different from those of others. Positions are what parties say they want, and these are indeed wants, not needs. A position is based on the fears of a party, how it understands the conflict, and how they think they can protect their interest in the best way they can. Positions are usually not compromised. However most positional stands do not, in reality, reflect what they actually need.

Interests are values pursued by individuals or groups during conflicts. These values may be immediate or distant benefits that such parties may obtain. Interests may be what the different parties really want, but again, not what they really need. Interests usually come in the form of favours, material gain, concessions, etc. During conflicts, it is not common for parties to reveal their interests. Sometimes, it is not the entire group that will obtain the interests, but only certain individuals or sections of the group.

Needs and fears go hand-in-hand. Needs are what the parties must have, but these are often not noticed and discussed. They are only discovered and identified through a careful analysis of the conflict, and through a mechanism of dialogue between the parties. There are times or occasions when parties may really identify their needs, but may not want to talk about them, and keep on emphasizing their positions. However, it is only when the needs and fears of the opposing parties are addressed that the conflict can be resolved or transformed.

Fears refer to those situations and conditions which make parties restless and worried. They often bring about uncertainty and a sense of threat to their existence and survival. Therefore parties are always out to protect their values, identity, security, and any privileges they may have.

2.6 LANGUAGE AND CONFLICT

Man's activities centre on the instrumentality of language. Therefore, language determines the progress and cooperation among members of a given society. In this way, it has the potential of bringing about conflict, since grievances and dissatisfaction are expressed through the medium of language. On the other hand, it can help to resolve human conflict. The spoken word has a great potential in determining the corporate existence of any society. Adedimeji states that "mere words, that language produces, can make and prevent wars, create understanding or inflame prejudice, form constituents or destroy them, sell shoddy or superior ideas, justify man's worst actions or express his highest ideals"(4).

Language is at the center of all human relations, and it is certainly the main factor when people are engaged in seeking the resolution of a conflict or the restoration of peace. Thus, language is at the heart of all issues relating to conflict resolution and peace building. Language is the major medium of culture and socialization, and the most powerful instrument of thought itself. Language is also dynamic, in the sense that it can infinitely be extended and modified to suit the changing needs of the speakers.

It is important to be mindful of the effects our words will have on those with whom we interact. For this reason, Iwara emphasizes that:

Words do evolve new meanings over time. Consequently, when we use a word, we should attempt to determine if it still has the meaning it used to have. We should be mindful that words do also change their meaning from one part of the world or country to another. For this reason, we should be careful not to assume that the words we use and the words people from other parts of the world or from other cultures use mean the same thing, nor should we assume that we see the same reality when viewing the same stimulus (71).

Akin (5) notes that one misleading idea about language is the erroneous belief that words are harmless. Yet words can harm people very badly. A biting criticism or personal attack can remain vivid in one's memory for ages. Some words can provoke a physical response, or even a punch in the face. The words themselves may sound ordinary and without weight, but they can bring about physical or emotional reactions, and thus they should be used with caution.

Language is a major factor in conflict. When language is a factor, it suggests that the primary means of communication is no longer employed to be beneficial to man. Wrong use of language worsens already strained relationships and breaks mutual ties. Bad language aggravates and exaggerates the differences between or among people, instead of naturally providing a common ground of agreement and harmony among them. It involves selfishness where a speaker raises self above others and denigrates them. Bad language means also saying more than what we feel, and can also refer to saying less than we mean and refusing to make known our real intentions.

Conflicts arise when there is misunderstanding between two or more people or groups. A wrong or misunderstood word is like fuel added to fire. Inflammatory language is one of the most common causes of conflict escalation. Language, the main role of which is to communicate meaning, can also be a source of conflict in any human society; but when language is used effectively, man's problems are solved. Adedimeji quotes Birk and Birk as stating that:

Wars and frictions between nations and groups are often caused by an ignorance of the true relationship between words and things. Individual misunderstandings are largely the result of similar ignorance and the consequent failure to interpret and communicate effectively, and even the personal and psychological ills of man can be cured by a language therapy which consists, in part, of putting freely into words one's deepest fears,

desires and conflicts, and so being led to analyse them consciously and rationally and perceive their real meaning (6).

When people use words to attack others, those attacked are likely to get defensive and angry. Usually when such attacks are used, those attacked are most likely to respond negatively, thereby escalating the problem at hand. They will then stand firmer and even refuse to listen to the other side's arguments whether they are valid or not. When issues are exaggerated, people tend to make statements that will get support for their own side. However, the reality is that these negative statements are not only going to gain support for the accuser but also for the accused. This is especially true if some people realize that the statements are mere exaggerations and are therefore unfair to the accused; then they turn to register their sympathy for the accused, rather than the accuser. This will ultimately only help escalate the conflict.

Misinterpretation of the speaker's real intentions is another factor that can lead to escalation of conflict. When the intended message is misunderstood or misinterpreted, whatever the person says will be viewed as negative. This happens mostly in situations where people already have certain opinions about their opponents. As conflicts increase, communication decreases, and distrust is on the increase. The two sides view each other from negative perspectives. Some people may even tag other people as perpetually evil, trouble makers etc. With such a mindset, people in dispute usually misinterpret the motives of their opponents, taking them to be more hostile or aggressive than they really may be. This attitude can only fuel the conflict.

In a conflict situation, there are usually other people outside it who discuss the conflict among themselves. In most cases, the kind of information contained in such conversations is inaccurate, and so capable of misinforming whoever gets the message, and this poses a threat of escalating the conflict. Such communications - coming from third parties- otherwise referred to as rumours, are usually also spread through the mass

media-television, radio, newspaper, and the internet. To solve this problem, it is important to know what types of rumours are being peddled, and then to correct wrong information and replace them with reliable information.

One basic and useful way to communicate effectively is for the parties involved to treat each other with respect and consideration, even if they do not actually respect each other ordinarily. A show of disrespect can ignite feelings of hate and hostility in an opponent, so he is most likely to dismiss or oppose anything that is said. However, this does not mean that you will agree with everyone and suppress your worries, or how you feel about what they have done or the way they look at issues. It only means that you express your opinions or differences in an acceptable way in which you do not sound better than them. Anger can be made known, but not in a way that it will make the conflict worse.

Trouble can be averted if parties in conflict pause to think before speaking. Since people are not always calm, rational or careful, certain principles and techniques of communication have to be adopted to keep conflicts from escalating. Akin recognizes the art of listening as the greatest attribute of good communication. She states that:

‘Good’ communication demands that both parties take turns speaking and listening. Many conflicts drag on because one side will not stop until they feel heard and understood – sometimes that is all they want. Once they feel they have been understood, the conflict dissipates. At other times, a conflict arises because one side didn’t hear what the other said, and replied inappropriately in word or action, or didn’t reply at all. If one is going to do only one thing to avoid escalation, it should be to listen carefully and make sure the other party knows they are listened to(1).

There is much to learn about the conflicts we are in and about ourselves if we listen carefully to our own speech during those conflicts. Effective listening is more than just hearing (the physiological dimension) what another person has to say. It involves analyzing and taking into consideration what is said. Ideally, people should do more of listening than any other communication activity, and that should take more of their communication time. In this way, it contributes considerably to interpersonal communication. Listening is not a passive activity, but is an active part of the transactional model of communication, as the listener stays involved.

Communication involves four skills: reading, writing, speaking and listening. Of all these, listening tends to receive the least attention in general practice. Yet it is the fundamental process through which people begin and sustain relationships. According to Iwara, listening is a basic process through which we take in information. He asserts that:

More communication time is spent on listening than on any other form of communication activity. Peace and conflict managers are therefore urged to treat listening as if their very existence depended on it, because in many ways, it does. Unlike hearing, listening is a deliberate process through which the listener seeks to understand and retain aural stimuli. Listening also involves critical thinking; and critical thinkers do not rush to judge other people's words; instead, they exhibit a willingness to re-examine ideas, and thus withhold their evaluation until they have had sufficient opportunity to assess the information being given to them. (80)

Based on this position, conflict managers must realize that their task goes beyond just hearing the words of the speakers. They therefore have to think critically about the information they receive in order to act appropriately.

The language that we choose in conflict situations determines the basis of our conflict stories and in moving those stories forward. Proper conflict management depends largely on our ability to listen to and analyse the language that we use during conflicts and how we are able to imagine and choose language which helps us achieve our aims. It is possible to make choices that can be surprisingly beneficial to all parties involved in the conflict.

A major feature of language during conflict is the presence of unusual intensity. This can be exhibited both verbally and non-verbally. For example, conflicts are often characterized by emotional language at different levels. Conflict language that expresses anger, deep dislike or hatred, or is likely to turn the conflict into violence should be checked, as this shows the intensity in the perceived opposition between the people involved. Intensity of language creates the intensity of the expression and meaning of conflict between the parties in it. Kellett remarks that:

There is a relationship between the language used in conflict and to represent conflict and the personal and contextual meaning of the conflict itself. The meaning of the conflict structures the language and the intensity of the language that is used in it. At the same time, the language that is available to us and that we habitually choose to engage in conflicts with also structures the dynamics and end results of those conflicts (72).

It is also always important to be precise and clear while speaking, and to be conscious of the words chosen to know how the other will react to them. It should not be taken for granted that meanings of words are concrete and therefore universal. Many words have slightly different meanings and varying levels of emotional impact to different people. How a message is received depends on more than ordinary or general meaning. The spoken word may be accompanied by other paralinguistic elements such as facial expression, intonation or body language. For example, one statement could have

many meanings depending on the intonation. In using language, hostilities and abuse are more often conveyed by the tone used, not just the words themselves. Effective communication is necessary for getting personal needs met and developing significant interpersonal relationships as well as for ensuring the adequate functioning of people in any society. Conflicts are easily resolved when we learn how to use communication positively at every instance in our daily life.

Conflict resolution is a fundamental activity in life which is carried out in different ways depending on the culture involved. Differences in approach depend on different ways of understanding the nature of conflict and society. Cohen states that:

It is clear that conflict resolution should be studied with full regard for the source language in which it is articulated. Communal life is possible only because members of a community possess a set of shared meanings, enabling them to make coherent sense of the world. This stock of meaning constitutes the common sense of the community and underpins all communication and organized activity. The mother tongue is the main repository of a community's common sense. Other systems of symbolic meaning that demarcate communities include religion, popular culture, and non-verbal behaviour. (9)

One main activity of a community is its handling of conflicts, because it has to be able to settle disputes and control violence before it truly survives. Since language constitutes a community's shared stock of meaning, the study of language and its functions enables us to look into how members of a group understand and manage conflict. Given the fact that languages are different, concepts that signify certain things in one language may mean differently in other languages, or such concepts may not exist at all. There are cross-cultural differences in the way people structure reality, and to impose our world view on others is to create unimaginable problems. The resolution of

inter-cultural conflict, which is evident in all multicultural societies, is becoming increasingly necessary. For information to be clearly exchanged and the issues at hand to be mutually discussed, the parties involved must be able to draw on a shared store of meaning. To negotiate peace, the parties in conflict ought to know what it is to negotiate and what 'peace' is. Because different languages convey different versions of reality, and in order to know what people think about a particular term or concept, we must first find out what they mean by its equivalent in their own language. What they will expect of that term or concept will be guided by the local language that determines their understanding of the term. By comparing and contrasting the meanings of concepts like 'conflict' and 'resolution' for example, in various languages, we can come to understand and appreciate similarities and differences. Language is not only a medium of communication, but also a window into how people organize both their understanding and expression of conflict according to their cultural patterns and ways of behaving. Differences in the understanding of conflicts are made manifest in the language people use to interact with each other.

Another form of communication is body language which includes facial expression, posture and gestures. For example, standing upright conveys a different meaning from slouching, pointing at your audience is different from scratching your head, shaking your audience is different from staying aloof etc. It is therefore left for the transmitter to clarify his message the way he wants to send it. Verbal and non-verbal communication occur either independently or in coordination with each other. Non-verbal communication, also referred to as cues, conveys messages just as verbal communication does. A person's interpretation filters messages sent with the message. Culture also greatly influences beliefs in most of the non-verbal expressions and their understanding. Our cultures determine the way we use language. So body language varies with culture. The way a particular body movement communicates meaning in one

culture is not the way it will do so in another culture. Meanings will vary according to the environment in which they are used. For example, in many African and Asian countries, it is a sign of respect not to look someone in the eye, while in America, the same practice is taken to be a sign of dishonesty or disinterest in the communication exercise (Akin 2).

The way we use language during conflicts provides a strong way of expressing and also guiding the meaning and dynamics of the conflict. Creative language devices, such as the use of metaphor and imagery, helps us to represent our conflicts in ways that are important to reach our goals and to clearly express ourselves, and then be able to negotiate from there. Language imagery makes clear and real our experiences in the conflict and how we might use language as the instrument for guiding the process of negotiation and change (Kellett 81).

To keep quiet and not say anything at all during conflicts also conveys meaning and determines the shape of the situation at hand. Kellett continues that: 'Silence – what is not said – is intimately tied to the meaning of what is said. Both speech and silence are intimately tied to what could be said. Hence the idea that silence is pregnant with possibilities. It interacts with language in some important ways for us'(84). Language is essentially an agreed system of communication designed to convey and receive information, but also sometimes to conceal it.

Silence sometimes becomes inevitable because, as Kellett says, first we do not always have the kind of language we need to really capture the way we feel since conflict situations are emotionally charged. Secondly, language is culturally determined, and we could only use what we have at hand. Thirdly, sometimes all we may have is silence because we do not know how to talk about certain experiences. There is also the fear of being interpreted differently, and no one knows where that can lead us to. The fourth reason is that sometimes we are not able to say anything because we do not know exactly

how we feel within us. Choosing what to say may actually determine how we feel and also how others will interpret the way we feel which will ultimately determine the direction of the conflict. Fifth, at times we are not able to know exactly how we feel because we do not know how to use language to express our feelings. Conflicts are mostly made up of unusual, highly charged, and very important conversations. The relevance of silence lies in the fact that it shows the constraints of language, the limitations of the people in the conflict, and the hidden possibilities for engagement in dialogue or negotiation. In the same way, it is always better for people who naturally use foul language to keep quiet during conflicts. This is because when they speak, their language will only inflame the crisis, even when they are not direct parties in the conflict. However, there are instances where silence is not golden. An adage has it that evil triumphs when good people keep mute. Whenever there is a problem in society, people of good will have to speak up and correct the ills going on. Kwashi (2015) remarks that when good and well-meaning people speak, they bring out reason and strong points in a gentle and polite way, and at the end propose workable solutions to the satisfaction of all concerned. He maintains that when such people keep quiet during conflicts, unreasonable elements will have their way, and before long, everybody will be engulfed in the crises including the good ones. So, well-meaning individuals in the society must speak out and correct whatever has gone wrong. Above all, it is necessary to exercise common civility in all moments of disagreement. Insults, derogatory names, exaggeration and sarcasm should always be avoided.

Choosing neutral words can greatly affect how a conflict moves along, either defusing it or escalating it. Choosing precise words to reflect the content and emotional language being expressed is an important role for the mediator and hopefully provides an example for the participants. Neutral words are those that do not assign blame, guilt, shame, or appear to judge. Hot words do one or more of these, and cause emotions to rise

and conflict to escalate. Mediators are expected to choose language which is clear, concise, and appropriate for the discussion. Under pressure and stress, we can react so quickly that we speak before we realize the impact of what we have said. Using neutral words will make you appear perceptive and interested in solving the problem at hand.

A linguistic approach to conflict management consists of making the best use of language in a way that will be of benefit to man who is the sole creature endowed with the faculty of speech. The process of making maximum use of language consists of the individual, the society in which he lives, and the nation in general.

Given the fact that conflicts are widely played out using language, both in a person's private life and in negotiations between two opposing parties, there is the need for participants to be aware of the potential for textual meaning to contribute, whether positively or negatively, to the process which must be one of the aims of those working to make a difference to human suffering as a result of conflict. Jeffries posits that:

There are obvious ways in which language participates in conflict—and its resolution/transformation. These include, for example, raising your voice; swearing; interrupting; lying; making mischief (for example telling tales of people); not allowing others the floor and many other features of impoliteness which are researched by many scholars in pragmatics. (13)

In managing interpersonal conflict, it is important that we also acknowledge the existence of human emotion, which may be expressed in terms of anger both as parties in conflict and as mediators or conflict managers. An effective skill in the management of conflict and the promotion of peace building is the active listening skills to enhance understanding of issues of communication (Abdulrahman 69). In mediation, it is hard to resolve a conflict you do not understand, and it is difficult to understand a conflict unless you have adequate and accurate information at your disposal. Clear communication is a necessary tool for getting to the root causes of a conflict and in finding satisfactory

solutions. On the other hand, ambiguous or unclear communication may itself be the root cause of the conflict in question or can be an agent of escalating one that has started. The parties in conflict need to be specific and make sure that everyone understands each point made. Ambiguous terms should be clarified to avoid having different or even opposite interpretations.

People in conflict tend to use inflammatory language such as profanity, name calling, and exaggerations that escalate the conflict. The inflammatory language should be reframed in a more objective way to make the message less emotional and more useful for future discussions. Since people in conflict are less likely to moderate their emotions themselves, a third party is more likely to be successful in this direction by choosing words that calm tensions. The way a person responds to a conflict can either escalate or decrease the intensity of the problem at hand. To calm the situation, one should provide a neutral point of view; and plan to work with the other party to achieve resolution.

2.7 LANGUAGE AND POWER

Language, the most common means of communication, is the instrument with which humans satisfy their desires and direct their goals. Being a human endowment, it develops and changes as people use it in social situations, just as people usually construct reality of the world around them with the aid of their language.

The impact of language on society depends on how we utilise it. Ideas, beliefs and aspirations are brought out into concrete reality through the use of language. Thus when people are aware of the influence of the words they use, they make deliberate effort in their choices in expressing themselves because any choice can have either negative or positive effect. Words are often used automatically and unconsciously, that is why we treat them so lightly in our daily conversations without clear interest.

Language is used to establish and sustain power relations. Power is not only got and sustained through force or other means, but also through indirect ways such as the use of language. Persons or groups of persons use language as their basic tool for creating status and power and to hold on to them. Power, whether personal or collective, can be reflected in the use of language, and the language in turn can reinforce and maintain such power. Power can be established and developed through the social practice of language interaction. The manner in which individuals and organizations use language to maintain and strengthen their interests, or to be in charge over others changes social relationships. The exercise or use of power by people with particular roles in social situations is most often revealed in the way language is used, just as it is with lack of power. The use of language to express power or authority becomes more profound when such power seems threatened, and the speaker feels they are under some pressure. In most modern societies, the belief is that everyone is entitled to rights and freedoms. However, inequality and unfairness can be found when power is used wrongly in real life situations. Power is usually established and practiced by the use of language to influence other people by the way words are chosen and by the tone or other linguistic and paralinguistic features employed. When power is mentioned, it refers to the control man has over fellow man. While men use language to exert their authority over others, the same language can be used to bring down or weaken power or authority. Weib and Schwietring observe that

In the case of the “Power of language”, the problem is multilayered. The “power of language” not only means language in the service of power; language can also undermine power. And above all, as language, it possesses itself power of a very special kind. The relation of language and power is ambivalent.¹⁶

In a way, the “power of language” has been made to mean the ‘language of power’ in the sense that power must employ the use of language to express and exhibit itself and to command; that is the use of language for the purpose of exerting authority. In another sense, the understanding and command of language itself is a source of power. The power that is expressed through language is itself weakened by the same instrument (language). This means that language can be used to convey the power of violence or dominion, and as well be used to undermine it. It further means then that people can take advantage of the power of language, and be able to see through and unravel and make bare the power exercised through language. While power and dominion must depend on language to assert itself, language is also used to make it vulnerable. This explains that as language is used for dominance and repression, it is also used for emancipation. Therefore, the power of language lies with language itself, and anyone who uses language possesses this power.

The use of power involves relationships that are unequal, with one person able to control the other. Human life is generally social, and people live or operate in groups of different sizes and compositions. Not all members of a social group play the same roles. Consequently, social groups have been characterized by hierarchies ranging from low to high on scales of power and status. There might even be subgroups within larger groups such as social classes, cliques or castes. Power is the authority that one person or subgroup has over others(d). This authority is made manifest by the use or command of language, since language is the basic instrument with which humans interact and socialize.

2.8 ETHNICITY AND CONFLICT

An ethnic group is a group of people which sees itself or is seen by others as sharing a distinctive and enduring collective identity based on a belief in a common origin, a common history and a common destiny. Members share culturally specific practices and beliefs. Language, religious beliefs, a shared territory and physical appearance are other factors that distinguish one ethnic group from another (Odendaal 6 Williams 4). In Nigeria, for example, ethnicity is one of the keys to understanding the country's pluralistic society. Irobi defines an ethnic group as a community of people who share cultural and linguistic characteristics including history, tradition, myth and origin(5). Ethnicity has a strong influence on one's status in a society.

Ethnic conflicts are often caused by an attempt to secure more power or access more resources among competing entities in a plural society. Ethnic conflict refers to situations where people mobilize against others on the basis of ethnic identity. An ethnic conflict or ethnic war is a conflict between ethnic groups often as a result of ethnic nationalism. Jowitt remarks that language has been a major factor in the determination of group identity, thereby creating ethnic or national consciousness. However, it is not the only factor. Religion is sometimes used with language to bring about tension and conflict in society as in the case of the Arab-Israeli conflict, or the conflict of the Buddhist Sinhalese and the Hindu Tamils in Sri Lanka (6). He adds that the combination of language and religion was also responsible for the disintegration of Yugoslavia. Although language is not the only factor which distinguishes ethnic groups, it is argued that it is among the key factors in terms of which an ethnic group is distinguished from other groups. Many have argued that it is the only symbol representing the entire relationship of the conflicting ethnic groups in question. Usually, ethnicity is not the only cause of conflict. Matsuo contends that 'allegedly ethnic conflicts themselves are not caused by ethnic plurality (or multiethnicity) within a state, though there are many

arguments to the contrary'(4). However, conflicts increasingly present themselves as ethnic conflicts with ethnic identity serving as the rallying point or the mobilization agent for the manifestation of the conflicts.

Academic explanations of ethnic conflict generally fall into one of three schools of thought: primordialist, instrumentalist and constructivist, as debated by political scientists and sociologists (Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia, August, 2012):

Primordialist View

Supporters of this account assert that “ethnic groups and nationalities exist because there are traditions of belief and action towards primordial objects such as biological features and especially territorial location”. The focus here is on the concept of kinship between members of an ethnic group, which makes them think in terms of family resemblances. Some political scientists however argue that ethnic conflicts are not caused by ethnicity per se, but that the conflicts involve institutional, political and economic factors, not that certain groups are doomed to fight each other.

Instrumentalist View

This account is said to have come about between the 1960s and 1970s in the United States as a result of the debate on ethnic persistence in the scheme of things. This theory explains such persistence as the result of the community leaders ‘who used their cultural groups as sites of mass mobilization and as constituencies in their competition for power and resources, because they found them more effective than social classes’(Wikipedia,). In this account of ethnic identification, ‘ethnicity and race are viewed as instrumental identities, as means to particular ends’ because supporters of this view believe that ethnic difference is not enough to explain conflicts. They also neither oppose the notion that ethnic difference is a part of many conflicts nor that a lot of belligerent human beings believe that they are fighting over such differences.

Constructivist View

This theory originated with Jean Piaget, who suggested that through the process of accommodation and assimilation, individuals construct new knowledge from their experiences. This theory states that accommodation is the process of reframing one's mental representation of the external world to fit new experiences. Accommodation can be understood as the mechanism by which failure leads to learning: when we act on the expectation that the world operates in one way and it violates our expectations, we often fail, but by accommodating this new experience and reframing our model of the way the world works, we learn from the experience of failure, or others' failure. Constructivism is often associated with pedagogic approaches that promote active learning.

Aapengnuo argues that:

Ethnicity is typically not the driving force of African conflicts but a lever used by politicians to mobilize supporters in pursuit of power, wealth and resources. While the ethnic group is the predominant means of social identity formation in Africa, most ethnic groups co-exist peacefully with high degrees of mixing through inter-ethnic marriage, economic partnerships, and shared values. It is often the politicization of ethnicity, and not ethnicity per se, that stokes the attitude of perceived injustice, lack of recognition, and exclusion that are the source of conflict. The misdiagnosis of African conflicts as ethnic ignores the political nature of the issues (11).

In accordance with this assertion, Mailafiya maintains that in a situation where there are increasing inequalities, joblessness and poverty, tensions are sure to arise, finding expression in ethno-religious conflicts. This is the kind of situation politicians and other self-minded individuals and groups use to achieve their aims. He declares that,

Deepening inequalities are, on their part, fostering new forms of anxiety and frustration among disposed groups, especially in the developing world. We see this phenomenon in countries such as oil-rich Nigeria, where the gap between the rich and the poor continues to widen. In the context of an increasingly desperate young, educated and unemployed urban youth, we have a ready army of people who can easily be mobilized for ethnic or religiously inspired violence(5).

This explains why in most multiethnic and multi-religious developing nations in the world, politicians who lose out in their bid to clinch power often resort to religion and ethnicity as a means for political mobilization.

In plural societies, where the masses participate in demographic procedures, political leaders often appeal to communal loyalties. This process usually reinforces political competition and mobilization along ethnic lines. Consequently, in most cases, when ethnic groups or parties lose in elections, they tend to reject democratic institutions and resort to violent means (Mousseau, 120). Democratic systems have been known to increase the availability of political resources for the organization of group demands, facilitating their mobilization. According to Blanton,

State-level measures, including wealth, natural resources, and ethnic domination tap into contextual factors and sources of grievances that may facilitate domestic conflict. Though these variables are certainly related to conflict, the presence of these conditions does not directly bring about domestic violence - despite the incentives the above factors may provide, actual conflict will not occur without the mobilization of forces (490).

In the view of Irobi, economic factors are one of the major causes of conflict in Africa. He maintains that: "Competition for scarce resources is a common factor in almost all ethnic conflicts in Africa. In multi-ethnic societies like Nigeria and South

Africa, ethnic communities violently compete for property, rights, jobs, education, language, social amenities and good health facilities” (8).

He further observes that another major cause of ethnic conflict is psychology, especially the fear and insecurity of ethnic groups during transition. It has been suggested that extremists usually build on these fears to polarize the society. In addition, memories of past traumas tend to increase these anxieties. These interactions subsequently produce a dangerous mixture of distrust and suspicion that leads to ethnic violence.

Ethnic groups in conflict may employ various psychological mechanisms leading to exaggerated perceptions of the justifiability and moral superiority of their position and the basic evil of ‘the other’. An important part of the process of maintaining ethnic identity is the continuous interpretation of historical events. This interpretation is usually always selective and aimed at enhancing the self-esteem of the group or its being victimized by the ‘enemy’ group.

The self-esteem of individuals is inherent in the esteem of their ethnic group. The way people view other groups is consequently influenced by their group’s need to establish its own self-worth and to favour itself. Groups determine their status of deprivation by establishing the difference between what they have and what they feel is their right to have. What they feel is their right to have is usually brought about by their perceptions of relative status. This feeling of deprivation is an important factor leading to social conflict. Burton’s Human Needs Theory explains that ethnic groups fight because they are denied not only their biological needs, but also psychological needs that relate to growth and development. These include people’s need for identity, security, recognition, participation, and autonomy. This theory is a perfect depiction of ethnic conflicts in Africa where such needs are not easily met by governments.

In the view of Pearson, the notion of identity tends to intersect with interests, resource concerns, and representational needs in political disputes. He argues that:

Ethnicity itself might or might not be the primary factor motivating people to fight. Often it appears not to be. It has long been argued that ethnic rivalry and resentment tend to become inflamed under the stress of harsh economic conditions or in the heat of battle for power among rival political leaders or parties. Indeed, the type and degree of ethnic hostility or extent of ethno-nationalism are likely also to vary according to the country's political structure or economic conditions (281).

Therefore, ethnic thinking and mobilization generally emerge from the resulting inequitable access to power and resources and not from intrinsic hatred. Conflicts between ethnic groups are mostly needs-based as one group feels that its identity, security, its fair place in the social, political, or economic system, or the recognition of the value of its culture is being denied.

Under conditions of extreme insecurity and uncertainty, an ethnic group is likely to exaggerate the potential threat of other ethnic groups to its own security and as a result adopt a worst-case scenario of the threat posed by opposing groups. The association of ethnicity with sectarianism, parochialism, narrow-mindedness and chauvinist bigotry does not help matters. The proper management of ethnicity and other issues related to it should form the main process in resolving these conflicts. As conflict persists between ethnic groups, spatial segregation brings about social and political divisions. People become more conscious of their ethnic or group identity and are ever ready to safeguard or protect that identity.

Ethnic rivalries may come about as a result of many circumstances. One major factor is primordial segregation. In Nigeria, for example, indigenous ethnic groups were encouraged to segregate by the colonialists. This pulled the groups further apart from one another. The divide-and-rule strategy was evident in the design that distanced ethnic groups from each other in separate areas. This arrangement resulted in violent conflicts when the various ethnic groups were forced to compete for scarce resources. Consequently, the situation has been fraught with ethnic politics whereby the elite from different ethnic groups seem to attract national resources to their ethnic nationalities, who they also use in times of conflict to perpetuate their hold on those resources. This, perhaps, is why Irobi remarks that 'Ethno-religious conflicts in Nigeria have continued because Nigerian elites are corrupt and split along lines of religion and ethnicity. This has resulted in ethnic rivalry, suspicion and hostility among leaders. Without a bold or articulate leadership, conflict management or prevention will always be a mirage' (9). He argues that the stability and progress of African states is threatened not by ethnicity per se, but by the inability of the nations to recognize and accommodate ethnic differences and interests. Adedimeji (5) and Kwanashie (31) further identify causes of conflict in Nigeria to include ethnicity, resource control, politics, poverty, unemployment and above all poor leadership which, they insist, accounts for the persistence of these problems. To manage or resolve the conflicts, therefore, is for the leaders to rise up to the challenge. One other major cause of the persistence of these conflicts is government's silence over the findings and recommendations of the various commissions of enquiry. Tough public speeches have not been translated into tangible political action against instigators and perpetrators of these conflicts, who do this merely for their own selfish interest.

