Linguistics Option for Mitigating the Threats of Inflammatory Statements Driven by Base Ethno-Religious and Political Sentiments In Nigeria

By

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Abstract

This study investigates the challenges of inflammatory statements made by ethno-religious and political sentiments in Nigeria, with the principal purpose of proffering linguistics solutions to the challenges. The specific objectives are to popularise the idea of applied peace (non-killing) linguistics in Nigeria, and to discuss how the ideas of applied peace linguistics can be applied to controversial or conflicting Nigerian speeches. The area of study for this research is applied peace (non-killing) linguistics. This study adopts a qualitative research method and utilises the descriptive design and utilised the theoretical framework of appied peace linguistics. Purposive random sampling technique was used to sample the study data, which include the pre-election 2015 speech delivered by the Oba of Lagos, Rilwanu Akiolu, the monarch of Yoruba land in Lagos state, and the inaugural speech of the former Governor of Lagos state- **His Excellency, Mr. Akinwunmi Ambode, on Friday, May 29, 2015.** The study observed that Oba Rilwanu Akiolu's speech violates the principles of applied peace (non-killing) linguistics. This is because he failed to honour humanism and foster humanization as he continually inflicted verbal harm and humiliation upon his addresses, and consequently, failed to act as a peace patriot, as dictated by the principles of applied peace linguistics. These qualities of the Oba's speech are in contrast to those of former Governor **Akinwunmi Ambode, who adhered to, or obeyed to the principles of applied peace (non-killing) linguistics. This paper makes a case for the upholding of proper language usage to foster peaceful co-existence in Nigeria**

1. Introduction

Over several years and centuries since the beginning of man, conflicts have always abound for struggle over territories and properties, fame, political power, respect, and the likes. The origin of many of these conflicts are traced to the expression of language which had been poorly done. It is interesting to note that sometimes, these statements which had given rise to conflicts may or may not have been consciously uttered. However, the inability of these utterance to, equally get clarifications and appeasements all culminate the conflicts that had plagued, and still plagues man, threatening his peaceful co-existence with members of his society. Several efforts have been devised by man, equally, to address these threats to human existence, triggered by poor language utterance. One of such attempts culminate in the emergence of the theoretical field of Applied Peace (Non-Killing) Linguistics.

Applied peace linguistics has been identified as a linguistic option for the threats of inflammatory statements driven by base ethno-religious and political sentiments in Nigeria. This is so, given the immense value of the theoretical construct in being able to identify the areas of possible conflict eruption which may be overlooked and which may come back to hunt Nigerians' peaceful co-existence within the country; the country being a multi-ethnic and multi-religious one. This paper will, therefore, x-ray how applied peace linguistics can be used as a tool to ameliorate the budding and persistent occurrence of conflicts among the various ethnic and religious groups in Nigeria.

1.1. Statement of the problem

Nigeria is a country inhabited by several ethnic and religious groups. According to Odinye and Odinye (2012:169), "The name Nigeria did not exist before because the regions (that make up the country) were never one. They (each of the regions) had their own defined and distinguished territories that were marked by their different cultures, unique languages, kingdoms and systems of rural leadership. However, the intrusion of the British as a result of their interest in slave trade and palm oil business, made them bring these regions with no common features together as a nation". Thus, Obitube (2014) opines that Nigeria is a country made up of several ethnic and religious groups with the citizens in the southern hemisphere of the country being predominantly Christians while those

in the northern hemisphere are predominantly Muslims. These divisions, which are both ethnic and religious form the strong base on which the Nigerian nation arose and is composed of. We also, do not forget to include the African traditional religion which was practiced by various people across various ethnic groups in the country before colonialism and which is still being practised by several Nigerians.

