COHESION IN SELECTED EDITORIALS FROM TWO NIGERIAN NEWSPAPERS

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Abstract

This study analyses the editorials of *Vanguard* and *Guardian* Nigerian newspapers to investigate how cohesive devices are used in textual creation and meaning realization in these texts. Four editorials were purposefully selected from the period of April to December 2021. This period is pivotal in understanding the escalated level of insecurity in Nigeria. It marked a basic departure from earlier attacks that targeted worship centers and marketplaces. Within this period, too, two serving States Governors narrowly escaped the bullets of the terrorists, namely: Governors Samuel Ortom of Benue State, and Babagana Zullum of Borno State. Halliday and Hasan's (1976) model of cohesion was adopted as the theoretical framework. A qualitative method was used for the data analysis. The framework is to enable the researcher to find out the effect of lexical choices as cohesive devices in the creation of semantic realization of the editorial text. The findings show that cohesive devices like reference, substitution, and ellipsis were used as grammatical items to refer to lexical elements that precede them. The devices help the writers to achieve their aim of making their readers see the connectivity of lexical words in meaning realization. The lexical cohesion, on the other hand, were used by the writers to relate to other lexical items that occurred previously in the texts. The editorial writers used the

lexical cohesion to create texture in the text, and to also express their opinions towards the insecurity situation in Nigeria. The study therefore, recommends more studies of this nature in other newspapers and media platforms to see how their choices of lexical cohesion enact social realities.

Keywords: Cohesion, Nigeria, Newspaper Editorials, lexical choices, cohesive devices.

Introduction

Nigeria has emerged as one of the most terrorized countries of the world in the last decade, perhaps second only to Afghanistan. Human carnage has become a daily occurrence to such an extent that it now hardly commands the attention of the news media. This ugly incident escalated between 2015 and 2023, spanning the eight long years of President Mohammadu Buhari's era. In Buhari's 8 years as President, some 63, 111 people were reported to have been killed by terrorists, kidnappers, and Islamic fundamentalists across Nigeria.

Significantly, two leading Nigerian newspapers paid deserved attention to these ugly incidents. In particular, within a spate of eight months, *Vanguard Newspapers* and *Guardian Nigeria* each made two strong editorial statements on the state of **insecurity** in Nigeria. This is monumental, given that human carnage no longer excites Journalists, and neither does it shake ordinary Nigerians with the sense of trepidation and fear that it engenders. *Vanguard Newspaper* of April 2, 2021, has, as its editorial, the scary title, "Attempt on Governor Ortom's Life", while the newspaper's issue of June 17, 2021, had its editorial captioned "Obasanjo's true "One Nigeria mantra". Samuel Ortom was the Executive Governor of Nigeria's Benue State between 2015 and 2023. Olusegun Obasanjo, on the other hand, is one of the most respected Nigerians still alive. He had served a total of 11 years presiding over the affairs of Nigeria, first as a military head of state (1976 -1979), and later as a civilian president (1999 - 2007).

Guardian Nigeria, too, did two bold and candid editorials on the state of insecurity in Nigeria. The newspaper's editorial of 14 June 2021, is aptly captioned "Beyond the Abuja Summit on Security". This is understandable given the alarming rate that has not only enveloped the country but in particular assumed a disturbing proportion in the Abuja-Kaduna axis and the whole of northern Nigeria. The newspaper's editorial of 10 December 2021, too, is determinedly titled: "Tackling Terror and Killings on the Highways".

That two leading Nigerian newspapers would devote time to make two bold pronouncements in less than a year is indicative of the newspapers' undiluted interest in the nation's social and economic stability. No country, no nation of the world can develop beyond the security of lives provided to its citizens.

It is important to state, at this point, that globally, editorials constitute the most important statements from any newspaper. The editorial is the voice, the proclamation that announces the identity and position of the newspaper on any issue of national or global relevance. It is scandalous for any respected newspaper not to have an editorial page; a newspaper could afford to ignore other aspects of its professional interests, but must always have a compelling interest in issues that lead to the progress of the country and the world at large.

Why do editorials often capture the imagination of readers, especially the educated elites? What specific linguistic element endears readers to the editorials of newspapers? Why do editors take the writing of Editorials as a very serious engagement, and what sustains and animates the beauty and readability of the editorials? This study investigates the element of coherence/cohesion as a fundamental feature that gives energy to newspaper Editorials. The selected newspapers are among the most respected in Nigeria and have both lasted nearly four decades in Nigeria's print-media space.