Proper analysis of ethnic conflicts is very important in order to find the appropriate way of handling the situation. Conflict management means constructive handling of differences. It is an art of designing appropriate strategies that will meet the needs and desires of the contending parties, even where compromises are to be made.

Aapengnuo (14) proposes three major strategies for mitigating ethnic conflict.

- i. **Building Unifying Institutional Structures.** At the centre of every conflict is the relationship between groups and the state in the search for security, identity, and recognition. How the state deals with interests and needs will determine the level and extent of the success to be achieved in resolving the conflict at hand.
- ii. **Reinforcing Positive Social Norms:** Defusing the potency of ethnicity for political ends requires reorientating cultural norms. Statements aimed at promoting national unity or inter-group cooperation can reduce dangerous ethnic chauvinism, thereby making it more difficult for selfish individuals to play on differences to get support for their interests.
- iii. **Early Response:** It is always better to deal with tension as early as possible, before intergroup divisions are mobilized to bring about violence. Preventing ethnic tensions from escalating out of control requires a rapid response to the situation.

In every conflict situation, communicating is always the best thing to do. The role of communication in defusing conflict cannot be over-emphasized. In human communication, the information corresponds to what are closely referred to as ideas or more scientifically-mental representations. In its basic form, human communication may be constructed as the process by which ideas contained within one mind are conveyed to other minds. Kraus and Morsella propose four communication paradigms (131-143). First, there is the encoding - decoding paradigm which describes communication as the transfer of information by means of a code. One reason that the received message may not be the same as the one transmitted is that all communication channels have

added some degree of noise to the message. Even when the transmitted and received messages are identical, the retrieved proposition may differ significantly from the original. Noise is anything that adds on undesired signal to the received message. It has a harmful effect on all communication, and its effect can be especially dangerous because it forces the recipient to take in what has been distorted. Given the unfriendly interpersonal orientation that the parties in conflict often have, the distorted information that is received is more likely to worsen, rather than reduce, conflict. One example of how noise may be introduced into communication is the use of third (or fourth or fifth) parties to transmit messages rather than direct communication. Each party's successive retelling of the message is likely to introduce some distortion, so that when it arrives at its final destination, it may bear little or no resemblance to the original message. To be on the safer side, therefore, it is better to avoid discussion of delicate matters in environments where misunderstandings are likely to occur. When distortion is likely, redundancy (multiply-encoded messages) can be of help. Expressing the same idea in different forms increases the likelihood that it will be correctly understood.

The second paradigm is the intentionalist paradigm which states that in human communication the same message can be understood to mean different things in different circumstances, and this brings about the need to distinguish between the literal meaning of a message and its intended meaning. Human communication generally is replete with utterances that are not to be understood only literally. This brings to the fore the danger of participants misunderstanding each other's communicative intentions. This paradigm emphasizes that it is not the words used that matter, but rather what the speaker intended those words to mean. In conflict situations, misunderstandings are likely to occur because different people interpret utterances based on their own attitudes. In most cases, knowledge of the speaker can enhance the interpretation of an utterance, and subsequently its communicative intention. The problem in this paradigm can be worse

when the parties to the conflict use different languages to communicate. Translating the messages may provide only literal interpretations, thereby making the intended or non-literal meaning obscure. Non-literal usage is a major feature of language. It enables speakers to formulate colourful and nuanced messages. This however poses a great problem to the translator of the message into a different language. Usually, correctly understanding the intended meaning of a non-literal expression requires shared cultural knowledge which goes beyond technical mastery of the language. In this case, a listener should strive to understand the intended meaning of what the speaker is saying. This can be achieved by being sensitive to the alternative constructions an utterance might yield. It is not generally true that what is said means one and only one thing.

Thirdly, there is the perspective-taking paradigm. This paradigm stresses the notion that individuals perceive the world from different vantage points, and because the experiences of each individual are to some extent dependent on his or her vantage point, messages must be formulated with this perspective in mind. This requires that the point of view of the audience be taken into consideration. However, a major problem here is that it is difficult to take the perspective of another person correctly, and the more different the parties involved are, the more difficult this task becomes. In spite of this hurdle, this paradigm nevertheless advocates that speakers should strive to express themselves in ways that will lead to the desired interpretation on the part of the listener, in the same way that listeners try to look beyond the speaker's words to arrive at the communicative intention. Ignoring this principle can affect communication. In situations where the listener's interpretation of the message is paramount, it is necessary that the speaker tries to view his own utterances from the other's perspective. This implies that when formulating a message, the speaker must consider what the listener will take his words to mean. It is therefore not what the speaker means with the words he has used,

but what the addressee is likely to understand them to mean. It is then necessary for the speaker to provide a background interpretation of the context of his utterance.

The fourth paradigm is the Dialogic Paradigm which focuses on the collaborative nature of communication. It stresses that participants in conversations and similar highly communicative processes behave less like autonomous information processors and more like participants in an essentially cooperative activity. From this view, communication is regarded as a joint task of the participants involved, who have come together to achieve certain communicative goals. Because the participants want to understand, and be understood by, each other, speakers and addressees must strive to ensure that they have the same understanding of the meaning of each message before embarking on the next discourse. The participants in the discourse are expected to be active listeners who ask questions and clarify any ambiguous expression, and try to ensure that they both have the same understanding of what has been said.

In communication generally, the greatest problem is misunderstanding, and in collaborating to overcome this menace the parties in conflict may be moving towards resolving their differences. Krauss and Morsella maintain that:

A more realistic view of communication is that of a neutral instrument – one that can be used to convey threats as well as offers reconciliation, to put forth unreasonable offers as well as acceptable ones, to influence a tense situation as well as to defuse it. Given a genuine desire to resolve a conflict, communication can facilitate the achievement of this goal. But although we can affect others (and be affected by them) through communication, we can affect them (and be affected by them) only so much. The fruit of communication is the establishment of understanding, but beyond this, communication can do little (directly) to change the state of affairs or, say, sway the outcome of a conflict based upon

irreconcilable goals. Good communication cannot guarantee that conflict will be resolved or even ameliorated, but poor communication greatly increases the likelihood that conflict will be exacerbated(147).

When communication is effectively employed, it can resolve conflicts. What is important is the substance of the communication, the quality of the proposals and counter-proposals that each participant makes.

2.9 THE JOS CRISES

Jos is a city in the Middle Belt region (also known as the north central region) of Nigeria. It is a cosmopolitan city marked by the presence of almost all ethnic nationalities in the country, and people from different parts of the globe. Before the violent eruptions in Jos in April 1994, and later the episode of September 7, 2001, Jos, and indeed the entire Plateau State, had prided itself as the 'Home of Peace and Tourism' basically because of the peaceful coexistence among the ethnically and religiously diverse inhabitants, as well as its abundant tourism potentials. The residents of Jos have been living in peace with both the indigenes and non-indigenes since the founding of Jos as an urban centre in the early part of the 20th century. Best notes that Jos town is traditionally believed to be founded on land belonging to the Berom, Anaguta and Afizere ethnic groups (4). All of these groups are ethnic minorities in Nigeria. Over the years, they have been overwhelmed by the influx of other ethnic nationalities into the city, from outside the boundaries of Jos and outside Plateau State completely. Some of these immigrants have laid claims to certain rights, basically as a result of their prolonged stay in the city.

The crises in Jos have their roots in the disputes over the 'rights' of the indigenous Berom, Anaguta and Afizere ethnic groups and the rival claims of the Hausa/Fulani settlers to land, power and resources. Best states that 'the agitation by... the Hausa/Fulani for political hold, prominence and traditional rulership, but most fundamentally for indigeneship of Jos, against the resistance by the indigenous ethnic groups on the other hand, created the initial background to the heightening of tension in the city'(5). Usually, when there are such competitions between the two sides they often lead to violent confrontations. Mailafiya affirms that the Jos crises have been viewed by different people from different angles as religious, ethnic or political (15). At the centre of it all is the acrimonious question of 'indigene versus settler' which has pitted one group against another. The Hausa-Fulani who have settled in the town would like to lay claim to ownership to it as much as the indigenes who insist that they are the original owners of Jos. Mailafiya continues that:

While some have interpreted the conflict in religious terms, others insist it is all about politics. Yet others see it in terms of ethnicity and the struggle over land and limited resources.... The truth is that human conflicts are deeply embedded in a complex web of forces. In the case of the Plateau, they may have been triggered off by local political factors but they have also taken on the coloration of religion (9).

The first violent conflict was witnessed in Jos on 12th April, 1994, following the removal of one Alhaji Aminu Mato as chairman of Jos North Local Government Management Committee, as demanded by the indigenous groups, on the grounds that he was a non-indigene. In response to what they perceived as injustice, the Hausa/Fulani group, under the umbrella of the Jasawa Development Association, staged a counter-protest which eventually led to a violent confrontation (Samuel *et al*:15).

On September 7, 2001, another round of violent conflict erupted in Jos, fiercer than any before it, which pitted the two groups against each other. This particular conflict quickly assumed a religious dimension and spread very fast. This also was tied to competition over political control of Jos North Local Government as well as the issue of indigeneship. The competition and conflict came up as a result of the question who is an indigene and who is not, and the rights derivable from being an indigene. The idea of indigeneship means that the group or groups who are the natives of an area control power and resources belonging there. Therefore, indigeneship is not only a mere status, but a status to which specific political, economic and psychological benefits are attached. On this note, Alubo remarks that:

In Jos ..., there are spirited attempts by the Hausa/Fulani on the one hand, and the indigenes (Berom, Afizere and Anaguta) on the other, to control political structures such as local councils and representation at the three tiers of government.... The issues relate to perceived advantages about who is favoured and/or marginalized and how each group attempts to attain what it considers its entitlement (85).

Furthermore, Samuel *et al* maintain that 'Jos is a contested city, because for a long time now, there have been desperate attempts by the competing ethnic and religious groups to lay claim to its ownership and political, as well as economic, control' (184). As violence recurs, spatial polarization and segregation bring about social and political divisions. People become more conscious of their ethnic or group identity and are ever ready to safeguard or protect their identity. The polarization or partitioning of the city is as a result of the fact that after every violent conflict, there is usually mutual distrust between and among the parties involved, and people cluster where they are, or perceive to be, 'the same'. People will then want to reside only in 'safe havens'.

2.10 CAUSES OF THE CONFLICT

The conflict in Jos has been viewed by various researchers and observers as coming from different angles. Several causes have been advanced for the conflict. However, it is clear that in addition to personal and collective interests of individuals and groups, the conflict has political, ethnic and religious undertones as aptly captured by Best:

Political Causes

Looking at the conflict from the political angle, Best states that those who believe that the cause of the conflict is political draw attention to the competition between the indigenes and the Hausa/Fulani to control the Jos North Local Government and all the political resources that emanate from it. Among those who hold this view are community leaders from Hausa/Fulani, Berom, Anaguta and other ethnic communities resident in Jos. The indigenes feel that the Hausa/Fulani want to remove them from the politics of Jos and to, subsequently, take hold of the Local Government and its traditional institutions. This, they are committed to resisting. Thus, tension has always risen during elections, appointments, and other political activities. Disputes over whether or not Jos North Local Government should be and what its boundaries should be also highlight the political causes of the conflict. 40

Ethnicity

Best goes further to examine the ethnic angle of the conflict. For some of the Berom, the Anaguta and Afizere, the conflict was ethnic because ethnicity provided the demarcation for the conflict. Some Berom leaders refer to the expulsion of their people by Hausa Muslim group along with the Anaguta, Afizere, Igbo and other non-Muslim ethnic groups from Angwan Rogo. However, those of these ethnic groups who were Muslims were spared.

In the same way, in areas where non-Muslims were greater in number than Muslims, such as Hwolshe and Jenta Adamu in Jos North Local Government Area, Miango in Bassa Local Government Area and Vwang (Vom) in Jos South Local Government Area, Fulani Christians were spared by the indigenous Christian group. These instances limit the explanatory weight of ethnicity as a basis for the conflict. However, ethnicity, like religion, served a number of functions in the conflict. 41

Religion

Religion has also been a major cause of the conflict in Jos. Best observes that for the Christian leaders in Plateau State, the Jos conflict was primarily religious. They view the conflict as an orchestrated jihad, a holy Islamic campaign employing violence to forcefully bring down Christianity and impose Islam on the people of the state. They point to the killing of pastors and Christians generally and burning of churches as evidence of their claim. The Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) hierarchy is particularly of the opinion that the bottom line is the attempt to actualize the philosophy of the Dan Fodio Jihad on the Plateau (which had failed earlier). 43

The Muslim leadership views politics and religion as one and the same thing. The interest of the Hausa is political as they aspire to various political positions in Jos. As Muslims, however, they see the conflict as religious persecution meted out against them.

In relation to the above causes of conflict in Jos, Iwara remarks that: -

Deep-rooted fear of domination by a linguistically and culturally powerful neighbour who is also economically and politically dominant is very often at the root of conflicts that erupt under other pretexts. The religious clashes that have occurred in northern Nigeria should perhaps be re-examined from this perspective. 69

2.11 LANGUAGE, ETHNICITY AND IDENTITY

One basic way in which people establish their identity and shape the ways other people see them, is through their use of language. Language is so important in the construction of individual and social identities that it is often a powerful means of exercising social control. An individual identifies himself as belonging to a particular group or community, most often by adopting the linguistic conventions of that group; and this is not only regarding the words he uses, but in relation to the ways he says them. Thornborrow remarks that:

How you talk, along with other kinds of social codes such as how you dress or how you behave, is an important way of displaying who you are; in other words of indicating your social identity. Identity... is something which we are constantly building and negotiating all our lives through our interaction with others (160).

The way a language is used is usually controlled by the society rather than the individual. Linguistic identity is not only a matter of using one language or another, but also how we use language with others. This refers to how we communicate and interact with others. Identity can also take many forms, in that people change from one role to another at different times in different situations and each of these contexts may require a shift into different, sometimes, conflicting, identities for the people involved. One major way in which we demonstrate this identity shift is through the language we use. Language is an important or even an essential aspect of ethnic group membership; indeed, linguistic features may be the most defining criteria for ethnic group identity. In most cases, people will identify themselves as belonging to a particular ethnic group or tribe on the basis of which of them is their mother tongue (Trudgill 58) Therefore, different ethnic groups maintain their distinctiveness and identity through language more

than anything else, just as it is often possible to detect ethnic background from language use.

Even though language is not the only factor that distinguishes ethnic groups, it is a key factor in terms of which an ethnic group is identified. In order to be an ethno-national group, or any human group for that matter, the group should share both some objective properties and a sense of belonging. The objective properties include ancestry, history, territory (place of 'ancestral' habitation), language, culture, religion, behaviour pattern and physical appearance among others. These attributes are usually bestowed on individuals and are generally inherited through generations. They form the foundation of an ethnic group. Thus, the objective properties shared by an ethnic group are those which can be used to distinguish the group from others. They are referred to as 'distinctive' properties, in the sense that they function as boundary markers between ethnic groups. Such distinctive properties are usually shared by the members of the ethnic group in question, and not by others outside it.

The term ethnicity is said to be derived from the Greek word "ethnos", meaning nation; and a nation is defined as a community which has common history, cultural tradition and language (Singh:95). Since people have cultural, historical and linguistic affiliations, they each also have an ethnic identity by which they can be separately known. In discussing ethnicity, concepts such as 'ethnic majority' and 'ethnic minority' are often used. An ethnic majority is used to describe a group which shares a social dominant culture; and, on the other hand an ethnic minority may be referred to as a group which shares ethnic affiliations that are socially marginalized. In many modern instances, the ethnic majority is said to have been established for a longer period while the minority groups are said to be the more recent product of migration.

This, however, is not always the case. For example, in the histories of Britain, the United States and Australia, the Celtic people, Native Americans and the Aboriginal tribes (and their cultures) respectively were displaced and then marginalized by later European migrants. In addition, majorities and minorities do not necessarily entail a significant numerical difference. This example can be seen in the number of the slave masters and the slaves in West Indian Islands: the numerically larger group of slaves was, socially and politically an ethnic minority. Another example could be found in South Africa during the Apartheid Regime.

The dwindling amount of linguistic diversity with a great number of languages dying out all over the world means that a small number of major languages will dominate and so regional, minority or lesser-used languages will have to strive for recognition and survival. Struggles for civil and human rights are often related to issues of language, as can be seen in struggles over nationalism and national identity, which are features of present societies, O' Reilly remarks that:

Indeed, conflict over language has become a part of or a proxy for all kinds of political struggle. Wherever it is not possible or politically correct to debate openly in terms of 'race' or ethnicity, language is used as a sort of shorthand for cultural and identity politics (71).

The accommodation of minority language rights is thus essential if nations wish to avoid fragmentation, which usually comes with dangerous consequences. O'Reilly further states that ethnic and national conflicts are most often precipitated when nations ignore demands for greater cultural and linguistic democracy. Problems will always arise when cultural, linguistic and political expression of ethnic groups is denied.

Jenkins argues that population is not a factor in ethnicity. The matter depends on the actual group and their viability in terms of ethnicity, not a raw number. Ethnicity is an inherent factor that should be discovered rather than be determined. The features of

the term ethnicity will determine whether a particular group of whatever size should be considered an independent entity or a sub-group within a larger group (4).

Language is a basic component of ethnicity; this involves the relation of ethnicity to language. If a people's language is changing, it is a factor that affects our understanding of their ethnicity. It is a fact that languages die and new ones develop, and this also applies to ethnicities. In some cases, ethnic groups shift language streams. This means that their identity is entirely lost. The individuals of such ethnicities may continue their genetic or even their cultural stream but under the umbrella of a new language or cultural stream. This explains the fact that the number of the speakers of a language is not the same thing as an ethnicity. This is the case where certain languages tend to dominate in multilingual societies or as a result of migration of entire populations or families.

Total ethnic change occurs when young people move from their ancestral abodes or marry into other language streams to become bilingual and subsequently lose the language in later generations. In practical terms, therefore, the ethnic group is disappearing. Ethnic change or shift is usually more objectively identified in language. Jenkins remarks that;

Under 50 speakers [of a language] with a history of decline, is indeed a valid point of practical loss of ethnicity. The maintenance of the language is virtually impossible at this level. Often the ethnic identity continues but with a linguistic identity that might be considered a dialect of a neighboring language (6).

For Bamgbose, merely equating language with ethnicity is not a viable position, since one ethnic group may be able to speak different languages other than the one associated with it (120). It means then that there is no one-to-one relationship between the two concepts. Brann states that 'there is thus a constant process of fission and fusion,

resulting in new ethnic identities under the pressure of various social forces, religious, political and economic' (102). One ethnic group may speak several related languages, just as one ethnic group may be able to speak the language of another. Bamgbose has further presented four possible positions on the relation between language and ethnicity, each recognizing the existence of other factors in addition to language:

- i. Language is crucial by itself:** According to this position, language is one of the factors that determine ethnicity, in fact the most powerful factor that maintains by itself a permanent distinctiveness of an ethnic group. However, it can be seen that this is not always so because there are ethnic groups which have lost their language and yet continue to feel a sense of being distinctive. Bamgbose gives the example of the Fulani who have almost abandoned their language, Fulfulde, for Hausa but continue to see themselves as ethnically different. There are also the Gaels in Ireland who speak only English, yet remain ethnically different.
- ii. Language is not crucial at all:** This position holds that ethnicity merely reflects an 'us versus them' feeling, and language and other seemingly identity-marking features may be discarded without affecting it. What matters most is self-identification and self-awareness. However, while it is accepted that language can be discarded, reliance on it as a symbol of ethnicity is undeniable. Language remains a powerful symbol.
- iii. Language is important only in relation to other factors:** This position states that language is one out of the various factors and cultural elements which determine ethnicity. The crucial thing is not language difference or ethnicity as such, but also the presence of other identity-marking factors.
- iv. Language has a variable role:** According to this position, the relationship between language and ethnicity depends on the stage of the grouping involved. Ethnic identity is only one way of collective identity, and each ethnic identity has a

different role for language. For example, a communal group is held together by its language, and a minority group is identified by reference to a larger group which determines the role and scope of its language; while an ethnic group clearly uses language as a symbol of ethnic mobilization.

Ethnic identity and language are often interwoven, especially when discussions come up about issues of power play between majority and minority language speakers. Language also raises issues of security and insecurity that spring from ethnic identity. All these features of language come under what is referred to as the social functions of language.

According to Iwara,

Language has two fundamental properties: instrumental and symbolic. Under the instrumental property, we talk of language being used as an instrument for giving or receiving information or expressing emotions or desires in interpersonal social interaction. But under the symbolic property, language is used as a symbol of identity. The fact that language can give speakers a sense of identity is responsible for minority language speakers not to want to abandon their language for a language of wider circulation. In this sense, language is a unifying bond that provides a sense of security for the speakers (72).

When speakers of a particular language adopt the speech patterns of a different group, they do that because they see it as prestigious and therefore want to be associated with it for various reasons. It can be a short-term strategy, where a speaker temporarily moves towards the speech of a group for a particular communicative effect; or a long-term one, where speakers gradually shift their patterns of speech to match those of the target group. What counts as the prestigious form of a language can vary according to the context and type of linguistic activity. Thornborrow explains that:

Speakers may wish to be identified with different groups at different times, and their linguistic patterns may produce a shift, whether between different varieties of a language or from one language to another. The question of group affiliation and identity can determine the choice a speaker makes about how to speak and ... what language to use When a choice is made between two languages, the question of identity becomes even more marked, particularly when the choice is bound up with the natural and political status of a language (171).

Usually, the desire for minority groups to acculturate to what is considered mainstream is informed by the association of that mainstream's culture with social, political or economic success. However, many members of the minority group may continue to engage themselves in cultural, religious and linguistic practices which mark them as unique.

A sense of cultural identity is often based on a particular language, and speakers' understanding of the link between the language they use and that identity is well guarded. Language rights and recognition are often important issues in socio-political conflicts throughout the world. The maintenance and preservation of a minority language within a majority culture is often the maintenance of the minority's values and the continuation of its unique cultural identity; for the loss of a language is essentially the loss of cultural identity.

However, sometimes when minority language speakers adopt a particular language of wider communication, it is to take cover under its powerful protection. This usually happens when a minority language group feels threatened by another minority language more than the threat posed by the major language community, so that it is a question of choosing the lesser of two evils. This may explain the scenario in such countries as Nigeria where the English language is waxing strong in spite of the

legislation seeking to ensure that the three major languages be used as national languages. In conflict situations, therefore, this sentiment should be taken into account when dealing with minority language speakers as disputants in matters relating to their identity and security.

Language and labels of identity

One major linguistic means of establishing people's identity is through the giving and using of names. People are distinguished from other members of their group which marks them as separate individuals different from others, even though they might share other attributes as being members of a family or a social class. The way names are used in interaction is central to the process of constructing individual identities within a group. The way that other speakers of the language refer to someone can depend on the degree of formality, intimacy and relative status of all who are involved in the interaction. According to Thornborrow, the words you choose to address people by are important ways of showing how you situate yourself in relation to others, of creating social distance or intimacy, of making deference, condescension or insult through the conventions of the address system of a language (169).

Wherever there is social conflict, there is often a linguistic conflict also, relating to the words and terms used by people to identify themselves and /or their opponents. Sometimes, labels of identity are created and imposed on some groups by others who may be in a more powerful position, often using that label to make some kind of social judgment on them. Certain kinds of linguistic behaviour also show a person's identity in relation to a group, as well as his position within it. The ability to show that one can use linguistic terms appropriately according to the norms associated with a particular group helps to establish one's membership of it. Membership of a group and one's position in it is accomplished in considerable measure through the language that one uses. The

performance of identity through language can also be asserted positively by people who want to maintain their difference from other social groups.

In naming or describing someone, certain characteristics carry more weight than others, and those are the ones that signify difference from what is usual. In terms of negative ethnic labelling, it is common to hear the use of derogative terms which indicate the 'otherness' of the group or person being named. Singh (2004) sees that as 'a particularly potent form of abuse because it leaves the addressee feeling powerless; that they have been arbitrarily dumped into a morass of negative perceptions which allows no recognition of them as acceptable individuals'. (98). One other way in which people are often negatively labelled is through the continuous use of certain identity terms which have come to signify negative social features in the society. It is important to consider how much of the difference a group of people perceive to be between them and another group is reality and how much of it is a creation, especially during conflicts.

2.12 EMPIRICAL STUDIES ON THE JOS CRISES AND OTHER CRISIS SITUATIONS

Some scholars have researched and written on language use about the Jos Crises and other crises across Nigeria and beyond. In a pragmatic analysis of print media reporting of the Jos Crises, Pam reveals that "The print media use the language of violence with meanings that are too obvious for an already angry and agitated audience" (74). She discovered that the choice of words for the headlines was deliberately aimed at arousing anger and calling for reprisal attacks.

In an article on effective language use in peace-building, Onwochei decries the subjective and inflammatory reports of casualty figures during the crises. She cites instances where different newspapers gave different casualty figures based on their perspectives. She advises that, "for peace-building to succeed and for there to be trust and peaceful coexistence, the media must be mindful of the language usage (sic) and

consciously go into positive journalism leaving sentiment and commercialization behind”.⁹⁴

Dalyop carried out a lexico-semantic study of the reports on the Church of Christ in Nations (COCIN) headquarters and St. Finbarr’s Catholic church, Jos bombings by “The Nation”, “The Light Bearer” and “Vanguard” newspapers. The study revealed that “due to certain reasons, cutting across religion and politics, some newspaper houses and reporters report with a measure of bias”. A similar survey by Nweke on the tone and effects of media reporting of the Jos Crises reveals that “the tone of reporting did not enhance mutual understanding of the crises situation in that there were discordant tunes and tone in the reporting depending on the side the story emanated from”.²¹⁸

In another perspective Dooga advocates the use of the language of war to frame it for peace. Analyzing newspaper headlines, he shows that almost all information is given in the language of war. He explains that “as a result of the absence of prevailing peace discourse, it becomes a challenge to journalists and opinion leaders to frame peace using the discourse of war”, adding that “To manage [conflicts], all who seek to intervene in future conflicts must learn and use the language of peace”.²⁸³

In analyzing radicalist discourse and the stances of Nigeria’s Boko Haram and Somalia’s Al-Shabaab on twitter, Chilwa explains that stance is used to express commitment, attitude and judgment of writers on any issue that is being discussed. The study reveals that “self-maintain and attitude markers are the most prevalent features of stance in radicalist discourse... and in most cases are used to express ideological propositions.”¹²

Chilwa and Adegoke carried out an investigation into the pragmatic acts in the discourse of tweeters and online feedback comments on the activities of Boko Haram in Nigeria. The selected tweets show how people can reveal their thoughts, feelings and attitudes about certain events or situations by expressing themselves through an informal

means of communication. The authors explain that “Most of these views are expressed through pragmatic acts when what needs to be said may not exactly be expressed explicitly, either by choice or for lack of appropriate words”⁽¹¹⁾.

In a study that investigates the contents of online conversations on terrorist attacks in Nigeria on **Nairaland**, and how such conversations exhibit stance and civil engagement in response to the attack, Chiuwa and Adebunmi observe that the comments and questions in the tweets show stance and reveal the positions of the various writers. They argue that “the various negative evaluations of Boko Haram (BH) and their extension to the entire northern Nigeria is a dangerous development in the social and political discourse of **Nairaland**.”¹⁰

2.13 SUMMARY OF LITERATURE REVIEW

Language is the pivot around which all human activities revolve. Many scholars (Adedimeji, Fasold, Hudson) have presented various functions performed by language, all pointing to the fact that the human society would be inconceivable without language. It is the instrument by which culture is expressed and transmitted; and culture in turn shapes the character of an individual. Whatever is to be said or communicated has to fit the situation or context in which it is uttered.

We choose our language according to the situation or context, which sometimes is created by the language itself. That is to say that the way we use language creates certain scenarios or environments that are different from others. Therefore, the use of language in conflict situations is different from ordinary day-to-day conversations and in some instances, the kind of language used brings about situations of conflict. Communication is successful only if the message is received in the same way as originally intended by the speaker. Language performs both positive and negative functions in society. It is a double-edged sword which can be an instrument of fostering peace and harmony as well as a source of conflict or a catalyst for escalating one that has

started (Abdulhahman, Jowitt). This dual attribute is just a reflection of the nature of man to do both good and evil.

A conflict erupts as a result of differences in opinions, cultural practices or interests. It is part of human nature and cannot be avoided, rather it should be managed. Conflict should not be viewed as entirely negative since when managed well, it is an instrument for growth and development (Abdulmalik, Best, Falet, Francis, Ovie-D'Leon, Salihu, Weber). Language has the potential of bringing about conflict, or of resolving it. It is central to all issues relating to conflict and its resolution. Words can be harmful, and their meanings or interpretations vary with time and space, and with persons and situations. The wrong use of words can even provoke physical responses, and further worsen bad relationships (Adedimeji, Akin, Iwara). Misinterpretation also leads to the escalation of conflict.

To avert trouble, the parties involved in a conflict should employ respectful communication. When opinions are respected and treated objectively, the problem is easily resolved. People should think and weigh their words before speaking. In this way, they should employ the art of listening which will enable them to understand each other's problems more critically, since it is not just hearing the words but taking into consideration what is said (Akin, Iwara, Kellet).

In conflict situations, hatred, hostility, abuse and other confrontational approaches are often expressed by the tone used, rather than by the words themselves. Differences in the understanding of conflicts are portrayed by the language people use to interact with each other, and so clear and straight-forward communication is essential in getting to the root of a conflict and resolving it. Bad language can only increase a conflict. In all conflicts, communicating is always the best thing to do. Choice of words matters a lot in all human conversation. In the same way, the type of language used during conflicts can either calm frayed nerves or propel the parties to higher levels of the conflict. Language use in this regard is not only from the parties involved but also from third-party individuals or organizations. The mass media, for example have been found

responsible for the escalation of the crises that engulfed Jos and its environs in the last decade. This is blamed on their choice of words and the tone in presenting the conflict which were largely inflammatory and provocative (Saidu, Salihu).

From all the literature reviewed so far, the role of language in society has been emphasized. Language use has been found to be determined by the context in which it is used. Particular to this work is the fact that language in conflict situations generally is different from ordinary day-to-day conversations. While language use is general determined by context and situation, the context or situation can actually be created by language itself. Furthermore, some researchers have examined the type of language used by the mass media in their reportage of the Jos crises in the last decade. In addition, instances of crises around Nigeria have also been analyzed with focus on language use in the social media.