This multi-ethnic and multi-religious set-up of the country constitute serious lines of differences among the people. These differences indicate the existence of strongly opposing ideologies, interests, wishes and aspirations among the inhabitants of the country. These oppositions, without gainsaying, are bound to trigger conflicts among individuals and groups who stand for, or represent various opposing factions. In such opposition, statements are, usually, made which possess the qualities of arousing mutual suspicion, unhappiness, conflicts, violence, and in severe cases, war. Thus, the fact that statements made with the word of mouth or writing possess immense power of integrating the vast majority if Nigerian population, so does this researcher believe that statements made with the word of mouth or writing also possess immense power of uniting this very same vast majority of Nigerian population. Providing answers to how this unity among the vast majority of the multi-ethnic and multi-religious Nigerian population can be achieved with statements made with the word of mouth or writing, popularised in applied peace (non-killing) linguistics, is the concern the problem this discussion intends to tackle.

1.2. Research objectives

The research objective set by this paper, is to find out how applied peace linguistics can be employed as a linguistic option for the threats of inflammatory statements driven by base ethno-religious and political sentiments in Nigeria. The specific objectives are highlighted thus:

i. To popularise the idea of applied peace (non-killing) linguistics in Nigeria
ii. To discuss how the ideas of applied peace linguistics can be applied to controversial or conflicting Nigerian speeches

1.3. Research questions

In order to address the research objective highlighted, the researcher adopts the following research questions:

i. What is the idea of applied peace (non-killing) linguistics in Nigeria?
ii. How can the ideas of applied peace linguistics be applied to controversial or conflicting Nigerian speeches?

1.4. Scope of the study

This research work is set within the scope of applied linguistics. Particularly, the broad/catholic vie of applied linguistics is the scope within which this work is set, as it attempts to discuss how applied peace linguistics can be employed as a linguistic option for the threats of inflammatory statements driven by base ethno-religious and political sentiments in Nigeria.

Within this scope, speeches which have been considered in the Nigerian political scene to have been controversial or conflicting are discussed within the framework of applied peace linguistics, and nothing more.

1.5. Significance of the study

The significance of this work abounds. For a country that is always subsumed in conflicts arising from ethnic, religious and political conflicts, due to inflammatory, inciting, or hate-provoking statements consciously or unconsciously made notwithstanding its multi-ethnic and multi-religious nature, the application of applied peace (non-killing) linguistics is very necessary.

This work provides solutions to solving Nigeria's problems with the regard to inter-ethnic conflicts by drawing the attention of people, especially its citizens to the fact that peace can be achieved and enhanced within the country with a conscious and proper use of language within inter-ethnic or political scenes.

2. Literature review

2.1. Theoretical studies

According to Chamberlain (2012), peace/non-killing linguistics as a natural extension of critical applied linguistics, in which language is seen, not only as a tool for reproducing power relations, but also as a vehicle for deconstructing harmful ideologies while promoting peaceful interactions within and across societies.

The need which gave rise to the development of peace linguistics can be summed up in the statement by Byram, Gribkova & Starkey (2002), that as our societies become increasingly multicultural, alternative visions of what it means to coexist, interact, and learn in community with each other are needed.

Huber & Reynolds (2014:2) contribute their own opinion on the issue by pointing out the importance of a new course of endeavour in human life, thus stating, "Mutual understanding and intercultural competence are more important than ever today because through them, we can address some of the most virulent problems of contemporary societies". Of course, the most virulent problems of contemporary societies being referred to are the problems of poor communication and inter-ethnic/inter-cultural conflicts.

Friedrich and Gomes de Santos (2012) presented the work of Paige (2009) who raised the question of whether or not a non-killing society is possible and what it would take to build such a society. They presented his definition of a non-killing society as "A human community, smallest to largest, local to global, characterized by no killing of humans and no threats to kill; no weapons designed to kill humans and no justifications for using them; and no conditions of society depend upon threat or use of killing force for maintenance or change (Paige, 2009:21)".

Certain theories help shed more light on the issue under discussion. These theories are reviewed also.

2.1.1. Politeness theory: This theory was propounded by Brown and Levinson (1978). Foley (1997) defines Politeness theory as the theory that accounts for the redressing of the affronts to face posed by face-threatening acts to addressees.

2.1.2. Conversational implicature: This theory was formulated by Grice (1975). The theory claims that any successful speech must fulfil some stipulated conditions. It sums up these conditions, which it refers to as maxims of conversation or cooperative principle (CP) to form the procedure with which a given speech is analysed thus:

> Maxim of Quantity - (informativeness). It states that one should make a speech as informative as is required and not to make it more informative than is required.

