
A critical study of ideologies in selected Boko Haram videos

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Received: 24 March 2023 | Accepted: 21 April 2023 | Published: 25 April 2023

Abstract: Boko Haram insurgency has threatened the existence of Nigeria as the group has wrecked serious havoc on different parts of the country. This group has constantly claimed to stand against some issues, ideas, people, doctrines, and systems. They have demonstrated this in their activities. To further their engagements, they periodically release videos to the public and these videos communicate layers of meaning and ideologies. This study, therefore, highlights and discusses the ideologies inherent in Boko Haram Video. A total of five videos were selected from the Sahara Reporters TV, Premium Times, and legit.ng using a purposive sampling technique. The study adopted Fairclough's Three Dimensional model of Critical Discourse Analysis as its theoretical leaning. Findings revealed that Boko Haram used both verbal and nonverbal semiotic resources in conveying their ideologies. Words like "infidels, tyrants, idiots, pagans and thieves" are used by Abubakar Shekau to show the negative out-group polarity of others while discourse elements like "we follow Allah, we obey Qur'an" are used to show positive in-group polarity. Various shots and expressions convey Boko Haram ideologies including monotheism, absolutism, anti-westernism, and masculinism. The study concludes that the semiotic resources used in Boko Haram videos covertly convey ideologies, power, (mis)representation and hegemony. Therefore, it is cogent that Nigeria's federal government and the Nigerian military pay attention to the understanding of the operational ideologies of Boko Haram for effective deradicalisation of the sect and successful eradication of Boko Haram insurgency.

Keywords: Boko Haram, CDA, Ideologies, Hegemony, Power

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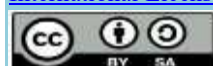
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1. Introduction

The problem of insurgency in North-Eastern Nigeria has defied solutions by a number of governments in Nigeria. Every government has engaged different methods to quash the brazenness of the group. Beyond Boko Haram in Nigeria, the increasing number of insurgent groups worldwide has become a concept of immense concern. Every country has gone through or is going through some form of agitation for group identity and ideological inclusion in government policies and programmes in its quest for nationhood. These agitating organisations use various techniques to further their operating philosophy and goals. These meaning-making tools are flexible for expressing various emotions, including anger, pleasure, sadness, camaraderie, and desires. These resources are used to justify or delegitimise inequalities, as well as to represent, under-represent, and misrepresent people, subjects, organisations, authorities, "powers," ethnic groups, and other kinds of linkages (Fairclough, 1999).

The different representations shown by Boko Haram are based on various ideologies. As shown via the use of semiotic resources, these ideological views are the consequence of group affinities, connections, beliefs, and social

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systems. The Jama'atul Ahlul Sunnah Lidda'wati Waj jihad, (those devoted to teaching teachings of the prophet and jihad) (known as Boko Haram) has used a variety of ways to propagate its calls for equity on the numerous methods by which the Nigerian government has ideologically, socially, and economically dispossessed the group. Boko Haram seldom uploads videos online to express its full dissatisfaction with the Nigerian Federal Government. These videos, mostly propaganda in nature, are often interwoven with semiotic materials meant to symbolise social hegemony and serve as a symbol of its tenacity in its agitations.

The majority of research on the Boko Haram insurgency has thus far focused on politics, law, economics, the environment, or religion (Wogu, 2010; Terwase, 2009; Akindele, 2001; Albert, 2017; Alali, 1991). These studies looked at the economic consequences of pipeline damage perpetrated by terrorists in the Niger Delta area and the impact of religious conflict in the country's north. A few studies, for example, have examined the issues from the perspective of Linguistics. Chiluwa (2011), Taiwo (2007), and Pam (2012) (cited in Ebim, 2015) investigate news labeling and ideology. These previous studies focus solely on the use of lexical items in reaching conclusion. In this study, through thorough critical analysis, hegemonies, powers, and inequalities are deciphered. Also, the language of threat is used for certain purposes; therefore, a critical analysis, that is, questioning this language genre, is necessary for understanding the function of this language use in Nigeria's insurgency fight.

2. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

CDA is a multi-layered approach that spotlights power elements and control in media talk - texts and pictures. It is burdened with characterizing, dissecting, and fathoming semantic variety and informative commitment, with an emphasis on friendly education and power issues (Wodak, 2007). According to van Dijk (2004), CDA is an exploration strategy that shines on uncovering how power, misuse, predominance, and imbalance are ordered, imitated, and opposed in the social and world of politics through text and discussion. Fairclough (1999: 132-3) characterizes CDA as a technique for efficiently dissecting talk to catch a depiction of the sideways association between the text and society concerning how "powers" are philosophically carried out.

There are various meanings of talk in view of different hypothetical and scholarly standards. Since talk is a standardizing term, it very well may be characterized in various ways, every one of which enlightens an alternate part of its broadness. Talk is characterized in CDA as the utilization of words in light of a social movement. Accordingly, Atkins (2002), referred to in Mirzaee and Hamdi (2012: 184) underlines that "language can't be viewed as unbiased, on the grounds that it is up to speed in political, social, racial, monetary, strict, and social arrangements." Fairclough (2013) concurs with other researchers' viewpoints on talk and adds semiotic parts, composed disquisitions, and nonverbal correspondence to the rundown of discourse types. Notwithstanding, he alludes to language as a talk, which is a major sociocultural action. This obviously shows that language can change thinking and character as well as the catalyst to drive activities.

CDA concentrates on a technique that spotlights on text x-raying, social construction, and power relations. "During the 1970s, a sort of talk and text examination arose that perceived the meaning of language in the development of force relations in the public eye. Numerous etymological explores in different nations at the time was centred around formal components of language that contained speakers' semantic skill and could be obviously recognized from explicit cases of language use" (Chomsky 2004 referred to in Wodak 2002: 13). Besides, Wodak (2002: 13) opines that "where the connection among language and setting was tended to, like in pragmatics (Levinson 1983), with an accentuation on speakers' common sense/sociolinguistic capacity, sentences and parts of sentences were as yet seen as the crucial unit." Much sociolinguistic examination at the time was given to reporting and fathoming language variety and open commitment, with little accentuation put on issues of social education and power." Such a setting underlines messages, their creation and translation, and their relationship to a large number of subjects of interest. Crafted by Kress and Hodge (1979), Trew (1979), Van Dijk (1985), Fairclough (1989), and Wodak (Ed) (1989) makes sense of and epitomizes basic phonetics' crucial presumptions, ideas, and techniques. One of the main ideas of this way to deal with language examination is philosophy.

2.1. Ideologies

van Dijk (1997: 29) characterizes ideology as "the psychological portrayals that comprise the underpinning of social cognizance, which is a group's common information and mentalities". ideologies, otherwise called the three-sided interpenetration of comprehension, society, and talk (van Dijk, 1998: 5), act as the establishment for bunch individuals' social portrayals and ways of behaving, including their discourse. The principal part is comprehension, which alludes to a thought framework that places philosophies in the emblematic domain of reasoning and conviction. Dijk (2001: 14), opines that belief systems have numerous central aspects:

1. Membership (orientation, identity, appearance, beginning, and so on) What precisely would we say we are?
2. Actions: What are we going to do?
3. Objectives: For what reason would we say we are doing this?
4. Norms and Values: What is great and what is terrible?

5. Position: How would we see ourselves in the public arena, and how would we associate with different gatherings?

6. Resources: What do we have? What still up in the air to have/keep at any expenses?

These are a portion of the principal qualities that lay out friendly cohesiveness and structure the underpinning of the self-diagram that coordinates belief systems. As well as being social as in they are associated with bunch interests, struggle, and battle, philosophies might be utilized to legitimize or challenge existing dissemination of force and control. Belief systems are additionally connected to talk as in they are enunciated and replicated in the public eye. Nonetheless, in spite of the fact that discourse isn't the sole vehicle for philosophy, it has a significant impact in its proliferation and affirmation. At long last, the perceived meaning of philosophy in this study expresses that belief systems have a place with gatherings; in any case, this doesn't imply that all gathering individuals generally act as per the standards of that specific philosophy. Bunch individuals have a place with a few gatherings, and contingent upon the circumstance, they might show disconnected bunch enrolments and collusions in their discourse and composing (van Dijk, 1997: 37).