However, none of the works, to the knowledge of the researcher, has recorded and analysed the verbal exchanges (directly or indirectly) between the parties involved in the Jos crises. The works that focus on the Jos crises particularly only investigated the language used by third parties, particularly the mass media, in most cases specifically the print media. In addition, attention was only paid to the incidents beginning from 2001. This research has gone further to analyse the linguistic situation of Jos and environs during the crises that have erupted. It has collected and analyzed samples of the verbal exchanges between the feuding parties. The research further involved interviews with key figures of the affected communities to ascertain the role of language considering the way it was used during the crises. The scope has also been extended to cover the period from 1994 to 2010, as well as covering the entire surrounding of the Jos-Bukuru axis. Generally linguistic choices and preferences of citizens of the area of study have also been captured.

CHAPTER THREE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

This study is an examination of the patterns of language use and communication in conflict situations, focusing on Jos and environs. This covers the entire city of Jos, Bukuru and surrounding areas. One part of the data was obtained from reports of Commissions of Inquiry, conference reports, newspaper reports and interviews. The other part was obtained from the questionnaire and personal observation. Data was randomly collected from across the study area. Copies of the questionnaire were given out to members of communities in different locations within the study area. As a cosmopolitan city, respondents are representative of almost all ethnic nationalities in the country and even from outside the country.

3.2 SOURCES AND INSTRUMENTS OF DATA COLLECTION

There were two primary instruments of data collection in this study. The first was the collection of samples of utterances, comments and remarks by parties in conflict, as well as by third parties, as recorded in various reports of commissions of inquiry into the crises experienced in Jos, conference proceedings, newspapers as well as personal observation by the researcher.

The other major instrument for the collection of data for this research was the questionnaire. The structured type of questionnaire was used, in which a number of options are provided against each question for the subjects to choose from. The questionnaire is divided into two sections. One section, comprising ten items, seeks personal information on the natural and social characteristics of the respondents. This is necessary because some of these factors may be responsible for the opinions, attitudes or behaviour of the subjects. The second section, made up of twenty items, seeks relevant information concerning the subject of the research which has to do with how people use

language in conflict situations. The use of the questionnaire became inevitable since we needed to have information about how language was used during the conflict as well as the perceptions of the people on particular language choices and use. The questionnaire was used to collate samples of the people's feelings towards the conflict in general and the role language played in the conflict in particular. Furthermore, the questionnaire in this study served as a more effective instrument with which to reach as many respondents as possible considered to be representative of the entire study population.

Another instrument used in collecting data for this work is the interview technique. The researcher carefully selected and interviewed some leaders and members of the communities under investigation on the role of language or the way it was used during the conflicts. One leader was selected from each of the following areas: Angwan Rogo, Angwan Rukuba, Gangare, Kufang, Bukuru (central), Gyel, Nassarwa Gwong, Apata, Hwolshe, Gada Biyu, Dadin kowa, Rantya, Rikkos, Angwan Rimi, and Laranto. In addition, samples of facts, utterances, comments and reactions of the parties in conflict were collected as recorded in newspapers, journals and conference reports.

3.3 METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

Copies of reports of the different Commissions of Inquiry and conference proceedings on the crises were collected by the researcher for the analysis of relevant sections that contained utterances or remarks by the parties in conflict as well as other witnesses. Editions of ThisDay, Vanguard and New Nigeria Newspapers containing reports on the crises or utterances by parties in conflict at the time the crises occurred were consulted and relevant information obtained. The research assistants were spread across all the corners of the study area.

For the questionnaire, 300 copies were distributed across the entire study area. Respondents were randomly selected and given the questionnaire to fill and return. To make this more effective, the services of research assistants were employed to be able to

cover the study area as evenly as possible. The research assistants were selected to operate in their various communities or related or nearby locations. This made it easier for the assistants to operate. In addition, through them, it was easier to obtain information from persons or groups who ordinarily might not be ready or willing to divulge certain types of information to 'an outsider'. The researcher collected data in collaboration with eight research assistants, six of whom are graduates and two undergraduates. Before the commencement of the work, the assistants were adequately instructed and enlightened on the task to be undertaken and their role in the entire project. In addition, they were guided on the focus and scope of the study.

Furthermore, the researcher personally interviewed a cross section of community and religious leaders in the troubled areas (fifteen persons in all) to ascertain the role of language and the manner in which it was used during the conflicts.

3.4 STUDY POPULATION AND SAMPLING PROCEDURE

The population for this study is made of all residents of Jos and Bukuru and environs. It consists of people of diverse ethnic nationalities from across the country and beyond. For the information obtained from the Commissions of Inquiry, newspapers and interviews, authors of various comments or remarks cut across the feuding parties, with a few third parties. For the questionnaire, 360 copies were sent out, but only 300 were responded to and returned. The persons interviewed were fifteen in number. The researcher adopted the simple random sampling technique which implies that every element or person in the entire population has an equal chance of being selected.

3.5 METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS

The various data collected in this study were analysed using the functional linguistic approach evolved by M.A.K.Halliday which stresses that all human communication or interaction is determined by the social situation in which it is made. Consequently, the results that were obtained were analysed according to the

circumstances surrounding the different utterances, remarks or reactions. The data from Commissions of Inquiry, conference and newspaper reports as well as interviews was analysed in relation to ten peculiar features identified in the use of language during the Jos crises. The data obtained from the questionnaire was also analysed according to the responses provided. The results are presented by simple percentage and analysed.

3.6 STUDY AREA

Jos is the capital city of Plateau State, Nigeria. It served also as the capital of the defunct Benue-Plateau state from 1966 to 1976. Jos town is situated on a plateau composed of undulating hills known as the Jos Plateau in Nigeria. It stretches for approximately 104 kilometers from North to South and 80 kilometers from East to West, covering an area of about 8,600 square kilometers or 860,000 hectares. Characterized by impressive ridges and isolated rocky hills separated by extensive plains, the Jos Plateau exhibits a variety of land forms possessing a beautiful landscape which provides excellent picnic resorts attractive to lovers of nature. It enjoys a near temperate climate averaging 22⁰c with an average humidity of 60% and annual rainfall of 1,400mm. It maintains an average height of 1,200 meters (4000ft) above sea level, and reaches its peak in the Shere hills where it stands at 1, 766metres (5,829ft).This gives it a generally cool temperature against the backdrop of enchanting scenic beauty and alluring cool weather, which make it a haven for all Nigerians and foreigners alike. These attributes have earned the entire state the name ‘Home of Peace and Tourism’, and elsewhere it has been referred to as ‘Plateau: The beautiful’ (Danfulani, 5).

Prior to the crises, the city of Jos appealed to all as a sanctuary of peace. For many years the description of Plateau State in general as the ‘Home of Peace and Tourism’ was not a mere slogan, but a true depiction of the area. The rocky terrain provides a cooling climate that attracts both human population and wildlife. Jos, particularly, was once variously described as the most peaceful town in the country and

at other times as the Europe of Nigeria because of its unique climatic conditions. Because of its clement weather, Jos has housed a great number of expatriates and foreign tourists to Nigeria. The report of the Plateau Peace Conference of 2004 captures it thus:

Since colonial days, visitors to the Jos Plateau have always recommended the place for a lifetime due to the warmth and accommodating nature of its people, its enchantic scenic beauty and the clement weather. This popularity and acceptable position coupled with the growth of the tin mining industry continued to attract more people to the Plateau. The 1962 national census aptly captured the scenario as it revealed that Jos had the largest concentration of Europeans in Nigeria outside Lagos, the [then] Federal Capital (1).

Jos has been described as a mini-Nigeria because virtually all ethnic nationalities are fairly represented in addition to the indigenous groups (Animasaun 104). The peaceful and accommodating nature of the people of Plateau State was further emphasized when at the inception of the F.M. band of the Plateau Radio Service, it was aptly named 'Peace F.M.'

CHAPTER FOUR

A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF VERBAL EXCHANGES BETWEEN THE PARTIES IN CONFLICT AND OTHERS DURING THE CRISES

Language in society is generally determined by the social context in which it is used. Since language is not just used haphazardly, different situations demand different patterns and approaches, as well as appropriate choice of words to convey the message intended. It is a truism that language can be used for positive effects as well as negative effects. While language can be used to solve problems of conflict, it can be the source of the conflict itself, or be used to escalate one. The type of language used in conflict situations is fashioned basically by the circumstances in which the speakers or respondents find themselves.

Language use during the Jos crises was symbolic of the circumstances in which individuals and groups found themselves, and in some instances language was instrumental in the eruption of crises in turn. Following from Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics, a critical discourse analysis of the verbal exchanges between the parties in conflict and third parties will be carried out. This approach is adopted because, according to the theory of Systemic Functional Linguistics, importance is placed on social context (of culture and situation) in the use of language. Ahmadvand explains that "functional linguistics, unlike many braches of linguistics, has always been concerned not only with words and sentences, but also with longer texts and collection of text (corpora) above the level of the sentence."³

Critical discourse analysis is a linguistic analysis aimed at bringing out the hidden meaning in discourse. By this, implied or unclear information is made explicit which may lead to other related discoveries. Wodak explains that;

Critical Linguistics (CL) and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) may be defined as fundamentally interested in analyzing opaque as well as transparent structural relationships of dominance, discrimination, power and control as manifested in language. In other words, CDA aims to investigate critically social inequality as it is expressed, signaled, constituted, legitimized etc by language use (or in discourse). 207

For any discourse to be critically examined or analyzed, it would require a clear description of the social attributes and structures that lead to the production of the text. It also has to do with how individuals or groups create meaning from discourse in relation to social structures and processes. Ahmadvand quotes Fairclough as defining critical discourse analysis thus:

By critical discourse analysis I mean discourse analysis which aims to systematically explore often opaque relationships of causality and determination between (a) discursive practices, events and texts, and (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 and hegemony. 3

There is a strong connection between linguistic structure and social structure, and discourse exists and is interpreted only in relation to social meanings. Every discourse is situated in time and space. Accordingly, Tenorio points to van Dijk as believing that “each context controls a specific type of discourse, and each discourse depends on a specific type of context.” Discourse analysis aims at unveiling the hidden aspects of language practices and improve communication by removing certain linguistic barriers.

This study adopts Halliday's framework of context and situation and context of culture as an important basis of CDA. The context of situation is divided into three aspects which are:

- i. The field of discourse: This refers to what a text is all about, revealing what is happening or the action taking place.
- ii. The tenor of discourse: This refers to the participants, their relationship, their roles and status in relation to each other.
- iii. The mode of discourse: This refers to what language is being asked to do, the function it is meant to perform, the way it is organized, the medium and what is being achieved.

The context of culture on the other hand, refers to the wider institutional and cultural environment which consists of the context of situation (Locke, 18-19).

The following are some of the features of the use of language during the Jos crises.

4.1 NEGATIVE LABELLING

People identify themselves and are identified by others mostly by how they are called. Whatever name that is attached to a person is the person's self-image. Therefore, a name is as crucial as the person. The way people refer to others also reveals their feelings and attitudes towards them. One common feature of the Jos crises is the use of negative or derogatory terms to refer to an opponent. The language was largely vulgar and offensive, as can be seen in the use of words like "arna", "kafir", "tubabbe" used by the Hausa-Fulani group to refer to the indigenous tribes, and terms like "Hausawa", "Mallo" etc used by the indigenous Christian group to refer to the opposite group. Kwashi (2015) remarks that when the crises was about to start, the word "Arna" was being used to describe the indigenous tribes on the Plateau, and on the other hand, the indigenous people used the word "Hausawa" generally to describe those 'who did not belong'. The implication of this was that a battle line was already drawn, before the real action. He remarks that 'when a person uses language in such a way as to destroy another person's self-esteem and confidence, the recipient of the attack is most likely to create

his own derogatory terms to fight back. When that continues between them, the inevitable result is full-blown violence'. Kwashi further stresses that a major reason for the crisis on the Plateau is lack of good communication and proper use of language, with a lot of derogatory terms gaining root in all the languages.

The semantic explanation of the words 'arna' and 'kafir' is that the persons being addressed are infidels or unbelievers, meaning those who do not follow the 'true' religion. The word 'tubabbe' signifies converts to the (Islamic) religion, in which case they are seen as not original followers who should not have the privileges that are attached to those who have been in it from the beginning. On the other hand, the term 'Hausawa' is used to refer to all the Hausa Muslims, and is also used derogatorily to refer to anyone who has abandoned their different faiths for Islam. In this sense, they are to be treated from a distance.

Field of discourse: This is a way of referring to a person in a derogatory manner using insulting terms and symbols.

Tenor of Discourse: The participants in the discourse are mostly the parties to the conflict (members of the opposing groups) who see each other as adversaries. Some people outside the conflict, referred to as third parties, also use these terms, although not always in the sense conveyed by the parties involved.

Mode: The function of these terms is to destroy the image of the person or persons referred to or even label them differently from what they really are. Negative labeling also shows the distance between persons or groups.

4.2 THREATS

A threat is a statement indicating that the person being addressed or talked about will suffer dire consequences if they do not comply with what is said or desist from a certain action. This creates a feeling of resentment, as it brings about fear and sometimes

hatred for the speaker. In defence, therefore, the addressee issues another threat or acts immediately to bring down the speaker. Conversational exchanges during the crises in Jos were replete with threats. For example, the Justice Niki Tobi Commission of Inquiry into the September 7th, 2001 crisis noted that while some of the protests were mere passionate appeals, ‘others are more violent in their language and contained veiled, if not open, threats to the peace of the area should the authorities ignore their demand’. In particular, part of one of the exhibits tendered to the commission reads: “We however call on the government to urgently look into the matter for the interest of peace. Our peaceful posture should not be taken for granted”.(21)

In the same way, the authors of Exhibit 70 claimed that the Berom of Jos North had resolved among other things as follows:

- i. That any attempt by the Chairman of Jos North to provide accommodation to Alhaji Mukhtar shall be resisted as we did to his brother Alhaji Mato in 1994. Note that the 2001 resistance will be more sophisticated than that of 1994.
- ii. That we consider this as our last communication to government on subjects of this nature as our capacity to calm our people has totally eroded to the point that we are regarded as collaborators.
- iii. That our desire to live in peace with settlers and neighbours should not be seen as weakness because we also have the capacity to be violent and make Jos as uncomfortable as possible for settler elements.
- iv. We shall remain loyal citizens as long as our rights and traditional inheritance are protected. But any attempt to take what belongs to us shall be met with the stiffest resistance that is better imagined.

Items contained in this communication to government are a clear indication that if their demands were not met, there would be unpleasant and dangerous consequences. Item number 3 is not only a threat to Alhaji Mukhtar and his supporters, but also to the

chairman should he act to the contrary. Item 4 pointed particularly at the State Government to reconsider its stand on the issue in contention or risk a breakdown of law and order. Items 5 and 6 are directed at both the opponents and government that any further infringement on their rights would result in violence which should better be avoided.

Similarly, Exhibit 65 was credited to the indigenous groups whom the authors claimed threatened, among others, as follows:

We are finally giving you sir and the security operations 48 hours to call these so called JASAWA to order OR we will SURELY call them to order. We kept custody of peace to the extent that we can no longer accommodate it. A word is enough for the wise. (22)

This threat contains an ultimatum after which violence is to be expected. The word SURELY has been emphasized to indicate the certainty of the trouble to come.

Furthermore, the authors of exhibit B drew the governor's attention to certain posters pasted in front of Mukhtar's office by some unidentified persons who were clearly opposed to his appointment. Some of the posters read:

Exhibit L – "THE DEVIL HAS NO PACKING (sic) SPACE IN JOS NORTH"

The authors of this statement regarded the actions of their opponents as totally evil, and since the Devil is the embodiment of all evil, the opponents were collectively termed the Devil. The statement did not literally refer to the Devil per se.

EXHIBIT M3 – 'I BELIEVE YOU WANT TO TAKE CARE OF YOUR FAMILY BOY. RUN FOR YOUR LIFE'

This threat is specifically directed at Alhaji Mukhtar. It implies that if he insisted on occupying the contested position, he would soon not be alive to take care of his

family since he would be consumed in the violence that would follow. He was therefore advised to choose the path that would ensure the safety of his life.

EXHIBIT M5: 'TRACE YOUR ROOTS BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE' (23)

This threat is a reminder to Alhaji Mukhtar that he was only a settler in Jos, and so should not claim what belonged to the indigenes. He was therefore advised to trace his own place of origin before anything unpleasant could happen to him. The threat also contains an ultimatum that any delay would be disastrous for him.

In the same vein, a letter alleged to be written by the Berom Educational and Cultural Organization (BECO) Elders' Solidarity Forum dated 30th July, 2001, titled 'COMPLAINT AGAINST THE APPOINTMENT OF ALHAJI MUKTAR MOHAMMED AS POVERTY ERADICATION CO-ORDINATOR FOR JOS NORTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA' and addressed to the Executive Governor of Plateau State tendered as Exhibit 70, reads in part:

Our people are now sure that your action is deliberately tilted towards making Jos a 'no man's land', which will be resisted with the last drop of our blood. We did it to Usman Danfodio, Ahmadu Bello etc; as such your own attempt like those before you will be resisted.

Although this threat is literarily addressed to the Governor of the State, it also has the undertone of fighting their opponents to the end to protect their own heritage. Fighting 'with the last drop of our blood' signifies that they were ready to fight their opponents or even the government until the last person in the group dropped dead. This emphasised their determination. Furthermore, the reference to Usman Danfodio and Ahmadu Bello who were forefathers to their opponents was to remind them of similar resistance in the past.

On the other hand, a letter dated 23rd August, 2001 written to the Governor of Plateau State by the Jasawa Development Association, and tendered as Exhibit 377 partly reads:

Sir, as peace-loving citizens, we took a number of steps to prevent the possible breakdown of law and order. However, if such undesirable acts are not timely checked and the culprits brought to book, the peace, unity and tranquility of this area [JOS] cannot be guaranteed. As chief security officer of the state, you may be aware of these machinations which, if not checked, are capable of reversing the significant strides achieved under the guidance of your re-engineering philosophy.

This is a threat from the Jasawa Development Association, obviously in response to similar threats from their opponents. The governor is also threatened if no decisive action is taken. As the letter indicates, the non-guarantee of peace is crisis, and that befell the city of Jos on the 7th of September, 2001. The *New Nigeria Weekly* of 15th September, 2001 also reports that some of the threats read: ‘Ours cannot be an empty threat, ‘Watch it, doomsday is coming’. Incidentally this actually played out on September 7 as that marked the beginning of the worst crisis ever witnessed in the state

Similarly, a letter written by the Jos North Local Government Area branch of the JNI titled ‘JAMA’ATU NASIR ISLAM JOS NORTH LGC BRANCH REPLY TO THE GOVERNOR DARIYE’S DIATRIBES AGAINST MUSLIM’ states that

... The act is also capable of giving room to the federal government to declare a state of emergency since the governor has by his public broadcast given impressions to the Muslims that the crisis is on course....

This letter is a reply to the governor’s broadcast at a point in time during the 2001 crisis in which he outlined a number of measures to nip the crisis in the bud. Some of the governor’s pronouncements did not seem to go down well with the Jos North Local

Government Area branch of the JNLC who concluded that they had not been given a fair treatment. Thus they threatened unpleasant consequences for the government.

True to the letter, the threat eventually became a reality as the Federal Government declared a state of emergency in Plateau State on the 18th of May, 2004, appointing General Mohammed Chris Ali as Administrator.

Reacting to some of the letters tendered as Exhibits, the Commission noted that:

The description of the opponents of the appointment as "... some disgruntled elements and tribal cohorts operating as enemies of democracy... cabal of extremists who would run berserk and create instability, anarchy and chaos Anarchists in tribal and religious garbs' ... and the statement that 'if such undesirable acts are not timely checked and the culprits brought to book, the peace and tranquility of this area cannot be guaranteed' are as peace-threatening as the statements contained in the protest letters referred to earlier.

As rightly observed by the Commission, there was the use of foul language ranging from abuse, condemnation and provocative name-calling.

At the Commission of Inquiry were different posters which, according to several witnesses, were found pasted on the walls of many offices of Jos North Local Government Council tendered as Exhibit 354. Some of the posters had the following inscriptions:

REJOINDER NO. 1 – YES! THE LOSE (sic) OF A FEW FAMILIES WOULDN'T BOTHER US. AFTER ALL FOR EVERY SINGLE ANAGUTA'S LIFE AND THEIR ALLIES, THERE ARE THOUSANDS OF HAUSA – FULANIS. LET'S SEE WHO BLINKS FIRST. – Hausa – Fulani Youth (Under 25).

This threat is directed at their opponents, to show that although they might have some casualties during the envisaged violence, they were still comfortable given the large number they constituted. This is in contrast with the small number of their opponents. To 'SEE WHO BLINKS FIRST' is a confirmation that they would defeat their opponents. For this threat and others that will follow in this section, a group of Hausa-Fulani youths (under 25 years of age) claimed responsibility.

REJOINDER NO. 3 – DEATH IS THE BEST FRIEND OF HAMAS. BE REST ASSURED THAT WE WILL DO IT EVEN BETTER. (HAUSA FULANI YOUTHS) UNDER 25.

This threat was issued to show that they were not afraid of death, especially in the expected violence. Rather they indicated that it was the best thing that should happen to them, and that their performance in the violence would surprise their opponents, as they vowed to 'DO IT EVEN BETTER'.

REJOINDER NO. 4 – WE'VE TRACED OUR ROOTS TO JOS NORTH. WE CAN RESIST THE REST, NOT ONLY YOU. (HAUSA-FULANI YOUTHS) UNDER 25.

This is a restatement of their position that Jos North is their place of origin, threatening that any other person stating the contrary would be resisted, 'NOT ONLY YOU' the opposing group. This is emphasised in case there were sympathisers of their opponents.

REJOINDER NO.5 THE SEAT IS DEARER TO US THAN OUR LIVES. IN THAT CASE, DO YOU HAVE THE MONOPOLY OF VIOLENCE?
(Hausa Fulani Youths Under 25).

The authors were threatening that since their opponents did not have a monopoly of violence, they should not think that they (Hausa-Fulani) would do any less; that they

had the capacity of unleashing even more violence, and would not mind being consumed in it, since the position in contention was more important to them than even their lives.

REJOINDER NO. 6 - BLOOD FOR BLOOD. WE ARE Ready, Let's See Who Has More Deposit of Ready Strikers With A Change Of Venue. (Hausa – Fulani Youths Under 25).

This is a threat indicating that for any amount of blood shed by them, the same would be spilled from their opponents. It means therefore that whatever violence was unleashed on them, the same extent would be avenged. There is further, the threatening confirmation that they had more fighters than their opponents, which was also calculated to instil fear in them.

FOCUS A: - ROSE OF (sic) CLAIM OUR RIGHTS. RESOLVED NEVER TO BE PASSIVE AGAIN IF WE ARE SUBJECTED TO TYRANNY AND INJUSTICE. (Hausa – Fulani Youth Under 25).

This threat contains a firm resolve to resist any act of injustice done to them, and to claim their rights at whatever cost. It is therefore a warning to anyone who wished to trample upon their rights.

FOCUS B: - Operation Eagle – JOS KASARMU CE WE ARE READY ‘... Kowa yace yana iyawa ga fili nan...’ (Hausa –Fulani Youths Under 25).

This threat was issued in the Hausa language – the native language of the authors. It means ‘JOS IS OUR LAND WE ARE READY ... WHOEVER SAYS HE IS CAPABLE, HERE IS THE OPPORTUNITY’. The use of the Hausa language is not to conceal the information from their opponents, bearing in mind that they could also understand the language, being a widely-spoken language in the city. Just like the other

threats before it, this one affirms that Jos belongs to them, and that anyone who had a contrary view should prove his worth.

A threat is an imminent and serious danger from an aggressor to the addressee or a third party, and this usually elicits aggression or an immediate and decisive response from the victim. What follows then is either the issuance of a counter-threat or concrete action to forestall the evil contained in the threat. For example, Jeffries captures the reaction of former British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, in response to the September 11, 2001 bombing of the World Trade Centre in the United States as he vowed: ‘The reason was to say: here we have this situation, in which we believe there is a threat. America believes there is a threat, we are going to act jointly.’(2).

In semantics the threats mean that there is a growing tension between the parties in conflict. The statement that ‘the devil has no packing (sic) space in Jos north’, implies that the persons being addressed are not welcome. The implication of the need ‘to take care of your family.... run for your life’ is that the addressee is advised to choose to stay alive as only the living carry on family responsibilities and obligations. The statement that ‘death is the best friend of Hammas’ signifies that the speakers would rather die fighting than submit to the whims of their opponents. In asserting that there would be ‘blood for blood’ the speakers mean that any harm done to them will be avenged.

Field of discourse: the statements issued are threats which indicate the imminent experience of danger.

Tenor: the participants are the parties in conflict - the Hausa/ Fulani group on the one side and the indigenous tribes of Berom, Afrizere and Anaguta on the other. The government is also a participant as some of the threats are directed to it.

Mode: the function meant to be fulfilled by the threats is to instill fear in the opponents in order to subdue them. Another function is to make government succumb and yield to their demands.

4.3 SARCASM

This is the use of seemingly good or kind words to portray the opposite of what is actually said, in order to hurt the addressee. The tone of this language use is sardonic and is an indirect way of abusing an opponent during conflicts. Some of the exhibits tendered at the Justice Niki Tobi Commission of Inquiry into the 2001 Jos crisis are examples:

EXHIBIT M4 – IF YOU CAN’T READ AT LEAST YOU KNOW WHAT THE SIGN ABOVE MEANS- DANGERRRR

The sarcastic tone of this statement lies in the fact that although it is not directly referring to the addressee as illiterate and therefore unable to read, it implies that the addressee had not taken the warning earlier given seriously because he could not discern what it meant. Alternatively, he is directed to a sign signifying danger. The fact that the word is spelt DANGERRRR, is to echo in the mind of the addressee the seriousness that it deserves. It is not merely a piece of advice to the addressee but also a scorn for his inability to understand situations.

REJOINDER NO. 2 – YES: THE DEVIL HAS NO PACKING (Sic) SPACE IN JOS NORTH. – FRANK TARDY IS ALREADY DOING IT FOR HIM - HAUSA FULANI YOUTHS (Under 25).

Although this statement appears like a confirmation of an earlier threat from their opponents, the intention of the authors is far from that. The tone indicates that their opponents were totally wrong about the issue in contention. Moreover, they added that

the chairman of the Local Government, who belonged to the opposing group, by his actions, was ironically paving way for their (Jasawas') victory.

FOCUS C: MONKEY DE WORK BABOON DE CHOP... (Hausa/Fulani Youths – Under 25).

This statement is made in Nigerian Pidgin English which literally reads: 'THE MONKEY LABOURS FOR THE BABOON TO REAP THE FRUITS'. This means that there are people who only benefit from the efforts of others. It is not only stating that the indigenous tribes were benefiting from the efforts of the Jasawa who had contributed to the development of Jos, but also indicating that that would no longer be tolerated.

Generally, sarcastic statements may be taken lightly only when the addressee does not understand the biting intention of the speaker. If, on the other hand, the intended meaning is understood, a reprisal remark is made, leading to exchange of unpleasant remarks and, in most cases, it eventually results in open physical confrontation. Sometimes, when we are aware of the negative effects of words, they hurt us. Such a hurt is often conveyed by verbal insults and degrading terms. Even when we are not aware of the negative effects, words can still harm us, both at the individual and group levels. Such language is regarded as offensive or even oppressive.

The statement 'if you can't read at least you know what the above sign means-danger' literally means that the persons being addressed are not literate. Since they are unable to read, they are advised to pay attention to a sign that has been posted which has the information contained in the write-up. To say that 'monkey dey work baboon the chop' means that the lesser animal labours for the bigger animals to enjoy. It then means that some people only reap from the efforts of others without working for it.

Field – the statements represent a disdainful approach in addressing an opponent. It is a satirical comment made to and about an opponent, while actually meaning the opposite.

Tenor: the participants are the parties to the conflict who are in a bad relationship. Thus, they regard each other as inferior or worthless, each claiming superior status.

Mode: the function of sarcasm in this discourse is to degrade, condemn and strip the opponent of self-importance.

4.4 CODED EXPRESSIONS

This involves the use of words in a special way that is different from their normal everyday meaning. It is usually only understood by those who share the same experience or are in the same group. It is mostly for secrecy, to keep information from those who 'do not belong'. This may explain why, in response to the question on how people discuss a crisis in their localities, the majority of the respondents indicated that such discussions were made secretly. Consequently, information is hidden from whoever is not from that particular group. This explains also why certain people code-switch to a language that is alien to an intruder in the course of conversation. Code words can also be used to describe an opponent, either from an ethnic or religious perspective, in a way that is not understandable to him or another person except the parties involved in the conversation. In addition, some expressions were used specifically to refer to certain events during the crisis in Jos. For example, the phrase "An Fara" indicated that a crisis had erupted in one part of the city or another and that served as a warning to be on the alert. Any person who was not conversant with the use of the phrase in such situations would not get the meaning literally.

The use of coded language means that certain terms in a language are understood only by those who share a particular knowledge or experience. The expression 'An fara' literally means that an action or process has begun.

Field: Coded language is used to conceal or keep information away from another person who has no knowledge of the specialized way in which the language is used.

Tenor: The participants are either the opposing parties directly or some third party from whom they wish to keep away information. Their relationship is characterized by distrust and mischief.

Mode: The function is that of exclusion of the opponent or any other person from gaining or participating in the information process.

4.5 EXAGGERATION

During the crises, information was often exaggerated to make the situation look more damaging and frightening than it actually was. This was mostly because rumours always filled the air and unconfirmed reports made people portray the situation the way they wanted. Exaggeration about casualty figures and extent of damage to properties was also perpetrated by some media houses, thereby heightening tension. For example, the Justice Fibresima Commission of Inquiry into the April 12th, 1994 riots in Jos observes that ‘the riot story was exaggerated by the BBC’³³ There were also often exaggerations on the spatial scope of the conflicts. Some media outfits would report that the whole of Plateau State was on fire, when actually trouble was brewing only in one section of the state capital. An instance is the caption in the *New Nigerian Weekly* of 15 September, 2001 which reads ‘DEATH ON THE PLATEAU’³. At the time of the report, the crisis had not gone outside the Jos–Bukuru area. Therefore, this information would be misleading to those outside the troubled environment. Another paper, *Weekend Vanguard* of the same day – 15 September, 2001- has the caption. ‘The Plateau Riots: intrigues behind the scene’.²³

The semantic implication of the caption “Death on the Plateau” is that there is a great wave of death incidence in the place being described. It also suggests that the entire state is engulfed in the crises with a widespread occurrence. This scenario is also painted in the caption ‘The Plateau Riots: intrigues behind the scene’ which signifies that the entire state is characterized by civil disturbances which appear to be out of control.