Maxim of Quality – (Truthfulness): It states that one should not say what one believes to be false or lack evidence

Maxim of Relation – (Relevance). It states that one's speech should be relevant.

Maxim of manner – (Clarity): It states that one's speech should be perspicuous, should be avoided obscurity and ambiguity, be brief and be orderly.

2.2. Empirical studies

Several researchers have conducted several studies on the application of applied peace linguistics to language study and to human societies for the attainment of world peace. These studies are reviewed in this section of our discussion.

In a research conducted by Chamberlain (2012), the researcher examined how the principles of non-killing linguistics overlap with what is considered 'developmentally-appropriate practice' in early childhood education. The researcher observes that by overlapping the principles of non-killing linguistics with developmentally-appropriate practice, a society stands to attain higher levels of academic success among children in schools; the researcher also observes that there is an enhancement of effectiveness within youth violence prevention and social skill development programs; and that there is greater opportunities for applying the principles of non-killing linguistics to new areas, contributing to a societal shift towards peaceful communication and resolution of conflicts in the interest of protecting both human and nonhuman lives.

Chamberlain's (2012) study and the current one show similarity in studying the application of applied peace (non-killing) linguistics to solving salient human problems. However, they reveal significant differences, too. Chamberlain's (2012) study differs from the current one in terms of purpose. While the work endeavoured to examine how the principles of non-killing linguistics overlap with what is considered 'developmentally-appropriate practice' in early childhood education, the current one focusses on finding out how applied peace linguistics can be employed as a linguistic option for the threats of inflammatory statements driven by base ethno-religious and political sentiments in Nigeria. Thus, while the study is interested in applying the principles of non-killing linguistics to solving problems

relating to childhood education, the current research looks at a bigger picture involving an entire political state or country.

In another study on a comparative scale of linguistic law and non-killing linguistics by Turi (2012), the author captured the problem which his work intends to address thus: "Major language legislation in the area of language policy is evidence, within certain political contexts, of contacts, conflicts and inequalities among languages used within the same territory. Objectively or apparently, these languages co-exist often in an uneasily dominant-dominated relationship, thereby leading to a situation of conflicting linguistic majorities and minorities (p.121). in this study, the researcher observes the tool of peace advocacy in language planning can be used to quell the violence committed against many languages through linguistic legislation. He points out that a linguistic legislation is respected as far as there is a complementary nonkilling orientation whereby a language or more is/are disadvantaged to the extent that they are threatened with endangerment or extinction; and as such, linguistic legislation risks to be a 'too much' drastic or 'too much' symbolic legislation if unchecked.

The work reviewed above shows similarity with the current study in times of studying the application of non-killing linguistics for the eradication of conflict or violence from human societies. However, their differences manifest as Turi (2012) focuses on the violence meted out to several languages through language legislation, which leads to their endangerment and extinction in severe cases, while the current study endeavours to conduct its study of applied peace (non-killing) linguistics in the context where threats of inflammatory statements driven by base ethno-religious and political sentiments in Nigeria affects pose danger to peaceful co-existence of the citizens, rather than of languages.

2.3. Theoretical framework

The origin of applied peace (non-killing) linguistics is not attributed to a particular individual. However, its development is traced to an entry written for a Posfácio (an Afterword) to Mattoso Camara's Dicionário de Linguística e Gramática (Gomes de Matos, 1977), another work published ten years later, which made a case for peace as a new universal in language education (Gomes de Matos, 1987), and the publication of an entry by Crystal in which we are told that way of doing Linguistics with a focus on peace (non-killing) principles is an approach which emerged in the 1990s among many linguists and language teachers in which

linguistic `principles, methods, findings and applications were seen as a means of promoting peace and human rights at a global level. Thus, its originator is not known.

Crystal (2001:254) contributes that peace linguistics as "a climate of opinion which emerged during the 1990's among many linguists and language teachers, in which linguistic principles, methods, findings, and applications were seen as a means of promoting peace and human rights at a global level".