3. Theoretical Framework

Norman Fairclough's Three Dimensional Model

Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Model of Critical Discourse Analysis is the model used in this study. Fairclough is acknowledged for making significant contributions to CDA thought. His disquisition is the primary paradigm used by researchers today to uncover ideologies in texts because it was the first to provide a framework for future scholars, particularly in emphasising the importance of language in a people's social life. He primarily believes that discourse achieves the dialectical relationships between social life and language (Fairclough, 2003). His involvement primarily aims to expose power dynamics through literature (Fairclough, 1999).

Fairclough proposed a three-layered structure reasonable for text examination: "the semantic portrayal of the conventional properties of the text; besides, the translation of the connection between the digressive cycles or communication and the text, where text is the finished result of a course of text creation and as an asset during the time spent in text understanding; lastly, and thirdly, the interpretation of the connection between the desultory cycles or collaboration and the text, where text is the finished result of a course of text creation and as (Page 134). According to Fairclough (1989), text analysis has progressed beyond simply describing what is written, with a focus on why certain things are written the way they are. Language is used for a variety of reasons. No text is free of ideologies, and no ideologies are free of text. People use language to express ideas and opinions about people and events that are important to them. As a result, Fairclough believes that every piece of writing contains a "hidden intention."

4. Research methodology

This study is a content analysis and descriptive research. It x-rays the various ideological leaning of Boko Haram in the videos released online. The study sourced data largely from online sources and colleagues who obtained the videos on WhatsApp. Some online news media – *Sahara TV*, *Premium Times Newspaper* and *Legit.ng*, posted some of these video and they were sourced from there. A purposive sampling technique was used in selecting five of the video for the analysis. The Fairclough's Three Dimensional model of Critical Discourse Analysis was used in analysing the data.

5. Findings and discussions

Codes and their Ideological Implications in Boko Haram

The late Boko Haram leader code-mixes with at least four languages in his videos and this discourse strategy holds ideological implications. The use of Arabic is hinged on his knowledge of Qu'ran and his background in Islamic schools. This, he uses to ideologically, include and appeal to his Arab-based supporters on one hand, and to communicate some ideas that could not be rendered in other languages. Furthermore, Shekau code-mixes with Hausa since it is one of the major languages in the north and it specifically appeals to the Northern citizens. Fulfulde is used to address the person of President Muhammadu Buhari since the president is a Fulani. Kanuri is used to appeal to his kinsmen. This code choice communicates layers of meaning that further entrench their strong ideological inclinations.

Boko Haram Ideologies

Based on the components of data, the following are Boko Haram ideologies identified in the selected videos.

Monotheism

Assmann (2004) characterizes monotheism as a general term for religions that admit to and love just a single god. It is the thought of accepting that there is just a single God. This is the immediate inverse of polytheism. The followings are cases where this philosophy can be recognized in Boko Haram Videos:

1. We are enemies of Christians, and those that veered off from Islam, are framing the premise with petitions however heathens, "[We] need ... to separate unbelievers, professionals of a majority rules government, and

constitutionalism, voodoo and those that are doing Western training in which they are rehearsing agnosticism (*Legit* Nov 1, 2014).

2. "Our objective is to see just Koran being followed on the planet. This is our concentration. (Premium Times Nov. 1, 2015)

Boko Haram holds this ideological belief that there is only one God - Allah, and close to Him, there could be no other. To this end references are typically made to Him all through the recordings. Samples 1 and 2 represent this Their philosophy about confidence and religion is that there is just a single method for loving Allah and this one way is through Prophet Mohammed (SAW). Thus any belief that imparts no similarity to this becomes agnosticism. The group labels each and every other group that shares an alternate conviction pagan, hence ought not to be overlooked.