Field: Information is given out of proportion to make the crisis look or sound more damaging and frightening than it actually is.

Tenor: those involved are both parties to the conflict and third party individuals or groups referring to the happenings during the crises.

Mode: Exaggerations are used to perform the function of magnifying any situation. In the crises under investigation, they were used to elicit undue sympathy as well as create a bad image of the opponents.

4.6 RUMOUR PEDDLING

A major feature of the crises in Jos and environs was the spread of rumours, hearsays and gossips. These were pieces of unconfirmed information which filtered through all quarters during all the crises. In most cases, such pieces of information were later found to be either false or incorrect as the case may be. A good proportion of the respondents to the questionnaire administered (28.3%) indicated that they treated rumours as credible information, just as about 10% of them stated that they would hardly take time to verify any information they received. In the same way, *Thisday* of Saturday, September 15, 2001 reported that ‘...the rumour mill was filled with false speculations that the Hausas were going to attack the Biroms after the Jumaat prayer on Friday, August 31. On the other side, the Hausas were fed with equally baseless rumour that the Biroms were preparing to attack and burn mosques in Jos. The paper also quotes one Silas Nwankwo as stating that ‘My wife was just trying to pack her things from the front of the house at about 4:45pm on Sunday when rumour came that the rioters had started again’ (36). This trend is capable of igniting trouble even in areas where the crisis had not yet reached, thereby causing greater damage than it would ordinarily have. Before clarifications are made eventually, the damage would have been done. Apart from informal interactions by individuals and groups, rumours could also be spread through

the mass media – radio, television, newspapers/magazines and the Internet especially on the platforms of the social media.

By semantic description, rumours mean all such bits of information which are not verified. They may turn out to be either true or false. Rumours are major sources of information, which can influence people's way of thinking and perception about a particular event or action.

Field: Dissemination of information that is not verified, which can be inaccurate, incomplete or even false.

Tenor: Those involved are parties to the conflict as well as third parties or outsiders. Some of the outsiders may or may not have direct relationship with the parties in conflict.

Mode: Rumors are also sources of information, but they perform different functions. Since they are unverified and can be inaccurate, they may be used only to mislead the hearer, thereby creating a wrong reaction.

4.7 MISINTERPRETATIONS

Utterances that are made can only be said to convey meaning if they are understood in the same way as intended by the speaker. Misinterpretations can occur if certain statements or actions are understood wrongly or not understood at all. For example, Jos North indigenes testified at the Justice Fiberesima Commission of Inquiry that the Jasawa misunderstood their earlier protestations which were entirely peaceful and devoid of any lawless acts to be confrontational, and therefore took to the streets unleashing terror leading to the riots of April 12, 1994²⁷. With misinterpretation, anything that is said or done is viewed as negative, and mutual distrust and suspicion

become the order of the day. In the same way, people are prone to interpret what the other party says according to certain stereotypes, or prejudicial beliefs, which they hold. The result of this is a creation of perpetual ill-feeling between opposing groups.

In semantics, this means understanding something that is said or an action in a way that is different from the real meaning. It means also that the way something is understood will determine the kind of response that it will elicit. In this case, meaning is situated in the understanding of the hearer.

Field: These are instances of understanding a message wrongly or applying one's knowledge to understand a message outside the meaning intended by the speaker.

Tenor: those involved is this range from parties in conflict to third parties or the general public who have heard conversations or seen certain actions during the crises.

Mode: Misinterpretations, either deliberate or unconscious, perform the function of misleading the people involved, and can lead to inappropriate reaction.

4.8 INCITING REMARKS

Words are used to do things. When people utter statements that whip up sentiments or rouse anger, what follows is confrontation, which mostly leads to physical combat. During the crises, some remarks were responsible for most of the trouble that raged on in Jos and environs. For example, the Justice Fiberesima Commission of Inquiry into the 1994 riots quotes one Alhaji Saleh Hassan as having stated that:

Government should not take the silence of the Hausaman for cowardice and for granted. Man to man, the Hausaman is equal to all eventualities and can also be ready to take his pound of flesh, if government does not act to safeguard the Jos Hausaman's aspirations. Nobody needs to tell one that one should rise up to one's responsibility. All Jos Hausamen should now take it as a responsibility to see that Aminu Mato occupies the seat of the Jos North Local Government Caretaker Committee Chairman. It is their right, their birthright... the Panel and government should beware of the fact that people are now quite alert, so that the happenings in Zangon Kataf should not be repeated. People are now cleverer by half, having learnt their lessons through Tafewa Balewa and Zangon Kataf (28).

In a similar way, at the Justice Niki Tobi Commission of Inquiry into the 2001 crisis, Exhibit 62, p. 8 states that:

On the 7th of September, 2001 at various locations in Jos and Bukuru between 7:00pm to (sic) 1:30pm of 8th September, 2001 there were repeated minaret calls from loudspeakers calling all Muslims to come out and fight the infidels as God has given them into their hands.

Furthermore, the commission notes that the Jos North Local Government Area branch of the JNI had used foul language when it described each of the measures earmarked by the government to tackle some of the issues that contributed to the crisis as a

trick ‘in furtherance of Christian agenda’ which they saw as anti-Moslem. In an article titled ‘JAMA’ATU NASRIL ISLAM JOS NORTH LGC BRANCH REPLY TO THE GOVERNOR DARIYE’S DIATRIBES AGAINST MUSLIM’, they consequently called on ‘all Muslims appointed to serve on the lopsided committees to discontinue their membership of such committees forthwith’.

On the other hand, the Commission also reported that Muslims also mentioned that Christians used loudspeakers to invite their followers to come out and fight non-Christians during the crisis. Part of Exhibit 479 tendered by one of the witnesses reads thus;

On Friday the 7th day of September, 2001 at about 3pm after Jumaat prayer at a Mosque inside my father’s compound we suddenly saw an ash coloured 504 Peugeot car been (sic) driven recklessly, and having the logo of COCIN Church Angwan Rukuba marked on its body an (sic) information came through a loudspeaker in Hausa saying that “LOKACI YAYI KU FITO, KU FITO” which means “it is time! You should come out! You should come out!” Some few minutes later we then saw a group of Christian Youths with bows, arrows, machetes, cutlasses, bottles (which we later discovered to have contained petrol), sticks and other dangerous weapons (74).

Incitements usually provoke people to action, and even when they have not yet taken issues seriously, their mindsets will begin to change immediately, leading to the escalation of the crisis. Furthermore, even those outside the conflict can be made to think negatively, and this may spark off fresh trouble elsewhere until many segments of the society are consumed in the crisis. Any incendiary remark is a very potent device for igniting or escalating conflict in any segment of the society. It is important to note that

incitements can come from even those not directly involved in the conflict. Such third party remarks are lethal as well.

The semantic implication of incitement is that words or certain actions are used to create reactions from people. The speakers are not necessarily involved in the problem, but what they say contribute greatly to the escalation of whatever problem that is involved. The reports that ‘there were repeated calls from loudspeakers calling all Muslims to come out and fight the infidels as God has given them into their hands’ and a similar one which stated that ‘information came through a loudspeaker... it is time! You should come out! You should come out!’ are capable of causing a lot of havoc, even where there shouldn’t be.

Field: These are statements that are meant to rouse anger and stimulate confrontation

Tenor: The participants in this act are usually leaders and influential persons in the opposing groups. They may also be third parties to the conflict. Their role is to move people to action by creating the feeling that the other party has acted unjustly to them.

Mode: The function of these remarks is to bring about the desired damage to the other party, and to satisfy the wishes of the instigator.

4.9 BLAME GAME, ACCUSATIONS AND COUNTER ACCUSATIONS

In moments of disagreements, there is always the tendency for the parties involved to trade blame. There is always buck passing and bitching between the opposing parties, which may even extend to third party individuals, groups or organizations. Examples abound in the crises that have rocked the city of Jos and environs. Testifying at the Justice Fiberesima Commission of Inquiry into the riots of 12th April, 1994, one Ezekiel Choji said that:

The Jasawa Militant wing of the Hausa Fulani settler stock, organized and directed Almajiri and hooligans who went to town on a violent demonstration on Tuesday 12th April 1994, chanting Islamic war songs, emptying garbage on the street, harassing pedestrians and motorists, destroying everything found on their way, burning tyres on the tarred roads (28).

This remark is corroborated by another witness at the tribunal who testified that ‘...it is of great interest to observe among non-traditional owners of Jos as regards claims of ownership. These challenges are believed to have been caused by those who do not wish Jos well by inciting trouble, i.e. the Hausa-Fulani slave traders, the so-called Jasawa’.

In his own evidence, one Joseph Azi Nyako emphasized that:

Specifically, I am referring to the activities of the group which operated under the dubious umbrella of Jasawa... It was common knowledge that the Jasawa contemplated a violent demonstration following a peaceful protest by the host communities. The hoodlums had a field day harassing motorists, littering streets with garbage and causing breach of the peace (28).

Similarly, *ThisDay* of 15th September, 2001 reports one Gideon Ayuba, a maintenance officer with the Plateau State Polytechnic, as lamenting that ‘I don’t know why the crisis happened. It has been a long time that our brothers were looking for trouble from us. When you hear of Kaduna, Zangon Kataf, Bauchi, these are the people who caused crisis there’ (35).

On the other side of the coin, the same newspaper reports one Mallam Abdullahi, a car dealer along Zaria Bye pass as accusing a particular ethnic group as being responsible for the losses he incurred in the crisis that started on the 7th September, 2001:

I am the one in charge of these vehicles. It is not only one dealer who has the cars. The cars belong to many people who bring cars here for sale under Jamil Motors, Rabiun Motors and Almihas Motors. The cars were all new. They are Tokunbo cars and brand new cars. They were all burnt by the Igbos. They broke into the office. They stole money and other things. They burnt the remaining cars after they had stolen many of them.... I don't know why they did it. But Allah dey (35).

This is an instance of insisting that the other person in a dispute is the one at fault. It aims at absolving self and pointing to an opponent as responsible for what has happened. The statements that 'it was common knowledge that the Jasawa contemplated a violent demonstration' points to the fact that the group mentioned is being blamed for what later followed. Similarly, the assertion that 'they are Tokunbo cars and brand new ones. They were all burnt by the Igbos. They broke into the office. They stole cars and other things' signifies that a particular group is isolated as responsible for a damage that has been done.

Field: This is the act of holding someone responsible for anything unpleasant that has happened, or refuting the other person's claim about oneself.

Tenor: The parties in conflict were mainly the participants in blaming and accusing each other for the events that unfolded. However, others outside the crises also apportioned blame.

Mode: The function of this form of conversation is to free oneself of any guilt from the crises and pointing to the other party as the one guilty, and who should take responsibility.

4.10 THIRD-PARTY CONTRIBUTIONS

In conflict situations, communication is not restricted to the opposing parties involved. Others outside the conflicts also make remarks. Most of such remarks from

third parties express displeasure over what has gone wrong and seek to give good advice and to sue for peace. For example, *ThisDay* of 14th September, 2001 quotes the Catholic Archbishop of Lagos, Anthony Cardinal Okogie while reacting to the September 7, 2001 crisis as advising that: ‘The good Lord has brought us under one umbrella and we call ourselves Nigerians. There should be no conflict between Igbo, Hausa or Yoruba... You don’t shed human blood anyhow. Go to the Holy Scripture... they were joking to be doing what they did (48). Similarly, the paper reports that in his own reaction to that crisis, the Secretary General of the Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs in Nigeria, Dr. Lateef Adegbite stated that:

I was dismayed that violence would again erupt in any part of this country, be it on ethnic or religious grounds. It is very disappointing because efforts have been recently made by both government and religious leaders to promote inter-religious and ethnic harmony all over the country. Whatever might have caused it, should be stopped. It is not the best way of showing resentment or expressing dissatisfaction because violence can only beget violence (49).

However, not all third party remarks are aimed at suing for peace. Remarks that are inflammatory only escalate the conflict. Dr. Adegbite appears to have deviated from his earlier approach when he later remarked that... ‘...we are also disturbed that some people have been targeting Muslims and Islam in what we see as religious cleansing, targeted against them (49). Also, the Vanguard Newspaper of 20th September, 2001 reports that the Chairman of the movement for the emancipation of the Middle Belt, Mr. Sebastine Hon, had stressed that the crisis was a plan to promote ethnic rivalry among the Middle Belt tribes to enable Islamic Jihadists to penetrate easily into the region. He stated that ‘We say no to Sharia, we say no to OIC, we say no to Islamization. We say no to the core North’s divide and rule tactics which was bequeathed to it by the British colonial government... to kill the realization of our quest for a distinct identity’ (6). Such third party remarks only instigate and exacerbate tension and violence.

The semantic implication of third-party contribution is that certain utterances and actions by certain people who were not directly involved in the dispute are capable of either adding to it or reducing it. These may be reactions, comments or even suggestions from such people who may either contribute sincerely or with personal interests attached. The appeal that ‘there should be no conflict between Igbo, Hausa or Yoruba... You don’t shed blood anyhow’ is aimed at calming the situation, and stated with sincerity. However, the retort that ‘We say no to sharia, we say no to OIC, we say no to islamization. We say no to the core North’s divide and rule tactic which was bequeathed to it by the British colonial government... to kill the realization of our quest for a distinct identity’ is capable of rousing anger and further worsening the situation.

Field: Comments and reactions of people outside the conflict, and who are not directly affected by the crises.

Tenor: Those engaged in these comments and remarks are people outside the conflict.

Mode: These remarks have functioned in divergent ways. While some are positive and aim at fostering peace, others are negative and inflammatory, thereby worsening an already bad situation.

The context of culture of these linguistic features refers to the general social environment or situation in which the participants found themselves in the crisis that erupted. The social environment was responsible for the verbal exchanges from the parties in conflict. In other instances, the conversations themselves were instrumental to the creation of conflict situations.

CHAPTER FIVE DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

This chapter contains the presentation and analysis of data obtained through the questionnaire only. Therefore, it does not include information from the other sources which were analysed in the preceding chapter. The chapter is divided into two main parts. Presentation of data is the first part which gives the information as obtained from the field. The second part, which is the analysis, examines the circumstances that may have led to the responses provided.

5.1 DATA PRESENTATION

SECTION A: PERSONAL DATA

1. Gender

Out of a total of 300 respondents to the questionnaire, 190 were males and 107 were females, while 3 gave no response to this item.

Male		Female		No of Response		Total	
Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
190	63.3	107	35.7	03	1	300	100

2. Age Range

The age ranges of the respondents were classified into five major categories. Those who ranged from 10-20 years were 45, ages 21-35 were 169, those between 36 and 45 years were 37, those of ages 46-60 were 28, and those from 61 years and above were 05, while 16 of the respondents gave no response.

10 – 20		21 – 35		36 – 45		46 – 60		60 and above		No Response		Total	
Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%
45	15	169	56.3	37	12.3	28	9.3	05	1.7	16	5.3	300	100

3. State of Origin

Since the respondents came from across all over Nigeria, they were grouped according to the six geopolitical zones of the country, with Plateau State standing out alone as it consists of the study area. 160 of the respondents were from Plateau State and 36 from other states in the North Central Zone. There were 17 from the North West Zone, 31 from the North East, 12 from the South-West and 30 from the South East. 12 of them were from the South-South, while 02 respondents did not indicate their state of origin.

Plateau		North Central		North West		North East		South West		South East		South South		No Response		Total	
Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%
160	53.3	36	12	17	5.7	31	10.3	12	4	30	10	12	4	02	0.7	300	100

4. Ethnic Group

For this item, all those from ethnic groups indigenous to Plateau state constituted one category, and the Hausa – Fulani ethnic group formed another. This is because they are the major conflicting parties in this work. Furthermore, those outside these two groups were put together notwithstanding their state of origin or nationality. This categorization is for ease of analysis. Indigenous ethnic groups were 125, the Hausa – Fulani were 66, while those from other ethnic groups across the country or beyond were 109.

Indigenous		Hausa – Fulani		Others		Total	
Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
125	41.7	66	22	109	36.3	300	100

5. Religion

From the responses gathered, 201 of the respondents were Christians, and 98 were Muslims, while 1 respondent gave no answer.

Christians		Islam		No Response		Total	
Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
201	67	98	32.7	01	0.3	300	100

6. Place of Residence (in Jos)

For the categorization of respondents based on their areas of residence, a respondent's religion is considered against the area of residence. This is because since the conflicts erupted, communities in Jos were polarized mostly along religious lines. 158 respondents who were Christians lived in Christian – dominated areas, 75 of them who were Muslims also lived in Muslim – dominated areas, while 43 respondents, made up of both Muslims and Christians, lived in areas that are considered 'mixed' where both Muslims and Christians co-habit. 2 respondents indicated that they lived in camps of the opposite religion, while 22 of them were not specific in their areas of residence.

Christian Christian		Muslim Muslim		Mixed		Cross Over		Not Specific		Total	
Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%
158	52.7	75	25	43	14.3	02	0.7	22	7.3	300	100

7. Marital Status

Out of the 300 respondents, 178 were single, 110 were married and 1 was either divorced or separated, while 4 respondents indicated that they were widowed. 7 respondents gave no response.

Single		Married		Divorced Or separated		Widowed		No Response		Total	
Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%
178	59.3	110	36.7	01	0.3	04	1.3	07	2.3	300	100

8. Occupation

Among the respondents, 57 were civil servants, 89 of them were businessmen and women, while 93 were unemployed. 39 respondents were engaged in other various activities for a living, and 22 of them gave no response.

Civil Servant		Business		Unemployed/ Applicant		Others		No Response		Total	
Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%
57	19	89	29.7	93	31	39	13	22	7.3	300	100

9. Educational Qualification

Out of the total of 300, 18 respondents attended only primary school, 95 had secondary school education, while 174 had attended tertiary institutions. 2 respondents attended adult education and 2 also had only non-formal education. 9 respondents provided no answer.

Primary		Secondary		Tertiary		Adult Educated		Non-formal Edu.		No Response		Total	
Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%
18	6	95	31.7	174	58	02	0.7	02	0.7	06	2	300	100

10. Languages Understood Well

Responses to this questionnaire item were classified based on the number and type of languages spoken. The result showed that 34 of the respondents were monolingual in their native languages, otherwise known as mother tongue, 48 were

monolingual also but in another language rather than their own, 184 were either bilingual or multilingual in their mother tongue and other languages, while 31 of them were also bilingual or multilingual in other languages with no knowledge of their own languages. 3 respondents gave no answer.

Monolingual in MT		Monolingual in other language		Bilingual in MT and others		Bilingual in others only		No response		Total	
Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%
34	11.3	48	16	184	61.3	31	10.3	03	1	300	100

SECTION B

USE OF LANGUAGE DURING THE JOS CONFLICTS

1. How do you learn about any crisis that erupts?

91 respondents said they learned about a crisis through the media, 114 from neighbours, and 51 through community announcements while 23 of them got to know of it through other means. 21 respondents gave no answer to this question.

Media		Neighbours		Announcement		Others		No Response		Total	
Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%
91	30.3	114	38	51	17	23	7.7	21	7	300	100

2. In what language do you usually get informed of any crisis?

Responses on this showed that 108 respondents got information about a crisis in their local languages, 96 in English, and 92 got informed in any of the three major Nigerian languages that are spoken around, while 4 persons gave no response.

Local language		English		Major Nigerian Language		No Response		Total	
Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
108	36	96	32	92	30.7	04	1.3	300	100

3. What language do you use to inform others in your locality of a crisis?

112 of the respondents indicated that they give out information in their locality about a crisis in their local languages, 88 used the English language, and 96 would use any of the major Nigerian languages spoken around, while 4 respondents gave no answer.

Local language		English		Major Nigeria Language		No Response		Total	
Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
112	37.3	88	29.3	96	32	04	1.3	300	100

4. In what manner do people discuss a crisis in your locality?

A total of 140 of the respondents stated that a crisis is usually discussed secretly among groups in their locality, while 125 declared that a crisis is discussed publicly; 5 of the respondents indicated that the discussion of a crisis in their area is carried out in other ways, but 30 of them gave no response.

Secretly		Publicly		Other		No Response		Total	
Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
140	46.7	125	41.7	05	1.7	30	10	300	100

5. How often do you interact with people of different ethnic groups or religions?

On the frequency of interaction with people of different ethnic and religious backgrounds, 129 respondents stated that they did that all the time, 112 did that often and 44 of them rarely did, while 5 of them indicated that they never had any interaction with them. 10 others gave no response.

Always		Often		Rarely		Never		No Response		Total	
Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%
129	43	112	37.3	44	14.7	05	1.7	10	3.3	300	100

6. In what language do you address a stranger?

Choosing the language to address a stranger with, 198 respondents preferred the English language; 23 of them would use their local language, while 75 of them preferred any one of the three major languages. No response was obtained from 4 of them.

English		Local language		Major Nigeria Language		No Response		Total	
Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
198	66	23	7.7	75	25	04	1.3	300	100

7. When discussing a crisis with people in your locality and a stranger suddenly appears, how do you react?

If a stranger appears when a discussion is ongoing, 102 of the respondents would change to a local language, while 139 indicated that they would stop completely; but 53 of them stated that they would continue without worry. No response was obtained from 6 of them.

Change to Local Lang.		Stop		Continue		No Response		Total	
Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%
102	34	139	46.3	53	17.7	06	2	300	100

8. When a stranger is discovered to be from your ethnic or language group, in what language do you continue communication?

After identifying a stranger coming from the same ethnic background as them, 60 respondents indicated that they would still continue communication with them in English; 56 of them indicated preference for a major Nigeria language, while 178 preferred their local languages. There was no response from 6 of them.

English		Major Nigerian Language		Local language		No Response		Total	
Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%
60	20	56	18.7	178	59.3	06	2	300	100

9. In a crisis, how do you identify a stranger?

The respondents indicated that they identified a stranger in different ways; 86 of them said they would know a stranger through the language he speaks, 39 did that by observing the dressing, while 135 of them know a stranger from his facial appearance. 21 of them did that in other ways, but 19 respondents provided no answer.

Language		Dressing		Appearance		Other		No Response		Total	
Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%
86	28.7	39	13	135	45	21	7	19	6.3	300	100

10 How would you relate with a stranger?

Responses indicate that 120 of the respondents would relate with a stranger in a friendly manner, but 129 of them indicated that their relation would be with suspicion, while 35 of them said they would behave just normally as in everyday life. 8 of them gave the indication that they would be hostile, while 8 gave no response.

Friendly		Suspicion		Normally		Hostile		No Response		Total	
Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%
120	40	129	43	35	11.7	08	2.7	08	2.7	300	100

11. In your view, how does language contribute in causing conflict?

On how language brings about conflict or contributes to it, 141 respondents attributed it to the use of insulting words by the opposing parties, 74 of them blamed it on the practice of not saying the truth, and 14 said keeping quiet was the cause of conflicts. 54 respondents said all the three aforementioned causes were responsible; and 5 indicated that language contributes to conflict in other ways, while 12 of them provided no response.

Insulting words		Not saying the truth		Keeping Quite		All of the above		Other		No Response		Total	
Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%
141	47	74	24.7	14	4.7	54	18	05	1.7	12	4	300	100

12. How do you think language can be used to resolve a conflict?

The submission of 116 of the respondents on how language can be used to resolve conflict is the choice of soft words, 126 of them emphasized saying the truth, while 6 would prefer avoiding speaking to the opponent. All the three strategies just mentioned were approved by 41 of the respondents as 7 of them said there were other ways, while 4 gave no answer.

Soft words		Truth		Avoidance		All of the above		Other		No Response		Total	
Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%
116	38.7	126	42	06	2	41	13.7	05	1.7	12	4	300	100

13. How do you take rumour or hearsay during conflicts?

A rumour or hearsay during conflicts would be taken seriously by 85 of the respondents, while 69 of them stated that they would not take it seriously. 132 of them said they would take it with doubt, while 10 indicated that they would take it as outright false, as 4 gave no answer.

Seriously		Not seriously		With doubt		As false		No Response		Total	
Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%
85	28.3	69	23	132	44	10	3.3	04	1.3	300	100

14. Do you care to verify any information you receive during conflicts?

From the responses gathered, 130 respondents always tried to verify any information they received during conflicts, 135 of them verified it only sometimes and 23 rarely did that. 8 respondents never verified information at all, while 4 of them provided no response.

Always		Sometimes		Rarely		Never		No Response		Total	
Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%
130	43.3	135	45	23	7.7	08	2.7	04	1.3	300	100

15. Which language do you prefer to use to state your grievances?

On the preferences of a language to state their grievances during conflicts, 74 respondents chose their local languages and 144 of them prefer the English language, while 72 of them said they could use any of the three major Nigerian languages. There was no response from 10 of them.

Local language		English		Any Major Nigeria Language		No Response		Total	
Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%
74	24.7	144	48	72	24	10	3.3	300	100

16. In peace-making efforts, who would you prefer to address you or your people?

For peace-making, 31 of the respondents would prefer to be addressed by a government official, 214 of them preferred one of their own community or religious leaders. A third party is preferred by 42 respondents, but 4 of them would prefer some other mediator, while 4 respondents provided no response.

Government Official		Comm. Or Religious Leader		3rd party		Other		No Response		Total	
Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%
31	10.3	214	71.3	42	14	04	1.3	04	1.3	300	100

17. Which Language would you prefer to be used in addressing you or your community during conflicts?

To be addressed during conflicts, 90 of the respondents would prefer the use of their local languages, while 85 opted for the English language. 106 of them would be comfortable with any language of wider communication; 12 preferred still other languages, while 7 of them gave no response.

Local language		English		Language of wider comm.		Other		No Response		Total	
Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%
90	30	85	28.3	106	35.3	12	4	07	2.3	300	100

18. Have you ever relocated or changed your area of residence?

In response to this question, 140 of the respondents indicated that they had relocated from one area to another, and 151 showed that they had not moved at all; while 9 of them gave no response.

Yes		No		No Response		Total	
Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%
140	46.7	151	50.3	09	3	300	100

19. If yes to (18) above, why?

As a follow-up to the preceding question, 52 respondents who responded in the affirmative indicated that they had relocated because of crisis; 82 of them said their relocation was a personal choice, while 15 respondents had other various reasons. 151 of the sample population gave no response.

Crisis		Personal choice		Other		No Response		Total	
Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%
52	17.3	82	27.3	15	5	151	50.3	300	100

20. How many times have you witnessed a crisis in Jos?

Responses to this question indicated that 20 of the respondents had witnessed a crisis in Jos only once, 39 of them twice, 68 thrice, while 59 had witnessed it four times. 100 of them had witnessed a crisis up to five times, but 7 indicated that they had not yet witnessed any, and 7 again gave no response.

1 time		2 times		3 times		4 times		5 times		Nil		total	
Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%
20	6.7	39	13	68	22.7	59	19.7	100	33.3	07	2.3	300	100

5.2 ANALYSIS OF DATA

SECTION A: PERSONAL DATA

This section gives information on the personal traits of the respondents. It becomes necessary because that will help give background information on their behaviour and choices as they use language during conflicts. Although these personal characteristics may not be entirely responsible for all responses given, they will go a long way to reveal why certain actions are taken or certain preferences (linguistic and otherwise) are made by the respondents.

1. Gender

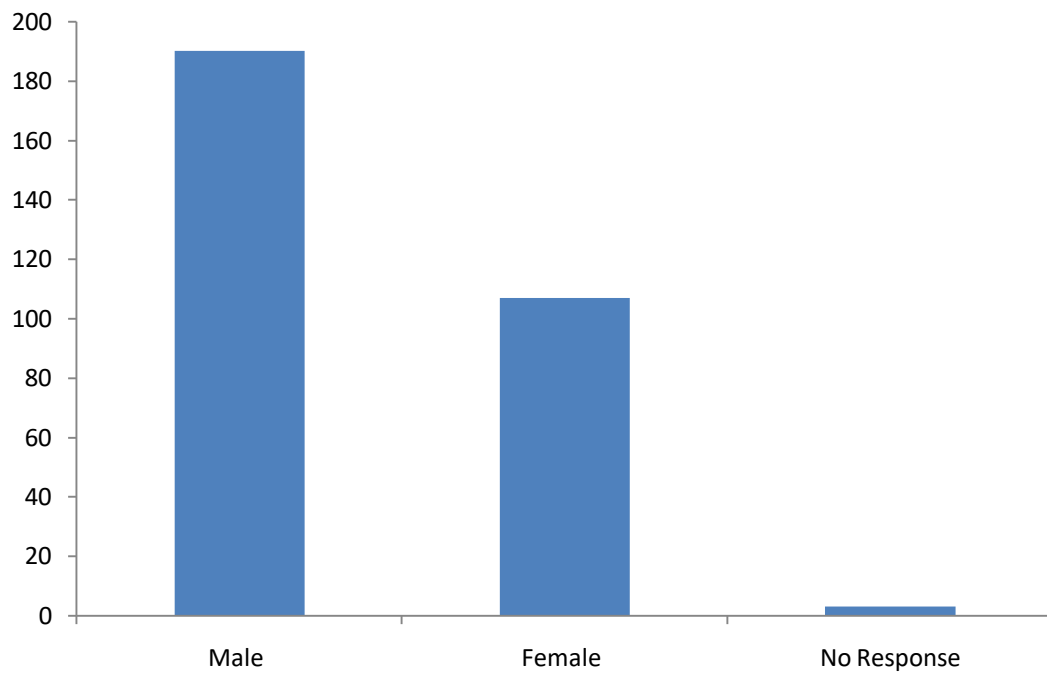


Figure 1: Gender of Respondents

The above table shows that 190 (63.3%) were males and 107 (35.7%) were females, while 03(1%) of them did not reveal their gender. In the Jos crises in particular, both men and women were involved especially with regard to information sharing and dissemination. While some of the women might not have been as actively involved in the conflicts as the men, there was always collaboration, and each of the sexes was affected. While certain types of information were shared by men alone, especially while the violence raged, other types of information were shared among all members of a community regardless of sex.

