LEXICAL AND DISCURSIVE CONSTRUCTION OF NATIONAL IDENTITIES IN SELECTED ENGLISH-MEDIUM NATIONAL ANTHEMS OF AFRICAN STATES

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Abstract
Slave traders and colonizers dominated Africa until the middle of 20th century. After this period came the quest for independence. At independence, a unique national identity of African nations was formed. Existing studies have examined national anthem and national identity construction from political, psychological, sociological, historical, and philosophical points of view. These existing studies have underexplored lexical and discursive construction of national identities in selected English-medium national anthems of African nations in systemic terms. This study, therefore, examines lexical and discursive construction of national identities in selected English-medium national anthems of African states with a view to unearthing regional differences and similarities in the construction of national identities. This study adopts de Cillia et al. (2009) discursive strategies deployed in the construction of national identities, complementing with the use of Halliday (1999)’s systemic functional linguistics as the theoretical framework. Out of 54 nations in Africa, we selected four nations from each region—central, east, north, south and west—along with these 20 nations’ English-medium national anthems. These national anthems are written in English, and those that were not originally written in English have translated English versions for accessibility. This study demonstrates that the different lexicalizations deployed to construct national identities in English-medium national anthems revealed collective memory, and the socio-political and religious upheavals that are peculiar to African nations.

Keywords: National anthems, national identity, discursive strategies, lexicalization and discursive construction.

Introduction
European traders and colonizers dominated Africa in the 15th century. During this period, millions of Africans were sent as slaves to work in colonial plantations in different parts of the world. When slave trade was abolished, Europeans shifted their attention to colonialism and the exploitation of raw materials. By the end of the 19th century, the African continent was dominated and conquered by colonizers. The
quest for independence started after World War I. Between 1945 and 1955, this quest was intensified, and many African nations got their independence between the 1950s and 1960s.

At independence, a new national identity of the African nations was formed. This identity is represented and constructed in national topoi such as national anthems, national myths, national narrative, national pledges, national mottoes, national constitutions, and the coats of arms of Africa nations. Identity, in its ordinary meaning, refers to what identifies, distinguishes, and differentiates somebody from others. Deng (1995) opines that identity is used to “describe the way individuals and groups define themselves and are defined by others on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, language and culture” (p. 1). After independence, African nations create their national identity in different ways. This is particularly evident in their national anthems.

A national anthem is the sacred and official song of a nation. This sacred song evokes emotional response and patriotism among the citizens of a nation. In the case of Africa, it reminds them of their colonial experience, the topography of their land, and their political and historical memory. Previous studies have focused on national identity formation/construction from historical, religious, psychological, sociological, and philosophical points of view. Souza’s (2008) work investigated national anthems written in English, with a special attention to the generic structures of seven African national anthems, namely, those of Ghana, Mauritius, Namibia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Gambia, and Uganda. Chee et al. (2015) examine the national anthems of other African nations, such as Gambia, Ghana, Mauritius, Namibia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Uganda that linguistically depict the violence of arms, war, shedding of blood, and paying the supreme sacrifice. Fourteen African national anthems out of 54 have been investigated. However, these previous studies have underexplored lexicalization in the construction of national identity in Africa via national anthems and their English-medium. This study, therefore, examines lexical and discursive construction of national identity in selected English-medium national anthems of African States with a view to unveiling regional differences and similarities in the construction of national anthems.

Literature Review

National identities: An overview

National identity is defined as “an imagined political community” (Anderson, 1983, p.14), which nationalized political subjects perceive as discrete entities. He further states that national identity is a mental construct because citizens of a nation reason and perceive issues and concepts the same way. Bourdieu (1993) defines a national identity as “a sort of habitus.” He describes national identity as a complex of ideas, concepts, or perceptual schemata that manifest in three ways, namely: similar/related emotional attitudes, similar/related behavioral dispositions, and national socialization. Hall (1996a, p. 292) is of the opinion that national identity is “a system of cultural representation.” This “system of cultural representation” is manifested in national culture and national narrative. National culture, according to Hall (1996a), is an acceptable and permissible behavior in a particular speech community, while national narrative deals with the story of a nation that gives credence to its realities. From these reviews, a national identity is not merely an imagined political community, because it has a concrete and definite geographical boundary. The role of language as a soul habitat of national identity is conspicuously
missing in these definitions. Therefore, our working definition of national identity is that national identity is a modernized form of social identity, which is produced, reproduced, transformed, and dismantled discursively (de Cillia et al., 2009). The concept of national identity is discursive in the sense that it aims to create a discourse of self and other representation that is based on national differences and international sameness (similarities). A discourse of national identity aims to create culture of difference, unification, and solidarity. Discourse, as a form of social practice, is concerned with language in use. Therefore, national identity is a product of discourse. It is socially constitutive and constituted (de Cillia et al., 2009). It is a product of social practices and events. It changes over time depending on socio-cultural, political, religious, and economic realities. Therefore, national identity is not static, fixed, and rigid, but malleable, unfixed, and flexible.

