

## MUSIC AS CATALYST FOR PEACE, UNITY AND NATIONAL TRANSFORMATION: A SOCIO – PRAGMATIC ANALYSIS OF SELECT NIGERIA PEACE AND UNITY SONGS

**Chinecherem Esther Obasi**

School of General Studies  
Michael Okpara University of Agriculture  
Umudike

### **Abstract**

The incessant ethnic conflict, religious intolerance and political instability witnessed in the country, attributed to the multilingual and multicultural nature of Nigeria have left the citizens with sense of fear, despair and loss. These have also threatened the fabric of national unity and hindered social progress. Attempts aimed at putting an end to this menace are on – going. Musicians are not left out in this quest for peace and unity. Consequently, this paper sets out to examine how musical discourse functions as a catalyst for social change and national integration. A purposive sampling technique was adopted in selecting two peace and unity songs produced in Nigeria that directly address these challenges. The study adopts a socio-pragmatic framework, applying Presupposition, Context, and Leech’s (1983) Politeness Maxims as analytical tools. Through qualitative analysis, the study reveals among others, that the musicians exploit linguistic politeness, shared cultural presuppositions, and contextual cues to negotiate and broker peace, reinforce unity in diversity as well as appeal to loyalty and empathy. The study concludes that peace and unity songs in Nigeria do not only mirror societal aspirations but also perform pragmatic acts that can shape national consciousness, heal divisions and foster inclusivity and sustainable peace and transformation.

**Keywords:** National transformation, socio-pragmatics, Nigerian peace and unity songs.

### **Introduction**

The religious, cultural, linguistic, ethnic and ideological diverse natures of Nigeria have been attributed to constitute the reason “her trajectory has been laced with myriads of conflicts right from inception” (Ajayi and Bamgbose, 2019, p. 61). The countless and unceasing ethno-religious, cultural, linguistic and environmental conflicts witnessed in the country between her independence in 1960 and now (2025), corroborates the above submission. Apart from the Biafra Civil War of 1967-1970, Boko Haram Insurgency in the Northern part of Nigeria (Borno, Yobe, Adamawa) from 2011 to date and the Southern Kaduna Killings of 2017, other more recent crises include the Nasarawa Massacre of 2021, Plateau State mass shooting of 2023 among others. These conflicts are tension driven developments that have threatened the peace and unity of the country. On the front burner is the quest for peace and unity in the country. Attempts aimed at ending this ugly trend are on –going. Both the government and individuals are involved in this pursuit, musicians are not left out. The peace and unity songs produced in Nigerian in reaction to this ugly scenario give credence to the above assertion. This paper consequently examines the language of two (2) peace and unity songs with the aim of highlighting their socio-pragmatic import in the Nigeria context. It analyzes some language forms which musicians use in engendering the spirit

of patriotism and commitment in the citizenry. This study also identifies and analyzes the presuppositions embedded in the lyrics that contribute to messages of peace and unity. Using the socio-pragmatic tools of Presupposition, Context, and Politeness Principles, the study sets out to examine music as a catalyst or a tool for negotiating and brokering peace in the nation.

Music has been identified as “literature’s cousin” (Okpara, Orié, Enwurum, Amaechi and Madumelu, 2013, p. 378) Literature is a work of art conveyed with the help of language. This is why Nwahunaya (2010, p.1) sees the study of literature as “the study of literary artifacts, i.e. imaginative verbal constructs that emerge from the creative consciousness of literary artists”. Musicians are literary artist that convey their messages using language. The language forms employed by musicians most times capture the ills that permeate the society. Onyeji, (2012) in support opines that although music is relished as a creative art, the philosophy behind its creation and practice is not separated from human social life or produce for reflection, but relates to the social and cultural needs of the people. Just like every other aspect of literature, music is employed for the purpose of entertainment, information and education. This is why Okafor, cited in Ajamgbe and Ahanotu (2014, p. 115), sees a musician as a keeper of public conscience and an educator.