2. Age range

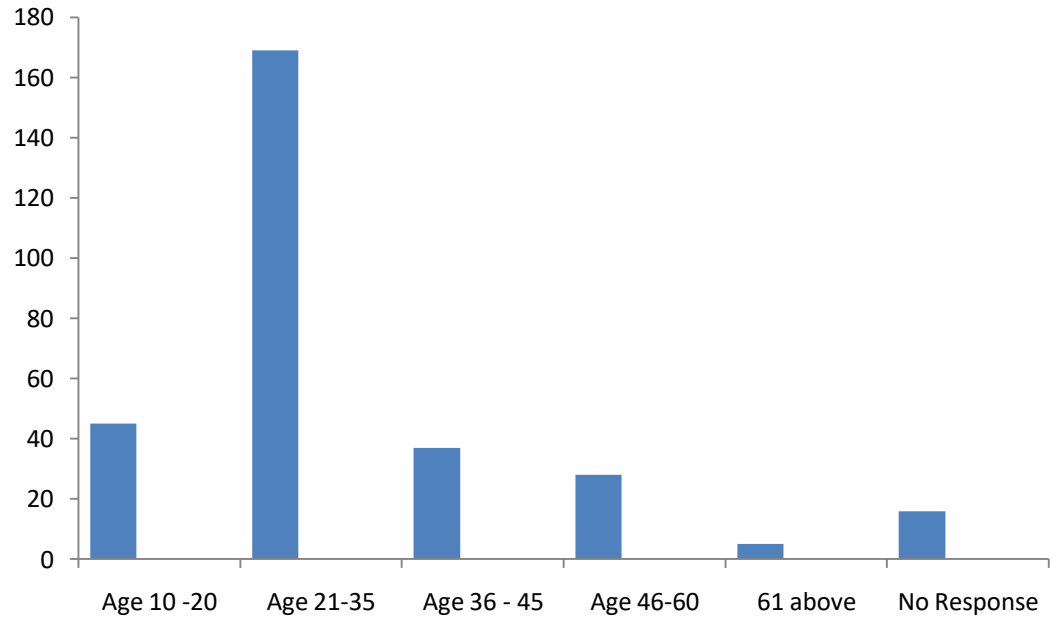


Figure 2: Age Range of the Respondents

From the responses gathered on this item, 45 (15%) of the respondents are aged between 10 and 20. These are adolescents or teenagers who are in a critical period of their formation in life. Any view about conflicts which they adopt at this stage has a lifelong effect on them and the society in general, since they are to be leaders and elders in future. 169 respondents were between the ages of 21 and 35, and 37 of them ranged between 36 and 45 years. It can be observed that these two groups constitute the physically (and perhaps also mentally) most active group in any human population. In this age of information communication technology, this category of people has greater and faster access to information. They access information about the eruption of conflicts around the neighbourhood and in distant places, and transmit same with ease. Their reaction to such information and the way they transmit it onwards has a lot of implication in increasing or decreasing the conflict.

Those between the ages of 46 and 60 were 28. Although this group is also physically strong, certain rash decisions either in word or action are usually given a second thought. However, some people in this group, who might not be physically involved in the conflict, could be guilty of inciting the younger ones. That was the case as recorded by the Justice Fibresima Commission of Inquiry into the riots of 12th April, 1994 in Jos Metropolis (7). Those respondents who were 61 years old and above were 5. These were the elderly who were less active and supposedly more cautious in matters of the society. 16 respondents gave no answer to this item. This may be as a result of their not being sure of their age, or just wanting to conceal that information for personal reasons. Their silence may even be pregnant with meaning, known only to them.

3. State of Origin

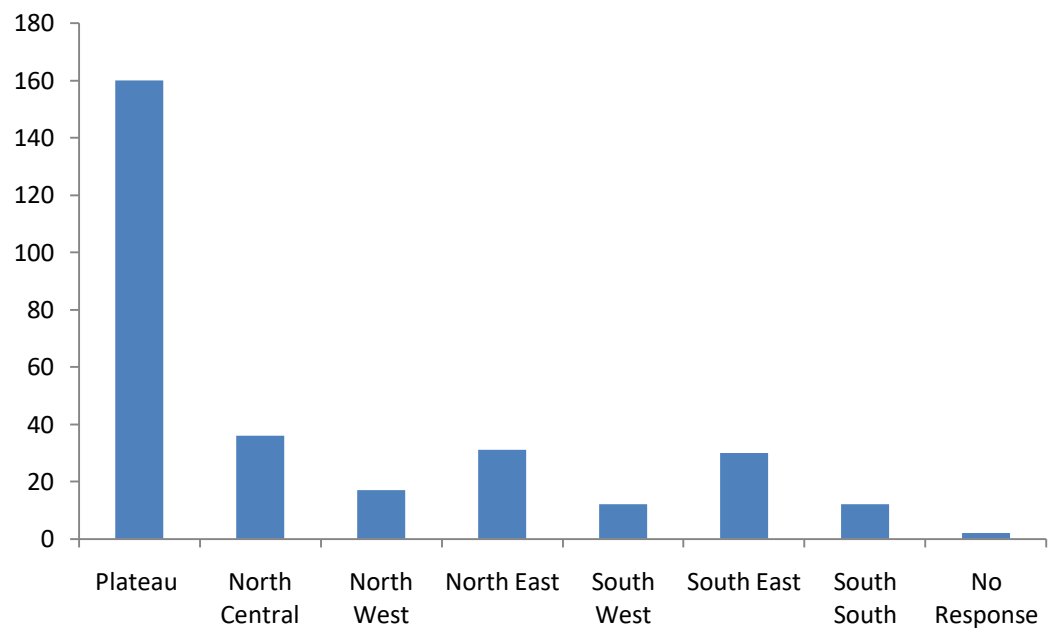


Figure 3: State of Origin of the Respondents

The categorization of residents of Jos was done according to the six geopolitical zones of the country, but Plateau State stands out alone because it houses the study area. The figures reveal that 160 respondents (53.3%) were from Plateau State. This includes all the ethnic groups in Plateau state, not just the three – Berom, Afizere and Anaguta – who constitute one side of the parties to the conflict, the other being the Hausa-Fulani group. Plateau state is known for its ethnic diversity and an attendant language diversity pegged at fifty-four (54), as noted by the Plateau Peace Conference of 2004⁽¹¹⁾. These ethnic groups have been lumped together here for ease of analysis, considering the fact that they have a common front. It should be noted that other geopolitical zones also consist of different ethnic groups and therefore different language groups. The respondents who represented the North Central Zone were 36(12%). In this group, ethnic groups from Plateau State, which is also in the zone, are excluded because they have been treated separately. There were 17 respondents (5.7%) representing the North West, 31(10.3%) representing the North East, 12 (4%) representing the South West and 30(10%) representing the South East. The South-South zone had 12(4%), while 02 (0.7%) of the respondents gave no indication of their geographical zones. This gives the picture of Plateau State as truly a miniature Nigeria where almost every ethnic group is found. In such a cosmopolitan setting, communication within different respective groups is done in the language common to all in the community. Such a language is likely to be the language most commonly spoken in the region identified, since not any one of the groups has a single common language. Communication in a native language in this case is only possible among people of the same tribe or with those who understand that language.

The remaining two respondents who gave no indication of their zones may even be representative of expatriates who are not natives of any zone in the country. The National Population Census of 1967 revealed that Jos had the largest concentration of Europeans in Nigeria outside Lagos, the then Federal Capital. Tourists and people on other missions had continued to flock into Jos before the unfortunate crises that engulfed the state in general, and Jos in particular.

4. Tribe

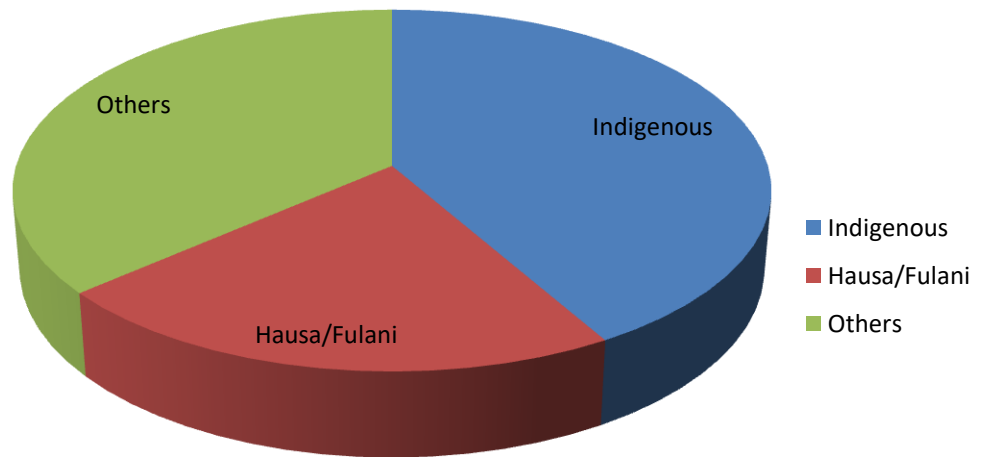


Figure 4: Tribe of the Respondents

Like the preceding item, all the tribes indigenous to Plateau state have been categorized together as one group, and the Hausa-Fulani group as another group. This is mainly for ease of analysis and also because they are the primary parties to the conflict. Thereafter, all other ethnic groups outside these two groups, including expatriates are classified as constituting one other group. The ethnic groups indigenous to Plateau state were represented by 125 respondents (41.7%), while those representing the Hausa-Fulani group were 66(22%). It should be noted, however, that the first group consists of all the fifty-four (54) ethnic groups in Plateau state which are all distinct in their own rights. It does not mean in anyway that they have been subsumed into the three ethnic groups of Berom, Afizere and Anaguta who constitute one of the parties to the Jos crises. In the same way, the Hausa-Fulani designation is only a political coinage for analytical convenience. These are two separate ethnic groups who speak different languages and are related only by religion and political alliance. The Plateau Peace Conference of 2004 notes that; ‘During the conference, the Fulani delegates insisted that there is a difference between Hausa and Fulani, since they represent different cultures and languages. They want these groups to be identified separately since they are not one and the same’ ⁽¹¹⁾. At this point, it is to be noted that this work is by no means trying to subsume one of these distinct ethnic groups in another, but that they are put together for analytical convenience. Other ethnic groups were represented by 109 respondents (36.3%). This included all other ethnic nationalities across Nigeria and beyond who are resident in Jos and environs. This also means that communication among members of each group has to be in a common language understood by all.

For the indigenous group, the language common to them is the Hausa language which serves as a lingua franca in the entire northern region of the country, since their native languages are not mutually intelligible. This is despite the fact that the Hausa language is not native to any of them, and more regrettably the language of the opposite

group in the conflict. For the Hausa /Fulani group, the Hausa language comes handy since it is native to the Hausa ethnic group and a strong second language of the Fulani ethnic group. The other ethnic groups comprised of different nationalities across the country and beyond. Consequently, the English language is the lingua franca that would serve their communication needs. Even in conversation with anyone among the two groups in conflict, the English language is the only medium that will connect them. Also, this classification is merely for statistical convenience and is by no means an attempt at making them a monolingual entity.

5. Religion

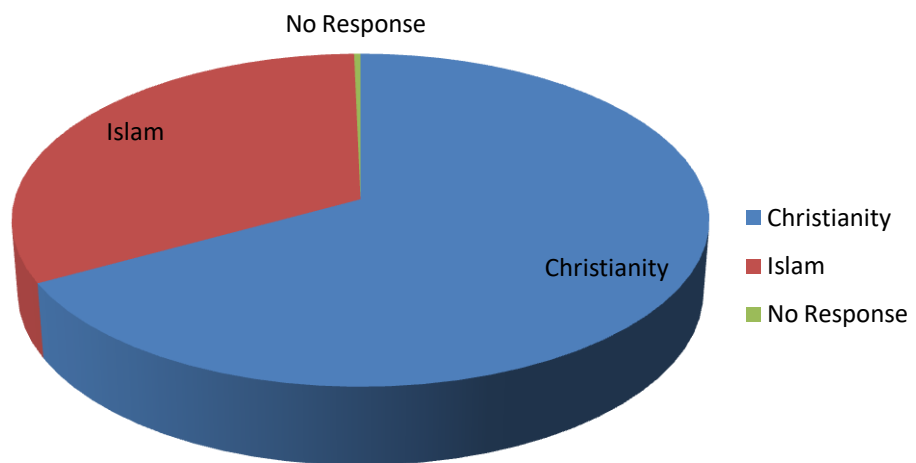


Figure 5: Religion of the Respondents

This item considers the religious affiliations of residents of Jos. This is because the conflicts raged along the lines of both ethnicity and religion with mainly Christians and Muslims on two sides. The crises that rocked Jos and environs were mainly between two primary parties, who are the Hausa, and then later, the Fulani on the one hand, and the indigenous tribes of Berom, Afizere and Anaguta on the other. However, when religion was introduced into the conflict, the demarcation lines changed, and it became religious, along the lines of Christianity and Islam. At this point, the altercation took on a religious coloration, as it was no longer between the Hausas and the indigenous groups in question, but between Muslims and Christians. When the crisis took on a religious dimension, that became a primary factor. *Thisday* Newspaper of Friday, September 14, 2001 confirms that: 'At the spots where check points were mounted, the militant youths care less about people's ethnic origin or profession. All they wanted to know was one's religion'.

Also commenting on the September, 2001 crisis, the Plateau Peace Conference states that; 'just like the 1994 crisis, subsequent crises have always taken a religious coloration each time there was outbreak of violence... The crisis increasingly assumed a religious divide which created an opening for external involvement.'⁽²⁾ From the data obtained, Christianity was represented by 201 respondents, and Islam was represented by 98 respondents while 01 respondent gave no answer. It should be noted that the indigenous tribes are not exclusively Christians, neither are the Hausa –Fulani exclusively Muslims. There are Muslims among the indigenous tribes just as there are Christians among the Hausa-Fulani stock. Consequently, when religion became a primary factor in the conflict, it became the case of brother taking arms against brother if there was a difference of faith. On the other hand people of different ethnic groups found solace in 'alien' communities thanks to their respective religious faiths.

In considering only Christianity and Islam, the researcher is not oblivious of the fact that there are people who belong to other religions such as the African Traditional Religion and others who have come from different lands in the world with different religions. We also acknowledge that there are also people who may not belong to any religion in particular. However, Christianity and Islam are considered because they are the major religions along the lines of which the conflicts were viewed. In communication people who belong to the same religion share certain lexicon which others outside it do not know. Therefore, in conflict situations, especially when religion is a major factor as it often played out during the Jos crises, the disputing parties are prone to using coded language that is understood only by anyone who belonged to a particular religion. This is often to share secrecy, to vilify an opponent or even to give out information on an impending danger.

6 Place of Residence

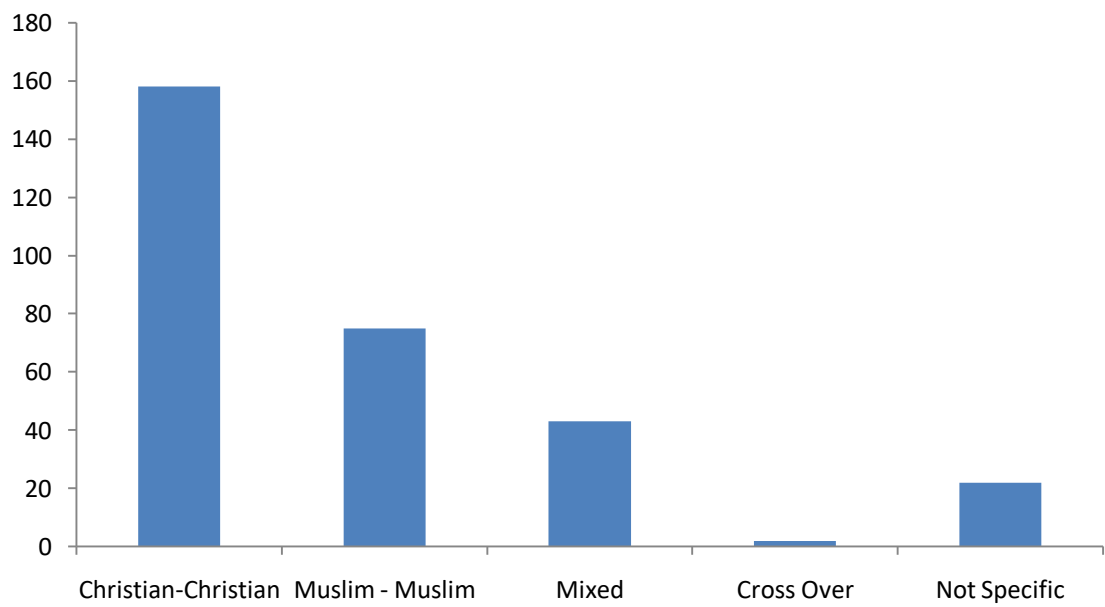


Figure 6: Place of Residence (in Jos)

The time crisis started in Jos, especially when it assumed a religious dimension, most settlements in Jos were polarized along religious lines more than any other factor. This item examines the place of residence of the respondents against their religious beliefs. As was observed in the previous item, the two major religions in contention are Christianity and Islam; and that is why consideration is restricted to them. Data shows that 158 of the respondents who were Christians lived in Christian-dominated areas. From the data, such areas of residence include Jenta Adamu, Gada Biu, Rukuba Road, Tudun Wada, Hwolshe, Angwan Rukuba, Kufang, the Gyel area of Bukuru, Giring, Anguldi among others. On the other hand, 75 respondents who were Muslims indicated that they lived in Muslim dominated areas which include Angwan Rogo, Filin Ball, Gangare, Bauchi Road, Ali Kazaure, Bukuru city centre, parts of Rikkos among others. This is a clear indication that the conflict has made these communities stay apart. Consequently, communication is strained. However, there are locations which are considered 'mixed' because both Christians and Muslims live in them. From the data obtained, 43 of the respondents lived in such locations. Such areas as indicated by the respondents include Dogon Dutse, Dadin Kowa, State Low Cost, Farin Gada, Nassarawa Gwom, Angwan Doki, Rayfield among others. This shows that even with the obvious polarization of some settlements, there are still areas where anyone, irrespective of religion or ethnicity, could live. Remarkably, reporting on the 2001 Jos crisis, *New Nigerian Weekly* Newspaper of 15th September, 2001 states that:

At Dogon Dutse, however, both Muslims and Christians collaborated and protected their property. While the Muslims guarded the Church, Christians protected the Mosque and no house or property was destroyed... at the Catholic Pastoral Centre, Muslims were cared for by social workers. The Central Mosque harbours another large refugee population, made up of Muslims and Christians alike.

In such areas, better communication is established and maintained, as mutual cooperation is also enhanced. The data later revealed further that two of the respondents lived in areas that were dominated by people of opposite faiths – regarded as crossing over in this work – that is a Christian living in a predominantly Muslim area, and a Muslim living in a predominantly Christian area. This shows that anyone could live and operate in a seemingly hostile environment. 22 of the respondents declined to indicate where they lived. This may be for personal reasons best known to them. Generally, people who live together in a community interact more frequently among themselves than with those outside it. Consequently, in polarized settings, cross-community interaction is difficult, if not impossible; and the wider the communication gap between parties to a conflict the deeper and more intense the animosity between them, as mutual suspicion takes centre stage.

7 Marital Status

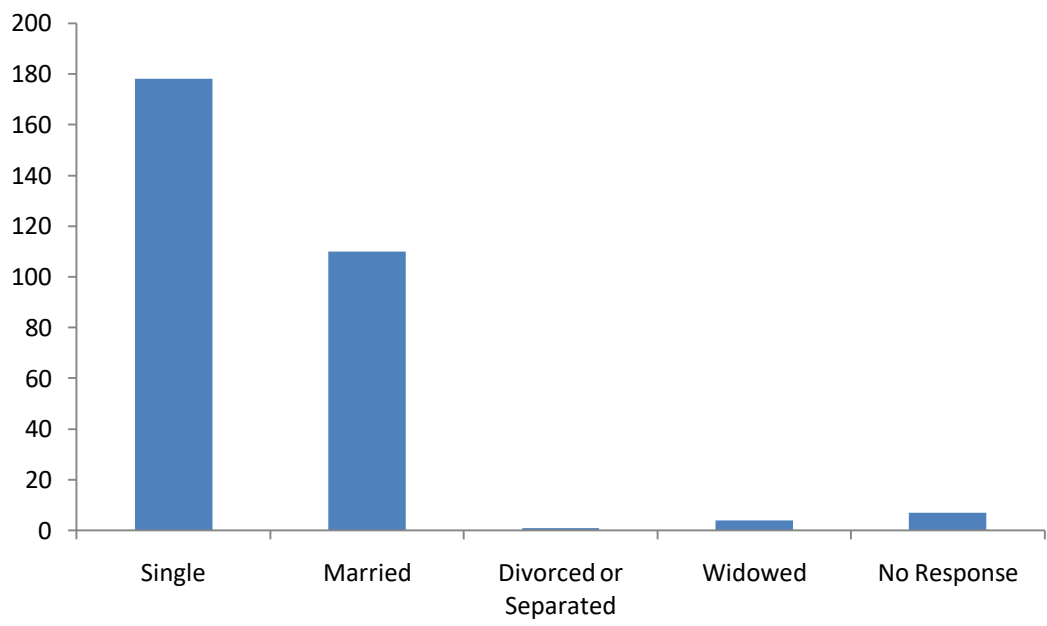


Figure 7: Marital Status

The above table shows that 178(59%) of the respondents were yet unmarried. Since the greater number of them are youths who are in their active stage in life as indicated on table 2 above, these unmarried respondents belong to this group. Having no family burden as such; they are easily lured into taking any action without considering the consequences. Young people have a number of ways in which they communicate among themselves. Apart from the conventional use of language, they could employ other means of passing information among themselves such as whispers, body movement and the like. At this stage, they are ready to react to any message received without actually weighing or analyzing it.

The data also shows that 110 of them were married. Most of these married men and women were also in their active stages in life. It means, then, that if control measures are not put in place, they too are ready materials for starting or even escalating conflicts. However, sharing certain information with their spouses may make them reconsider their stand or view about a conflict. When two people bring out different opinions and analyse each one critically, a more acceptable view may be found. It should be noted, though, that such consultations during crises are rare. One out of the respondents was either divorced or separated. Divorce or separation is a consequence of conflict itself, though at the family level. Language plays a very vital role in family conflicts. Instances of divorce or separation are traceable to improper or faulty use of language. On the other hand, language is capable of calming frayed nerves, leading to the avoidance of unhealthy relationships. Four of the respondents indicated that they had lost their spouses, while seven provided no response. Some people might not have wanted to reveal their marital status mostly for personal reasons which they did not feel comfortable making public.

8. Occupation

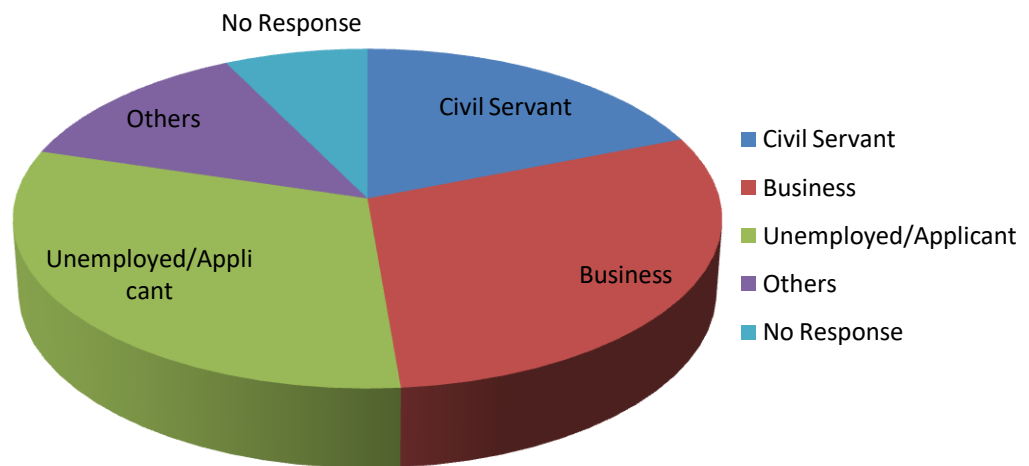


Figure 8: Occupation of the Respondents

Information from table 8 shows that 57(19%) of the respondents were civil servants, while 89 (29.7%) of them were into business. Personal income and a means of livelihood are very vital to societal stability. It is expected that if there is a good means of livelihood in terms of economic empowerment through employment or business enterprises, it will reduce restiveness in the citizens. It was observed that 93 (31%) of them were employed. This is one indicator of the level of poverty in the land and it is a major factor in situations or times of conflict. The Plateau Peace Conference of 2004 confirms that:

Delegates noted that the youth constitute an active segment of society but are not gainfully employed, leading to poverty and despair. The Conference also looked at employment beyond the narrow concept of a salaried job, but also within the broader perspectives of self and non-self employment.... Delegates see poverty as the inability of individuals to take care of the basic necessities of life such as food, health, shelter, clothing and school fees (109).

Since the bulk of the population is made up of able-bodied and energetic young people, they become a major tool in the hands of perpetrators of conflicts. A little promise of 'succour' from mischief makers is enough to have them wreak havoc on the society. Language is the principal medium of making any such promise of 'succour'. Mischief makers may hide under the guise of ethnicity or religion, using words that appeal to the senses of these unemployed poor people, to incite them to engage in actions that disturb the peace. 39 (13%) of them indicated that they had some means of livelihood outside business and civil service. This is also a precarious situation. If those means of survival were not reasonable enough to be stated, it means that anything could happen if those opportunities slip off their hands. The result is that they add to the number of those who have no means of livelihood completely. 22 (7.3%) of them provided no response to this item. This may be just that they didn't want to reveal what they lived on, or actually did not have anything. Whichever way, the picture is frightening. Overall, language is used to play on people's idleness and despondency.

9 Educational Qualification

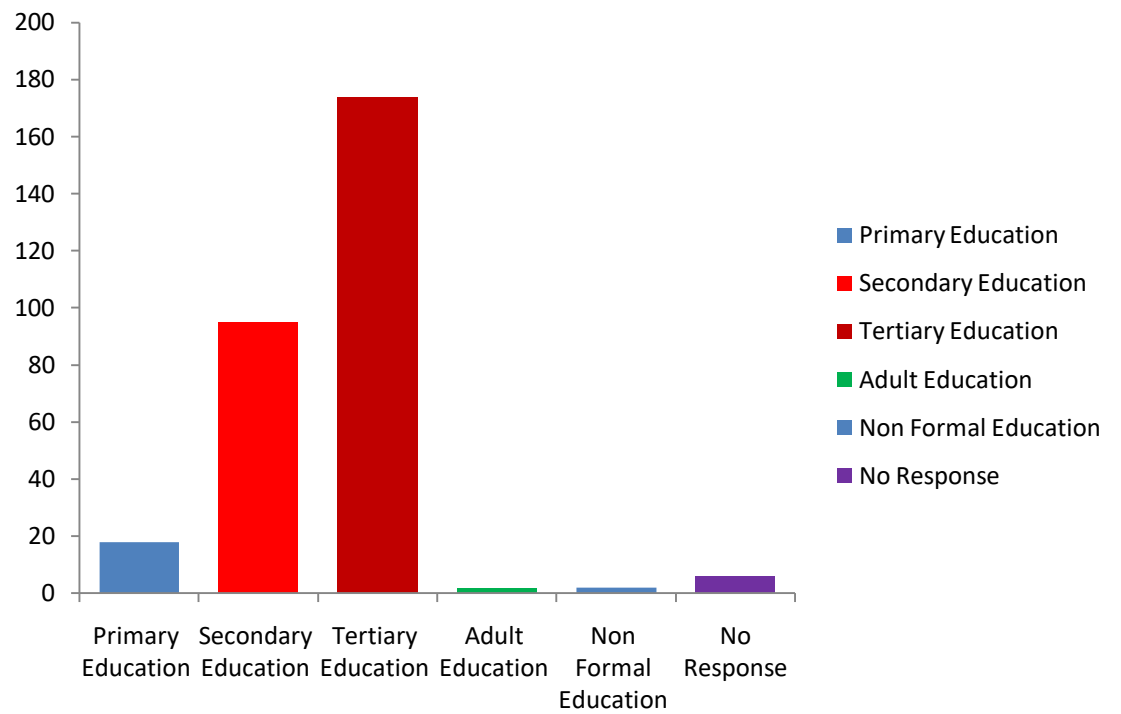


Figure 9: Educational Attainment of the Respondents

Educational attainment, just like employment and economic empowerment, is a major factor in times and areas of conflict. The above table indicates that 18 (6%) of the respondents had education only at the primary school level, while 95(31.7%) of them attained secondary education, and 174 (58%) had education up to the tertiary level. It is often hoped or expected that the further a person goes in education, the more discerning he or she should be. Little or no education leaves the individual at the mercy of agents of discord who misinform him or misrepresent and misinterpret certain portions of information to him. Because he is uninformed he plunges himself into any action without a clear thought. The table further indicates that 02 (0.7%) of the respondents had some adult education. Although the type of education received by these respondents is not the advanced type, or as rigorous as that received by their younger counterparts, they are endowed with the ability to reflect on whatever action they should take since they are adults. This category of people will also not accept all information literally. They are more likely to analyse any message carefully before acting. 02 (0.7%) of the respondents also indicated that they had non-formal education. This is the type of education outside the formal classroom. It is mostly given at home by parents to their children, or the elders of the society to the younger ones. This is the type of education that emphasizes morality in addition to teaching about how to live and survive in the society. Therefore, if this is done well and the younger ones imbibe morality as a precept, there will be less trouble in the world, and conflicts, though they are bound to occur, can easily be resolved amicably. This type of education helps individuals to receive any message during conflicts with caution. It guides people in dealing with one another in society and in responding to any type of information they receive. However, 06 respondents (2%) gave no response to this item. This may be because they might not actually know which category they belonged to.