The year 2021 was particularly catastrophic in the degree of human carnage in Nigeria. A serving Governor, Samuel Ortom,

almost lost his life during one assassination attempt; his farms were burnt down, a significant number of his community members got killed, and many others were displaced. All these affirm that there is more than meets the eye. The editorials on these incidents, therefore, authorize a study of this nature.

The concept *coherence* is essentially dependent on the effective deployment of lexical resources available in the register of the textual discourse. Lexical choice, here, is a key element in every discourse situation, especially in the analysis of texts. In media discourse, language is the resource that influences information management in every context. The success of any text depends on the skillful use of language by the producer or writer. Newspaper editors often write to create awareness in matters of situational happenings. They write to criticize certain vices in society, as well as to persuade, advise, and encourage their readers on certain issues of importance to the general public or the society so that change shall be effected.

Consequently, these editors use various cohesive strategies to connect their words in the text into meaningful units of expression. More often than not, these writers also use these discourse strategies to facilitate efficient retrieval of identities of referent items. This way, they facilitate a smooth flow of information in the structures of the text, thereby enhancing textual cohesion.

In other words, the use of cohesive devices in spoken or written discourse, aside from making the work/discourse grammatical, also serves as a discourse strategy that Editors use to communicate their intents since no writer writes in a vacuum. The essence of writing is to pass a message across to the readers based on the Editor's experiences of the situations or happenings in society. The purpose may be to persuade the readers into accepting the writer's position on issues or to inform the readers on certain goings-on in society that readers may not have put in perspective.

The interest of this study, then, is to evaluate the cohesive devices as used in the Editorial sections of *Vanguard* and *Guardian Nigeria* newspapers. This is with the view to seeing how

these cohesive devices aid the language learner in making meaning of these editorials. The study raises some questions: For instance, what types of cohesive devices are employed by the Editors in creating editorial texts in *Vanguard* and *Guardian Nigeria* newspapers? What patterns of cohesion are found in the Editorials? To what extent are cohesive devices utilized in the editorials of *Vanguard* and *Guardian Nigeria* newspapers? How do these cohesive devices aid in the meaning-making of the subject matter?

Purpose of the Study

It is generally believed that a text, whether written or spoken, is only meaningful when the various segments are brought together to make a unified whole. The focus of attention, it reasons to follow, is not its grammaticality, but whether it meets the requirement in a certain context for the analysis of its textuality. The study's objectives are, among others, to identify various cohesive devices used in the editorials; establish the type of cohesive devices, and find out how the editors of the selected newspapers use these devices in making meanings in their context of use.

Conceptual Review

Some linguists like Owolabi, (2007), Ifechelobi, (2012), Ehineni, (2014), and several others, in their various research, suggest that many Nigerian Journalists often use unclear and complex linguistic constructions to convey their messages. This way, they create a lot of ambiguities that hardly advance the discursive interest of journalism nor even assist the general reader and learners of English as a communicative medium. Meanwhile, Systemic functional linguists, Halliday and Hasan (1976) have explored how lexical and grammatical elements such as reiterations, collocations, references, substitutions, ellipsis, and conjunctions are deployed to enhance textual cohesion in the texture of discourses.

Concerning that, Ifechelobi (2012:51) argues that "the information function of the mass media is ... indispensable for the meaningful existence of members of the society". Okunna

(2002:274) cited in Ifechelobi (2012) also observes that mass media through their various contents, collect, store, process, and disseminate news, data, pictures, facts, messages, opinions, and comments which members of the public require to react knowledgeably to personal, environmental, national and international conditions, as well as to be in a position to take appropriate decisions.

However, every newspaper has its style; the different styles adopted by the different newspaper houses mean the form of the language adopted to meet their target audience. The basic quality of the language of journalism is clarity, and its most desired effect is for the language to be understood. This is because it is the language used that determines what the reader can get from the story. The simplicity of the language of journalism makes the reader have confidence in the kind of print media he chooses to read because the reader believes that what is being reported is the truth (Umaru et.al, 2013: 1).

News and information benefit the reading public when they are used to communicate meaningful ideas in context and also meet the needs and priorities of the people (Ifechelobi, 2012). Ifechelobi goes further to explain that, "the knowledge of language use is the knowledge of how to use language appropriately". Even more: Ifechelobi (2012) suggests that "the press, in trying to make their message stand out in large, colourful, but short headlines often create a lot of ambiguities". This does not help the language learner in acquiring good English for effective communication. This study, then, attempts to show how the deployment of some lexical and grammatical devices enhanced textual cohesion and effective textual communication in the selected newspaper editorials. But, first, let's take a look at some of the key concepts as itemized below.