The importance of this theoretical movement is captured in the words of Gomes de Matos (2014) who states that peace linguistics is characterized as interdisciplinary approach aimed at helping educational systems create conditions for the preparation of human beings as peaceful language users.

The methodology by applied peace linguistics for studying and analysing language and peace related issues are captured by Gomes de Matos (n.d), who put forward four principles for peaceful language users and presented them as follows:

Principle 1

- Be a peaceful language bridge-person between/among persons, groups, communities. How?

  Several courses of action:

  By viewing and treating conflicts and controversies constructively.

  By convincing others cooperatively, rather than competitively or coercively.

  By contributing to a culture of compassion.

Principle 2

- Dignify your daily dialogue. How?

  By addressing other persons with respectful language and optimistic

  vocabulary.

  By disagreeing through empathic language, that is, by placing oneself in the other's shoes.

  By using positivizers (adjectives and verbs which can enhance positive qualities/traits in people)

Principle 3

- Honour humanism and foster humanization. How?

  By avoiding/preventing verbal harm and humiliation

By applying justice and peace to your communicative acts
By rephrasing potentially dehumanizing messages, texts

Principle 4

- Act as a peace patriot at all times. How?
  By perceiving persons as peace partners
  By promoting a passion for peace, especially in aggressive, hostile contexts
  By monitoring your communication for their ethical, moral, social values.

These outlined principles form the basis for intense considerations when building strategies for achieving and fostering peace in a community or society and so, prove to be the best theoretical approach for conducting this research on the threats of inflammatory statements driven by base ethno-religious and political sentiments in Nigeria.

2.4. Summary of literature review

From the literature review conducted, it is understood that the field of applied peace (non-killing) linguistics has been in existence barely over three decades. Given this period, not much studies and researches have been conducted in the area, given the paucity of materials and works on record. Thus, few works were reviewed; notably, the works of Friedrich and Gomes de Santos (2012), Paige (2009), Chamberlain (2012), Crystal (2001), Byram, Gribkova & Starkey (2002), Huber & Reynolds (2014:2), Gomes de Matos (n.d), Gomes de Matos (1977), Gomes de Matos (2012), Gomes de Matos (2014), Turi (2012) among others, were reviewed. Also, theories which relate to the theoretical field of peace linguistics were also reviewed, these include politeness theory by Brown and Levinson (1978), as well as corporative implicature by Grice (1975).

Researches conducted in the area of peace linguistics were, equally, reviewed. These include the works of by Chamberlain (2012) and Turi (2012) who address issues relating to the alignment of child education with peace ideologies and movements, and meting out of peace to all human languages, respectively. Their relationship with the current work are summarised in their collective interest to address issues relating to the application of the principles of peace linguistics for the attainment of world peace. Their differences with the current work are also discussed as neither of them looked at the application of the principles of peace

linguistics for the attainment of peace among the multi-ethnic and religious Nigerian population which the current work intends to address. Finally, the theoretical movement of applied peace linguistics was discussed- its origin and development, its claims and principles, as well as its importance to the current work, leading to its adoption as the theoretical framework for this research.

3. Research methodology

3.1. Research design and procedure

This study adopts a qualitative research method and utilises the descriptive design. Within this design, this study will follow a step by step approach of presenting information leading-up to the study, charting the course of the study and conducting the actual study is adequately adhered to. In the end, it is the hope of this study to succeed in presenting knowledge that will prove the immense importance of applied peace linguistics to human co-existence.

3.2. Area of the study

The area of study for this research is applied peace (non-killing) linguistics, which is a theoretical field of applied linguistics.

3.3. Population of the study

The sampled population to be studied constitute the statements contained in the pre-election 2015 speech delivered by the Oba of Lagos, Rilwanu Akiolu, the monarch of Yoruba land in Lagos state and those contained in the inaugural speech of the former Governor of Lagos state- **His Excellency, Mr. Akinwunmi Ambode, on Friday, May 29, 2015 at Tafawa Balewa square in Lagos** those, which draw-up ethnic sentiments among Nigerians.