Absolutism

Absolutism implied that the sovereign power or extreme power rested in the possession of a lord or a pioneer who professed to govern by divine right and this these guidelines are unbending (Jackson, 1991). Absolutists accept that their position since they are heavenly can't be changed nor addressed. The followings are instances of completeness in Boko Haram videos.

3. "I will wed out a female at 12. I will do same for a 9-year-old young lady, similar to it was done to my mom Aisha and spouse of Prophet." (*Legit* Nov 1, 2014)

One of the unique ideologies of Boko Haram fighters is their absoluteness and strict adherence to dealing with issues especially when it has an inkling with Prophet Mohammed (SAW). This is exemplified in sample 3. Furthermore, they hold such strict rules such that any fighter that contravenes this is either executed or severely dealt with. In video 5, one of the scenes shows where a member is being flogged. The scene suggests that the represented participant was being punished for typical defiance behaviour. Their approach to issues is uni-directional. Shekau believed that the only way to achieve their goal is the use of force and the killing of whoever stands in their way including women and children. This absolute tendency is an ideology that comes to play in their engagements. This means that Boko Haram's cognitive frame demonstrates religious fundamentalism and bigotry, the extreme or absolute manifestation of intolerance and ideas that embraces violence. It abhors and resists any doctrine that does not conform to its interpretation of Sharia while avowing to force the political, social, and economic systems to conform to its religious tenets through lethal means.

Sectarianism

Strict sectarianism is a philosophy which is comprised in a general public by specific gatherings who have a place with a belief system. Every one of these gatherings [sects] is worried about broad lessons from where they contradiction and specific standards for which they should be and show scorn, bias, separation, towards different factions, regardless of regardless of whether their organization is correct (Al-Hindawi & Kadhim, 2021). The followings embody this philosophy in Boko Haram videos.

4. "People of Kaduna and El-Zakzaky (confined Shiite pioneer in Nigeria), you ought to apologize. And every one of you, the supporters of Tijjaniya (an organization in Islam), you ought to atone". (Premium Times Sept. 25, 2016)

5. "All those priests are to be killed for following majority rule government, every one of them are unbelievers" (*Legit* Nov 1, 2014)

Boko Haram has a place with the Sunni faction of Islam and they hold the philosophy of Salafi Jihadism which is a cross-breed strict political philosophy trying to lay out a worldwide caliphate described by the backing for physical/military jihadist. Boko Haram additionally shares the partisan characteristics of Wahhabism. A faction inside the Sunni Islamic group participated in the recovery or transformation of the Islamic teachings of the eighteenth-century Islamic scholar and evangelist, Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab. One of the changes of the Wahhabi development underscores the cleansing of customs connected with the adoration of Muslim holy people and journeys to their burial chambers and altars, which were far-reaching among individuals of Najd.

Altogether, Boko Haram additionally shares the partisan attributes of Takfiri. This signifies a Muslim who expels one of his/her coreligionists for example who blames one more Muslim for being a defector. Inside the domain of Islamic regulation understanding the discipline for abandonment is capital punishment. These partisan philosophies of Boko Haram further assert the purposes behind their extreme methodology in doing their exercises.

Anti-Westernism

Hostile to Westernism is a political and strict response to the liberal and popularity-based upsides of the West (Aydin, 2007). Each type of response against Western thoughts is named the enemy of Westernism. The followings are instances of this philosophy in Boko Haram videos.