On the other hand, the national anthem is one of the most important national symbols of a nation, and is a sacred song that evokes and provokes patriotism, nationalism, and communalty (Hobsbawn, 1983; Cerulo, 1989, 1993; Smith, 1991, 1998; Fotopoulos et al., 2009; Souza, 2008; Chee et al., 2015). A national anthem is described as a “bonding icon” and “an invented tradition which fosters solidarity feelings” and produces “community of like-minded people” (Hobsbawn, 1983; & Stenglin, 2004, p. 409). The national anthem is, therefore, the most important bonding icon and invented tradition of a nation, which helps in the understanding of socio-cultural, political, historical, ideological, religious, and economic dimensions of a nation. The national anthem is a sign of political sovereignty and a ritual song to commemorate the official opening and closing of public and national events such as national protest, war, celebration, the death of a president, the swearing-in ceremony of a president, national day celebrations, and on many other occasions. The national anthem increases political consciousness and delivers unambiguous statements about national identity.

Theoretical framework
The theoretical framework adopted for this study is discourse-historical approach (henceforth, DHA). Wodak and her colleagues in the Department of Applied Linguistics, University of Vienna, Austria, developed DHA in the 1980s. DHA is one of the traditional models of critical discourse analysis. DHA focuses on modern societal problems such as racism, discrimination, anti-Semitism and national identity (Hernandez, 2006). DHA “attempts to integrate a large quantity of available knowledge about the historical sources and the background of the social and political fields in which discursive “events” are embedded” (de Cillia 2009, p.7). This model is relevant to the current study because it focuses on the modern societal problem of national identity. de Cillia et al. (2009) developed discursive strategies in the construction of Austrian national identities. Though this method originally applied to the Austrian national identities, it could be extended to other contexts such as African national identities (de Cillia, 1999, p.186 cited in Hernandez, 2006 p.108). This paper, therefore, applied the discursive strategies of de Cillia et al. (2009) to the study of the discursive construction of national identities in English-medium national anthems of African states.

de Cillia et al. (2009) define “strategies” as a set of plans used to achieve varying degrees of political, psychological other kind of objectives” (p. 31). They identified four major discursive strategies in the discursive construction of national identities:
Constructive strategies: aim to promote a culture of unification, identification, solidarity, and differentiation.

Strategies of perpetuation: endeavour to maintain, reproduce, preserve, and protect threatened national identity.

Strategies of transformation: aim to transform a well-known national identity into another identity, which the speakers or citizens of those nations have already conceptualised.

Dismantling or destructive strategies: seek to disparage existing national constructs without providing old ones to replace them.

In addition, the theory of lexicalization adopted for this paper is situated within Halliday (1999)’s Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). Halliday (1999)’s SFL is significant because it accounts for the use of language according to context. The systemic dimension is premised on the fact that language is “a structured network of sign systems” used by speakers for meaning construction whereby the selection of one system excludes others (Souza, 2008, p. 29). The functional dimension deals with the dialectical relationship between language and social context. This suggests that language in SFL is a social phenomenon. Language is “a complex semiotic system, having various levels” (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 24). The three levels recognized are semantics (discourse), lexicogrammar, and phonology. Semantics is concerned with explication of meanings, lexicogrammar is a selection of system choices either at the lexical or grammatical levels which invariably construe meanings, while phonology is the sound and letters, which help in the expression of lexical and grammatical choices. Context in SFL bifurcates into context of culture and context of situation. The context of culture accounts for the larger context that embodies culture, value, and customs of a speech community. Halliday (1999) defines context of culture “as the ideas and the customs and values inherited from the past” (p. 17) which is given to a text and helps to construe its meanings. Context of situation accounts for immediate context where language is given utmost attention. The discourse of national anthems as language in use is best understood when it is placed within the aforementioned contexts. Therefore, “contexts” helps in the understanding of the discursive construction of national identities in English-medium national anthems of African states.