3.4. Sampling

Purposive random sampling technique was utilised for collecting the date required for conducting this research.

3.5. Instrument of data collection

Given the nature of the data, there was no need of questionnaires or interview questions for collecting the data for this work. Rather, the internet, printer, paper, writing materials such as pen and paper are instruments which proved to be handy to the researcher.

3.6. Method of data collection

To collect the data, the internet was surfed to obtain copies of the speeches. They were printed with the aid of a printer and made available to the research table for analysis to be done.

3.7. Method of data analysis

The work adopts a descriptive approach of analysis. Thus, controversial speeches delivered on the Nigerian political scene which arouse ethnic sentiments are presented and analysed descriptively. On this basis, the research will descriptively analyse the pre-election 2015 speech delivered by the Oba of Lagos, Rilwanu Akiolu, the monarch of Yoruba land in Lagos state, which steered-up criticisms from Igbos and well-meaning Nigerians who view it as anti-Igbo speech. On similar note, the inaugural speech of the former Governor of Lagos state- **His Excellency, Mr. Akinwunmi Ambode, on Friday, May 29, 2015 at Tafawa Balewa square in Lagos will also be analysed, descriptively.**

4. Data analysis

Before, the analysis begins, proper, it is important to note the relationship between the two speeches purposively selected for analysis. The flag bearer of the All Progressive Congress, which is one of the political parties in Nigeria was up for the contest of the gubernatorial election of 2015 against the candidate of the People's Democratic Party, an opposition party in the state. However, it turned out that the ruling monarch of Yoruba land, in the state, Rilwanu Akiolu, the Oba of Lagos supports the candidacy of the then gubernatorial aspirant, **Mr. Akinwunmi Ambode. It is therefore, in his solidarity speech to the gathered people of Lagos that he delivered his inflammatory speech which is being studied in this work. Another speech to be studied, as earlier noted, is the** inaugural speech of the former Governor of Lagos state- **His Excellency, Mr. Akinwunmi Ambode, whom the Oba supported and for whose reason, the inflammatory speech wsas delivered. The inaugural speech was delivered on Friday, May 29, 2015 at Tafawa Balewa square in Lagos.**

4.1. Analysing excerpts from Oba Rilwanu Akiolu's speech

Sentence 1- On Saturday, if anyone of you goes against the Ambode I picked, that is your end. If it doesn't happen within seven days, just know that I'm a bastard and it is not my father who born me.

The first principle of applied peace linguistics which dictates that one should be a peaceful language 'bridge-person' between/among persons, groups, communities by viewing and treating conflicts and controversies constructively, convincing others cooperatively, rather than competitively or coercively, and contributing to a culture of compassion is violated by the Oba, the speaker. His statement shows that he treats his addresses as competitors to the dictates of his statement instead of speaking to them constructively, convincingly and cooperatively. Thus, the statement

> *If it doesn't happen (drowning in Lagos lagoon by anyone who votes against his candidate of choice), just know that I'm a bastard and it is not my father who born me.*

Thus, the statement neither helps to breed nor enhance peace in the Nigerian society.

The second principle which encourages one to dignify one's daily dialogue by addressing other persons with respectful language and optimistic vocabulary, disagreeing through empathic language, that is, by placing oneself in the other's shoes, and by using positivizers (adjectives and verbs which can enhance positive qualities/traits in people) is also violated by the speaker. Observation shows that the speaker does not respect the image of his addresses and does not provide the right or positive motivators for them.

The third principle, which dictates that one should honour humanism and foster humanization by avoiding/preventing verbal harm and humiliation, by applying justice and peace to one's communicative acts, and by rephrasing potentially dehumanizing messages, texts was also violated. The speaker neither recalls his vulgar and impolite statements. Rather, he goes on to use intimidating languages against his addresses without mindful of whose horse is gourd.

The fourth principle which states that one should act as a peace patriot at all times by perceiving persons as peace partners, by promoting a passion for peace, especially in aggressive, hostile contexts, and by monitoring one's communication for their ethical, moral, social values was, equally violated. This is so because the speaker does not consider his addresses as partners in the peace process. If he had done so, then he would have adopted stating a plea or a convincing statement to politely convince the people of the unhappiness him and his people would feel if their interests are not met by the electoral outcome.