6. "We realize what's going on in this world, it is a Jihad battle against Christians and Christianity. (Legit Nov 1, 2014)
7. "It is a conflict against western training, a majority rules system and constitution". (Legit Nov 1, 2014)
8. "I am against the public authority of individuals by individuals." (Legit Nov 1, 2014)

From the activities carried out by Boko Haram, it can be deduced that the group is against anything that is Western. This includes; western education as it explains the reason the group was christened Boko Haram literally translated as a book is forbidden. This also explains why they are against Western education, especially for the girl child. The abduction of the Chibok and Dapchi school girls exemplifies this intrinsic ideology. Also, this is the reason they are against democracy – a system of government currently practised in Nigeria. Since democracy holds tenets that are somewhat against the predilections of the group, they constantly are against it. Abubakar Shekau clearly said, "I am against the government of the people by the people", and this is the basic tenet of democracy. This worldview informs its strong hatred for other Muslims who still support democracy, constitutionalism, and Western education, and those who still ally with non-Muslims.

Conservatism

MerriamWebster (2020) characterizes traditionalism as a political way of thinking in light of custom and social steadiness, pushing laid out foundations, and favouring slow improvement to unexpected change. The accompanying examples show this ideology:

9. What I will believe you should know is, that there is subjugation in Islam, don't be hoodwinked about the Assembled Countries, it is futile thing and I call them Joined Countries of ridiculousness drove by Boycott Ki-moon. "Prophet Muhammed took slaves himself during Badr war. (Legit Nov 1, 2014)
10. "I left my folks' home. I left my mom and my dad, I passed on my relations and joined the people who need to rehearse Islam" (Premium Times Nov. 1, 2015)

One of the belief systems Boko Haram shows is that of opposition against change particularly when it rocks the boat." The tendency to safeguard and keep up with the sacredness of their partisan and strict convictions plagues their videos. Text 9 and 10 epitomize this belief system. This is one reason they use arms in order to hold their individuals in line of their tainting with civilisation that isn't birthed in that frame of mind of Islamic convictions. For Boko Haram, their life and activities are predicated on the fundamentals of Islam, which they try to safeguard even with their lives. The assertion in example 9 "What I will believe that you should know is, that there is bondage in Islam, don't be deluded about the Unified Countries, it is a pointless thing and I call them Joined Countries of ludicrousness drove by Boycott Ki-moon. "Prophet Muhammed took slaves himself during Badr war." (Legit.ng Nov 1, 2014) embodies their conviction about change which radiates from the West about slave exchange. While they guarantee to remain against innovation which the gathering transparently announced, they are enmeshed in the utilization of present-day gear in executing their convictions. The group utilizes computers, robots, arms, and different instruments which are the results of innovation. One would have expected that they confine their utilization of arms to customarily created ones.

Caliphatism

This alludes to a type of government that appeared in Islamic grounds after the passing of the Prophet Muhammad. The caliphate alludes to the workplace of the caliph as well as to the time of his rule and to his domain (Kadi & Shahin, 2015). The followings are samples:

11. "we want to see just Koran being followed on the planet. This is our concentration. (Premium Times Nov. 1, 2015)
12. "If you say, 'I promise to Nigeria, my country,' it is off-base and a demonstration of agnosticism. For my purposes, I promise to Allah, my God, to be devoted to my Allah, and you to your country. Energetically, you said you will revere a land". (Legit Nov 1, 2014)
13. "Go and structure your property, we are in Allah's territory and don't know Nigeria. We don't know Cameroon or Chad. ... I don't have a country. I have Islamiyah". (Legit Nov 1, 2014)
14. "There is no President in Nigeria ... No President on the planet, just Islam." (Legit Nov 1, 2014)

Without a doubt, the establishment of an Islamic caliphate in Nigeria and in other parts of Africa is one of the goals of Boko Haram. Since the group believes in the Salafi jihadism ideology which seeks to establish a global caliphate, Boko Haram holds this ideology dear to their heart. The statements in samples 11 to 14 show this ideology.

Pastoralism

According to Leshan and Standslause (2013), pastoralism is characterized as a means design in which individuals make their living by tending tamed creatures. Pastoralism likewise connects with shepherds; thus connecting with country life and scenes. Carrying on with a provincial life is one of the philosophies of Boko Haram. Their exercises are most

arranged in the country region and very inside at that. They live in a rustic region and live peacefully. The greater part of the recordings examined in this study shows that they live very distant from seeing structures and metropolitan regions. Their camps and it are in the backwoods to prepare the ground. It is their conviction that they don't want to remain where they can be handily followed. This has made them succeed by and large in going after occupants living in nearby towns.

