

ROAD SIGNS AS LINGUISTIC LANDSCAPE IN NIGERIA: A SEMIOTIC COMMUNICATION

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ABSTRACT: *The term 'sign' as used in this work, in relation to road architecture, refers to the nonlinguistic symbols used as linguistic landscape to communicate intended information in form of instructions, warnings, directions, etc. to road users. The study of signs in semiotics is all encompassing, involving the inference of meaning from signs and symbols using interpersonal, cultural, contextual and personal experience. Semiotics' preoccupation is the study of all that can be taken as sign. It is noted that in spite of the use of the road signs in the Nigerian cities and suburbs, many road mishap are still being recorded. This study, guided by semiotics principles, and using gestalt theory of visual perception, examines the communicative effectiveness of road signs in Nigeria, using Akure metropolis as case study. Thus, the paper examines the effectiveness of road signs as linguistic landscape (information agent) for road users in Nigeria using the Akure metropolis in Ondo State as the case study. Through a survey research method, the study, interviewed 260 respondents who were mainly made up of: commercial drivers, private drivers and pedestrians in order to obtain their opinions, attitudes, feelings and dispositions towards road signs as linguistic landscape. The study reveals that most road accidents were due to the flagrant disobedience of the road and traffic signs by the motorists and pedestrians. The incessant road mishap calls for serious questions on the effectiveness of the road signs as a vehicle of information dissemination to road users.*

KEYWORDS: Communication, Highway Code, Linguistic Landscape, Road Architecture, Road Signs, Signs.

INTRODUCTION

'Sign' refers to an observable substance, the mental image of which is associated in our minds with another image or concept. It is a form that is marked by an intention to communicate something meaningful (Guiraud, 1975; Gordon, 2005; and Pennycook, 2017). If language is a means of communication, then, signs as various forms of symbolic language are, indeed, communicative features, which, according to Mahmud (2004 & 2013) constitute the extralinguistic elements of communication. According to her, non-verbal features of language process form part of what the receiver uses to interpret the message of the sender. Peirce further declares that 'nothing is a sign unless it is interpreted as a sign'. Anything can be a sign as long as someone interprets it as 'signifying' something - referring to or standing for something other than itself (Chandler, 2007). This means that the meaning of signs has to be learnt, and their values can change, depending on the context in which they are used or situated. As Wales (2001) observes, the fact that the values of signs can change over time further indicates the arbitrariness in the relationship between the signifier or significant ('the form or concept') and the signified or signified (the thing or idea referred to) (p. 420). Signs are codified symbols in form of materials, gesture, visuals and linguistic elements fused to form meaningful

expressions of thought and idea through connectivity. Road signs are used as linguistic landscape in road creation; they form part of road architecture, performing communicative function, to inform, instruct, warn and direct road users. This work focuses on the use of road signs as linguistic landscape in Nigeria using Akure, the capital of Ondo State, located in the South West region of Nigeria as a case study.

Statement of the Problem

Many major township roads in Nigeria are well tarred with road signs to guide the users on the use of the roads and to maintain safety. It is noted, however, that in spite of the road signs that are visible on the roads, accidents still occur due to violation of the traffic rules as represented by the signs. This incessant road mishap calls for serious questions on the effectiveness of the road signs as a vehicle of information dissemination to the road users. It is important to find out whether the road users really understand the information the signs are meant to give, whether the signs are well positioned or visible enough for the road users, and whether the road users deliberately ignore the signs and traffic rules. This work, therefore, is to examine the effectiveness of the road signs as information agent for road users in Nigeria exemplified in the Akure City the capital town of Ondo State, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions will be answered in this study:

- i. What is the significance of the road signs in the Nigerian metropolis?
- ii. Are Road Signs linguistic representation of the traffic rules in the Nigerian metropolis?
- iii. To what extent do the motorists understand the information that the Road Signs in the Nigerian metropolis represent?
- iv. To what extent do the road users obey the instructions that the Road Signs in the Nigerian metropolis represent?
- v. Are the Road Signs effective in communicating information to the road users in the Nigerian metropolis?
- vi. Are there deliberate efforts to make Road Signs effective in the Nigerian metropolis?