Text

A text, as explained by Halliday and Hasan (1976), must have texture, which is guaranteed collectively by cohesion and register.

Halliday and Hasan in this view, suggest that for a text to be coherent, it must satisfy two conditions: one is that a text must be consistent with the context in which it is created; the other is that a text must have cohesion. In other words, all parts in a text must be connected by identifiable cohesive devices (Wang, and Guo, 2014). Halliday and Hassan capture our definition, here, more clearly: "A text has texture, and this is what distinguishes it from something that is not a text. It derives this texture from the fact that it functions as a unity to its environment (1976:2)." The unity of a text in its environment of use, then, gives meaningful texture to a text. To be specific, the current investigation is confined to *the written text*: the focus is written editorials and the context is Nigeria in a devastating state of insecurity.

Cohesion and Coherence.

Cohesion and coherence are two hardly distinguished linguistic terms in discourse analysis. They are used in discourse analysis and Text Linguistics to describe the properties of written texts. While coherence is about the unity of ideas, cohesion is the unity of structural elements. coherence and cohesion are essential for aiding readability and the communication of ideas. Though they share the same morpheme "cohere", they are different (Wang and Guo, 2014:462). For Halliday and Hasan (1976), cohesion is the "non-structural text forming relations". The design of cohesion in the text is connected to semantic ties or "relations of meaning that exist within the text, and that define it as a text". For instance, we find examples of cohesion *when a pronoun refers back to an already-mentioned noun*. It also involves the use of the definite article (the) to qualify a noun that has already been introduced with the indefinite article (**a**, **an**). Cohesion is also achieved with the *substitution* of an already mentioned noun by a *synonym* or *hyponym*.

Cohesive Devices

Reference

This implies the use of an item or language to refer to another item within or outside the text without necessarily repeating the word, phrase, or clause. Halliday and Hassan (1976) opine that co-referential forms are forms which instead of being interpreted semantically in their own right, make reference to something else for their interpretation. When the interpretation is within the text, it is an 'endophoric' relation, but if it's outside the text, where the interpretation is in the context of the situation, it is an 'exophoric' relation. The exophoric relations, however, play no part in textual cohesion. Rather, endophoric relations form cohesive ties within the text.

Endophoric reference is also of two types: those that look back in the text for their interpretation is known as '*anaphoric'* reference and those that look forward in the text for their interpretation is called '*cataphoric'* reference. For instance, in the following sentences:

1. The bottle is on the table. The colour of it is green
2. Ada is in the house. She is very sick.

In the first sentence above, 'it' refers back to 'The bottle' while 'She' in the last sentence refers back to 'Ada'. *This type of reference that is looking backward* is '**anaphora'**. The reference, *where the pronoun is given first and kept the identity in suspense to be revealed later in the text*, on the other hand, is known as '**cataphora'**. Below, are some examples:

3. She sang melodiously. The late Osinachi.
4. He made a tremendous entrance. The President.

Here, 'She' in the first sentence refers to 'The late Osinachi', and 'He' in the second sentence refers to 'The President'. Referring expressions help to unify the text and create an economy because

they save writers from unnecessary repetition (Akindele, 2011). Halliday and Hasan (1976:1) identify *three main kinds of cohesive references*: **personal**, **demonstrative**, and **comparative**. Personal reference includes the three classes of personal pronouns, possessive adjectives (or possessive determiners) and possessive pronouns. Demonstrative reference has to do with the identification of the referent by locating it on a scale of proximity with circumstantial (adverbial) demonstratives like "here, there, now, and then". Comparative reference keeps track of identity and similarity through indirect references using adjectives like "same, equal, similar, different, else, better, more", etc. and adverbs like "so, such, similarly, otherwise, so, more", etc (Halliday and Hassan,1976:37-39 cited in Koussouhon *et. al,*2017).