10. Languages Understood Well

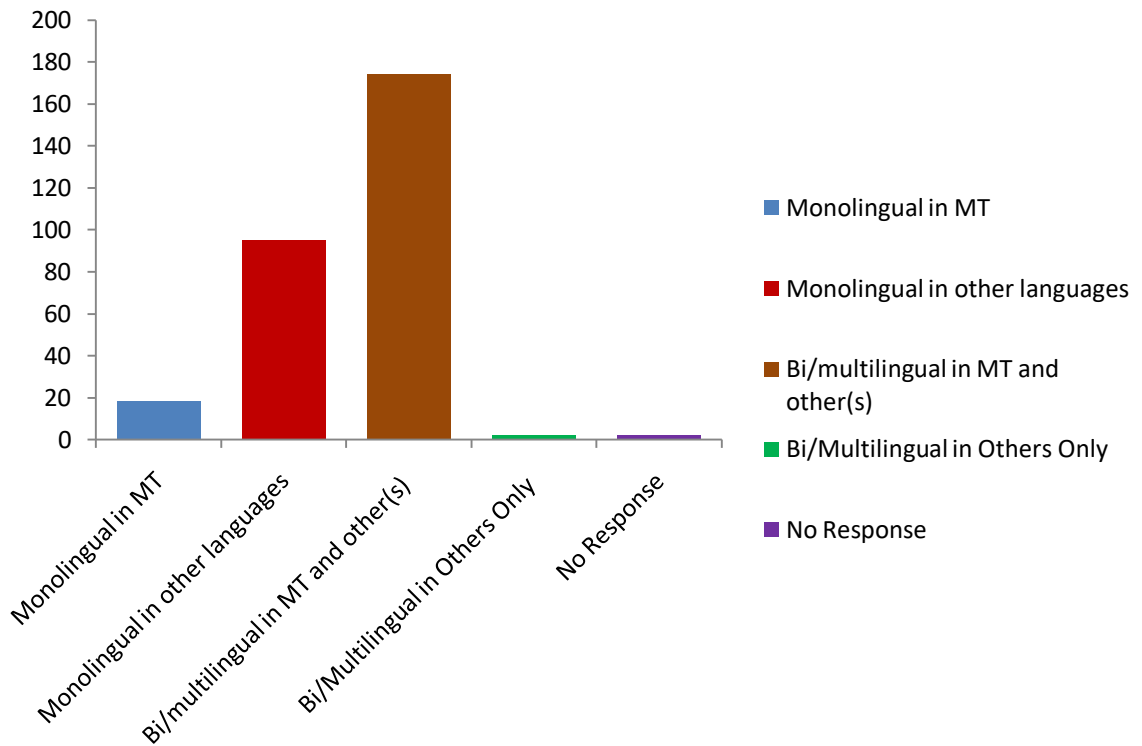


Figure 10: Languages Understood Well by the Respondents

The number of languages available to an individual or in a society determines how communication takes place. The table above shows that 34 (11.3%) of the respondents were monolingual in their native languages, otherwise known as Mother Tongue. This means that they can speak and understand only one language. Therefore, if information is passed in another language, they are automatically left out. In the same way, they cannot pass information to others in another language except their own. 48 (16%) of the respondents showed that they were also monolingual, but in languages other than their own native tongue. This implies that they can only speak and receive information in a 'foreign' language. Consequently, if information is passed by their kith and kin (may be about any possible danger, for example), they are left out completely. This may be as a result of the children not wanting to learn their native languages, or their parents not teaching their children the mother tongue. This factor has been the most potent cause of language loss or extinction. The data shows that 184 (61.3%) of the respondents were either bilingual or multilingual in their native languages and other languages. This is an indication of linguistic versatility. Being able to speak other languages in addition to their mother tongues means that they can pass or receive information in their native languages or other languages as the context suggests. This is an added advantage, as they can function well in both their local communities and in other environments. The data further reveals that 31(10.03%) of the respondents were either bilingual or multilingual in other languages only with no knowledge of their native languages. This means they are only versatile in 'foreign' languages, while remaining ignorant of their own. Consequently, any communication in their native languages leaves them out. No response came from 03(1%) of the respondents. This may be because they were not sure of what response to give, or they just decided to keep that to themselves.

SECTION B**USE OF LANGUAGE DURING THE JOS CONFLICTS**

For analytical convenience, the items in this section of the questionnaire are grouped according to each of the research questions raised.

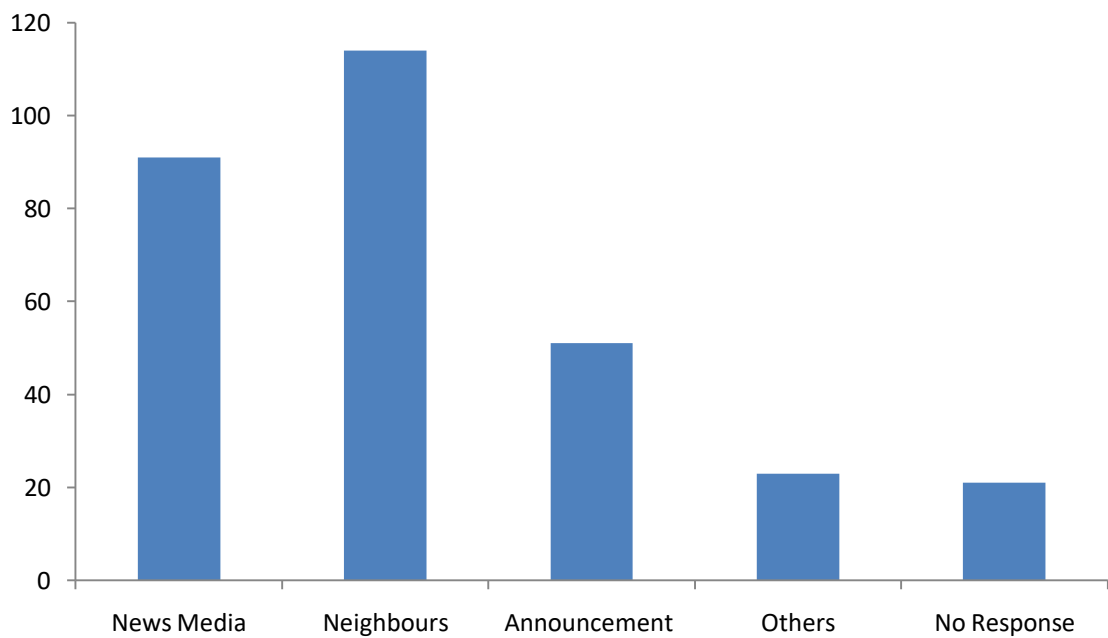
A. Method of Information Dissemination during Crises**How do you learn about any crisis that erupts?**

Figure 11: Source of Information about the Eruption of a Crisis?

Usually, when a crisis erupts, information about it is received through different means. Ninety-one respondents indicated that their source of information on crises was the news media, both electronic and print. In this case the quickest news medium is the electronic media especially the radio and the social media, since breaking news can be transmitted immediately, and also given the fact that the print media will always take a longer time, at least a day, to get the information across. With advancement in technology, the social media makes information readily available to people wherever they may be, and at all times, through such applications as ‘Facebook’ and ‘Whatsapp’. It should be noted that the manner in which the media convey the information has a great impact on the crisis – either to further escalate it or defuse it. The Plateau Peace Conference of 2004 noted that there were publications of inciting reports and bias reporting of the 2001 crisis, that some media outfits were involved in one-sided reporting and sometimes outright misrepresentation of facts which further fueled the crisis (127). In the same way, the Fibresima Commission of Inquiry observed that the riot story of the 1994 conflict was exaggerated by some media houses, which fueled tensions⁽³³⁾. If the media are objective and avoid giving inaccurate information, conflicts can be more easily contained. 114 respondents revealed that they got information about a crisis from their neighbours. From the table, this is the greatest number of all the options; and it indicated that information about crises spreads fast among people in communities.

One common feature of this, as observed by a community member of Kufang in Jos South local government area, Mr. Dung Bot, is the mention of the phrase ‘AN FARA’ which literarily means ‘they have started’. He explained that once that phrase was heard, everybody in the neighbourhood would know that a crisis had erupted. This phrase seemed to be so well known that, on hearing it, no one in the community would ask or wonder what ‘had been started’. Similarly, Bello Abubakar of Sarkin Mangu Street in Jos North Local Government Area stated that whenever there was a crisis,

people in the community would be immediately informed and the men asked to come out in their numbers for defence. For fifty-one of the respondents, they got their information through public announcements. This could be through local ‘town criers’ who stand at strategic points to make announcements, or through unusual ringing of bells at worship centres at odd times or issuing those announcements at such worship centres. Since the conflicts in Jos and environs have always taken a religious coloration, worship centres sometimes serve as meeting points from where statements or even incitements could be issued. Twenty-three of the respondents indicated that they got information about the crises through different means other than the ones given. One of the products of modern technology is the mobile phone which is used to send or receive information through calls or text messages instantly. This set of respondents could have got their information through that or some other sources. 21 respondents gave no answer to this item. This could largely be because they did not want to disclose their source of information, or they may have received information about crises through different sources not mentioned in the options.

In which language do you usually get informed of any crisis?

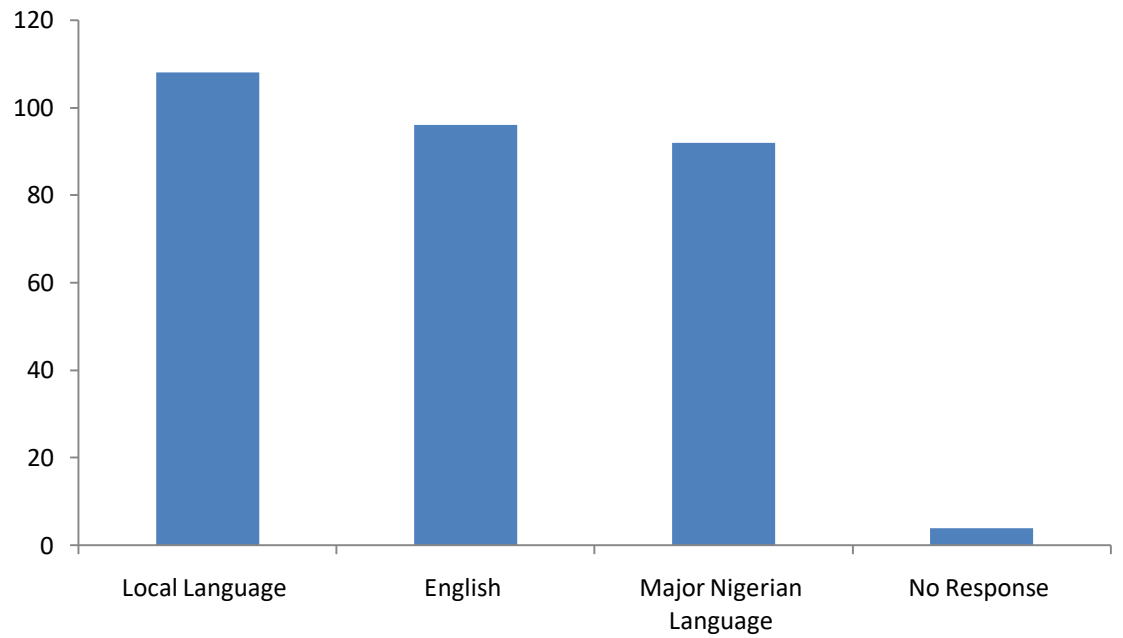


Figure 12: The Language through which information about a crisis is usually obtained.

The choice of language in communication is, to a large extent, determined by context, which consists of the interlocutors, the topic, the environment and the purpose for engaging in the conversation. Therefore, discussions about a crisis will differ from ordinary friendly conversations, for example. From the data obtained, 180 respondents stated that they received information about crises in their local languages. This includes one's native language and the language of the immediate community. Since most areas in the Jos-Bukuru Metropolis are cosmopolitan, with people from diverse ethnic and linguistic backgrounds, the local language here may mean the language that is common to all around the vicinity. The use of one's native language applies mostly to people who share the same linguistic background. The English language was the medium of information for ninety-six of the respondents. This is largely because of the heterogeneous nature of most societies in Jos and Bukuru. English is the only neutral lingua franca that is accessible to all Nigerians. In this case, where there are people from different regions of the country living together in one community, it remains the only language of interpersonal communication and any information received will have to be in it.

Ninety-two of the respondents stated that they got informed about crises through one of the major Nigerian languages which are Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo. These three languages are regional languages for the Northern, Western and Eastern parts of the country respectively. They are understood and spoken by most people in their respective, regions, serving as languages of wider communication. The use of any of these languages, therefore, will depend on the composition of the community where the respondents reside. It is not necessarily true that since Jos is in the North, Hausa is the major language to be used. If the population of an area has more people from the Western region, for example, Yoruba will have to be the major language in use there.

In the same way, where there are mainly or more people from the Eastern region, the Igbo language is certainly the major Nigerian language there. The remaining respondents, four of them, gave no response to this item. This could be because they got information about crises in languages different from those classified in the options, or they might have their personal reasons not to indicate the language just as with the last item.

Which language do you use to inform others in your locality of a crisis?

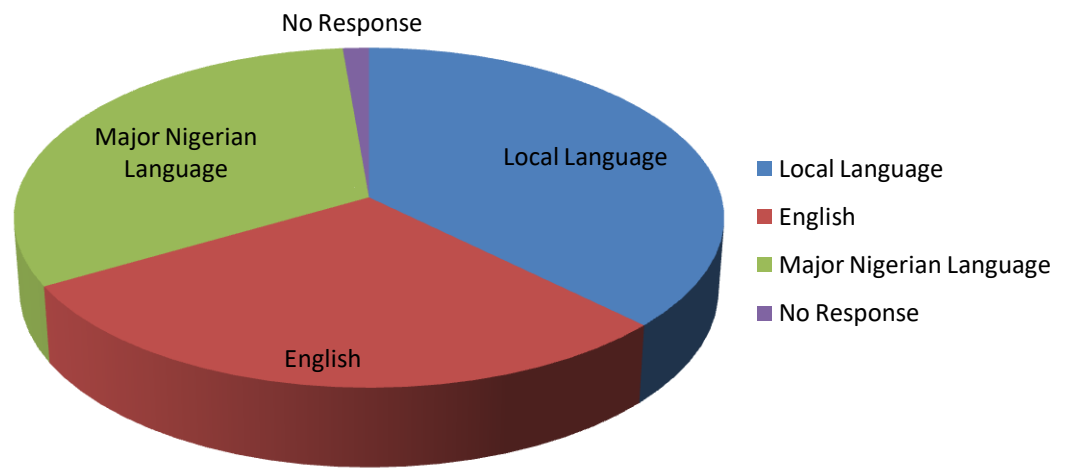


Figure 13. Language Used to give out Information about a Crisis

The choice of any language for communication at any given time is determined by different contextual factors. Respondents are consequently guided by these factors as they give out information about the eruption of crises. Data shows that 112 of them informed other people of a crisis in their local language. Again, this local language may be the respondents' native language or a language of the immediate community which is understood and spoken by all. Eighty-eight respondents stated that they used the English language to give out information about a crisis. This also explains the cosmopolitan nature of Jos with people of different language groups, and since English is the only language used across the country, this category of people feels more comfortable using it. Ninety-six of the respondents preferred to use any of the major languages. This again will depend on the people that make up particular settlements. There was no response from four of the respondents, which may again be because they used different languages other than the ones in the options, or they had their personal reasons for being silent on this.

In what manner do people discuss a crisis in your Locality?

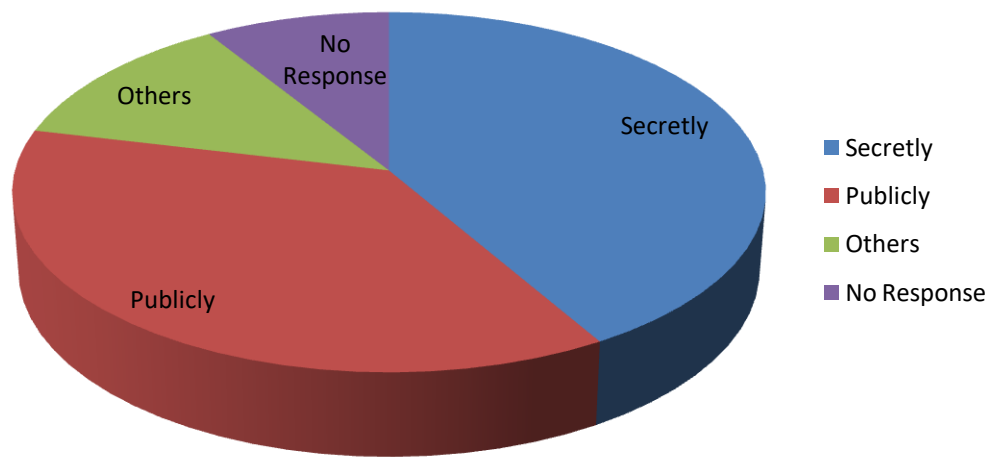


Figure 14: Manner of Discussion about a Crisis

The topic of discussion and situation determine the tone of conversations. The table above shows that 140 respondents indicated that people in their localities discussed crises in secret. In this case, people only come together in clusters to talk about any impending, ongoing or past crisis. In other words, information is hidden to whoever is not in that cluster. This may be because of the serious and dangerous nature of crises in societies. Usually when people conceal information, they may be planning something sinister, or discussing a bad act they may have involved themselves in. However, it can also be a means to ensure safety and protection from the enemy. On the other hand, 124 of the respondents declared that discussions about crises in their localities were carried about publicly. Perhaps this category of people see nothing wrong in making known everything about the crisis being discussed. In such instances, people talk freely on what they feel is necessary to say. For this category of people, free flow of communication is essential, as such that will in turn open up avenues for resolution. Five of the respondents indicated that people in their localities discussed crises in different ways other than the options provided. This may be that both options are obtainable or some peculiar methods of discussion are employed. However, thirty respondents gave no answer to this question, probably because they were not too sure of which method applied in their localities.

B. Pattern of Communication by Parties in Conflict during Conversations with Unfamiliar or Unknown Persons or Groups

How often do you interact with people of different ethnic groups or religions?

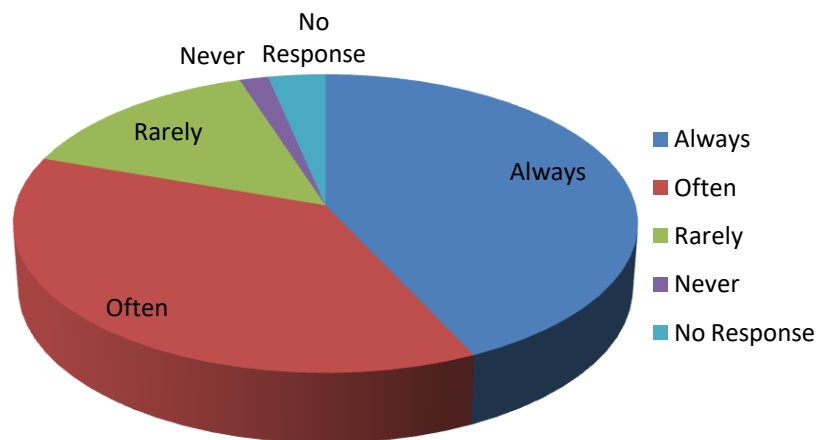
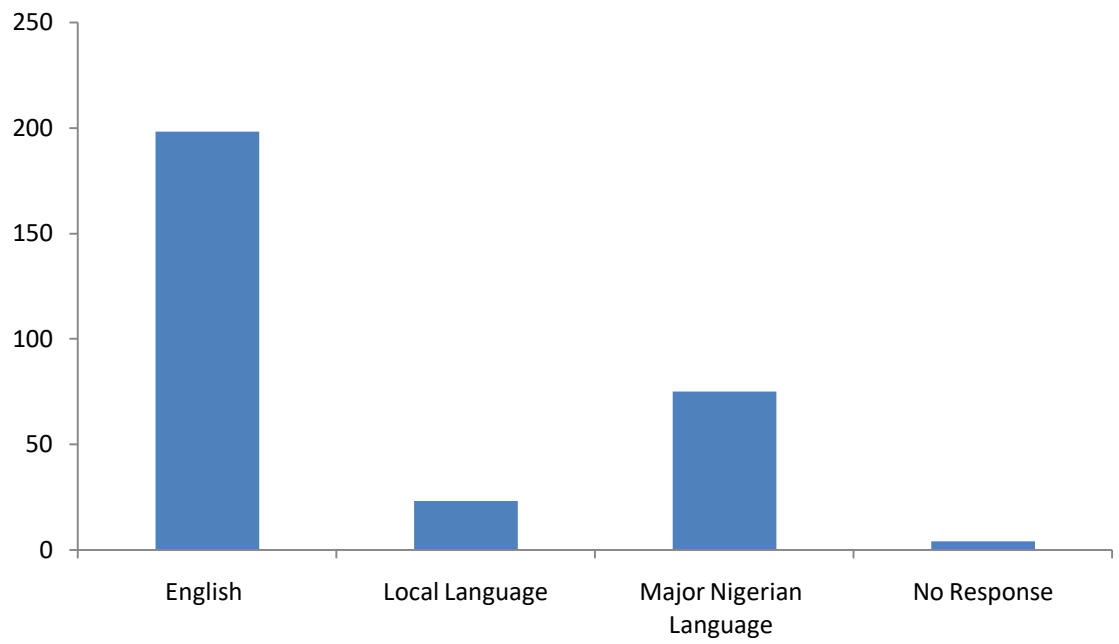


Figure 15: Frequency of Interaction with People of Different Ethnicities and Religions

All human societies function through the use of language as members interact and socialize among themselves. As a result, frequency of interaction among them determines, to a large extent, the viability of the society. In spite of the negative feelings conflicts generate in people, 129 respondents indicated that they always interacted with people of different ethnic groups or religions. This shows the accommodating nature of some people even in the face of hostility. The fact that they are still willing to interact with people of the opposite camps is an indicator that settlement of conflicts involving such people can easily be achieved as constant interaction and communication builds up trust. One hundred and twelve of the respondents showed that they also interacted with people of other faiths or nationalities, but not as frequent as the first group. This category of people may interact with other people probably when there are no disagreements or disputes, and avoid them when trouble erupts. Furthermore, 44 of the respondents showed that their interaction with people of other groups was rare. They would do that only on very few occasions, meaning that even at moments when there are no conflicts, they still maintain their distance and become open to others only when certain circumstances demand it. However, 05 of the respondents showed that on no account would they interact with people of different tribes or faiths, as the case may be. This goes to explain the deep distrust that conflicts sow in people's minds. The polarization of settlements along religious lines further gives impetus to distrust and hatred among disputing communities. There is a lot of ethnic and religious rivalry and intolerance, mutual suspicion and distrust, which widen the gap between the conflicting groups in the Jos crises. Whenever this happens, communication is strained, and ill-feelings fill the air, thereby prolonging the conflicts or even making it intractable. The remaining respondents, 10, provided no answer to this item. These may be people who are not sure of whether they had any interaction with those from different groups or not, or are unwilling to reveal their attitudes.

In which language do you address a stranger?**Figure 16: Language Used to Address a Stronger**

The choice of which language to use at any point in time depends on several variables which include the situation, the people in the conversation exercise and the topic, among others. From the above table, one hundred and ninety-eight of the respondents said they would choose the English Language when addressing a stranger. This may be because of the fact that English is the only lingua franca across the entire country and since the stranger's language is not known, English comes in handy. Twenty-three respondents showed that they would use their local language. Again, local language here refers to the respondents' native language or the language of the immediate environment in which they live. The use of the local language may be because they want to know if the stranger 'belongs' to their own category or not. When that is ascertained, it will determine how they will relate with the person further. Seventy-five of the respondents stated that they would use any of the three major Nigerian languages (Hausa, Yoruba, and Igbo). This could be because of the assumption that the person may be able to speak any of these, probably based on the perception of the respondents. 04 of the respondents gave no response to this item. These may be people who avoid strangers completely or are not sure of which language to choose to address them.

C. Choices and Preferences by Parties in Conflict When Communicating Within Their Own Groups and with Opposing Groups.

When discussing a crisis with people in your locality and a stranger suddenly appears, how do you react?

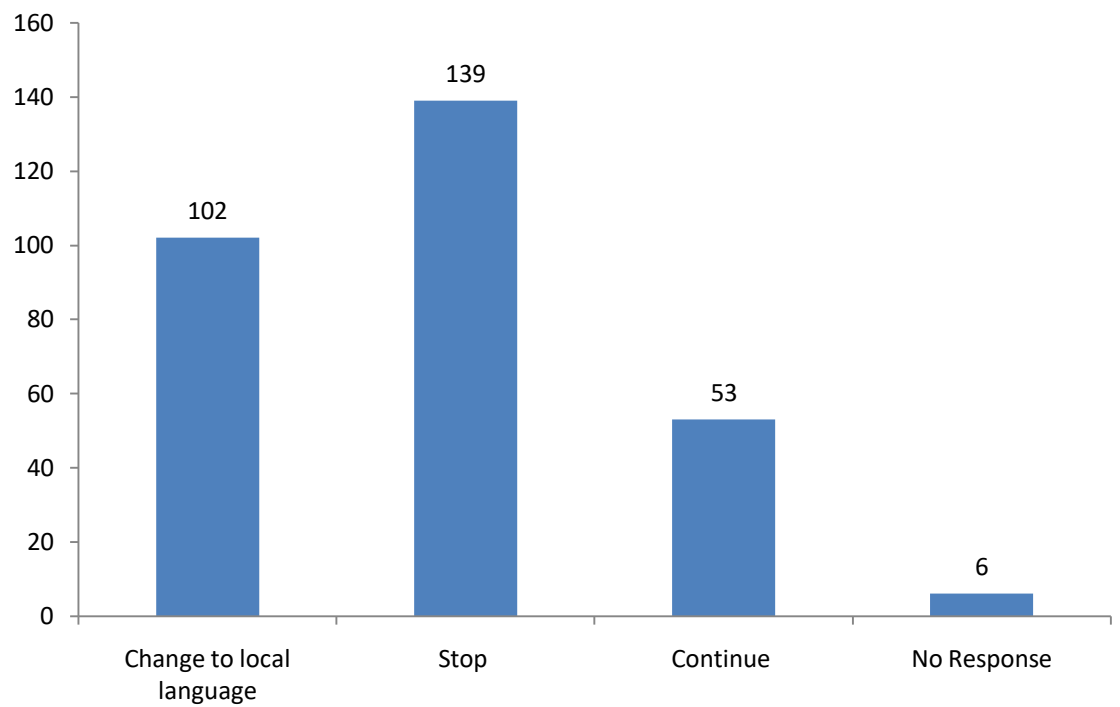


Figure 17: Reaction to the Appearance of a Stranger when discussing a Crisis

People react in different ways to different situations. During crises, the atmosphere is that of tension, and suspicion is rife, which in turn affects the pattern of communication among members of a community. The table above indicates that 102 respondents would switch over to their language if a stranger suddenly appeared in the course of their discussion during crises. This is with the suspicion that the stranger, who might be an enemy, would get information from them and thereafter use it against them. This is one other reason for code-switching – to exclude a third party from partaking in or gaining from a conversation that is ongoing. 139 of the respondents declared that when a stranger suddenly appeared, they would stop conversation entirely. This is as a result of the suspicion that they were not sure if a change in language would actually keep information from the stranger, since they did not know which languages he could understand or speak. Fifty-three others showed that they would continue their conversation without worry. In this case, they might be sure that the stranger would not understand the language, or that it made no difference whether the stranger understood what they were saying or not. This also means that they preferred to bare their minds freely, irrespective of what would follow. However, six respondents did not respond to this question, maybe because they could not really describe their actions at such instances.

When a stranger is discovered to be from your ethnic or language group, in which language do you continue communication?