### **Purpose of the Study**

This study sets out to:

1. identify and analyse the presuppositions embedded in the lyrics that contribute to messages of peace and unity.
2. examine how contextual features shape the meaning and interpretation of select Nigerian peace and unity songs.
3. uncover how politeness strategies are deployed to promote harmony, reduce conflict and foster national cohesion.

### **Theoretical Approaches**

This study is primarily anchored on Leech’s (1983) Politeness Principles, complemented by Hyme’s (1962) Context Theory and Stalnaker’s (1974) Presupposition Theory. Pragmatics has to its credit many definitions from different scholars such as Morris (1938) Levinson (1983), Leech (1983), Crystal (1985), Yule (1996), Mey (2001) Grundy (2008), Udofot (2011) and etcetera. Leech and Short (1981, p. 290) opine that pragmatics is “ the investigation into that aspect of meaning which is derived not from the formal properties of words but from the way in which utterances are used and how they relate to the context in which they are uttered. Supporting this view, Jackson and Stockwell (2011, p.180) aver that the discipline of pragmatics has developed to account for the “use of language in context” pragmatics considers people’s intended meanings, assumptions, purposes and goals and the kinds of actions they are performing when they communicate (Yule, 1996). In pragmatics, the analyst interprets meaning from the point of view of the language user, in relation to the context of use. Hence, user’s point of view, and context of use can be seen as dominant features in pragmatics analysis.

According to Holmes (2008, p.2), “Sociolinguistics is concerned with the relationship between language and the context in which it is used.” It x-rays the affinity between language and society. Consideration on how social situations affect the way language is used in a society, presupposes a socio- pragmatic approach to language study. This accounts for Agbedo, Krisagbedo and Buluan (2013, p.46) assertion that “socio-pragmatics refers to the way conditions of language use derive from the social situation” The present study aims at examining the social – pragmatic features of Nigeria peace and unity songs produced in the wake of countless ethno-religious,

cultural, environmental and linguistic conflicts. Context, identified as the “third face” of language (others being ‘expression’ and ‘meaning’) is significant in producing and interpreting utterance. Context enables an expression to convey a speaker’s intended meaning and be correctly interpreted by a hearer, (Finegan 2012, p.5). Odebummi (2006) cited in Aremu and Alayande (2011, p.143) sees context as “the spine of meaning” which is fundamental to pragmatic analysis. Utterances are appropriately produced and interpreted when consideration is made to the environment of use. This environment of use could be physical, psychological, socio-cultural and linguistic in nature. Physical context takes account of how participants, activities, place and time influence production and interpretation of an utterance. Psychological context considers how the state of mind of interlocutors affect the production and interpretation of utterances. Linguistic context considers the appropriateness of the individual’s lexical items that constitute an utterance while socio-cultural context considers how beliefs, values systems, cultural heritage and religion of interlocutors affect the production and interpretation of utterances. Insights from context point to the fact that language does not occur in a vacuum.