Methodology: Data and analytical procedures

This research work adopts simple random and purposive sampling techniques in the collection and collation of data. The principle of simple random sampling technique is premised on the fact that every element of a population must be given equal chance of being selected for study (Lucas et al., 2006). Purposive sampling technique is applied on data from each African sub-region on anthems that fit into our specific objectives (Palys, 2008). Africa has 54 nations and the continent is divided into five sub-regions, namely: central, east, north, southern, and west. There are nine nations in Central Africa, 11 in East Africa, seven in North Africa, ten in Southern Africa, and 15 in West Africa. Four nations are selected from the five sub-regions, totalling 20 in all. The table below shows the list of the 20 national anthems of African nations selected, each nation’s year of independence, date of each anthem’s adoption, and sample texts from these national anthems.
### Table 1: Year of independence, year of adoption, title of national anthems and sample texts of selected English-medium national anthems of African states.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Year of independence</th>
<th>Year of adoption</th>
<th>Title of national anthem</th>
<th>Sample texts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central African States</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congo D.R</td>
<td>1960</td>
<td>1960</td>
<td>“La Congolais”</td>
<td>Stand up Congolese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gabon</td>
<td>1960</td>
<td>1960</td>
<td>The Concord</td>
<td>United in concord and brotherhood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equatorial Guinea</td>
<td>1968</td>
<td>1968</td>
<td>“Hinno Nacional”</td>
<td>Let us tread the path</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East African States</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eritrea</td>
<td>1993</td>
<td>1993</td>
<td>Ertra, Ertra</td>
<td>Ertra, Ertra, Ertra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burundi</td>
<td>1962</td>
<td>1962</td>
<td>Uburundi Bwacu</td>
<td>Beloved Burundi, gentle country,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanzania</td>
<td>1961</td>
<td>1961</td>
<td>God Bless Africa</td>
<td>God Bless Africa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uganda</td>
<td>1962</td>
<td>1962</td>
<td>Pearl of Africa</td>
<td>Oh! Uganda! May God uphold thee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North African States</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Algeria</td>
<td>1962</td>
<td>1963</td>
<td>The pledge/Hymn of Revolution</td>
<td>We swear by the lightning that destroys,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>1953</td>
<td>1979</td>
<td>My Homeland</td>
<td>My homeland, my homeland, my hallowed land,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morocco</td>
<td>1956</td>
<td>199?</td>
<td>Fountain of Freedom</td>
<td>Fountain of Freedom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tunisia</td>
<td>1956</td>
<td>1987</td>
<td>O defenders of the Homeland</td>
<td>O defenders of the Homeland!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Africa States</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angola</td>
<td>1975</td>
<td>1975</td>
<td>Forward Angola</td>
<td>O Fatherland, we shall never forget</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Namibia</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>Namibia land of the brave</td>
<td>Namibia land of the brave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malawi</td>
<td>1964</td>
<td>1964</td>
<td>O God Bless our land of Malawi</td>
<td>O God bless our land of Malawi,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mozambique</td>
<td>1975</td>
<td>1975</td>
<td>Heroes of the noble race</td>
<td>Heroes of the sea noble race</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West African States</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gambia</td>
<td>1965</td>
<td>19965</td>
<td>National anthem</td>
<td>For The Gambia, our Homeland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>1957</td>
<td>1957</td>
<td>Hail the name of</td>
<td>God bless our homeland</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In order to investigate lexical and discursive construction of national identities in selected English-medium national anthems of African states, the analysis begins by examining how discursive issues are lexicalized in selected English-medium national anthems of African states and followed by lexical signifiers as well as their functions and the discursive strategies they perform in constructing national identities in selected English-medium national anthems of African states.

Data Analysis and Discussion

Lexicalization of discursive issues in selected English-medium national anthems of African States.