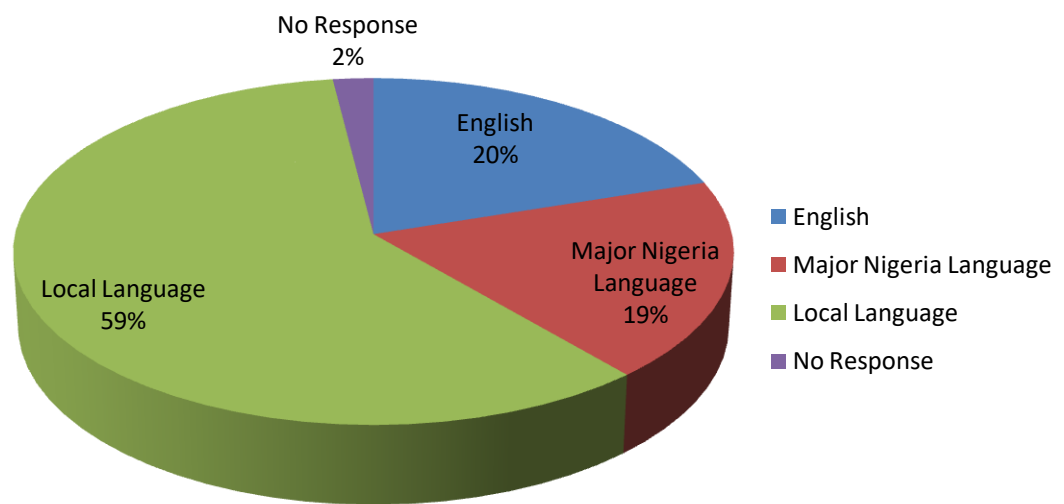
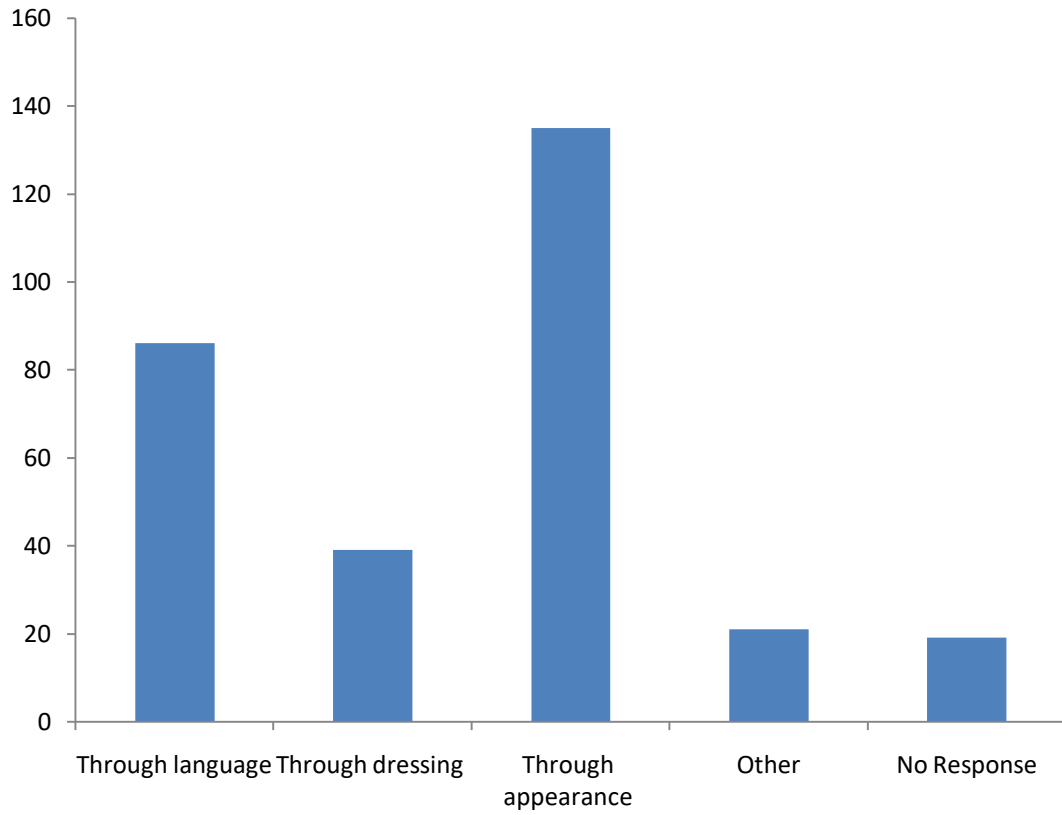
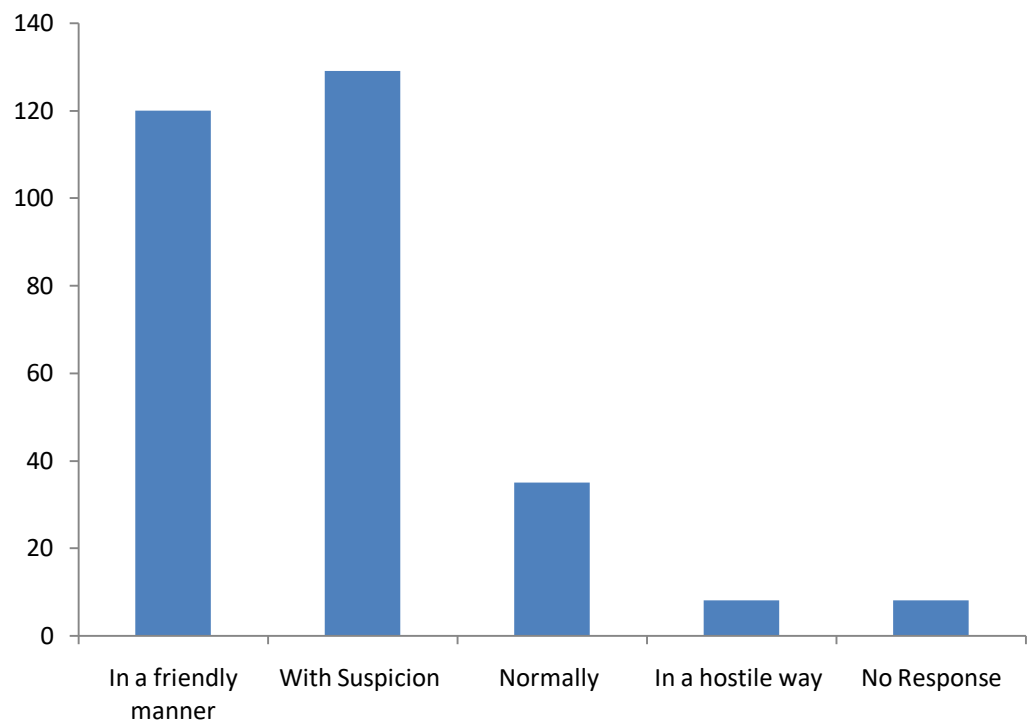


Figure 18: Language used if a Stranger is Discovered to belong to the Speaker's Group

The data from the table above indicates that sixty of the respondents would still continue to communicate with a stranger in English even after he was later discovered to be from the same ethnic or language group as they were. This may be as a result of the fact that most young people, especially in urban areas, do not speak their native language which is a major cause of language endangerment as is currently being experienced in Nigerian urban centres. They therefore feel more comfortable and safer to use the English language which is not only a national lingua franca, but an official language of the country. 56 respondents indicated that they would still adopt any one of the major Nigerian languages. This again shows that such people may be more proficient in the major languages than in their own native language. In addition, these respondents themselves may belong to any one of the major language groups where the language is their own native tongue. Interestingly, a majority of the respondents, 178 of them, indicated that they would switch immediately to their local language if they had started communication in a different language. This is referred to as code-switching, which is a language situation in which a speaker changes from one language to another in the course of communication, either as a result of a change in the topic of discussion or the situation in which the interlocutors find themselves. One of the reasons for code-switching is to establish and maintain solidarity with the person one is speaking to. This is what this group of respondents did, in order to establish and cement their relationship with the strangers. However, six of the respondents provided no answer to this item, perhaps because they had no interest in strangers.

D. Linguistic and Paralinguistic Features of Communication during Conflicts**In a crisis, how do you identify a stranger?****Figure 19: Ways of Identifying a Stranger**

To identify a stranger in times of crises, 86 (28.7%) of the respondents indicated that they could do that on the basis of language. Language is both for communication and for personal identity. The use of language was a major criterion in identifying people during the crises in Jos. It was assumed that anyone who could not speak the language of the ethnic group he claimed to belong to was an alien and an enemy, and was treated as such. It was a devastating disadvantage for people who could not speak their native languages, as it was not enough to claim membership of a particular ethnic group. On the other hand, anyone who could speak the language was spared. According to Michael Gotom, a motor mechanic, he would have been lynched on his way to Jos from Abuja during the November 2008 crisis but for his ability to speak his native Ngas language. Thirty nine (13%) of the respondents showed that they could identify a stranger based on his dressing. Particular patterns of dressing are associated with particular sections of Nigeria. In that way, most people usually conclude where one comes from on the basis of the dressing. However, because of integration and socialization among people from different regions, modes of dressing are also found outside their native domains. In this case, other factors are needed to arrive at where a person hails from. For a majority of the respondents, 135 (45%) of them, they could identify a stranger from his physical appearance. This may be due to the fact that certain races or ethnic groups have peculiar physical features. This again may be misleading, as certain people have features of people from other races or ethnic groups with whom they have no link whatsoever, and so other factors have to be considered also. Twenty-one (7%) of the respondents used other parameters to identify a stranger, other than the features mentioned. Different features of a person, whether linguistic or non-linguistic, can speak volumes of who he or she is. 19 (6.3%) of them provided no response to this item.

How would you relate with a stranger?**Figure 20: Relations with a Stranger**

From the data in the table above, 120 respondents indicated that when they came across a stranger they would relate with them in a friendly manner, in the hope that even if the stranger was from the enemy camp, a friendly relation could calm tensions. 129 of the respondents indicated that they would relate with any stranger with suspicion. This is based on the fact that they would not know what was on the mind of such a stranger, so it was safer to keep their distance and act with caution. For thirty-five of the respondents, they needed no special way to treat a stranger, and so would relate to them in the normal way they would relate with other people around. To them there was no special or unique way to treat strangers. However, eight respondents indicated that they would treat strangers with hostility. This may be because of their own way of seeing all strangers during conflicts as harmful, and to be either avoided or treated in a cruel way. To this group of people, no stranger is to be trusted whatsoever and every stranger during a crisis is a potential enemy that has to be treated as such. 08 other respondents gave no response to this item, probably not wanting to disclose the way they treat strangers during conflicts.

E. Special Traits or Peculiarities of Language Use in Conflict Situations as Opposed to Ordinary Daily Conversations

In your view, how does language contribute in causing conflict?

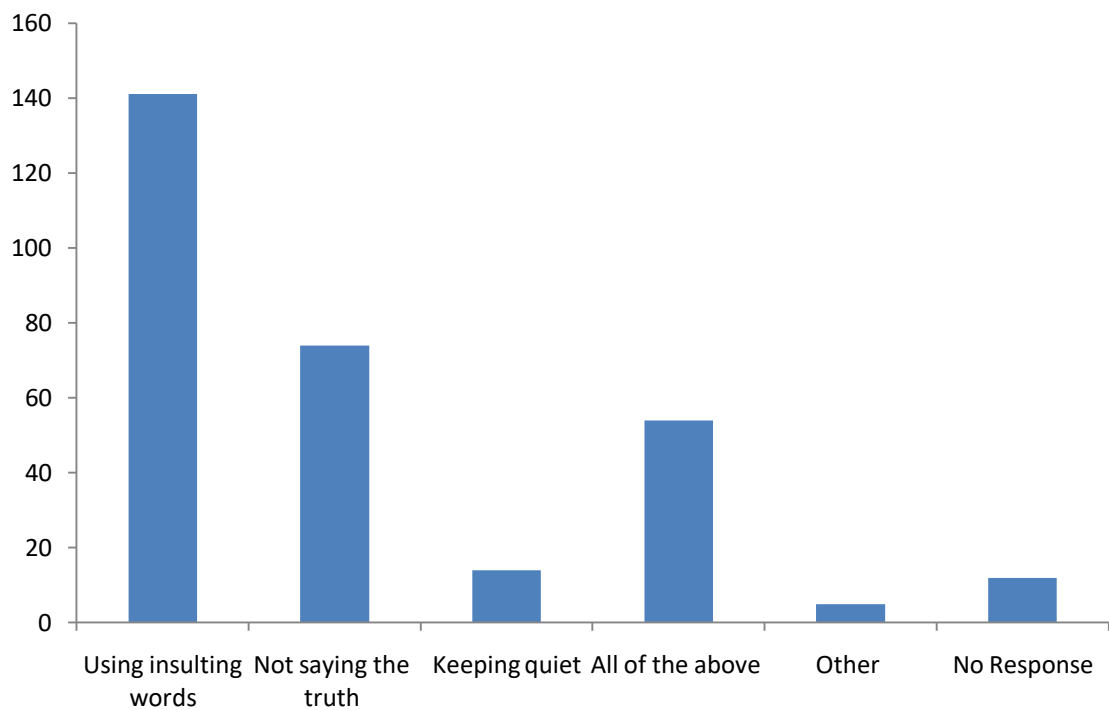


Figure 21: Ways in which Language Contributes to Conflict

The use of language has been identified as a major factor in conflicts. The way parties in a conflict communicate has the capacity of either escalating it or defusing it. From the data above, an overwhelming majority of the respondents, 141 of them, indicated that using insulting words was instrumental to conflict generation and escalation. Bad language usually fuels a crisis, and verbal attacks usually result in physical confrontation leaving behind dangerous consequences. This was particularly a major factor in the Jos conflicts. The Plateau Peace conference of 2004 confirms that:

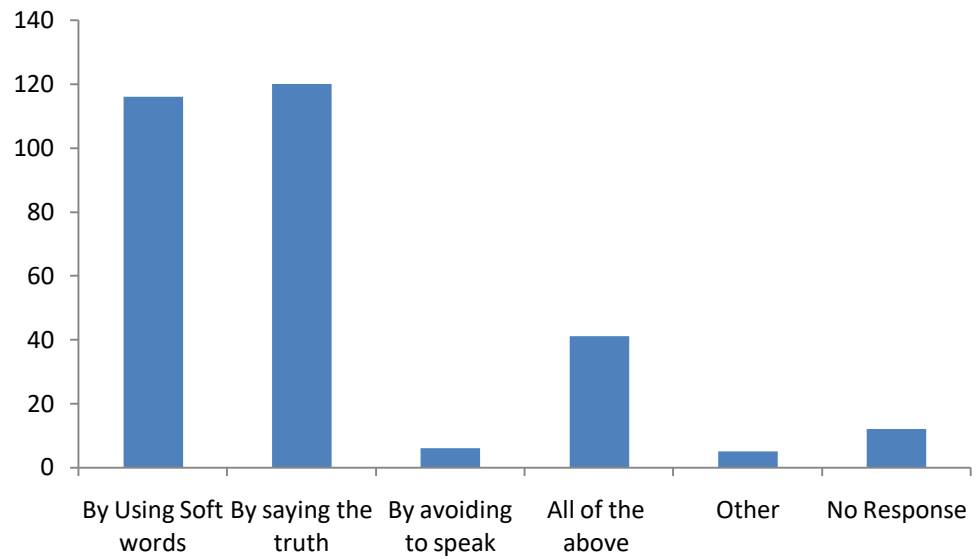
... various dimensions of social factors contributed to fueling the crises in Plateau state. These factors include the use of derogatory terms such as Kafiri, Sarkin arna, Tubabe, Shosho, Inyamiri, Settler, Kore. It was noted that the use of derogatory terms emanates from ignorance and contempt which usually result into provocation and anger ... Delegates noted that the use of derogatory terms is a major source of friction among the citizens of Plateau State, particularly those that have religious connotations which often result into provocation and anger such as Kafiri, Arna, Sarkin Arna etc. (45)

Also common during the crises in Jos was the display, circulation and advertising of inciting and vulgar write-ups which contributed in heightening tension, thereby escalating the conflicts. This is confirmed by the messages conveyed by some of the posters that were tendered to the Justice Niki Tobi Commission of Inquiry of 2004 and admitted as exhibits.

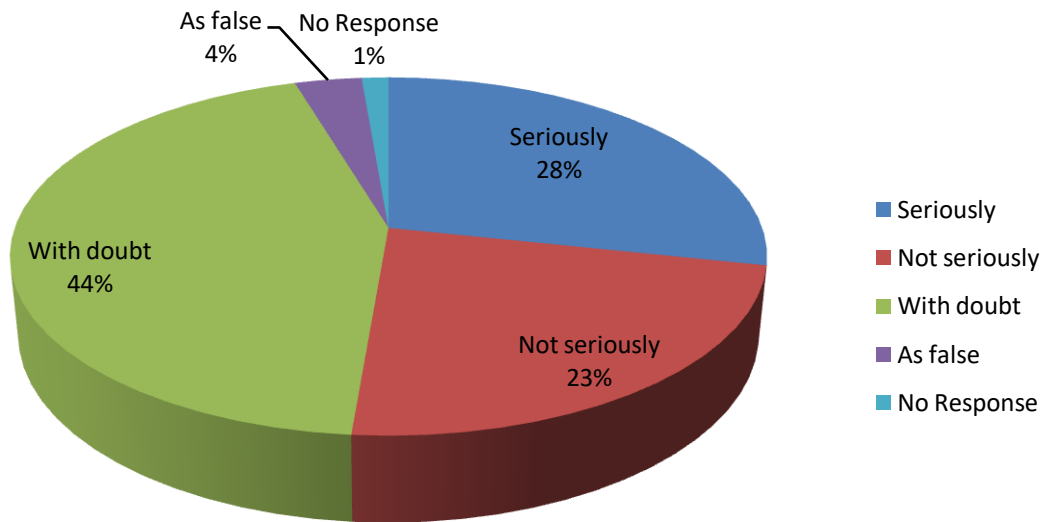
For seventy-four of the respondents, the act of not saying the truth was the main issue resulting in conflicts. Insincerity in communication raises suspicion, and this leads to distrust and hatred. Mutual suspicion and distrust were prevalent in all the conflicts that erupted in Jos and environs. The Justice Niki Tobi Commission of Inquiry of 2004 further confirms that 'No doubt, there was a great deal of ethnic and religious rivalry and

intolerance, mutual suspicion and distrust, and even animosity between the groups that claim Jos North Local Government Council as their own⁽²⁷⁾ Silence has also been regarded as a major factor in conflict situations. 14 of the respondents see the act of just keeping quiet in the face of animosity as mischief in itself. Silence keeps information from others around, and no one knows what goes on in the mind of an individual, whether the thoughts within are malevolent or benevolent. While silence can be a positive resource in averting a conflict, it can also signify indifference or, worse still, evil intentions that can worsen already tense situations. It is a major factor which breeds suspicion and mistrust. For 54 respondents, all the three aforementioned factors of using insulting words, not saying the truth and keeping quiet are responsible for bringing about and escalating conflicts in society. However, 05 respondents indicated that language contributes in causing conflicts through different means other than the ones mentioned.

Language is used in diverse ways, and human beings choose which way to use it according to the social context they find themselves in. 12 others gave no response to this question. It should be noted at this juncture that apart from speech, there are other paralinguistic methods of communicating information such as gesture, tone, facial expression among others, which can be used in diverse ways to mean different things to different people at different times. Each of these paralinguistic methods can produce either positive or negative effects.

How do you think language can be used to resolve a conflict?**Figure 22: Ways in which Language can be used to resolve Conflict**

Language is a double-edged sword: it can dress relationships into fine shapes as well as disfigure them. Since language use is critical to conflict resolution, it must be put to the best use possible. To this effect, 116 of the respondents preferred the use of soft words, by parties to a conflict, which have the potency of calming tensions. For 120 respondents, the best use of language to resolve a conflict is just to say the truth. To them when everyone says what exactly the issues are, resolution can be achieved. However, 6 of them are of the opinion that the best way to resolve a conflict is to avoid speaking about it altogether. To this category of people, memories of what has gone wrong must not be evoked and that people should let sleeping dogs lie. To forty-one of the respondents all the aforementioned strategies are effective measures in resolving a conflict. Although all of them cannot be used in a single episode, they can perhaps be used one after the other that may have failed. Five respondents indicated that they would use language in a different way other than the strategies mentioned here to resolve a conflict. In this case they could use any method that would solve the problem at hand. The remaining twelve respondents however did not respond to this item.

How do you take rumour or hearsay during conflicts?**Figure 23: Attitude to Rumour or Hearsay during Conflicts**

Information dissemination during conflicts takes different forms. One of such forms is rumour, which is unverified information, the truth of which has not yet been ascertained. Rumour was a prominent feature during the conflicts that erupted in Jos. The Plateau Peace conference of 2004 observes that ‘rumour peddling was a major source of fueling the conflicts which heightened situations that would ordinarily have been calmed’.⁴⁹ Rumours or speculations can go a long way to actualize what they carry even when or where they are initially false. Concerning the September 7, 2001 crisis in Jos, *Thisday* Newspaper of Friday, September 14, 2001 reported that:

This development confirmed several days of speculations that religious crisis was brewing. A war of words had ensued the previous week between the indigenes under the auspices of Plateau State Youth Council and the Hausa-Fulani on the platform of Jasawa Development Association.

The following day, Saturday, September 15, 2001 the same newspaper reported that ‘it was said that the rumour mill was filled with false speculations that the Hausas were going to attack the Biroms after the Jumaat prayer on Friday, August 31. On the other side, the Hausas were fed with equally baseless rumour that the Biroms were preparing to attack and burn mosques in Jos’.

Every information sent and received has a great impact on both the participants in the communication act and the society in general. The rumour that went round facilitated the friction that later became a full-scale crisis. Therefore, the manner in which individuals or groups handle rumours has a great effect on the conflict at hand. 85 of the respondents indicated that they would treat rumours seriously, meaning they would regard them as correct whether they are really so or not. In this way, whenever any misleading information comes to this category of people, they just accept it and consequently act wrongly. Sixty-nine of them stated that they would treat such information not seriously, because it could turn out to be either true or false, so that not

much attention should be given to it. An overwhelming majority of one hundred and thirty-two indicated that they would always take such information with a pinch of salt. In this regard they would consider rumors with caution, since the veracity of the information was not yet confirmed. This however does not mean they would disregard it completely, but would only exercise caution as it had the potential of becoming both true and false. For ten of them, rumours should be regarded outright as false. To them, since such information is yet to be confirmed, it is not worth any attention at all. No response was received from four of the respondents.

Do you care to verify any information you receive during conflicts?

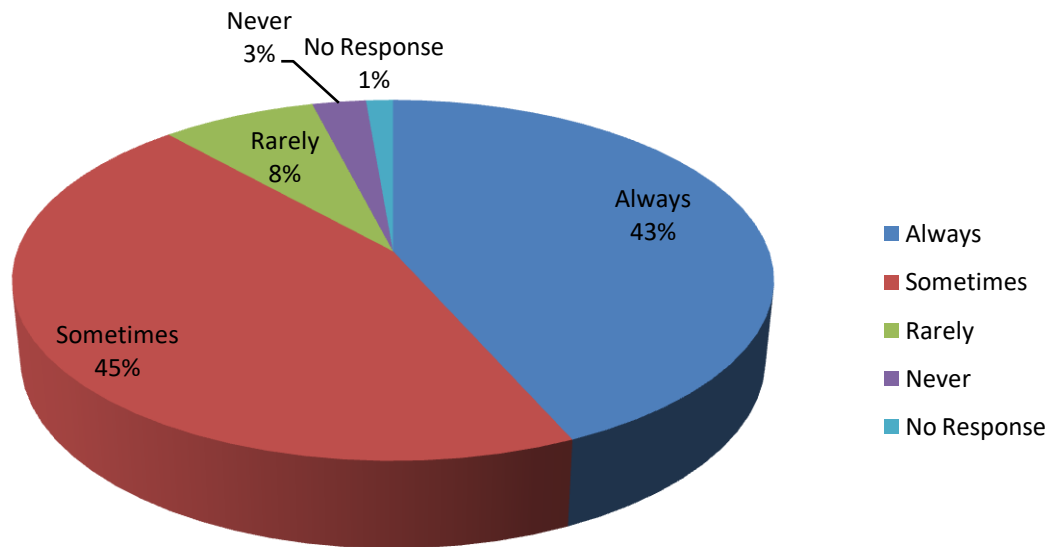
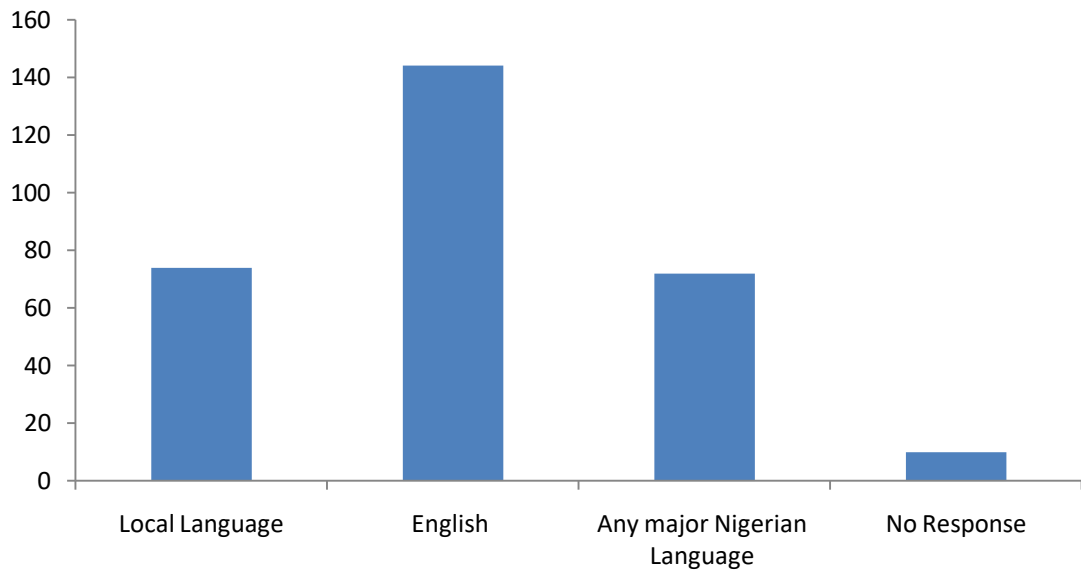


Figure 24. Verification of Information During Conflicts

Communication can convey different shades of meaning, and not every message conveys correct information. Therefore, parties in conflict are prone to receiving a lot of misleading information and may act wrongly if the message is not verified. One hundred and thirty of the respondents indicated that they would always verify any information they received. This means that they would only act accordingly if they get to know whether the information is true or false. One hundred and thirty-five of them stated that they would verify information received only sometimes and not always. This may be either because they regard certain types of information as basically true which should not be doubted and others as intrinsically false, or because they regard certain pieces of information as not important. Twenty-three respondents showed that they rarely verified information received. This shows that the greater percentage of information they received was accepted without any probe. In such instances, they are likely to act wrongly since not every piece of information conveyed is a fact. Furthermore, eight of the respondents stated that they never made any verification on information received during the crises. This category of people are those that would always act on information without any doubt in their minds. This is the worst case as they may always be on the wrong side as a result of lack of accurate information, Mischief makers will find this category of people ready instruments to utilize in order to foment trouble. They would use them (the gullible audience) and whip up sentiments, spread rumours, misinform the public and even exaggerate the crisis situation. However, 04 respondents declined to offer any response to this item.

Which language do you prefer to use to state your grievances?**Figure 25: Preferred Language for the Statement of Grievances**

Language choice at different times depends on a number of factors including the topic, situation and the speakers involved. To state their grievances in times of conflicts, seventy-four of the respondents indicated that they would prefer the use of their local language. People usually choose the language they are more comfortable in, and which will best describe their feelings and emotions. One's language is a marker of one's identity, and the people who prefer their local language do that because they are not only better able to clearly express themselves, but also use the language to set them apart from other ethnic or language groups. It is used to reinforce their uniqueness as an entity. One hundred and forty-four respondents stated that they would prefer the English language. This may be because English is the only lingua franca that runs through all the country, and which is also seem to be neutral since it is not native to any ethnic group in the country. This may also be in recognition of the fact that Jos is cosmopolitan in nature, or it could be that most people are not fluent in their native languages as the trend is now when most people tend to shift to one or another of the major languages in the world today. For seventy-two respondents, they would use any of the major Nigerian languages. These languages (Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo) are regional languages, and so the choice of any one of them is not necessarily made by a native speaker. It also depends on the composition of the particular area in which the language is used. Any choice of language made by people to state their grievances must ultimately be based on the fact that the hearer also understands that language. Ten respondents, however, gave no response to this item.

F. The Extent to Which the Use of Language by Third Parties can Reduce or Fuel A Conflict.

In peace-making efforts, who would you prefer to address you or your community?

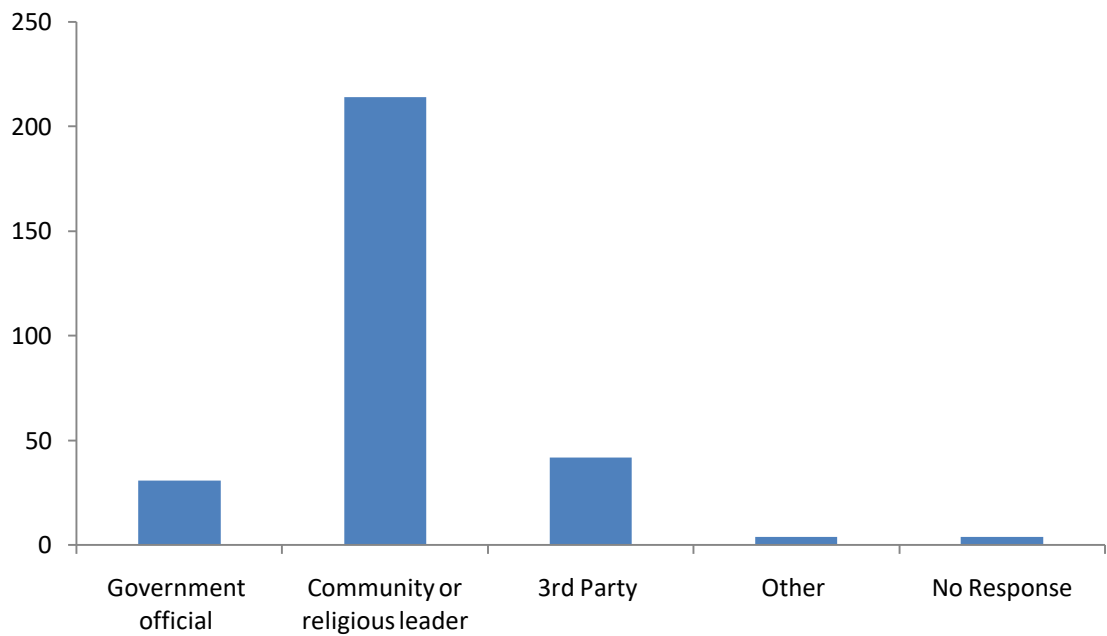


Figure 26: Choice of a Third Party as Mediators

During mediation, different people come in to make peace between the feuding parties. The possibility of achieving peace sometimes depends on who is making the effort, and how acceptable or otherwise he is to those in conflict. The mediator's choice and use of language is also instrumental to the success or even failure of the exercise. For peace-making, 31 (10.3%) of the respondents indicated that they would prefer to be addressed by a government official. In this regard, they feel that government alone has the capacity to settle their dispute and make amends. This is also because they feel that government will not only broker peace but will also repair damage where possible. Another assumption here is that government will be neutral in addressing the conflict at hand.

On their own part, the majority of the respondents, 214 (71.3%), would prefer to be addressed by their own community or religious leader. This points to the fact that conflicts usually bring about mistrust and misgivings. Consequently, this category of people feel that any effort by anyone they do not really trust will not produce any positive effect. Since the crises in Jos and environs are basically ethnic and religious, most people tend to view any information from their own community and religious leaders as sacrosanct. They therefore feel confident and sure that whatever comes from them is final. Because of distrust, anyone outside their community or religious groups cannot convince them even if they were really honest and had good intentions. For 42 (14%) of them, they would prefer to be addressed by a different third party. This may be because they feel that such third party will be neutral enough so as to be as just as possible in addressing the problem. 04 (1.3%) of them indicated that they would opt for some other mediators apart from the ones mentioned. They felt that such persons might be more capable of handling their problems. 04 respondents gave no answer to this item.

Which language would you prefer to be used in addressing you or your community during conflicts?