Significance of the Study

Road signs are not decorations but symbols to guide, instruct, warn and give directions. It is very important that every road user has an in-depth knowledge of the meaning of the signs on the road. Thus, the study will be of immense significance to all the consuming stakeholders, who are the road users such as the: motorists, commuters, and pedestrians. This is because the study intends to show that the road signs are not just ornamentals to decorate roads but symbols that serve as an intermediary between the roads (inanimate object), and the road users (animate) for perfect synergy on all that both need for mutual cooperation between them. Secondly, the findings of the study will be significant to all the regulatory stakeholders in the government such as the policy makers, Federal Road Safety Commission, Police and the Vehicle Inspection Officers (VIO). The study will make their minds to be conscientious to look at implement and monitor policies that will make obedience of road and traffic signs compulsory. As suggested by Jolayemi (2004 & 2009), in his logico-pragmatic analysis of the Nigerian National Pledge

and a socio-acoustic analysis of *Gbòzà*, aspects of linguistic analyses can be deployed for social reformation and change. This study portends the propensity of a semiotic analysis as social communication change of the Nigerian road users from apathy to sympathy.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study was designed as a survey research, using the structured interview method to probe the opinions, attitudes, feelings and dispositions of samples toward a given phenomenon, and uses the outcome to generalise on the entire population. The sampled population was a set of purposively selected 260 respondents that resided in Akure, Nigeria. The centrality of the Akure township makes it a good representation of the larger target population, Nigeria. Apart from it bounding five states of the Federation of Nigeria, namely: Edo, Ekiti, Kogi, Ogun, and Osun, it also serves as the connecting nerves for the transportation of humans, goods and vehicles among the Northern, Southern, Eastern and Western parts of the country. It is also a town with high population of vehicular and pedestrian movements percolating the whole of the Nigerian transportation nerves and networks. The respondents were made of various categories of the road users in any metropolis. 120 commercial motorists were selected from the Ondo, Benin, and Kaduna Motor Parks; 40 private motorists and 100 pedestrians were also selected from Oja Oba markets and the shop owners in Oba-Adesida road in Akure town of Nigeria. In order to collect data from these samples, six questions were asked each of the respondents in a structured interview.

Theoretical Framework

This work is anchored on semiotics, using gestalt theory of visual perception, which is based on the observations of the German psychologist Max Wertheimer. As explained by Lester (2011, p. 45), the eye merely takes in all the visual stimuli, whereas the brain arranges the sensations into a coherent image. According to him, human beings perceive objects in their entirety before seeing the individual objects. That is to say that perception is a combination of sensations and not of individual sensory elements. Elaborating on the Gestalt theory, Gallese (2016) anatomically focusses attention on action, perception and cognition as a function of “dorso-ventral stream” of the brain. He explains that recognising a sign is made possible as a result of the “cortical networks” that allow an object to be perceived by the brain in relations to the space and other activities around the object (p. 128). As this study is precipitated by the social communication import of the road signs, the gestalt theory adequately lends credence to the analysis of responses from the Nigerian participants. This is because the study is set as to obtain information from Nigerians’ response to the viability of the road signs as a visible landmark to be perceived, interpreted and acted upon.

Some Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

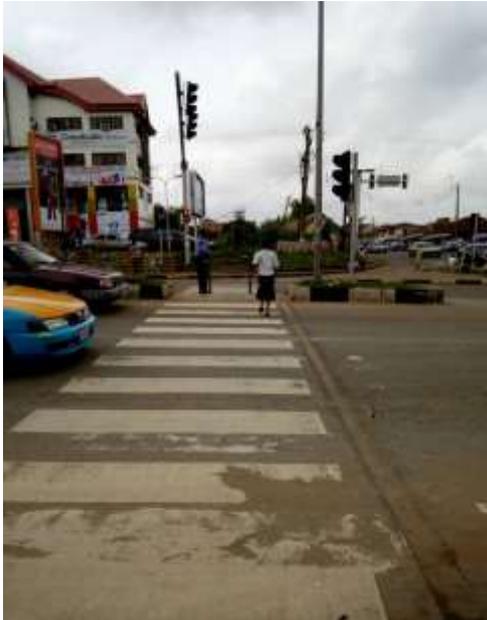
As defined in the Nigeria Highway Code, (2008, p. 1), road is ‘a path established over land for the passage of vehicles, people, and animals. It provides dependable pathway for moving people and goods from one place to another’. Ever since de Saussure’s (1916) seminal discussion on sign in semiotics, three triangular strokes have been popular in defining the sign. These are (1) a tangible element, (2) with a mental concept that the tangible element refers, and (3) the operational image that exists between the element and the concept. These, Saussure refers to as: the signifier, the signified and the signification, respectively. A sign is, therefore,