Another pragmatic concept that serves as tool for data analysis is Presupposition. It has been discovered that when speakers encode their message, they often fashion it in such a way that they intentionally leave some things unstated, assuming their hearers already know them. This assumed common ground or certain shared background information by interlocutors is called ‘Presupposition’ (Stalnaker, 1978, Kempson, 1977). It is seen as “the necessary preconditions or assumptions made in speaking or writing an utterance, distinct from what may actually be asserted (Wales 2011, p. 34). It is to assume or take something for granted in advance without saying it (Akmajian, Demers, Famer and Harnish 2008, p. 400). Presupposition is semantic and pragmatic in nature. The former is ‘the accommodated beliefs necessary for an utterance to make sense’ while the latter is “the accommodations needed for an utterance to be appropriate” (Grundy 2008, p. 48). By indication, semantic presupposition looks at the grammatical aspect of an utterance while pragmatic presupposition considers the appropriateness of utterance in a particular context. Yule (1996) quoted in Osisanwo (2008, p. 87-89) categorizes presupposition into (i) Factive (ii) non – factive (iii) existential (iv) lexical (v) counter-factive and (vi) structural. Factive Presupposition entails the use of verbs like “realize”, “regret”, “know” before a piece of presupposed information. Non- factive presupposition entails the use of verbs such as “imagine”, “dream” and “pretend” before presupposed information, rendering the information untrue. Existential presupposition involves the use of nouns or definite noun phrases and possessive constructions. Lexical presupposition happens when a speaker’s use of a particular expression is taken to presuppose another concept that is unstated. Counterfactive presupposition is related to non- factive presupposition. Here, what is presupposed is not just untrue but opposite of what is true. A typical example of this presupposition is the English conditional if-clause construction. Structural presupposition occurs when the form or structure of a sentence implies that something is true even when not obviously stated. The WH- question construction in English is a typical example of structural presupposition.

Politeness principle is another important concept of pragmatics. It was brought to lime light in the 1970s by the cultural anthropologists Penelope Brown and Stephen Levinson. It is the verbal and non- verbal behaviour that makes a person to maintain face in a conversation (Brown and Levinson (1987). Leeche’s (1983) contribution on politeness principles is relevant to this study. He says that the purpose of politeness principles is to establish feeling of community and social relationship. Thus, he

described them as verbal and non-verbal behaviour that maintain harmonious relations (Aremu and Alayande 2011, p. 144). He proposes seven maxims of politeness which are (i) Tact Maxim (ii) Generosity Maxim (iii) Approbation Maxim (iv) Modesty Maxim (v) Agreement Maxim (vi) Sympathy Maxim and (vii) Pollyanna Maxim. The Tact Maxim advocates that speakers should minimize cost to other and maximize benefit to other. The Generosity Maxim encourages speakers to minimize benefit to self and maximize cost to self. The Approbation Maxim requires speakers to minimize dispraise of other and maximize praise of other. The Modesty Maxim expects speakers to minimize praise of self and maximize dispraise self. The Agreement Maxim emphasizes the need to maximize agreement between self and other and minimize disagreement between self and other. The Sympathy Maxim stresses the need to minimize antipathy between self and other and maximize sympathy between self and other. (Leech, 1983). Finally, Pollyanna Maxim points that people often consider the bright side instead of the gloomy side in discussing others. (Aremu and Alayande 2011, p. 145; Ewurum, Njoku and Umeh, 2019, p. 65). Presupposition, Context and Politeness Principles aforementioned, will serve as analytical tools in examining the language use of the musicians in relations to the Nigerian context.

### **Conceptual Elucidation**

The concept “transformation’ became topical in the affairs of the nation following the rise to power of former president Goodluck Jonathan on the promise of a Transformation Agenda. Transformation is a fundamental shift in the deep orientation of a person, an organization, or a society, such that the world is seen in new ways and new actions and results become possible that were impossible prior to the transformation (UNDP-LDP, cited in Asobie, 2012) for any nation to attain its desired goals and objectives, transformation is needful. One cannot keep doing same things in anticipation of new results. Therefore, there is need for a change of modus operandi for new desired results to be accomplished. Doing things in novel ways engender performance of great feat. Impossibilities become possible in the face of transformation. Akunyili (2013) corroborates this view as she asserts that “for any entity of system, organic or inorganic, to progress, to make lasting impact, it must transform. It cannot afford to remain static. It must innovate or it dies”. She further says that ‘transformation or change across board is sine qua non, a necessary condition, for a nation’s evolution”