Substitution

Substitution is the replacement of a word or phrase with a filler word such as "**one**", "**so**", or "**do**" in other to avoid repetition. Unlike reference, **substitution** is a relation between linguistic items like words or phrases. It is grammatical rather than meaningful. There are three classifications of substitution, according to Halliday and Hasan (1976:90). These are **nominal**, **verbal**, and **clausal** substitutions. In nominal substitution, the most typical substitution words are "the one" and "ones" and they substitute nouns. Consider, for instance, the following usages:

1. I pray you travel to Canada before I **do**. ("do", here, replaces the verb phrase '*travel to Canada*');

2. Thanks for the gift. Please get another **one**. ("one" replaces the noun '*gift'*);

3. Would you like a bottle of Coke? Yes, please. I'd love **one**. ("One" replaces '*a bottle of coke*');

4. Emeka destroyed his father's car. He must get him another **one**. ("One", here replaces '*his father's car*').

In *verbal substitution*, the most common substitute is the verb "**do**", and it is sometimes used in conjunction with "**so**" as in "*do so*", and substitute verbs. For example:

5. "Udenna is a smart fellow. Do you like him?" Yes, I **do**. ("Do", here, substitutes "*like him*");

While in *clausal substitution*, an entire clause is substituted and sometimes seems to be similar to either nominal or verbal substitution. But the difference is always the presupposed anaphoric reference. For example:

6. Did she come? I think **so**.

7. You should submit your work now if you have not **done so**.

Ellipsis

Ellipsis and *substitutions* are employed by writers to achieve economy and variety in their choice of words to make the text more interesting (Ezeifeka, 2018: 36). Like substitution, the **ellipsis** is a grammatical rather than semantic relation that expresses grammatical units such as words, phrases or clauses in a text. Though *substitution* and *ellipsis* are similar in their function as the linguistic link for cohesion, ellipsis differs in that it is "substitution by zero" (Halliday and Hasan 1976: 42). **Ellipsis** occurs when some uniquely recoverable elements are deleted. It has a formal notion, which does not apply to anything that has not been said or written before ... (Brown and Yule, 1983). Halliday and Hasan (1976) suggest that "language does not function in isolation, it functions in actual situations of use and, therefore, an elliptical item is one which, as it were, leaves specific structural slots to be filled from elsewhere. They distinguish three types *of ellipsis*: **nominal**, **verbal**, and **clausal**. 'Nominal ellipsis' means ellipsis within the nominal group. 'Verbal ellipsis' implies an ellipsis that operates on the verbal group. 'Clausal ellipsis' views

the clause as its basis. Consider, for instance, the elliptical instances in the following sentences:

1. I want to **read**, but I can't. ('*Read'* has been elided);

2. Nelson likes **going** to school but not to church. (Verbal ellipsis);

3. John bought three **cars** this year, and Peter bought two ('*Cars'* have been elided);

4. He could **come with us to school**. Yes, he could. ('*Come with us to school*' is elided).

Conjunction

Conjunction acts as a cohesive tie between clauses or sections of text in such a way as to demonstrate a meaningful pattern between them (Bloor and Bloor, 2004: 98). For Brown and Yule (1983:115) observation, conjunctions are "explicit expression of meaning relations in a text". They see conjunction as the underlying semantic relation, which has the cohesive power (Dairo and Onadeko. 2008:69). Meanwhile, Halliday and Hasan (1976:226) maintain that conjunctive elements are cohesive not in themselves but indirectly, by their specific meanings; they are not primarily devices for reaching out into the preceding text, but they express certain meanings which presuppose the presence of other components in the discourse.

The conjunction is the least directly identifiable relation amongst the cohesion-forming devices within the text, and also the last of the grammatical cohesive ties. While, Dairo and Onadeko (2008:.69) maintain that conjunctions are explicit markers that are specific adverbs, which can express various meanings ranging from **additive** (and), **temporal** (before), **adversative** (anyway), **causal** (therefore) to **continuative** (well), Halliday and Hasan (1976) identify four categories of conjunctions as an *additive*, *adversative*, *causal* and *temporal*. 'Additive conjunction' acts to structurally coordinate or link by adding to the presupposed item and is signaled through "**and**, **also**, **too**, **furthermore**,

additionally," etc.; 'additive conjunction' may also act to negate the presupposed item and is signaled by "**nor**, **and ... not**, **neither**" etc. 'Adversative conjunctions' act to indicate "contrary to expectation" and are signaled by "*yet, though, only, but, in fact, rather*", and so on. 'Causal conjunction' expresses "result, reason and purposes", and is signaled by "**so**, **then**, **for**, **because**, **for this reason**, **as a result**, **in this respect**," and so on. The last conjunctive type, 'the temporal', links by signaling sequence or time, and is expressed by words such as "**then**, **and then**, **next**, **afterward**, **after that**, **until then**, **sequentially**" and some other expressions (Koussouhon *et.al* 2017: 90).