described by the International Commission of Illumination (CIE) (1988, p. 3) as a device that provides a visual message by virtue of its situation, shape, colour or pattern and sometimes by the use of symbols or alpha-numeric characters to transfer information. According to Makinde and Opeyemi (2012, p. 608), the road signs convey messages in words or symbols and are erected to regulate, warn, or guide road users (motorists, and pedestrians, etc.). Human ingenuity has made contacts and links possible among the people at different locations in our society through the creation of connectivity within the vast space that makes up the society. This connectivity comes in form of roads, river ways, airways, etc. The most visible and mostly used by the people, using different types of means of transportation, is the road. The need for interconnectivity makes the road network so complex, as there exists different types, such as the expressways, two-lane highways, dual carriageways, drive pathways, intersections, roundabout, T-junctions, interchanges, intercessions, U-turns, etc., all having their complexities (Nigerian Highway Code, 2008).

Road signs are nonlinguistic forms of communication that give road users specific information, instruction and precautions on the use of the roads. According to McGregor (2009), Dewar and Olson (2002), every sign forms a fundamental unit and it is used in the representation and conveyance of information. They refer to traffic signs and signals, road markings, mounted symbol, etc. that form part of road architecture and serve as linguistic landscape that communicate the conditions of road, e.g. bends, corners, bumps, T. Junctions, and intercessions. The others are: directions on road routes, caution on speed limits and precautionary measures with the road users in order to make the use of the road so easy.

Road signs typically have a vast scope but sometimes have restrictions in spatial and semiotic scope. The meaning and effect of signs, in actual social life, is unlimited or unrestricted. It is specific to the space in which they are emplaced and to the addressees they select. This means that the shapes will select audiences in relationship to the professions of the users. Triangle and circle, for example will suggest different meaning and idea to a mathematician different from its meaning when used as road signs. The meaning of linguistic landscape, therefore, is embedded in the space where they occur and such social space gives them typified linguistic symbol, which can be interpreted by the road users, irrespective of the place where they occur. The above is described by Scollon and Scollon (2003) as 'emplacement'. According to them, signs are placed in a specific space, and their emplacement defines their effects. This, they describe as 'Place Semiotic' – that is, the meaning of the signs is activated by their emplacement in the world. In spite of this, however, many of the road signs have an international signification, interpretation, designation and application. Thus, they are a universal code with a universal interpretation and application, as exemplified in the Zebra Crossing sign across the various streets in the world as presented below of: Akure, Nigeria (Africa); Philadelphia, United States of America (America); Nujiang North Street, Shenyang, Liaoning, China (Asia); Seymour Street, Traralgon, Victoria, Australia (Australia); London, United Kingdom, and Konstanz, Germany (Europe).

Universality of Zebra Crossing Across the Streets of the World: Examples of Nigeria, America, China, Australia, the United Kingdom, and Germany