Sentence 2- The one you have done before, he's my son. Jonathan is my son and I speak to him every day. But, this Saturday, by the grace of God almighty Allah, I am the owner of Lagos and the owner of this…for the time being…. Listen. Because this is an undivided chair. The palace belongs to the dead, the living and those coming in future."

Above statement also violates the four principles of applied peace linguistics as posited by Gomes de Matos. Thus, we see the speaker accusing his addresses of violating his wish, wish they were, of course, ignorant of, by voting General Muhammadu Buhari as President of Nigeria instead of his candidate of choice- Dr. Goodluck Jonathan. He further threatens his addresses with death, should they dare violate his wish to have his gubernatorial choice voted into office in the forthcoming election.

Sentence 3- On Saturday, if anyone of you, I swear in the name of God almighty Allah, goes against my wish that Ambode, insha Allahu, will be the next governor of Lagos State, the person is going to die inside this water (Lagos lagoon)."

This statement also defies all the principles of applied peace (non-killing) linguistics by being confrontational rather than been in cooperative with the addresses. It thus, seems to challenge the addresses to war or battle instead of being a statement that should try to reason with the audience in order to achieve a collective goal.

Sentence 4- I'm not ready to beg, appeal to anybody o. And that's why Asiwaju and the governor said, I said that is your own. Even the two of them they cannot disobey me. Nobody knew how I picked Ambode. Jimi (Agbaje) is my blood relation and I told him in a plain language he can never be governor in Lagos for now.

This statement, equally, violates all the principles of applied peace (non-killing) linguistics. One questions how a person seeking a favour or someone who ought to make a request to his addresses should, instead, threaten them in order to receive one's wish. The autocratic nature of the speaker's statement also prompts one to question whether one is considered a full-fledged human or whether one's right or freedom to vote one's candidate of choice is being forcefully denied. Such negative thoughts made out of such inflammatory statement can make the addresses go against such a misguided order and dare the consequences instead

of the interactants working together to achieve a common goal that will foster harmony and peaceful co-existence.

Sentence 5- The future belongs to God. I am not begging anybody to go, but you must not, I repeat… what you people cannot do in Onitsha, what you cannot do in Aba or anywhere…. If you do what I want, Lagos will continue to be prosper for you. If you go against it, you will perish in the water. Finish.
This statement, just as the preceding ones from Oba Rilwanu Akiolu's speech, equally, do not adhere to the dictates of applied peace (non-killing) linguistics. The statement:

I am not begging anybody to go, but you must not

fails to acknowledge the role of the other people in the interaction (the addresses) in the effort to promote peace among humans.

4.2. Analysing excerpts from the inaugural speech of the former Governor of Lagos state- His Excellency, Mr. Akinwunmi Ambode

Upon his inauguration as governor of Lagos state, after his victory in the election, having amassed the majority of the vote cast, the former governor, who was the subject of the speech delivered by the Oba of Lagos whose inflammatory speech we had analysed delivered his own speech whose excerpts the work, hereby, analyses.
Sentence 1: Permit me to acknowledge and appreciate, specially, all the voters that voted for me; equally appreciate those that did not and also the people that did not exercise their franchise to vote at all. We are all winners.
This statement meets the dictates of principle of applied peace linguistics which states that one should be a peaceful language 'bridge-person' between/among persons, groups, communities by viewing and treating conflicts and controversies constructively, convincing others cooperatively, rather than competitively or coercively, and contributing to a culture of compassion. He achieved this by respecting the choice or perceived 'flaws' of even those who did not vote for him. Thus he, through his statement, acts as a bridge-person' between those who supported his candidacy for the gubernatorial election and those who did not. By doing so, he wins their hearts and draws them to be partners in the peace process for the harmonious future of the state.