Lexical cohesion

Lexical cohesion occurs when lexical items, nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs in a text relate to each other in some way. They might relate to each other in terms of repetition, synonyms, and collocation. In other words, lexical cohesion refers to the way related words are chosen to link elements of a text. *Lexical cohesion* is different from other cohesive patterns in text texture because *it is non-grammatical*. Halliday and Hasan (1976: 274) suggest that lexical cohesion refers to the "cohesive effect achieved by the selection of vocabulary". 'Lexical cohesion', then, refers to the linguistic resources that signal discourse relations that transcend grammatical relations. It is the category of resources that is purely semantic because they enable text receivers to find texts meaningful and not random collections of unrelated sentences. They are linguistic devices built on the surface of texts and act like threads woven to make the different parts of text move together as semantic units (Malah, Tan, and Rashid, 2017: 240). Halliday and Hasan (1976) distinguish two basic types of lexical cohesion. These are **reiteration** and **collocation**. 'Reiteration' is the form of lexical cohesion that involves the **repetition** of a lexical item, either directly or through the use of a *synonym*, *antonym*, *superordination* (*hyponym* and *metonymy*), or generally-related word. **Repetition** is the *restatement* of the same lexical item. For

example, "*Stephen ate a plate of beans*. The meal of *beans* was very delicious". Synonyms refer to the relation between items of similar meaning. This is when different words that have the same meaning are chosen. For instance, "*The **Manager** is the **head** of the Company*". As an instance of lexical cohesion, we also have **Antonyms**, which refer to the relations between items of opposite meanings such as "*good*" and "*evil*", "*short*" and "*tall*", and so on. **Hyponyms**, in addition, are sometimes used. This refers to items of general to specific or part to a whole relationship. For instance, "*Mangoes, oranges, and apples are all **fruits***".

'**Collocation**', on the other hand, is achieved through the association of lexical items that regularly co-occur. It is the combination of vocabulary items that co-occur together. **Collocation** is easily noted when a word is immediately followed by a predictable word type. For example, when the word "sickness" is followed by "drug", "diagnosis"," prescription", or/and "treatment".

The Editorial

Newspaper editorials are sections in newspapers that are anonymously written by the editors. It also goes by various terms such as *comment*, *opinion*, *leading article*, or *we say*. (Reah,2002; Fowler,1991). Ideally, newspaper editorials are often meticulously written; points are carefully argued out and articulated in such a convincing manner that readers need no further push to read them. From the very first sentence to its last, the language of newspaper editorials is often beautifully couched to subtly compel and sustain the attention of readers through its *persuasive* arguments and its often *punchy* conclusions. Editorials often have four different categories, namely: the **Hermeneutic**, which strives to explain or interpret a social situation; the **Critical**, which addresses a position, a situation, or action of a government, individual, or group without any iota of fear; the **Persuasive**, which works on the psyche of both the government, groups or individuals on why certain actions should, or should not be taken; and the **Panegyric**

Editorial, which often embraces praise or eulogistic model of pronouncements without sounding sycophantic.

Theoretical Framework

The study adopts Halliday and Hasan's (1976) model of cohesion. Halliday (1969, 1970, and 1978) propounds the theory of the three metafunctions of language as **Ideational**, **Interpersonal**, and **Textual** (Dairo and Onadeko, 2008). Many other scholars have identified with the Hallidayan theory by providing more formal accounts of how speakers and writers of the English Language identify a text from its texture (VanDijk, 1972, Halliday and Hasan, 1976, de Beaugrande,1980, de Beaugrande and Dressler,1981).

The theory was purposefully designed for the analysis of text so that text analysts could arrive at sensible and useful findings on both written and spoken data (Halliday, 1994). The main concern of text linguistics is the way a part of a text is organized and related to other parts of the text to form a united meaningful whole (Dairo and Onadeko, 2008:61). For this analysis, however, any reference to text is to the written norm. The most important factor is the harmonious connections of words in making meaning in the context of use.

Halliday and Hasan (1976) is specifically selected because, among other reasons, it comprehensively treats the subject (Brown and Yule, 1983) and, secondly, it is more or less the standard framework in text description being used by many text analysts (Dairo and Onadeko, ibid). Finally, it is generally seen as a very reliable framework for the analysis of newspaper editorials.