Lexicalization refers to a change that occurs to a word after it has been formed, coined, or borrowed from one language to another, or after it has been contextualized in order to express a concept (Lipka et al., 2004). It is the process of making a word express a particular concept (Ezeife, 2014). It is otherwise called wording, which can manifest in three ways: Overlexicalization (overwording), relexicalization (rewording), and underlexicalization (underwording) (Fairclough, 1989; Halliday, 1978). This paper focuses on lexicalization not only as a frequent use of words but also as the study of form, structure, nature, and function of a word in the expression of a particular concept. Therefore, lexicalization is the study of the formed, borrowed, contextualized word to express a particular concept. The expression of the meaning of a word may not be in Standard English but in a particular variety of English. For instance, in Nigeria, execuchiefs and Commander in Chief of Armed Forces refer to financial impropriety perpetrated by the executive arm of government. Lexicalization is a word that enhances discourse organization and comprehension when it is repeated several times to express a concept. Such words aid the easy comprehension and understanding of discursive issues within a particular discourse. The literal meanings of these words help to appreciate and understand discursive issues in selected English-medium national anthems of African States. Key words like: “arise,” “let,” “God,” and “images” are repeated in selected English-medium national anthems and they help to organize discourse. The discursive issues that these words represent are: clarion call, national solidarity, ethical appeal to Supreme Being, and national rejection of colonial rule. The definitions of key words used in this study are taken from the Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary (8th edition) and Microsoft Encarta (2009).

Recurrent use of the word “arise” expressing clarion call

“Arise” means to become visible as one moves towards achieving a particular goal. It also means to rise from a quiet, inactive, or subjugated state to be active, vocal, or rebellious. It is the act of coming
together to protest against unpleasant situations in a nation and to rise in order to right the wrong in a society or nation. Clarion call, on the other hand, is a call to action directed at individuals groups, people, institutions, communities and nations. Clarion call always demands an urgent or inspiring appeal to carry out an action. This discursive issue recurs only in West African English-medium national anthems.

West Africa:
Nigeria: Arise, O compatriots, Nigeria's call obey,
Niger: Arise, Niger, arise! May our fruitful work rejuvenate
       Arise, Niger, arise! On land and river,
Ghana: Arise, arise, O sons of Ghanaland

The word “arise” in the national anthems of Ghana and Nigeria is employed to reveal and capture the state of passiveness and inactiveness of the citizens of these nations. Citizens of these nations are called to awake from slumber and begin to act and defend their nations. Although the first three lines in the first Nigerian national anthem, “Nigeria we hail thee/our own dear native land/though tribe and tongue may differ,” show linguistic and ethnic diversities, the current national anthem adopted in 1978 calls on fellow countrymen and women, irrespective of religious, cultural, political, and religious subscriptions, to unite the nation and serve, lead, and fight for the survival of the Nigerian Nation. This national anthem was adopted when the nation was in dire need of national unity after 30 months of civil war. The establishment of the national youth service corps, and the creation of states, among others, was put in place to call on Nigerians to awake from slumber and serve their fatherland. The national anthem of Ghana was written during the colonial period, when agitation for independence was intensified. Ghana totally rejected colonial rule and it was not surprising that Ghana is the first nation to attain independence in sub-Saharan region. The expression, “sons of Ghana,” does not refer only to male children, but to anybody who is of Ghanaian ancestry. Therefore, a call on a son of Ghana is not gender-specific, but is a way of calling on every citizen of Ghana to work and protect their territorial integrity.

In the national anthem of Niger, the Niger nation, Niger, is personified. Arise “Niger” is a call to action and appeal for people to do something. This means that a nation can be sick, inflicted, invaded, threatened, annexed, and a nation can die as a person does. The only difference is that a nation does not anticipate its death, but a person does. Niger is likened to a human being, to tell the citizenry that a nation must be on the alert to defend herself against internal and external attacks. Nigeriens are called upon to fight on land and river. Niger got her name from the Niger River—the second longest river in Africa. This river has served as a means of livelihood to neighboring countries—Nigeria, Ghana, and many others.

Tactical deployment of “let” to solicit for national solidarity

“Let” means to allow somebody to do something or something to happen without trying to stop it. It is the act of giving somebody permission and an order to do something in order to protect collective image. It calls for collective actions to protect and preserve one’s interest. National solidarity is a collective action and the unanimous agreement reached by members of a nation to carry out an action. It is a harmony of interests, responsibilities, and beliefs among members of a nation to achieve a common and purposeful goal. This discursive issue is commonly found in the national anthems of Central African nations:
Central Africa:
Congo: Let us all, with wild joyfulness, sing/ Let us forget what divides us/Let us live our motto/ Let us fight every one of us
Equatorial Guinea: Let us tread the paths/Let us sing for freedom (repeated twice) Let us shout /Let us defend our freedom/Let us keep our united nation/ Let us keep our nation independence.
Gabon: Let us forget our quarrel/ Let us build together/ Let us remain vigilant/Let us salute our fatherland and ever sing.