The second principle which encourages one to dignify one's daily dialogue by addressing other persons with respectful language and optimistic vocabulary, disagreeing through empathic language, that is, by placing oneself in the other's shoes, and by using 'positivizers' (adjectives and verbs which can enhance positive qualities/traits in people) was, equally, adjudges to have been fulfilled by the speaker as due respect of the choice of all voters in the gubernatorial election were respected. Optimism was equally expressed in the speech and the addresses, all experience the needed warm environment that promotes peace, rather than a cold one.

The third principle, which dictates that one should honour humanism and foster humanization by avoiding/preventing verbal harm and humiliation, by applying justice and peace to one's communicative acts, and by rephrasing potentially dehumanizing messages, texts was also fulfilled as the former governor avoided making inflammatory statements that inflict verbal harm on the addresses.

The fourth principle which states that one should act as a peace patriot at all times by perceiving persons as peace partners, by promoting a passion for peace, especially in aggressive, hostile contexts, and by monitoring one's communication for their ethical, moral, social values was also fulfilled by the speaker as he ensured that he maintained ethical, moral and social values through the quality of his speech.

Sentence 2- To all Lagosians in diaspora, foreign residents and all other stakeholders; thank you for keeping faith in the potential greatness of our state. From the bottom of my heart, I greet all our traditional rulers, our Royal Fathers, Kings, Chiefs and their wives.

Above statement, with which the speaker recognised the presence of the political and social hierarchy of those gathered also fulfils the dictates of all the principles of applied peace linguistics as enunciated by Gomes de Matos. The phrase *our state* also gives the addresses a sense of belonging as partners in building the peace necessary for a prosperous and harmonious state, amidst the co-habitation of people from different tribes and cultures.

Sentence 3- As we collectively face the challenge to make Lagos a better place to live in, we must recognize our strength in diversity. A common national identity

where everybody counts. I shall run an open government of inclusion that will not leave anyone behind. No matter your age, sex, tribe or any other Status, as long as you reside in Lagos, we will make Lagos work for you…. I am determined to demonstrate that the government belongs to the citizens. You have put us here as servants to serve you and not you serving us. Today we are committed to that creed.

This statement also, adheres to the principles of applied peace (non-killing) linguistics. By recognising the diversity in the religious, cultural and ethnic background of the people, the speaker shows respect that everyone has a role to play in achieving a better Lagos state and not just a section or identified group of the Lagos population. This helps to foster peace.

Sentence 5: To this end, a new office of Overseas Affairs and Investment (LAGOS GLOBAL) shall be created under the Governor's Office. We want you to fly into Lagos, start your business, find your way; live, work and enjoy in Lagos.

This statement shows that the speaker has a sense of collective belonging and participation of everyone in the pains and gains of the state, notwithstanding the religious, cultural, ethnic and social diversity. Thus, the statement fulfils the principles of applied peace linguistics.

Sentence 6- God bless Lagos State
God bless Nigeria
Itesiwaju Ipinle Eko
Oje mi lo gun; Oje wa lo gun
Eko oni baje – I promise. Thank you.

This statement above, also, obeys or heeds the dictates of applied peace linguistics as the speaker expresses good wishes to everyone, irrespective of the socio-cultural, ethnic, religious or political background.

5. Summary of findings and Conclusion

From the analysis conducted, it is clear that Oba Rilwanu Akiolu's speech violates the principles of applied peace (non-killing) linguistics. He is neither a peaceful linguistic-bridge between or among persons, groups and communities, nor did he dignify his dialogue. Again, he failed to honour humanism and foster humanization because of his inability to avoid or prevent the infliction of verbal

harm and humiliation upon his addresses. Consequenetly, the study observed that the Oba failed to act as a peace patriot as advocated by the principles of applied peace linguistics. These qualities of the Oba's speech are in contrast to those of former Governor **Akinwunmi Ambode, who adhered to the principles of applied peace (non-killing) linguistics.**

In conclusion, this paper makes a case for the upholding of proper language usage to foster peaceful co-existence in Nigeria. This should be the focus in a multi-lingual, multi-cutural and multi-ethnic Nigeria, rather than making of poor language choices that produce inflammatory statements, which are capable of instilling bad blood in the veins of an already ethnically, culturally, socially and politically diverse population of the country.

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