It is deducible from the above expression that any nation that desires development or that wants to make lasting impact has to transform; otherwise it dies, and becomes a history. Transformation means the change of individual’s attitudes and beliefs for the realization of feats hitherto not achieved. Individual’s attitudes and beliefs can be influenced by the happenings in the society. They could also be influenced by the lyrics of music they listen to. Hence, music is perceived as a communicative device that serves as an important component of systems of persuasion and manipulation. It has a powerful influence over human behavior, exercised for a host of political, social and economic goals (Browns, 2006). Music plays an indispensable role in behavioral control by changing the systems of beliefs and attitude of the individual through persuasion. It is the intent of this study to consider not only the messages laden in the musical communication but the motives behind their use. Music, which is an aspect of man’s culture, appeals to people everywhere and has been the heart of all human societies (Ajefu 2012, p. 17). This is why it is often referred to as “The international language” Music captures the perceptions of the ills that permeate societies it emanates from and also influences those societies in turn, thereby contributing meaningfully to national transformation. The peace and unity songs

produced in Nigeria in the wake of ethno-religious, cultural, linguistic and environmental conflicts give credence to the above assertion. "Peace is a state of harmony characterized by the lack of violence, conflict behaviours and the freedom from fear of violence" (Olufemi 2014, P.130). A peaceful environment opens doors for innumerable feats. Where there is no peace there is a questionable level of transformation. Peace drives away hostilities that threaten harmonious relations. Musicians acknowledge the functionality of a peaceful and united society in the actualization of any nation's visions and missions which may incorporate desire for transformation. They believe that a house divided against itself cannot stand.

### **Methodology**

This study adopts a qualitative research design hinged on descriptive and interpretive analysis. The design will enable the researcher provide in-depth analysis of the peace and unity songs produced in Nigeria in the wake of ethno-religious, cultural, linguistic and environmental conflicts witnessed in the country. Two peace and unity songs that serve as the primary source of data were selected through a purposive sampling technique, because of their relevance to national issues and their popularity in fostering peace, reconciliation and transformation. They include: Shadrach John (2011). "A Peace Song" and Onwenu O. and Zaiky (2014). "This land – celebrating 100 years of Nigeria" Transcribed lyrics of the songs serve as data for analysis. They are employed to analyze the language use of the musicians in relation to the context of use. Printed materials in the library and internet serve as secondary source of data.

### **Data Presentation and Analysis**

This section hosts both data presentation and analysis. To facilitate reading and understanding, the two peace and unity songs with the titles; "A Peace Song" and "This Land" will be presented as excerpts 1 and 2 respectively. Each will be analyzed separately using the analytical tools adopted for this study.

#### **Excerpt 1**

Woke up one early morning no children playing  
No sound of greetings one neighbor to another  
Oh it's quite gloomy  
Peace don't live here no more no more  
Can't believe how much we have hurt each other  
Can't believe the damage we have done  
Brother hurting brother  
Neighbour harming neighbour  
Children grieving for their parents  
Hacked home before their time oh oh  
I can't go out  
I don't know who to trust  
Fear is just the order of the day  
Is this the way we want to live?

With peace we don't have to worry  
Where peace reigns fear is out the door  
With peace we can work out our differences  
Put an end to all the hate

Leave no room in your heart for vengeance and hatred no no no  
A knife for a knife so lives everyone

We have our differences we cannot change things making wars  
Without peace our dreams are gone  
Without peace there is no home to build  
To make Nigeria the country of our dreams

Wake up everybody; it's time to build a new day  
Enough is enough let's put the past behind us  
Because when there is peace we can build a new Nigeria  
Enough is enough let's give peace a chance

Nigeria bianu!  
Ummunnem ka-anyi biri n'udo n'udo n'udo  
(Shadrach John, 2011)

### **Discussion on Excerpt 1**

Excerpt 1 is a peace and unity song written by Shadrach John, produced by Wole Oni and Jeremiah Gyang and directed by Steve Gukas. The song is a collaborative effort and part of the Neighbor to Neighbor Peace Project album, featuring about fourteen influential gospel and mainstream artists from different parts of Nigeria, representing Nigeria's multi-ethnic, multi-Lingual, multi-religion and multi-cultural nature. Some of these artists include; Onyeka Onwenu, Jeremiah Gyang, Sunny Nneji, Timi Dakolo, Segun Obe, Yinka David and many others. The emphasis of the song is on national peace and unity. The song was released in the year 2011 when Nigeria witnessed an upsurge insurgency