20, Oba Adesida Road, Akure, Nigeria



65, Woodland Ave, Philadelphia, USA



Nujiang North Str, Shenyang, Liaoning, China



Seymour, Str. Traralgon, Victoria, Australia



62, Gascoigne Road, Barking, London,



Luisenstrasse 8, Konstanz, Germany

Road signs are meant to give information to road users, particularly motorists who cannot stop to read or have the luxury of slowing down to read and or study to take in instructions. Since road signs are designed to be glanced rather than studied, it is very important that the visuals and content of any road sign, must be such that will make their communicative functions effective to the road users. Particularly, road signs must be consistent in object and content in all the road networks to be effective (Ben-Rafael, Shohamy, Amara & Trumper-Hecht, 2008; and Thongtong, 2016). For road signs to be effective, therefore, they have to be bold, well located and have general connotation. Wogalter, Racicot, Klsher, & Simpson, 1994, opine that a sign must be credible and accurate; the message conveyed in it should be credible and convincing (something/meaning?) to the readers so that he will act upon it; thus, while the visual shape of the sign is quite generally understood (the sign can be found all over the world, with the same meaning). There could also be cases where text and images co-occur (text imprinted on the visual shapes) to communicate specific messages thus making the Highway Codes more instructional. Stressing this, Mahmud (2017) observes that there is a very interesting relationship between the linguistic and visual elements when combine in communication process. Through these co-occurrences, we can infer the interrelationship of the entire concept that makes up the codes: the text supports, emphasizes or repeats the information contained in the non-textual, visual sign, and vice versa. Van Leeuwen (2005) describe the co-occurrences as different ‘affordances’, meaning the materially, culturally, socially and historically developed ways in which meaning is made with particular semiotic resources. The affordance of a mode is shaped by its materiality, by what it has been repeatedly used to mean and do (its ‘provenance’), and by the social norms and conventions that inform its use in context.

Consequent upon the above and in order to make the use of the roads easy and risk free for the users, there is the need to provide the road user guides that will ensure effective usage of the

various interconnectivity presented by road complexities; hence, different Highway Codes in the form of images/signs, symbols and signals are part of road architectures in the Nigerian roads to give guide to the road users. The main function of the codes is to give information. The Highway Codes, like any other codes, are forms of social contract, they are set of rules or conventions that members of a group agree to follow for their mutual benefit or convenience. Once the road users sight the signs, the information the signs communicate comes to mind because they are observable mental substance and image are associated with particular meaning and concept (signification). In this sense, it is imperative that the road users have to learn the meaning of different road signs and place their occurrence at any time and in all road situation as representative of the information they are meant to give.

Codes are systematic sets of rules that assign meaning to signs, i.e., to “things” they stand for, or refer to other things in meaningful ways (Wales, 2001). Road signs are institutional copyrights, regulated by official authorities, for instance in Nigeria, like Federal Road Safety Commission, The Nigerian Police, with the role of setting rules that restrict, moderate and instruct on the use of the road. Such rules include prohibitions, speed limits, warnings, and directions. It is, therefore, essential that the road signs and codes as means of communication be of tremendous interest of study to scholars, especially in the area of semiotics in order to showcase the significance of road artifacts, not just as decorative ornaments, but representation of communicative information to give instructions, regulations, and advise that will guide road users and maintain the sanity of the usage.

Examples of Road Signs



These are prohibitive signs on no U-turn and right turn.



These are warning signs on: approaching round about, bumps and uneven roads, approaching zebra crossing for pedestrians, intersections, speed limit of 80km per hour, and no parking.

Source: Nigerian Highway Code, 2008, pp. 82-84.

Semiotics of Road Signs

The preoccupation of semiotics as a field of study is the relationship of signs as symbols to meaning, that is, sign systems are involved in the construction of meaning. It is concerned with everything that can be taken as a sign Eco (1979, p. 7). Semiotics studies signs in our daily speech and activities. Such signs include body language, gesture, visuals, symbols, pictorials,

linguistic elements, space such as road, land, building, landmark, vegetation, landscape, etc. all used for the purpose of communication. It looks at what is used to stand for something. Observing this, Blommaert, Collins & Slembrouck, (2005, p.198) note that semiotically, we just have to replace 'language' by 'signs'. According to Lester (2011, pp. 5253), 'a sign is simply anything that stands for something else...anything word or physical presentation, from a yelled comment to an arranged jacket, is a sign if it has meaning beyond the object itself'. Semiotics, therefore, studies not only 'signs' in everyday speech such as traffic signs, symbols or pictures, but everything, which 'stands for' something else. Kress' work consistently pushes this agenda, and the fundamental impact of his work is that he brought signs and the study of signs into another theoretical field of force than that of mainstream semiotics. To him, signs should look at, not for themselves, but for what they teach about the social processes in which they are embedded and in which they play a vital role. In line with this too, Van Leeuwen sees signs as semiotic resources. Semiotic resources are signifiers, observable actions and objects that have been drawn into the domain of social communication and that have a theoretical semiotic potential constituted by all of their past uses and all their potential uses and an actual semiotic potential constituted by those past uses that are known and considered relevant by the users of the resource. Van Leeuwen, (2005, p. 4).