Masculinism

Bain and Pina (2020) see masculinism has been conceptualized as an inescapable male-centric belief system of manly social predominance. This philosophy depends on the move by women's activists who backer equivalent privileges for both orientations. Masculinist ideology is moulded by culture and strict inclinations.

15. "I will wed out a female at 12. I will do same for a 9-year-old young lady, similar to it was finished on my mom Aisha and spouse of Prophet." (*Legit* Nov 1, 2014)

16. "I am the one that caught your young ladies, and I will sell them on the lookout. I have my own market of selling individuals; the proprietor educated me to sell". (*Legit* Nov. 1, 2014)

As discussed and indicated in the samples above, Boko Haram members do not give regard to the female folk because of their beliefs. Also, the representation of women in their videos is from a low oblique angle which suggests a powerless position. Within the theoretical framework of this study, such shots is hegemonic and it clamps down on women. Shots where their members who are mostly men are at higher or leveled angle. This suggests power and equality. Video five gives a vivid illustration of this. It further shows that Boko Haram is against the idea of feminism and equal rights for men and women. Within the group, men are given more regard as only them constitute both the leaders and other fighters. In all the videos, the representation of women is sparing as they are mostly shown as captives. This demeans the important place of women in human societies.

Environmentalism

Environmentalism is utilized as a general term to allude to worry for the climate and especially activities or promotion to restrict negative human effects on the climate (Davies, 2020). Albeit, known for some exercises which have adversely impacted many individuals and networks, Boko Haram appears to cherish nature and wants in the investigation of nature and its safeguarding. To this end, they move into regular environments which are depicted by Shekau as "we moved out and relocated as Allah appointed" (Premium Times Nov. 1, 2015). Whether this is on the grounds that they were pushed there or on the grounds that they have no choice is left to be chosen. Their recordings show their affection for widely varied vegetation where they reside.

Personalism

According to Stanford Reference Book of Theory (2009), personalism places extreme reality and worth in personhood - human as well as (basically for most personalists) divine. It accentuates the importance, uniqueness and sacredness of the individual, as well as the individual's basically social or social aspect.

17. "Prophet Muhammad denied us from utilizing any plate utilized by a Jew without washing it first. He likewise restricted you from wearing the dress of the Jews". (Premium Times Sept. 25, 2016)

18. "Prophet Muhammed took slaves himself during Badr war. (*Legit* Nov 1, 2014)

Boko Haram holds this subjective idealism which believes that realities can be interpreted by personalities. For them, their interpretation of realities rests on the person of Prophet Mohammed as interpreted by their preachers. This is why Abubakar Shekau was held in a very high esteem before he killed himself when he was over-powered by a factional group. Personalities who are viewed as religious leaders are given a status where their authority is not questioned and their interpretations of the holy books are taken hook line and sinker. Followers mostly do not ask questions as they believe their "VIPs". These personalities, to them are the sole arbiter of knowledge and wisdom and this is why they are normally revered.

6. Conclusion

We can conclude that the deployment of videos by Boko Haram, as against audio that are sparingly used, has communicated the ideological underpinning of the group a great deal. It communicates a threat to viewers and the Nigerian military. The interaction of the semiotic resources used in the videos and the speeches of Abubakar Shekau corroborate the interpretations of the semiotic codes used in the videos. This suggests that users deploy language affordances based on choice from variant forms to effect biases. These lexical choices portray the group of devout Muslims who are working in line with the injunctions of Allah. Clearly, the ideology expressed through these lexical expressions is to amass support from other Islamic fundamentalist bodies such as Islamic States, Al Qaeda, Taliban, and

Al-Shabaab. Within Nigeria, these expressions are used as ideological membership persuasion. The expressions are used for membership recruitment, especially for those who also desire an all-Muslim state.

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