### **Elements of Presuppositions in Excerpt 1**

Presuppositions are the necessary preconditions or assumptions made in speaking or writing an utterance distinct from what many actually be asserted (Wales 2011, p. 34). The song writer of 'A Song for Peace' took for granted certain shared background knowledge between him and listeners of the song in the Nigerian context. "Peace don't live here no more" is typical of Existential Presupposition which implies that peace was once the norm and existed in the country but as a result of the incessant ethnic conflict, religious intolerance and political instability has eroded. "Children grieving for their parent" is also a type of Existential Presupposition which implies that parents have been killed as a result of the conflict. "Brother hurting brother" and "Neighbour harming neighbour" also presupposes that the relations that should protect and strengthen us are causing pain and harm. "Wake up everybody" presupposes that citizens have been complacent and inactive towards the nation's crises. "We can build a new Nigerian" presupposes that the present nation is decayed and in need of repairs. Another type of presupposition deployed in the song is Factive Presupposition, for instance "Can't believe how much we have hurt each other", "Can't believe the damage we have done" and "I don't know who to trust". The instances presuppose that much harm had already been done, that violence has led to irreversible damage and that betrayal has become eminent respectively. "Where peace reigns fear is out the door" and "Without peace there is no home to build" presupposes that fear has become a mantra in a nation where peace was previously enjoyed, and that peace is essential for nation/community building and development.

"Enough is enough let's put the past behind us" presupposes that there has been a turbulent past that continues to affect the present Nigeria. "Because when there is peace, we can build a new Nigeria" is a type of Structural Presupposition that presupposes that peace does not exist in the country currently. However, peace is

perceived as the necessary condition for national development. These presuppositions were deployed by the artists to highlight that Nigeria has suffered breakdowns and setbacks as a result of violence, and to reinforce the belief that peace is what the country needs for transformation and development.

### **Elements of context in excerpt 1.**

Context according to Finegan (2012, P.5) “enables an expression to convey a speaker’s intended meaning and be correctly interpreted by a hearer.” The artists deployed physical, socio-cultural psychological and linguistic context in the song “A peace song.” the physical context of the song reveals that it is a song written in Nigeria (2011) within a period of heightened ethnic and religious conflict. When the country witnessed upsurge in terrorism. The artists deployed linguistic context in the song by their repetitive use of phrases like, “Peace don’t live here no more” and “With peace we don’t have to worry” to highlight the central theme of hopelessness and loss. The use of collective pronouns such as ‘we’ and ‘our’ reveal that everyone is affected by the violence and the pursuit for peace should be a collective goal. Also, the repetitive use of imperatives such as “Wake up everybody” and “Enough is enough” in the song reveal the level of persuasion and urgency of the artists in their bid to restore peace and unity in the country.

The infusion of Igbo language in “Nigeria bianu” and “Umunnem ka anyi biri n’udo” situate the song within Nigeria multilingual nature emphasizing inclusiveness. The Psychological Context reveals that the artist’s state of mind is that of sadness as a result of the devastating pain caused by insurgency as captured in “Oh it’s quite gloomy”. The socio-cultural context is revealed in “No children playing”, “Brother hurting brother”, “ Neighbour harming neighbour” and “Umunnem ka anyi biri n’udo ” In Africa, the absence of children’s laughter depicts absence of communal joy and social harmony. Also references to “Brother” “Neighbour” and “Umunnem” depict African kinship ties and communalism now affected by violence. Context analysis reveals that the song performs a performative act. Language is employed by the artists to express displeasure as well as lament the loss of lives and property. It also serves as a persuasive call for reconciliation.