It is in this context that the Hallidayan notion of "cohesion" as a set of linguistics that are available for creating texture is brought to bare. In other words, a set of sentences are put together in a specific way to constitute a text. It is important to observe that Halliday and Hasan (1976) also view the concept of cohesion as a semantic relation that is based on the notion of **presupposition**. *The presupposition* here refers to the intertextual link between two

elements where one element [the presupposing] presupposes another one [the presupposed] which is located somewhere (anaphora or cataphora), or in the context of *situation* (exophora). *Presupposition* is realized at three levels: **the semantic level** (as in the case of **reference**), the **lexicogrammar level** (as in the case of **substitution** and **ellipsis**), and the **grammatical level** (as in the case of **conjunctions**) (Koussouhon, Akogbeto and Amoussou, 2017: 87). **Cohesion**, then, is not part of the structural boundaries like *full stop* or *any break* in structural continuity (Dairo and Onadeko,

Data Analysis

Based on the theoretical framework earlier presented, the selected editorials of 2nd April and 17th June 2021 of *Vanguard* newspaper, as well as the 14th June and 10th December 2021 issues of *Guardian Nigeria* newspaper were analyzed in this section with the discussion of the findings. In the appendix are the selected **four** editorials, carefully numbered, for identification, discussion, and analysis

Reference

The following instances represent some elements of references used in the selected editorials. The writers used some elements as indicated by reference to refer to something else for their semantic interpretations. Some examples are:

1) we also fought for independence together and were granted **it** on the same October 1, 1960. (*It* here, refers to the noun *independence,* it is an example of an anaphoric reference) (*Vanguard*,17 June 2021)

2) Ortom has paid countless visits to President Muhammadu Buhari to save **his** state from herdsmen terrorists. (his here, refers to Ortom. It is also an anaphoric reference because the reader will have to look back to preceding words to get the meaning of the referent element).

(*Vanguard* 12 April 2021).

3) **This** is lamentable following the panic and commotion that ensued travelers were forced to abandon their vehicles (this is a demonstrative reference, the reader reads forward to get the reference, It is a cataphoric reference.) (Guardian 10 Dec. 2021).
4) **These** were not what **those** who fought for Nigerians must continue to resist efforts by unpatriotic elements to rend our country asunder. (*these* and *those* are demonstrative references) (Vanguard 17 June 2021).

5) In the case of the Sokoto incident, the victims were burnt to ashes in the vehicle conveying **them**. (them refers to the noun *victims*) (*Guardian* 10 Dec. 2021).

6) The attack on Kaduna-Abuja highway **mimicked** previous slaughter, eye witness accounts (*mimick* is used to liking the attack on Kaduna – Abuja highway as a previous attack) (Guardian 10 Dec. 2021).

7) All the public officers having anything to do with security ought to bring **their** heads in shame. (*them* refers to *public officers*) (Guardian 14 June 2021).

Substitution
Reference is a distinction between semantic forms and meaning, while substitution is a relation between linguistic items, such as words or phrases. For instance:
8) The notion of the "ownership" of the country by one ethnic group while the **others** are reduced to serf neither arises nor holds water. (others substitute the phrase "*one ethnic group*") (*Vanguard* 17 June 2021) 9) Can the country afford to station Policemen and Soldiers on every road and at every hour? As **this is not** possible. (this is an example of a clausal substitution negating the question) (*Guardian* 10 Dec, 2021). 10) Those of us who have shed part of our blood and sweat for the country we **did so** because we wanted

a country where every Nigerian can claim as his or her own. (*did so* substitute *shed part of our blood and sweat*) (*Vanguard* 17 June 2021).

Ellipsis

Ellipsis is where something is left unsaid. It is simply "substitution by zero" as we have mentioned earlier. The reference that is necessary to make a text cohesive is missing but "understood". Some examples of ellipsis in our data are:

11) The alarming spate of insecurity in the Northern Nigeria in partially, and the country in general. (*the alarming spate of insecurity in* has been elided in the second clause) (*Guardian* 10Dec. 2021).

12) "I am a strong believer of one Nigeria, but not one Nigeria at all cost. (*believer* has been elided). (*Vanguard* 17 June 2021). 13) The present over bloated structure of one central military and one police is counter -productive and will not bring positive result.(central is elided). (*Guardian* 10Dec. 2021).

Conjunction

Conjunctive elements are cohesive not in themselves but indirectly, by their specific meanings. They specify how information at one point in a text is related to what has preceded it. The relationship in conjunction is semantic rather than structural. The following are some examples in our data:

14) The various separatist efforts only arouse **because** of the growing injustices, extreme nepotism, marginalization, condonation of herdsmen attacks, and insistence by the federal Government that pastoralists should have access to people's ancestral lands. (causal conjunction giving information on the cause or reason for a thing). (*Vanguard* 17 June 2021).

15) The country is at the brink of another civil war or disintegration **due to** its overwhelming security woes. (causal conjunction) (*Vanguard* 17 June 2021).