Solidarity is the act of showing support by one group or group of people for another person or group because they share similar or related feelings, opinions, aims, and ideologies. Nationalists of these nations tactically use “let” as a discourse-organizing word to solicit for national solidarity in order to build a united nation. Africa is a continent that is endowed with multiplicity of ethnicities. Ethnicities divide the nation of Congo, and Congo was engulfed in post-independence turmoil for two decades after Mobutu was overthrown. This war really tore the nation apart. To solicit solidarity is a way to achieve national continuity. In Gabon and Equatorial Guinea, solidarity is deployed in defense of the nations and all hands must be on deck to fight against any territorial invasion.

Images expressing national rejection of colonial rule
An image is a word used with a different meaning from its normal one in order to describe something in a way that produces a strong picture in the minds of the reader and listener. What this suggests is that images are used to create mental pictures of things in the mind of the readers. National rejection in the context of colonial rule means the unacceptability or refusal of colonial government in Africa. It means a lack of belief and trust in running a system of government for common use. It means a refusal to accept the legitimacy of colonial rule in Africa. This suggests that colonial rule is inimical, and inhumane to African nations; therefore, African elites call for its total and national rejection. This discursive issue features in North African national anthems.

Algeria: we swear by the lighting that destroys, /by the streams of generous blood being shed,/ let it be written with the blood of martyrs.
Morocco: both light and fire/ Up! My brethren
Tunisia: the blood surges in our veins,/ Let heavens roar with fire/ Let thunderbolts rain with fire

As can be seen from these lines, nations in North Africa are compared to lighting, light, fire, and rain. These images, in essence, show the total rejection of colonial rule, because African nations are fire that cannot be played with, and these nations are ready to consume any foreign incursion. Since the 11th century, the Arabs have conquered North Africa. The region was a route for the trans-Atlantic slave trade. North Africa was a major trade center for the Arabs. These Arabs were later conquered by Europeans’ powers, and colonialism began. In Algeria, for instance, more than 500,000 lives were lost in that country’s quest for independence. The war lasted for eight years, and it was one of the deadliest wars in the history of Africa. The Algerian anthem shows inordinate passion and zeal to end colonial rule. To live is good and to die in the course of fighting for a nation is the ultimate price. Therefore, Algerians see
fighting to secure their independence and to die in the process as the best martyrdom. In Tunisia, the quest for independence started in 1954 and that quest was accompanied by violence and destruction of property, which caused the French premier Pierre Mendes-France to come to Tunisia for reconciliation. In 1955, Tunisia got her independence after the French premier had promised them full autonomy. In Morocco, the efforts of absolute monarchy facilitated Moroccan independence. The quest started in 1924, when Abdel e-Krim revolted and drove Spanish forces from the shore of Morocco. His attempt to drive the French from Morocco was resisted, and French forces dominated the country for two decades. The country’s quest for independence was brought to the fore again when a student group was formed in the 20th century. In 1944, Morocco nationalists formed the Istiqal party. This party won the support of Arabs and the sultan. The sultan proposed Moroccan self-government in 1950. He was deposed in 1953, went to exile in Madagascar, and came back in 1955 when Morocco got her independence.

Ethical appeal to Supreme Being captured in the word “God”

God is a spirit or being that is worshipped and is believed to have created the universe. God is believed to be a holy being or spirit to whomworships and prayers are addressed. He has power over a particular part of nature or represents qualities such as wisdom, knowledge, eternity, fertility, abundance, goodness, immutability, and others. Ethos as one of the Aristotle’s persuasive tools is defined “as the moral ideas and attitudes that belong to a group of society.” Lathal and Ghosal (2014), cited in Alo and Ayinuola (2016: p.351) opine that ethos is the most important persuasive tool without which rhetoric would not be functional. Ethical appeal refers to an act of foregrounding universal beliefs, values and concepts such as God, family, death, birth, marriage, and others. Our attention in this paper focuses on universal belief centered on God as a creator of the universe. Ethical appeal is the act of foregrounding African universal belief in a Supreme Being, “God,” as the controller of universe. This discursive issue is peculiar to West and East African Nations.