The study of signs in semiotic is all encompassing. It involves the inference of meaning from signs and symbols using interpersonal, cultural, contextual and personal experience. Broadly speaking, semiotic codes may be signifying and/or behavioural, among others, and these include Morse code, secret codes, the binary code of computers (ones and zeros), musical codes, codes of algebra, traffic lights, dress, scents, taste (in culinary practice), gesture, etc. (Eco & Sebeok, 1983); Sebeok, 2001; and Wales, 2001). To them, signifying codes may be explained as a system of signs governed by rules agreed upon (explicitly or implicitly) between members of the using culture or society.

Social semiotics deals with observable actions and objects that have been drawn into the domain of social communication Halliday, (1978), Van Leeuwen (2005), and Thibault, (1991). They are signs and symbols though, but they are signifiers and the road users are consciously, culturally and socially bound to them. The signifier is the physical form of an object; what we see, touch and smell in the objective and shared reality. The signified is the content, the meaning of the object; what we experience, think and feel when we interact with the artefact (Sara, 2002, p. 4).

Semiotics is concerned with the phenomena of signs in all their abundance and variety: acoustic signals, road signs, verbal signs, gestures, - in short, signifying objects and artefacts of virtually every size, shape, colour, and substance. Louis Hébert (2011). It is therefore, a thorough thought for scholarly examination, the analysis of road traffic architecture, using semiotics as the scientific study of sign for the purpose of analysing the road codes as traffic architecture used as communication tool to give information to the road users in Nigeria.

Discussion and Findings

Six research questions, as shown in 3.1 above, form the basic guide for administering interview to the respondents in this work. The responses of the respondents on the interview conducted on them in order to gather data for this work is hereby discussed hereunder:

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Question 1: What are the significance of road sign in the Nigerian metropolis? Many of the drivers interviewed at the two motor parks in Akure metropolis affirmed that road signs are meant to guide road users on precautions to take to avoid risk of accident in the course of traversing the Nigerian roads. Out of a total number of 120 commercial drivers interviewed in the course of this work, 90 of them, representing 35% of respondents recognised the significant of the road signs as communicative symbols to guide road users. The remaining 30, forming 11.5% of the total respondents claimed not to give attention to the signs, even though, they were aware that they plaid significant roles in guiding the road users. All the 40 private drivers, representing 15% of the total respondents in this work affirmed that indeed, road signs were not just ornament to decorate the roads but installed to give specific instruction, directions, orders, etc. to the drivers and pedestrians. Out of the 100 pedestrian interviewed, 78, representing 30% of the respondents opined that road traffics gave information on what road users should do, like giving instruction on when and where to cross the road and, therefore, are significant and useful as linguistic representation. However, 22 of the pedestrians, representing 8.5% claimed that they did not know the significant of the road signs.

Question 2: Are the road signs linguistic representation of the traffic rules in the Nigerian metropolis? The question is to elicit the respondents' opinion on whether the traffic signs, as nonlinguistic symbols, can effectively represent the meaning they will infer from linguistic communication. Almost all the respondents claimed that indeed, road signs were nonlinguistic representation of verbal and written communication on the roads. To them, motorists and pedestrians did not have the luxury of time to wait and read instructions in the course of traversing the roads. Road signs performed the same function of giving information that written or verbal form of communication would do. This opinion was derived from the answers of 238 respondents, 120 commercial drivers, 40 private drivers, and 88 pedestrians, representing 91.5% of the total respondents interviewed, all affirming the fact that road signs are linguistic representation of traffic rules in the Nigerian metropolis. The remaining 8.5%, comprising 22 pedestrians claimed that they did not pay any special attention to road signs, could not describe them, therefore, did not know the importance or the meaning that they represented.

Question 3: To what extent do the motorists understand the information the road signs in the Nigerian metropolis represent? Majority of respondents, numbering 176 and representing 67.7% of the total respondents employed in this work showed understanding of the information the road signs represented. 23.1% of the respondents, numbering 60, could not interpret all the signs, describing them as not clear enough while the remaining 9.2%, totaling 24, showed little or no understanding of the linguistic implication of the road signs and were unconcerned about the message the signs represented.