16) "I am a strong believer of one Nigeria, **but** not one Nigeria at all cost. (adversative conjunction used to communicate information that is contrary to the expectation already established by the preceding text). (*Vanguard* 17 June 2021).
17) The inciting claim of ownership by conquest of the state by a nomadic group must be stopped. **Otherwise**, armed conflicts will never cease in the area, **and** all over the country. (*otherwise* is adversative conjunction while, *and* is additive conjunction) (*Vanguard* 2 April 2021).

18) **Every now** and **then**, Nigerian troops are ambushed and killed in large number by terrorists. (*Guardian* 14 June 2021).

Lexical Cohesion
Lexical cohesion is achieved by the selection of vocabulary. When the same lexical item is repeated in the same or different form, there is some contribution to the text cohesion. Lexical cohesion occurs when nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs in a text relate to each other in terms of repetition, synonyms, and collocation, Two forms of lexical cohesion are : reiteration and collocation.

Reiteration
Reiteration is the form of lexical cohesion that involves the repetition of a lexical item, either directly or through the use of synonyms, antonym, and superordination. The following are some the examples in our data:

Repetition
Repetition is the restatement of the same lexical item. Examples are:
19) As things stand, the road is not **safe** and the railway is not **safe.** (*Guardian* 14 June, 2021).
20) The present over bloated structure of **one** central military and **on**e police is counter -productive and will not bring positive result. (*Guardian* 10Dec, 2021).

21) Government's **regula**r claim of security forces over the spate of insurgency in many part of the North is not by equally **regular**. (*Guardian* 10Dec, 2021).

22) Any Nigerian who does not feel concerned about the challenges of the country is a **human** without being **human**.(*Vanguard* 17 June,2021)

23) " I am a strong believer of **one Nigeria**, but not **one Nigeria** at all costs, but **one Nigeria** where every Nigerian can feel proud that he or she has a stake in the country. .(*Vanguard* 17 June,2021)'

24) **The country** is steadily going down and **the country** appears helpless**, the country** is fast attaining the status of a pariah or a failing state. (*Guardian* 10Dec, 2021).

Synonyms

This is when different words that have similar meaning are chosen. Some examples in our data are:

25) Government's **regula**r claim of security forces over the spate of insurgency in many part of the North is not by equally regular and even more **frequent** deadly attac in hapless citizens (*Guardian* 10Dec, 2021).

26) The country is steadily **going down** and the country appears **helpless**, the country is fast attaining the status of **a pariah** or **a failing** state. (*Guardian* 10Dec, 2021).

27) The only way to tackle the menance of bandits on the Abuja – Kaduna **highway** is to have a permanent survelliance along the **road**. (*Guardian* 10Dec, 2021).

28)As usual, the Presidency has ordered military engagement to "**fish out**" the perpatrators. The IGP, Mohammed Adamu, has also ordered a police **investigation.** (*Vanguard* 2 April, 2021).

29) If the **summit** on national security held the other day in Abuja did not achieve any other thing, it at the least served to present to many highly public placed officers who participated in the **talk shop**. (*Guardian* 14June, 2021).

30) **Former President** Olusegun Obasanjo deserves some commendation for rekindling faith in our country by reminding us of the true meaning of "one Nigeria". According to **the retired General** who spoke in Abeokuta...(here, former president and the retired general meant the same thing in the text. They are both referred to Olusegun Obasnjo). (*Vanguard* 17 June, 2021).

Antonymy

Antonymy is the relation between items of opposite meanings. Examples are:

31) Nigerians are better off **together** than going their **separate** ways, Obasanjo affirmed. (*Vanguard* 17 June, 2021)

32) Those of us who have shed part of our **blood** and **sweat** for the country. (*Vanguard* 17 June, 2021).

33) Speaker of the House of Representative, Femi Gbajabiamila, said the nation must confront the realization that our **previous** and **current** approaches to address the challenges have not yielded the results. (*Guardian* 14June, 2021).

Hyponymy

Hyponymy refers to items of general to specific or part to a whole. Examples:

34) Travelers were forced to abandon their **vehicles** while some others veered off the road with shattered **windscreen** and flat **tyres.** (windscreen and *tyres* are parts of *vehicle*) (*Guardian* 10 Dec. 2021).

Collocation

Collocation is the combination of vocabulary items that co-occur together. It includes combination of lexical items, For Example:

35) **The President** was represented by **the Secretary** to the government of the Federation, Boss Mustapha. (*Guardian* 14June, 2021).

36) The victims were **burnt** to **ashes** in the vehicle conveying them. (*burnt* and *ashes* collocate) (*Guardian* 10 Dec. 2021).