### **Elements of Leech’s Politeness Maxims in excerpt 1.**

Leech’s politeness maxims as discussed above will be utilized for analyses. The artists deployed the Tack Maxim in the song such as “With peace we can work out our differences” to minimize imposition and recommend dialogue against war. They equally avoided the use of direct blame on specific group, rather the use of collective pronouns like “we”, and “our” and indefinite pronoun “everybody” were adopted to avoid direct accusations and to foster reconciliation.

The Approbation Maxim is exploited by the artists to extol positive value such as peace and forgiveness rather than focusing on blame. What the country will achieve if the citizens exhibit these positive values is also highlighted. “We can build a new Nigeria”, is deployed to praise unity and progress rather than focus on failure. The Agreement Maxim is exploited in Phrases like “Enough is enough”, “Let’s put the past behind us” and, “Leave no room in your heart for vengeance” to seek common ground by appealing to shared challenges and desire for progress. The Agreement Maxim is deployed to foreground unity over division. The Sympathy Maxim is exploited in phrases like “Children grieving for their parents”, “Our struggles and fear”, and “Umunnem ka anyi biri n’ udo” to invoke empathy and emotional solidarity with victims of violence, reveal shared aggravation and appeal to shared humanity and relationship respectively. The Generosity Maxim is exploited by the artists to

maximize benefit for all citizens by shunning revenge and hatred as captured in the song “Leave no room in your heart for vengeance and hatred”, “A knife for a Knife so lives everyone”. The target is to promote a life of forgiveness, and sacrifice for the greater good of the nation. The Pollyanna Maxim is exploited in “Because when there is peace, we can build a new Nigeria” to highlight the bright side of life peace can foster if allowed to thrive in Nigeria. Generally, the artists exploited Politeness Maxims in order to cushion the effects of harsh conflict realities, evoke empathy and foster peaceful co-existence in Nigeria.

### **Excerpt 2**

1. Oh this Land of mine,  
Nigeria on my mind  
Born in diversity  
Blessed beyond comparison  
Through these 100 years,  
Our struggles and through all our fears  
We are strong in our unity, peace our destiny

### **CHORUS**

Here we are, standing tall  
Through adversity  
We are one  
One hundred years of unity  
Nigeria, we will stand.

2. Oh this land of mine, Nigeria on my mind.  
I pledge to you my loyalty, my love, my ability  
When else we celebrate ourselves, we shall be dead again  
To serve a new Nigeria, for a better land for all.

### **SOLO**

Tell it on the mountain  
Shout it on the valley  
Nigeria has come a long way  
And it is turning into a future of brighter and better days  
Together we will make it strong and  
Invincible we are on our way  
One nation indivisible, Nigeria is here to stand  
(Onyeka Onwenu, 2014)

### **Discussion on Excerpt 2**

The excerpt above represents Onyeka Onwenu’s “This Land” written and performed as Nigeria’s Centenary Anthem to commemorate the country’s one hundred years (100) of Amalgamation in 2014. The song also featured other Nigerian artists from different ethnic, religious and linguistic background to showcase the nation’s strength in diversity.

### **Elements of Presuppositions in Excerpt 2**

“Oh this land of mine, Nigeria on my mind” is a typical of Existential Presupposition that presupposes that Nigeria exists as a beloved, typical homeland. “Born in diversity” presupposes Nigeria’s multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multi-lingual nature. Another presupposition deployed in the song above is Factive Presupposition, “Through these 100 years, our struggles and through all our fears”,

presupposes that Nigeria has witnessed real and devastating struggles since amalgamation. “We are strong in our unity” presupposes that Nigeria’s unity has been tested, but it remained resilient. “Whenever we celebrate ourselves, we shall be dead again” is an example of Counterfactive Presupposition that presupposes that lack of self-worth and self- appreciation have hindered national progress, and that only collective pride can sustain Nigeria. “Together we will make it strong and invincible” presupposes that Nigeria is not yet fully strong and incapable of being conquered, but can become a formidable force through unity. These Presuppositions were deployed by the artists in the song above to represent Nigeria as a nation tried by adversity yet able to stand strong through collective loyalty and peace.

