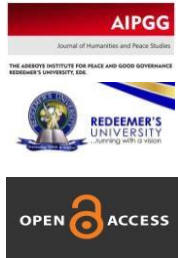


Representation of social actors in media discourse on Biafra Self-determination agitation

Moyosore Omowonuola Alade
Department of Mass Communication
Redeemer's University, Nigeria
Osun State Nigeria

Abstract:



Given the influence of the media on public discourse, this study analyses how social actors in the Biafra self-determination agitation discourse are represented in the Nigerian media. The data comprises articles downloaded from the online version of news reports of two Nigerian popular broadsheet newspapers – The Punch and The Guardian, between 2016 and 2017. The study is grounded in sociolinguistic-based Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). It adopts Van Leeuwen's conception of social actor representation as an analytical framework to investigate the inclusion and exclusion of social actors and the roles allocated to social actors in the Biafra agitation discourse. The study finds that Biafra self-determination groups, security operatives and the Nigerian government are included in the news reports as social actors. Those referred to as 'attackers', and 'killers' are backgrounded and suppressed in the representation of the Biafra agitation discourse. Also, social actors are assigned both active and passive roles.

Keywords: Representation, Critical discourse analysis, Social Actors, Biafra Agitation, Van Leeuwen, IPOB, MASSOB