Question 4: To what extent do road users obey the instructions the road signs in the Nigerian metropolis represent? Most of the respondents, 212 (81.5%), expressed concern that, despite the fact that they knew the importance of the road signs and traffic rules, they still failed to obey them, most of the time. This submission was deducted from 102 commercial drivers, representing 39.2% of the respondents, 30 private drivers, representing 11.5% and 80 pedestrians, representing 30.8% submitted that the road signs, like most of the traffic rules, were not observed or obeyed. Only few respondents, 48 (18.5%), made up of 18 commercial drivers, representing 6.9%, 10 private drivers, representing 3.8% and 20 pedestrians, representing 7.7% of the total respondents claimed that they obeyed the road signs as they were meant to guide the road users and prevent avoidable road mishaps.

Question 5: Are road signs effective in communicating information to the road users in the Nigerian metropolis? On this, a total number of 180 respondents: 80 commercial drivers, 32 private drivers and 68 pedestrians, representing 69% of the respondents submitted that indeed, road signs mounted on the roads in the Nigeria metropolis were effective in guiding the road users. They attested to the clarity of the road traffic signs. However, 60 respondents: 28 commercial drivers, 6 private drivers and 26 pedestrians, representing 23% of the respondents believed that the road signs did not necessarily give additional information to what they already knew on the use of the road, therefore, were not necessary on the roads. To them, road signs were more of ornaments to decorate the roads. The remaining 20 respondents: 12 commercial drivers, 2 private drivers and 6 pedestrians, representing 8% felt unconcerned about the road sign and so, unsure of their effectiveness.

Question 6: Are there deliberate efforts to make road signs effective in the Nigerian metropolis?

Most of the road users interviewed observed that, even though, road signs are very important guide that must be obeyed by road users for effective road usage and avoidance of mishap; there is no commitment on the part of stakeholders towards ensuring that the road signs are obeyed by road users and made effective in the Nigerian metropolis. 98, out of the 120 commercial drivers interviewed, representing 37.7% of the total respondents confessed that they had never set their eyes on the Nigerian Highway Code, claiming that the Nigerian Highway Code was not made a prerequisite for them to be licensed for driving. They noted that there is no enforcement of the obedience of road signs as offenders easily go away unpunished most times because they usually “settle” the men of the Road Safety Corps, the Policemen and the VIO’s when they (the drivers) are apprehended for running contrary to the instruction of the road signs. The remaining 22 of the commercial drivers interviewed, representing 8.5% of the total respondents in this work claimed to have the Highway Code but did not take the content serious because there is no lay down punishment for disobedience of the road signs and offenders can get away with it when they are apprehended by enforcers. 22 of the pedestrians interviewed, representing 8.5% of the respondents claimed that they do not use the zebra crossing signs because vehicles plying the road do not wait for pedestrians on zebra crossing as stipulated by the High way code and that the law enforcement officers are not always found at stipulated areas to control the use of the roads and apprehend those that disobey the road signs. They, therefore, expressed fear of being knocked down by commercial drivers if they attempt to use zebra crossing. The remaining 78, representing 30% of the total respondents noted that there is no adequate sensitization on the meaning and use the road signs, therefore, claiming ignorance of the meaning of zebra crossing signs on the roads. All the private drivers interviewed, totaling 40 and 15.4% of the total respondents used in this work expressed dissatisfaction at the lackadaisical attitude of law enforcement agents towards traffic monitoring and control. They also asserted the fact that there is no proper enforcement on the obedience of the road signs, noting that the possession of High way code is not made mandatory for drivers before they are issued license. Equally, they noted that there is no standard means of apprehending those that run contrary to high way code laws in Nigeria, hence, the road signs, that are supposed to guide road users are reduced to mere road ornaments and decorations.