### **Elements of Context in Excerpt 2**

The physical context of the song reveals that it is a song written in Nigeria to celebrate her 100 years of amalgamation (1914-2014). It showcases Nigeria’s pride, reflection and aspiration. The artists deployed linguistic context by their repetitive use of phrases like, “Oh this land of mine, Nigeria on my mind”, “Standing tall”, “100 years”, and “We are one”, to reinforce unity as the theme of the song. “Tell it on the mountain, shout it in the valley” are imperative sentences functioning as performative directive that encourage public declaration of national pride. Also, the use of collective pronouns like “our” and “we” depict inclusiveness. The Psychological Presupposition of the song is that of commitment and loyalty as captured in “I pledge to you my loyalty, my love my ability”. “Born in diversity, blessed beyond comparison” is typical of Socio-cultural Context depicting explicit acknowledgement of Nigeria’s plurality and reaffirmation of her unity in diversity. Context analyses reveal that the song is a celebratory one that performs a persuasive task of urging Nigerians to pledge loyalty, appreciate our unity in diversity, celebrate achievements and hope for a better tomorrow.

### **Elements of Leech’s Politeness Maxims in Excerpt 2**

The artists deployed the Tact Maxim in “Nigeria has come a long way” to highlight her aspirations while downplaying on her failures and decadence. The Approval Maxim is exploited in the above song, “Blessed beyond comparison” in praise of Nigeria in order to extol her national unity. The Agreement Maxim was exploited by the artists in “We are one...we shall stand”, to seek common ground among Nigerians irrespective of the political, cultural, linguistic, and ethnic differences. The artists exploited the Generosity Maxim in “I pledge to you my loyalty, my love, my ability” to showcase willingness and passion to serve the nation selflessly. The Pollyanna Maxim is exploited in the song in “Here we are, standing tall. Through adversity, we are one ...”, to look at the bright side of Nigeria being able to stand despite the challenges confronting her. The Sympathy Maxim in, “Our struggles and fears” is exploited to display empathy with Nigerian citizens’ pains creating a connection between artists and Nigerians. These Politeness Maxims were deployed by the artists to avoid conflict, inspire self-respect and foster inclusivity among the Nigeria citizens.

### **Conclusion**

This study has attempted a socio- pragmatic analysis of two peace and unity songs produced in Nigeria, in the wake of ethno-religious, cultural, linguistic and environmental conflicts witnessed in the country, with the intent of investigating how music functions as a potent catalyst for peace, unity and national transformation. Adopting a socio-pragmatic framework, the study utilizes Presupposition, Context and Leech’s Politeness Maxims as analytical tools. From the analyses, the study reveals that the language choices, presupposition, contextual meanings and Politeness Maxims

deployed by the artists exceed just entertainment. The artists' pragmatic import is to encourage reconciliation, appeal to shared national values and foster inclusivity. Finally, the paper concludes that when music is reflectively captured and socially awake, it becomes a unifying language with the potential to inspire patriotism, heal divisions and foster moral, emotional and physical transformation in Nigeria.