West Africa:
Nigeria: Oh God of creation, direct our noble cause/ [Oh God of creation], Guide our leaders’ right, [Oh God of creation] Help our youth the truth to know.
Ghana: God bless our homeland Ghana/ And [God] make our nation great and strong/[And [God] make our nation / Bold to defend forever/ and under God march on forevermore,
Gambia: Keep us, great God of nations

East Africa:
Uganda: Oh! Uganda! May God uphold thee
Burundi: May God, who gave you to us.

Ethical appeal to a Supreme Being for divine assistance, guidance, protection, and fruitfulness is made on behalf of the nation or the citizens. Ethical appeal to a Supreme Being manifests in East and West Africa national anthems. The belief in a Supreme Being is evident in African Traditional Religion (henceforth ATR). ATR believes in the existence of spirits, gods, goddesses, and idols. These are
believed to control every segment of human lives such as rain, finance, marriage, harvest, planting, family, war, forest, ocean, and desert. Notwithstanding, Africans believe in the existence of a Supreme Being, the creator, who brings the universe into being. It is not far-fetched to see God being called different names in different African languages such as “Chukwu,” “Chineke,” “Obangiji,” “Olodumare,” “Olorun,” “Osanobua,” “Nana,” “Ngewo,” “Odamankoma,” and many others. The existence of various religions to Africa still upholds the sanctity of the Supreme Being called the creator. This Supreme Being has the power to direct and guide. He protects human beings from internal and external attacks and invasion. In the national anthems of Nigeria and Gambia, ethical appeal is made to the creator to direct, lead, and guide the youths, leaders, nobles, and occupants of these nations, whereas in Ghana emphasis is concentrated on the nation.

Lexicalization of discursive strategies deployed in the construction of national identities in selected English-medium national anthems of African States

Metaphor as a constructive and transformation strategy

Metaphor, from the Greek word “metapherein,” means “transfer.” Charteris-Black (2011) defines metaphor as a situation whereby an aspect of our experience is transferred to another aspect, or is represented using another aspect. He further stated that metaphor is “a projection and mapping” across what they call “conceptual domains,” which involves a cognitive mental process by which language is the only medium of expression of the metaphorical word or phrase, and that conceptual structure of source domain is mapped onto the conceptual structure of target domain. Metaphor is a prominent lexical signifier deployed to construct national identities in English-medium national anthems of selected African states. The following metaphors are deployed in constructing national identities in English-medium national anthems: land metaphor, animal metaphor, blood metaphor, and person metaphor. These types of metaphor and their frequency of occurrence are presented in the table below:

Table 1: Source and target domains and conceptual metaphors in selected English-medium national anthems of African states

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metaphors types (source and target domains)</th>
<th>Conceptual metaphors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Source domain</td>
<td>Target domain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Land metaphor</td>
<td>The nation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Animal metaphor</td>
<td>Colonial masters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Home metaphor</td>
<td>The nation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Mother metaphor</td>
<td>The nation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Father metaphor</td>
<td>The nation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The literary meanings of source and target domains are taken from Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary (8th Edition) and Microsoft Encarta.

Land metaphor

The conceptual metaphor here is that the nation is a land. The source domain “land” and the target domain “nation” depict that land can be underutilized, and underexploited. The word “land” has the
semantic features +inanimate, +nativity, + a place of inheritance, fruitful while the nation has the semantic features +inanimate and + abstract. In this context, a land refers to a country of birth and place where someone has a right of inheritance. Let us examine this metaphor in English-medium national anthems of African states.

North Africa:
Morocco: Land of freedom…
Tunisia: We die for the sake of our land/ we live and die loyal to Tunisia…

East Africa:
Uganda: The land that feeds us, land of freedom…

Southern Africa:
Namibia: God, bless our land of Malawi, keep it a land of peace, land of brave, beloved land of savannah.

Nation as land and land as nation is deployed to create a sense of belongingness and to solicit for national solidarity. A nation is likened to a land that can either be in peace or in a war situation, fruitful or barren, and free or in bondage.

Animal metaphor
The conceptual metaphor here is that colonial masters are animals. Animal metaphor is tactically used to depict malevolent colonial rule in Africa. The source domain “animal” has the semantic features +animate, + savage, + beast, + omnivorous, +wild, -human being, and -sense while the target domain “colonial masters” has +human being, +animate and + foreigner. This metaphor depicts that colonial master misruled, exploited and underdeveloped African nation. Let us examine this in the following lines of African national anthems.

West Africa:
Niger: We confront ferocious and treacherous animals/Often scarcely armed,
Ghana: And help us to resist oppressors’ rule.