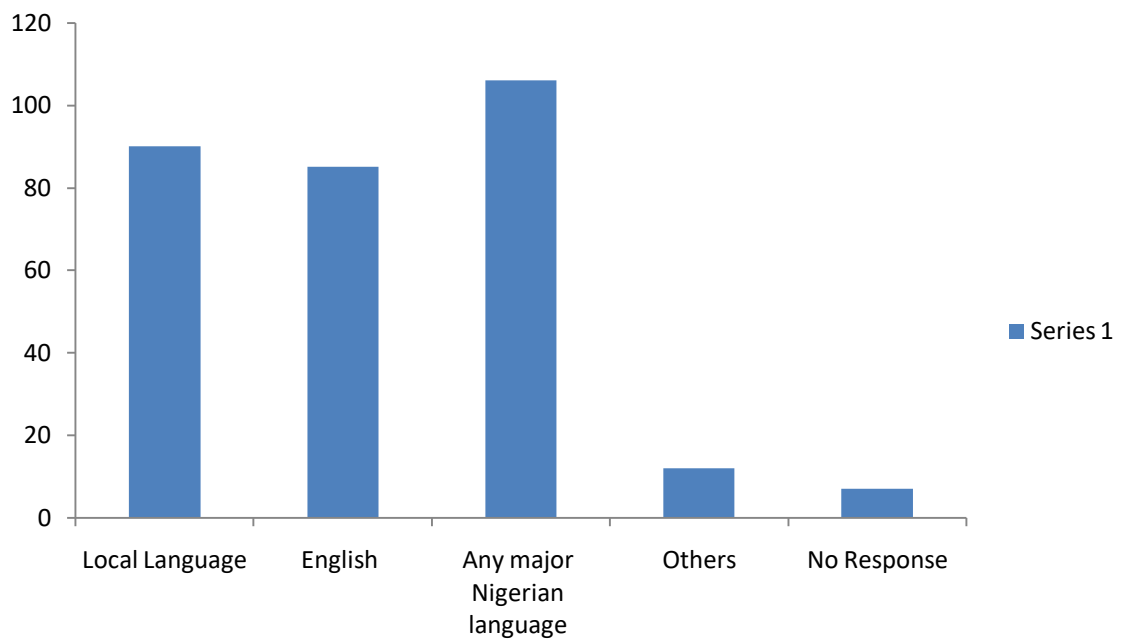
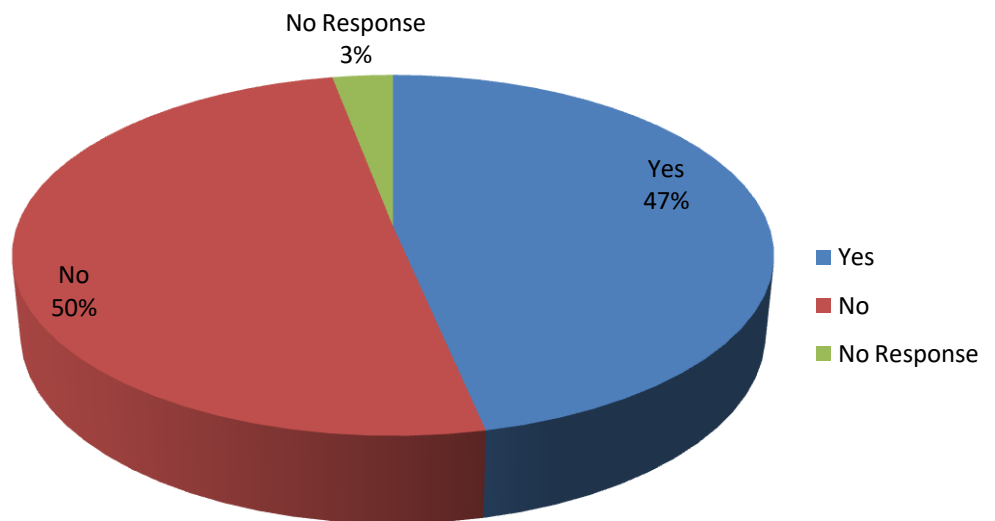


Figure 27: Preferred Language to be Addressed in during Conflicts

Language depends largely on the purpose for which it is used. In conflict situations, therefore, the choice of language in addressing the conflicting parties depends on which one they understand best and are more comfortable with. 90 of the respondents indicated that they would prefer to be addressed in their local language. By this, they have a greater sense of belonging and recognition as they are addressed in their own language. Furthermore, the use of the language of the people fosters greater solidarity between them and the speaker, as they see him as identifying with them and sharing in their worries. This builds up confidence in them and makes them have the feeling that they can be listened to. This belief is further confirmed by a saying by the former South African President Nelson Mandela that 'if you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his own language, it goes to his heart'. Therefore, a person's native language is dearer to him than any other language he understands. Using the local language of an audience helps to connect the speaker with them at an emotional level, since they will feel he is one of their own, and he can thus take advantage of cultural nuances as well.

For eighty-five of the respondents, they would prefer the English language to be used. This again may be because of the cosmopolitan nature of the town (Jos). Their choice may also be in recognition of the fact that the person to address them may not necessarily be from their linguistic group, or that the community to be so addressed may itself be made up of people from different language groups. It may also be for the simple fact that some people are more comfortable with the English language than any of the Nigerian languages, including their own. One hundred and six of them stated that they would prefer the use of any of the three major Nigerian languages. Since these are regional languages, it is assumed that the choice of any of them will be all right if the particular community is made up of people from the same region who use it for active community participation. According to twelve of the respondents, they would prefer the use of another language separate from the categories mentioned. This may be because they feel that those mentioned may not appropriately address the problem at hand. There was no response from seven of the respondents.

G. The Trend of Movements and Settlement Patterns During Conflicts**Have you ever relocated or changed your area of residence?****Figure 28: Change of Area of Residence**

This item elicits information from the respondents on whether they have changed places of abode in Jos. People may choose to live in certain places rather than others, depending on the interest they have, or depending on the circumstances they find themselves in at different times. Based on that, one hundred and forty respondents indicated that they had changed places of living. However, one hundred and fifty-one of them answered in the negative. This category of people may not have had any reason to change their place of residence, or even if they wished to, may not have had the opportunity or means to do so. Three respondents provided no answer to this question. This category may be constituted by people who might not be willing to reveal that they had changed locations or people who were not sure of what response to give, especially if they had only very brief moments of leaving their homes at different intervals. Wherever human beings co-exist, they need to interact and socialize. If conditions are not favorable for smooth communication among them, some will not feel comfortable in such locations and may seek relocation. However, in some cases where relationships are cordial, certain conditions may lead to relocation, thereby creating a gap in their interactions with one another.

If yes to (18) above, why?

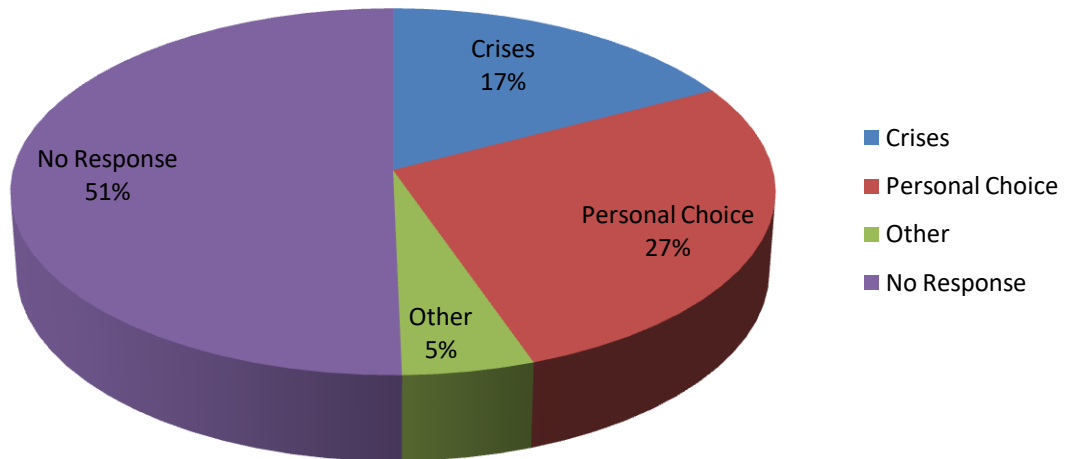


Figure 29: Reason for Area of Residence

This item is a follow-up to the last one, which sought information on whether there were cases of relocation in areas of residence. From the table above, 52 of the respondents cited crises as the reason for their relocation. This is evident from the nature of the crisis itself. It was ethnic as well as religious. Consequently, if people felt they were unsafe in the locations they lived because the majority of the people there were from different ethnic or religious backgrounds, they had to relocate to places where they could live securely and comfortably with their own kind. Before the crises began in Jos and environs, almost all settlements were made up of people from different ethnic backgrounds and religious beliefs who lived together peacefully and cordially. With the crises, segregation set in and the settlement pattern took a different dimension. Suspicion and hatred set in, and people no longer communicated and interacted freely with one another in communities that were once peaceful. As a result, most settlements now are either predominantly Christian, or predominantly Muslim. However, eight-two of the respondents indicated that their relocation was out of their personal wish, not motivated by any factor. It is common to find cases where people will feel they need a change of environment, which will make them think of another settlement. 15 respondents indicated that they were motivated or compelled, as the case may be, by other different factors apart from the ones mentioned. In life, there can be no end to factors that make people take certain decisions at different times. 151 respondents gave no response to this item. Interestingly, the same figure stood for those who indicated that they had never changed their abode in the last question. Consequently, they had no answer to give to this question asking for reasons for relocation.

H. The Frequency of Crises in Jos

How many times have you witnessed crisis in Jos?

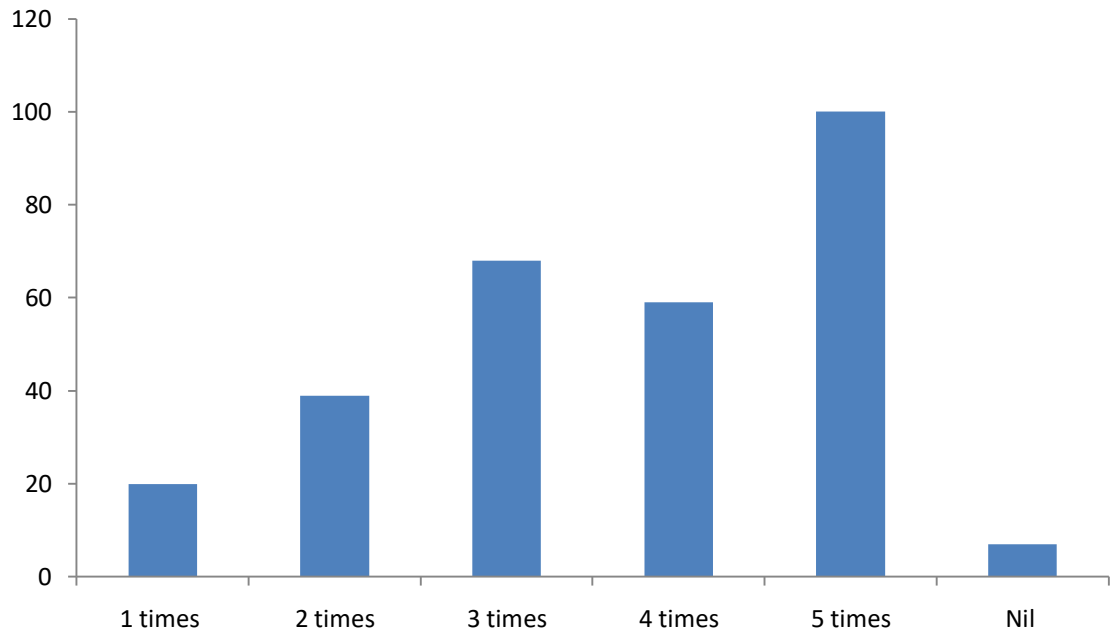


Figure 30: Frequency of Crisis in Jos as Witnessed by the Respondents

The conflicts in the Jos/Bukuru area have occurred no fewer than five times from 1994 to 2010 (1994, 1998, 2001, 2008 and 2010). Certainly, there are other skirmishes that have occurred in one location or the other at different times which have not received serious attention, may be because they are curbed at an earlier stage. Based on this classification, the conflicts have been regarded as up to five times only during the period under study. From the responses received, twenty of the respondents had witnessed crisis only one time, while thirty-nine of them witnessed it twice. These two categories are probably people who came to settle in Jos only recently. Sixty-eight of the respondents witnessed the crises three times, fifty-nine of them four times, while one hundred of them (representing over 33%) witnessed them five times. While it is true that the longer a person has lived in Jos, the more times he has witnessed the crises, it is also to be noted that some conflicts may erupt in some parts of the metropolis and end there without spreading to other areas. Therefore, when a respondent gives the number of conflicts he has witnessed within the period of his stay in Jos, he may be excluding those that were witnessed in other parts which did not reach his area of residence. Furthermore, seven of the respondents indicated that they had not experienced any crisis before in Jos. This category of respondents may comprise those who arrived Jos when the crises had stopped, up to the time of responding to this questionnaire, or they may be living in areas that have been untouched so far by the crises.

5.3 TOWARDS CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Conflict resolution is a problem-solving exercise which should aim at the elimination of the source of the conflict, not just the management of the conflict or the settlement of an ensuing dispute. The violation of human needs leads to conflict in society, and conflicts can be resolved by getting to the roots of a problem through a careful analysis by the parties involved with the ultimate aim of arriving at an agreement that will be satisfactory to all (Weber: 498). In this case, a conflict should be seen as a

common problem which opponents all have the responsibility of resolving. This facilitates open and honest communication of information between the parties, thereby reducing misunderstanding which can create confusion and mistrust. Parties in dispute should design ways that will help them to view conflicts objectively and learn from them. In this way, ongoing dialogue will be established. The essence of amicably resolving conflicts is to liquidate antagonisms but not the antagonists themselves, and to see evil as different from the evil-doer. Weber further cites Ghandi as affirming that when we put ourselves in our opponents' shoes we will do them justice and most of the 'miseries and misunderstandings in the world will disappear', adding that 'an opponent is entitled to the same regard for his principles as we would expect others to have for ours' (505).

Attitudes seem to be resistant where a conflict has witnessed a long history of mutual attack. Ethnic conflicts are usually not only over resources or power, but also for protecting group status, culture and identity. Since identity and belief are non-negotiable elements, peace processes might lack support and suffer setbacks in implementation if parties' psycho-social concerns are not sufficiently addressed (Pearson, 2001). In some disputes, the settlement of outstanding instrumental issues, such as regional economic investment for example, is vital to relieving intergroup tension and suspicion.

Cohen remarks:

There is growing acceptance that disagreements are rarely handled effectively by a pre-occupation with relative gain at other's expense, mindless intransigence, or violence. The problem-solving approach to conflict resolution maintains that real needs rather than tactical positions should be addressed, and creativity and pragmatism applied to the settlement of differences. Where necessary, the skills of trained third parties are drawn upon. Nobody is considered to possess a monopoly of

truth and justice, and outcomes are sought that leave neither triumphalist winners nor embittered losers (18).

Negotiation during conflicts should not be seen as a tug of war where each side is unyielding, but should be seen as a common problem to be solved. Minimal trust is necessary in resolving a dispute, because without it, reliable communication cannot be achieved, and people do not want to go into an agreement which they suspect will be violated later.

Different languages – with their various religious, historical and cultural backgrounds – construct conflict resolution in different ways. Different cultures have different meanings for the same words. Therefore, conflict resolution problems lie inherently in them. This, however, does not mean that semantic dissonance rules out conflict resolution; rather it worsens and delays an already difficult exercise. What ought to be done at the initial stage is to draw the attention of the parties in dispute to the presence of areas of possible misunderstandings. By so doing, they can re-evaluate their different perceptions. The third party mediator can also guide the opposing sides through those areas of difference.

When disputants frame conflicts differently, constructive conflict management is very difficult. People tend to talk at cross purposes - saying things that are meaningful to them, but are irrelevant, confusing, or threatening to others. Without at least an understanding of how each group frames or defines the conflict, the conflict most likely will get worse, not better. The rapid spread of domestic ethnic conflicts and violence since the end of the Cold War has brought about a consideration of the role of mediation and negotiation in promoting settlements. Conflicts which are identity-based, often entailing ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and religious aspects, have been among the most persistent, intractable, and destabilizing for the regions in which they occur.

Rothman and Olson have observed that traditional methods of conflict resolution tend to be ineffective in dealing with prolonged social conflicts, because they do not deal with the structural inequalities of the system or the deprivation of human needs through their focus on the symptoms alone. They further argue that the use of traditional approaches to resolve identity conflicts which focus on resources and power politics, often has the effect of exacerbating or prolonging the struggle. They emphasize the need to sequence interventions in intractable conflicts by first beginning with methods that address the 'psycho-cultural' dynamics of the situation prior to efforts to settle the more material and tangible interests at stake. They have therefore come up with the following methods of conflict resolution and their analyses (289 -305).

Resource-Based Negotiation

In resource conflict, for negotiation and settlement to be effective, the parties involved must learn their opponents' true goal and 'bottom line', and discover where there is common ground between them. Resource-based conflict resolution may enable conflicting parties 'coexist' but it is not likely to lead to real cooperation (through the linking of goals, opportunities and even identities). The danger in this resource - based framing is that it may lead to short-term, material 'fixes', but leave underlying conflict causes unresolved.

Interest-Based Bargaining

This is a new approach to domestic and, to a lesser extent, international conflicts which articulates a difference between what is sought and what motivates what is being sought. While in a power politics frame, power means ends and means at the same time. In interest-based bargaining there is a distinction between them. Therefore, power is seen as a goal or end, but an effort to determine why power, for example, is sought, not power itself, is the centre of attention.

The primary focus of this approach is to differentiate between exclusive positions – opposing definitions and outcomes, and potentially compatible interests – and reasons for the positions. Interests, redefined as motives, now provide the focus for interest-based bargaining.

Like resource negotiation, interest-based negotiation may lead parties in a conflict to clarify their goals and interests. By that, they may discover areas of common ground or come to the realization that no real conflict exists after all. The essence of interest-based conflict resolution is finding creative solutions that satisfy each side enough to defuse the conflict. Moreover, interest-based bargaining may lead conflicting parties to seek common or superordinate goals as a basis for bridge building, ongoing cooperation and positive interdependence, thereby breaking down some fences. If disagreements which are based on mutually exclusive interests of two opposing parties are understood simply as two different ways of viewing the same situation, it could readily be a starting point of a change towards downplaying the conflict. Therefore, trust needs to be built. As Weber observes, ‘trust-building can be done by showing a positive interest in the opponent’s welfare and demonstrating a readiness to respond helpfully to their needs and requests’ (510). Although trust can be exploited, it is less dangerous than living in mutual distrust. Once trust is established early in the relationship, it can create self-fulfilment leading to the amicable resolution of conflict. Usually, good relationship makes genuine agreements possible. On the other hand, if the relationship is bad, there is the likelihood that agreements are missed through misunderstanding of motives. There should, then, be the use of appropriate bargaining tactics, and there should be caution about using certain strategies that may not yield the desired result.

However, a major setback here is that interests are treated as paramount. Parties are not led to question the goals, values and motivations upon which their interests are based. This uncritical attitude towards interests may be inadequate for situations in which the interests of parties to a conflict are viewed as greatly at variance.

Identity-Based Conflict Resolution

In this view, when conflict is deep and abiding, it is often about the articulation and confrontation of individual and, especially, collective identities. It is basically about reassuring each other of recognition and survival. According to this approach, there is something more existential and fundamental about many conflicts that require an entirely new framework, at least at the start.

This new conflict frame, paralleling or at times preceding the reframe based on interests, is of the view that identities are where the focus should often lie. Conflict presents an opportunity for articulation and reinvention. When parties come to understand themselves and each other more fully as they analyse the causes and nature of their disputes, they may begin to discover new ways or methods of defining themselves, each other, and their relationships. In this way, identity-based conflict resolution brings together ends and means again, with identity now serving as both goal and obstacle.

Deep conflict (distinguished from disputes and arguments) is seen as developing from perceived or actual differences between the identities of disputants, whether as individuals or groups. If the concrete and often resource-based issues that emerge around identity conflicts (for example over land or political control) are to be settled – by negotiation or by some type of identity-based bargaining at later stages – there is a precondition that the fundamental identity issues be articulated and mutually engaged first. In identity conflict, conflict is an integral part of life. Identity conflict enables the parties in dispute to design solutions that will help them to live with and learn from the conflict. In this way, good dialectic or ongoing dialogue is formed.

This dialogue is a form of guided ‘interactive introspection’ by which disputants speak about themselves in the presence of their opponents and about their needs and values. Conflicts emerge due to threats to or frustrations over existing identities, but they also serve to produce identities. Usually the identities formed in the heat of conflict are exclusive and adversarial. They can also be a source for identity formation which is inclusive. Reflexive dialogue can be positively transforming. It will not only nurture an expression of disputants’ underlying motivations for conflict, but it will also help the disputants to express themselves, as they also try to communicate to the other side what they care about most passionately and the reasons for that. Furthermore, and more rewardingly, this can be an interaction by which disputants come to know and express themselves in ways that may not have occurred if the conflict had not provided the opportunity, or necessity, for such open expression.

Whereas in conventional adversarial conflict framing parties in the conflict usually identify the root or source of their conflict in their opponents, in reflexive reframing, parties begin, or start over, with themselves. Instead of blaming the other side for their aggression, for example, sides may express their threatened or frustrated needs as a positive need to feel safe and in control of their destiny. Akin suggests that there are two important conflict resolution techniques which are active listening (otherwise tagged ‘emphatic listening’), and the use of ‘I messages’ instead of ‘you messages’.³ Both of them focus on trying to communicate without placing blame and really trying to hear and understand what the other person is saying. When people are in conflict, making extra efforts to improve communication between the disputants is often helpful in reducing the intensity of the conflict, even if the conflict appears difficult to resolve.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The study analysed the peculiar features of language use by the parties in conflict during the crises that engulfed Jos and environs at different intervals between 1994 and 2010. The aim of the study was to examine the features of language during the conflicts, and the role language played while the crises raged. Samples of direct exchanges between the feuding parties were collected and analysed. Furthermore, the questionnaire was used to obtain information from the parties involved about their perception of how language issued during crises in general and how they used language during the Jos crises in particular. Halliday's Systematic Functional Linguistic theory was adopted for the analysis to account for how language is used in social context. This theory asserts that whatever is said is conditioned by the social situation in which it is said. It maintains that choice of words or other linguistic elements in a conversation is determined by the functions they are to perform. This entails that knowledge of the grammatical structure of a language is not enough, but what is necessarily required is knowing how appropriate such grammatical constructions are in different contexts or situations.

Findings from the study reveal that language was crucial in the crises. There was generally a negative use of language which contributed greatly in igniting and escalating tension and violence. In most instances, foul language was primarily responsible for the outbreak of violence and continued hostilities as indicated below.

1. The conflicting parties were engaged in negative labeling or the use of derogatory terms to refer to each other, issuing statements of threats and counter threats, and sarcastic statements to hurt the feelings of opponents.

2. While coded language was used to conceal particular information, a lot of narratives about the conflict were exaggerated both by the parties involved and those outside it.

3. Rumours were widespread, where the truth could not be ascertained in most cases.

4. There were also misinterpretations of what was said by the opposite party, inciting remarks from leaders of the conflicting groups and others, and there were also accusations and counter accusations.

5. A somewhat distant but potent factor in the crises was the role of third parties. While some third parties made remarks or contributions that sued for peace, others simply contributed in escalating the conflict by their instigating remarks.

6. Field investigations further reveal that language use was generally influenced by membership of one ethnic or religious group or the other. Consequently, mutual suspicion was rife, which in many cases led to innocent persons or groups who knew nothing about the crisis nor were they part of it to fall victim. This further resulted in polarization of settlements, thereby straining communication and interaction among all the inhabitants of the metropolis.

6.2 CONCLUSION

Language is pivotal to the existence of any human society. It is the medium through which members of a group or society interact to express feelings, emotions and ideas. However, language can be used in two directions. It can be used to perform both positive and negative functions in a society. While it can foster cooperation and mutual coexistence among people, it can also be a source of resentment and conflict, leading to instability and even destruction. Different people have different feelings or perceptions of the world, and conflicts can arise where there are differences in opinions, cultural practices or personal interests. Therefore, conflict is part of humanity and cannot be avoided but only managed if responded to in a positive manner. The relationship among members of a community does not depend so much on the number of conflicts that occur, but mainly on how they are handled. Negative and improper use of language has

been largely responsible for the eruption and escalation of most of the crises in Jos. A linguistic perspective to the management and resolution of conflicts consists of the best use of language in a way that is beneficial to all involved. Therefore, proper language use and effective communication among members of a society are major requirements for a peaceful society.

6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

This study recommends that:

1. Speakers must take into consideration the feelings and opinions of their opponents when expressing themselves, and strive to arrive at mutual agreements as much as possible.
2. Mediators should choose the right words to reflect a process towards an amicable resolution of the conflict. They should choose language which is clear, concise and appropriate for the resolution.
3. Thirdparties to a conflict should also be mindful of their choice of words, and ensure that only utterances that can bring about peace are made.
4. Government, on its part, must explore its information mechanisms to enlighten the populace on the positive and negative types of language use and their impact on individuals and the society in general. Public campaigns should be carried out to sensitise the people on the need to maintain decorum when communicating. Negative use of language was the major factor in the escalation of conflicts that were witnessed in Jos, just as it has been responsible for most of the wars and battles that have been fought all over the world. The Freedom of Speech Act should be explained clearly to the people to know that it does not translate into using language to offend another person.

5. Education curriculum planners and policy makers should provide a section in every language course devoted to the teaching of positive language practices, aimed at promoting peace and cordial relationships among inhabitants of a place.

6.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. During the research a number of limitations were encountered. It was not possible to get responses from the government directly on how information was managed during the crises, especially that the crises occurred during different regimes.

2. Furthermore, it was not possible to obtain information from every member of the communities in conflict.

3. For the questionnaire used, not all items were responded to by all the respondents, probably because of unwillingness by certain people to divulge some type of information.

4. Another major constraint was in getting back all the copies of the questionnaire administered. Out of a total of 360 copies, only 300 were filled and returned.

6.5 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

1. There have been crises after 2010, as well as other instances of conflict that have not been captured, which can also be investigated by other scholars.

2. Since this study analysed the crises only from the sociolinguistic perspective, other scholars can analyse these or other crises from the perspectives of critical discourse analysis, stylistics or pragmatics.

6.6 CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE

1. This study has established that language and situation have a kind of 'chicken and egg' relationship: language use creates a certain situation, and the situation also creates the type of language to be used.

2. Other researches so far have not carried out an investigation into the direct verbal exchanges between the parties in conflict, nor found out their own use of language during the crises. A major contribution of this study is that direct exchanges from the feuding parties were collected, and the different features of the use of language identified and analysed.

3. Information was obtained directly from members of the respective communities or groups in conflict about their use of language during the conflicts. The verbal exchanges especially have revealed how emotions control language during crises, and how language also serves as the source or catalyst for conflicts.

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**APPENDIX
QUESTIONNAIRE**

Department of English,
University of Jos,
Jos.
25th March, 2014.

Dear Sir/Madam,

This is a study aimed at examining the role of language in conflict situations. It is particularly intended to assess the choice and use of language during the conflicts that have erupted in Jos and environs so far. Please, you are requested to kindly supply appropriate and honest information which will be used for academic purposes only. You are assured of utmost confidentiality about any information received.

Thank you for your cooperation.

FODANG, A. A.
PGAR/UJ/0195/10

SECTION A: PERSONAL INFORMATION

Please tick (✓) or fill as appropriate

1. Gender: Male (), Female ()
2. Age Range: a.10-20, b.21-35, c.36-45, d.46-60 e.61 and above
3. State of origin.....
4. Tribe.....
5. Religion.....
6. Place of residence (in Jos)
7. Marital status: a)Single, b)Married, c)divorced or separated, d)widowed
8. Occupation: a) Civil servant, b) Business, c)Unemployed, d)Applicant
e)Other(specify).....
9. Educational qualification: a)Primary school, b)Secondary school, c)Tertiary
institution, d)Adult education, e) Non-formal education
10. Language(s) understood well.....

SECTION B: LANGUAGE USE IN CONFLICT SITUATIONS

Please tick (✓) or fill as appropriate

1. How do you learn about any crisis that erupts? a) Through the media, b) from
neighbours, c) by community announcement, d) other (specify).....
2. In which language do you usually get informed of any crisis? a) Local language,
b) English, c)a major Nigerian language (specify).....
3. Which language do you use to inform others in your locality of a crisis? a) Local
language, b) English, c) a major Nigerian language (specify).....
4. In what manner do people discuss a crisis in your locality? a)Secretly, b)publicly,
c) in whispers, d) other (specify).....
5. How often do you interact with people of different ethnic groups or religions?
a) Always, b) Often, c) Rarely, d) Never
6. In which language do you address a stranger(s)? a)English, b)your own language,
c)a major Nigerian language(specify).....
7. When discussing a crisis with people in your locality and a stranger suddenly
appears, how do you react? a) Change to a local language, b) stop discussion, c)
go on without worry.
8. When a stranger is discovered to be from your ethnic or language group, how do
you continue communication? a) in English, b) in a major Nigerian language
(specify)....., c) in your local language.

9. In a crisis, how do you identify a stranger? a) Through language, b) through dressing, c) by facial appearance, d) other (specify).....
10. How would you relate with a stranger? a) in a friendly manner, b) with suspicion, c) normally, b) in a hostile way
11. In your view, how does language contribute in causing conflict? a)Using insulting words, b) Not saying the truth, c) Keeping quiet, d) all of the above, e) other(specify).....
12. How do you think language can be used to resolve a conflict? a) By choosing soft words, b) Saying the truth, c) By avoiding to speak to your opponent, d)all of the above, e)Other(specify).....
13. How do you take rumour or hearsay during conflicts? a) Seriously, b) Not seriously, c) with doubt, d) as false
14. Do you care to verify any information you receive during conflicts? a) always, b) sometimes, c) rarely, d) Never
15. Which language do you prefer to use to state your grievances? a) Local language, b) English, c) a major Nigerian language(specify).....
16. In peacemaking efforts, who would you prefer to address you or your community? a) Any government official, b) Your own community or religious leader, c) Any third party outside the conflict, d) other (specify).....
17. Which language would you prefer to be used in addressing you or your community during conflicts?a) your local language, b) English, c) Any language of wider communication d) Other (Specify).....
18. Have you ever relocated or changed your area of residence? a (Yes), b (No)
19. If yes to 18 above, why? a)Because of crisis, b) Out of personal choice, c) Other (specify).....
20. How many times have you witnessed crisis in Jos?.....