## References

- Agbedo, C.U Krisagbedo, E.C and Buluan, D. (2013). "Socio-pragmatic analysis of Boko Haram's language of insurgency in Nigeria: Implications for global peace and security". *Developing Country Studies*. 3 (8), 45 -63
- Ajamgbe, C.O and Ahanotu, E.N (2014) "Music in oral tradition for sustaining our traditional values" *NKA journal of the arts*. No15,110-117
- Ajayi, M. T., and Bamgbose, G. A. (2019). Ideologies and impoliteness strategies in online ethno-religious conflict among Nigerians. *Ghana Journal of Linguistics*, 8(1), 60-80.
- Ajefu, E.E. (2012) "Informal music education: A cultural resource for sustaining, enhancing and promoting the indigenous music in Africa" *Journal of Arts and Contemporary society*, vol. 4, 17-28
- Akmajian A., Demers, R.A., Farmer, A.K., and Harish R.M. (2008). *Linguistics: An introduction to language and communication* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.) New Delhi: Prentice Hall of India.
- Aremu, M.A (2011). A Social – Pragmatic analysis of obituary announcements in English in Nigeria. *Journal of the Nigeria English studies Association* (JNESA), 14(2), 142 – 155.
- Asobie A. (2012). "Challenges og governance: Need for transformational Leadership presented at national conference of ANAN, Held Abuja October 9
- Austin, J.L (1962). *How to do things with words*, Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.
- Brown, P. and Levinson, S. (1987). *Politeness: Some University in language Usage*: Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Brown, S. (2000). "Evolutionary models of music: From sexual selection to group selection" In F. Tonneau and N.S. Thompson (eds.) *Perspectives Behaviour*. Vol. 13, 231-281. New York: Kluwer academic/Plenum Publishers.
- Finegan, E. (2012). *Language: Its Structure and use* (6<sup>th</sup> Ed). USA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.
- Grundy, P. (2008): *Doing Pragmatics* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.) London: Hodder Education.
- Gukas Steve (2011). "A song for peace in Nigeria"
- Holmes, J. (2008). *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics* (3<sup>rd</sup> Ed). Edinburgh Gate: Pearson Education Ltd.
- [http:// daily independenting.com/2013/04/akunyahis – national – transformation/](http://daily.independenting.com/2013/04/akunyahis-national-transformation/). Retrieved September 22,2015
- Jackson, H. and Stockwell, P. (2011). *An introduction to the nature and functions of Language*. New York Continuum International publishing group
- Kempson, R. (1977). *Presupposition and the definitions of Semantics*. Cambridge: Cambridge university Press.
- Leech, G. (1983). *Principles of Pragmatics*: New York: London
- Leech, G.N (1981). *Semantics* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.) Harmondsworth: Middlesex Pengium books
- Levinson, S. C. (1983). *Pragmatics*. Cambridge university Press.
- Mey, J.L. (2001). *Pragmatics: An Introduction* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed) Oxford: Blackwell Publishing

- Morris, C. (1938). "Foundations of theory of signs". In R. Carnag et al. (eds), *International encyclopedia of United Science*, 2 (1) Chicago: The University of Chicago press.
- Nwahuanya, C. (2010) *Literary Criticism*, criteria theory and post-Colonial African literature. Owerri: Springfield Publishers Ltd.
- Odeunmi, A. (2006). Locutions in medical discourse in South – western Nigeria. *Pragmatic* vol. 16 (1): 25-41
- Onwenu O. & Zaiky (2014). "This land – celebrating 100 years of Nigeria."
- Onyeji, C. (2012): "Nsukka Journal of Musical Arts Research" vol. 1 page 48
- Osisanwo, W. (2008). *Introduction to discourse analysis and Pragmatics* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed) Lagos: *Femolus-Fetop*.
- Saeed, J. I. (2003) *Semantics* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed). Oxfoed: Blackwell Publishing
- Searle, J. R. (1969). *Speech Acts*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Stalanker, R. (1978): Pragmatics. In Davidson and Harmaa (eds). *Semantics of natural language*. New York: London
- Stalnaker, R. C. (1974). Pragmatic presupposition. In M. K. Munitz & P. K.Unger (eds.), *Semantics and philosophy* (pp. 197-213). New York University Press
- Udofot, I. (2011). *English Semantics*. Uyo: Scholars Press.
- Wales, K. (2011). *A dictionary of Stylistics* (3rd). Edniburgh Gate. Pearson Education Ltd.
- Yule, G. (1996). *The study of language* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.