Southern Africa:
Malawi: Put down each and every enemy,
Mozambique: Struggle against imperialism

In this context, colonial masters are regarded as beasts, wicked human beings and despots. The exploitation of Africans started with slavery and slave trade. After the prohibition of slave trade, attention was shifted to colonialism. Colonialism benefited colonial masters, and impoverished African nations. The quest for independence started after the Second World War. This quest was intensified when various
political parties and mass media were formed. This metaphor is used to express Africans’ hatred, and dislike for colonial rule. This metaphor shows socio-political and historical upheavals in Africa. African nations were ruled for a century before the quest for independence was intensified in the late 1950s. This quest led to brutalization and killings of African cultural heritage and imprisonment of African nationalists.

**Home metaphor**

Home metaphor refers to a nation. The source domain “home” has semantic features + Rest, + Comfort, + Building, + Security, + love, + Nativity, + dwelling place, + Acceptability while the nation has semantic features + inanimate and + abstract. Nation is likened to a place of comfort, acceptability, security, and rest. This metaphor is tactically deployed in the use of homeland. The words homeland, motherland, and fatherland are called lexical metaphors (Martin and White, 2005). Martin and White define lexical metaphors as words that provoke attitude or have the potential to cause an attitudinal response in readers. Homeland, in English-medium national anthems, refers to a place where a person has a sense of belonging and where one shares in the history, political upheaval, and economic recession of the nation. There is recurrent use of “homeland” in African national anthems, particularly in North and West Africa:

**North Africa:**
- Egypt: My homeland, my homeland, my hallowed land (repeated three times)
- Tunisia: O defenders of the Homeland!
- Morocco: We salute as our emblem God/Homeland, and King.

**West Africa:**
- Gambia: For The Gambia, Our Homeland (repeated twice)
- Ghana: God bless our homeland Ghana,

“Homeland” here depicts a place of rest and security. The word occurs seven times in the national anthem of Egypt. It suggests a place of refuge, safekeeping, protections, security, confidence and defense.

**Mother metaphor**

The conceptual metaphor here is that nation is a mother. The source domain is mother, which has the semantic features + animate, + human, + productivity, + fertility + good care and + diligence while nation has semantic features + inanimate and + abstract. This implies that a nation is a mother. Except in Southern African, there is no other region that uses motherland in their national anthem recurrently. This can be exemplified in the lines of English-medium national anthems of southern African nations.
- Namibia: Namibia Motherland/We love thee (Namibia motherland)
- Malawi: And Mother Malawi

Motherland is the country in which somebody was born. It shows productivity. It is a place of oneness and togetherness. In addition, nation as a mother depicts a place of fertility.
Father metaphor

The conceptual metaphor here is that nation is a father. Nation is a place that provides security to its sons and daughters. The semantic features of father are: +animate, +human, + protection and + security while national has semantic features +inanimate and +abstract. Nation as a father shows a place of protection and acceptability. Fatherland equally refers to somebody’s ancestral nation and a native land. Let us examine nation as fatherland in English-medium national anthems of African states.

Nigeria: To serve our fatherland
Angola: To serve our fatherland/ O Fatherland, we salute your sons
Algeria: The cry of the Fatherland sounds from the battlefields.
Gabon: Let us salute the Fatherland and ever sing!
Central African Republic: Holding high the flag of the Fatherland

In this context, a nation is a place of protection and security. This implies that there cannot be any internal or external invasion and if there is, the nation stands and defends its territory and citizens. The safeguarding of lives of citizens is mostly evident when other nations are in a war situation. Expatriates from different home nations are redeployed back to their home country for safety.

Conclusion

This study has provided important insights into the understanding of the historical, socio-political, religious, economic, and cultural underpinnings in the English-medium national anthems of African states. Against the backdrop of classification of national anthems into monarchical, revolutionary, and power consolidation, according to some scholars, English-medium national anthems of African states initially fall within the last two classifications, and have experienced paradigm shift because of the socio-political, religious, and economic upheavals that befell the African continent after the departure of the colonial masters. English-medium national anthems of African states are concerned with national cohesion because there is an urgent need to unite and bond diverse ethnic nationalities for peace and tranquility to reign in African nations. This is revealed via the varying degrees of regional and national similarities and dissimilarities, which are lexicalized in the discursive construction of national identities in selected English-medium national anthems of African states. Finally, African English-medium national anthems preach and promote oneness, togetherness, inclusiveness, and cohesiveness.

References