Summary of the Findings

Results of the feedback from the respondents as shown in the presentation above reveal that:

1. Road signs in the Nigerian metropolis are part of the road architecture and they are very significant as guides to the road users for road sanity.
2. Road signs installed on the streets of Nigeria as linguistic landscape are communicative symbols to the road users. They are the nonlinguistic representations of the verbal and written communication on the roads, as the road users do not have the luxury of time to read the instructions in the course of traversing the roads. Road signs, therefore, perform the same function of giving information like the written or verbal communication.
3. Majority of the road users in the Nigerian metropolis, including commercial and private drivers and pedestrians understand the meaning of the road signs.
4. Most of the road users in Nigeria do not comply with the regulations of the road signs.
5. Majority of the respondents indicated that they understood the meanings of the road signs. This implies that the road signs are communicative to the extent that the road users can interpret them.
6. There is no deliberate effort to make the road signs effective. It is the general opinion that even though there is the Nigerian highway codes, most drivers do not have copies. Possession, learning and application of the codes to driving, therefore, are not made compulsory to the drivers before they are given licenses. Also, there is no standard stipulated punishment for the road offenders that will serve as deterrent to violators of road signs.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The research shows that road users in the Nigerian metropolis have clear understanding of the road signs, which means that the road signs, as linguistic landscape have communicative effectiveness as majority of the respondents claim to know the significance and meaning of the signs. However, it is deduced from the study that the respondents have a nonchalant attitude towards the signs and what they represent, thereby making compliance to the traffic rules in the Nigerian metropolis very low. This contributes, immensely, to the numerous road accidents that claim loss of lives and properties.

It is therefore, necessary that deliberate effort be put in place to ensure that the linguistic relevance of road signs in Akure metropolis is not undermined by road users in order to prevent, if possible eradicate the concerned rate of road mishap and preventable loss of lives from accidents in Akure metropolis.

It is recommended that the relevant government agencies and other voluntary organisations should carry out more enlightenment campaigns on the meanings of road signs and the importance of obeying them. Studies should be carried out to ascertain why road users intentionally flout road traffic signs.

Road users need to have positive attitude towards the law in general and safety on the road in particular. Relevant government agencies, non-governmental and other voluntary organisations should partner in this onerous assignment of sanitising our roads and prevent, if not eradicating

road mishaps on the Nigerian roads. This can be achieved through the coming together of these stakeholders to organise enlightenment campaigns on the meanings of the road signs and, more importantly, the need to obey them.

The Highway Code should be made available to all the drivers at an affordable cost if not free. Also, it is not enough for each driver on the Nigerian roads to have the Highway Codes, but the adequate interpretation of the codes should be a criterion for issuing licenses to drivers, either private or professional.

The creation of the Highway Code is a very ingenious act that will go a long way in ensuring sanity in the Nigerian roads. The mounting of these signs on the road and their communication consistency, irrespective of where they occur, will create lasting impressions in the consciousness of the road users. It is therefore important that there should be proper training of the road users on the meaning of the highway codes as printed in the Nigeria Highway Code. The Highway Code test should not be limited to the first timer only but there should be a refreshers' course each time drivers' license is to be renewed.

Apart from routine check to physically enforce compliance with the road signs, additional investigation on the reasons the road users flout road signs in the Nigerian metropolis should be done at all government and law enforcement levels in order to design a policy that will put in place formal orders and punishment on the use of roads and road offenders.

Lastly but highly important, two uninvestigated variable cropped into the study bordering on the unavailability of the Nigerian Highway Code on the internet, and the blind eye given the road offenders who were able to pay their ways. The study discovered that the Nigerian Highway Codes are not given serious attention by all the stakeholder in the Nigerian roads. This research work discovers that the booklet is not available on the Internet. In this world of internet study and education, it is only appropriate that authorities make the Highway Code available to road users and also, on the internet so that, as it is the case in other countries like Ireland, etc., it will be available for road users and others that might want it for research purposes. Furthermore, it was also discovered that on the few occasions when the traffic officers or other road enforcement agents caught the road offenders, the officers were given bribes by the offenders. Only those who refused to give the bribes ended up being persecuted for road offences. The implication of this is that even the watching officers should also be watched; and they should not be shielded from punishment, when they err. They should also be given adequate remunerations, incentives, and encouragement for the job done so as not to be attracted to bribes. With all the above, it is hoped that road usage and commutation will be safe, after having the due regard given the road signs as a linguistic landscape in Nigeria. Thus, it is expected that the wanton loss of valuable lives and properties will be highly degraded from its current situation.

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