37) The constant **loss** of **human lives** as a result of these attacks is **heart**-rendering particularly as they come against claims by government security agencies that the war against insurgency is being won. (*Guardian* 10 Dec. 2021).

38) As things stand, the road is not safe and the **railway** is not safe. The other day the terrorists stalled a **passenger train** on the same **route** in the middle of nowhere what would the people do? (*Guardian* 10 Dec. 2021). The *railway* implies a more general class of objects that includes *passenger*, *train* and *route.*

These lexical devices allow for continuity of meaning. They are all cohesive because one lexical item refers to another.

Discussion

The five types of cohesion discussed by Halliday and Hasan (1976) under the five headings reference, substation, ellipsis, conjunction, and lexical cohesion have been analyzed in this work. Reference, substitution, and ellipsis are grammatical, they involve closed systems: simple options of presence or absence, and systems such as those of person, number, proximity, and degree of comparison. Lexical cohesion is as the name implies, a lexical item that is in some way related to one occurring previously. Conjunction is on the borderline of the grammatical and lexical, as some conjunctive elements can be interpreted grammatically while some involve lexical selection. The above-mentioned cohesive devices have been

used in our data, by the editorial writers to give pattern to the texture of their texts. The cohesive devices like reference, substitution, and ellipsis were used as grammatical items referring to lexical elements that precede them. The devices help the writers to achieve their aim of making their readers see the connectivity of lexical words in meaning realization. The lexical cohesion, on the other hand, was used by the writers to relate to other lexical items that occurred previously in the texts. Some lexical words were repeated to lay emphasis or draw the attention of the readers to them. For instance, lexical words like; **insecurity**, **terrorists**, **attack**, **abduction, kidnapping, killed**, **claim**, and so on, were repeated severally in the four selected editorials for the readers to understand how bad and intense the situation of insecurity is in Nigeria. While, the repetition of lexical words like; **Nigeria**, **Country**, **State**, **Abuja**, **Sokoto, Kaduna**, **Benue**, **North**, and so on, were used for the readers to understand the context, the particular country, and the various states that are most affected in Nigeria. **Synonyms** were used in the texts to relate similar meanings through the use of different lexical words as shown in the analysis. For instance, the words; **The President** and **the commander–in–chief of the Federal Republic of Nigeria** are meant for the same person in the texts, (Muhammed Buhari), **attack** and **destroy**, **abduct** and **kidnap killed** and **assassinate** and so many others were used by the editorials to relate similar meaning in the texts.. **Antonymy** is used by the writers to relate opposite meanings like; **together** and **separate**, **current** and **past,** etc, Collocation shows the co-occurrence of some vocabulary items like ; **railway**, **passenger**, **train**, etc, The editorial writers, as found in our analysis, used these cohesive devices to link lexical words for semantic realizations by their readers. And, lexical cohesion is used to create texture as well as express their opinions towards the insecurity situation in Nigeria.

Generally, the selected texts focused on the security challenge in Nigeria. The inefficiency of the government in protecting the lives and properties of its citizens. The editorial writers through their use

of cohesive devices, drive their readers through various activities of the terrorists, bandits, and armed hoodlums. The various attacks of the herders on harmless farmers and some political office holders, terrorists attacks on innocent travelers; both on roads and railways. Various opinions of prominent citizens like former president Olusegun Obasanjo, The sultan of Sokoto, Muhammad Sa'ad Abubakar, Speaker House of Representative, Femi Gbajabiamila, Chief of Defence Staff, Lt, Gen, Lucky Irabor, and some others, on the security challenge in the country, their suggestions on how to tackle the insecurity challenge in the country were stated through the editorial choices of lexical cohesion that give social reality to the texts and cohesive devices which give the texture sense of semantic unity.

Conclusion

This study has so far contributed to scholarship on the application of cohesive devices and lexical cohesion on media text, and editorials in particular, which embodies the newspaper opinion on social and political issues. The media, however, advocate for the masses on issues of this nature, The Guardian and Vanguard selected for this study, succeed in intervening for the masses through their editorial sections. The study, therefore, recommends more studies of this nature on other newspapers and media platforms. It hopes to help the present government of Bola Ahmed Tinubu, to tackle the security situation by implementing the various suggestions made towards fighting insecurity in the country.

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Appendix

Nigerian Newspaper Editorial Sources

Guardian newspaper, June 14, 2021

Guardian newspaper, December 10, 2021

Vanguard newspaper, April 2, 2021.

Vanguard newspaper, June 17, 2021.