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A Critical Discourse Analysis of Language Use to Depict Power Dynamics and Different Ideologies in President Tinubu's 1st October, 2024 Independence Day Speech

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Abstract:

This research presents a critical discourse analysis of President Bola Tinubu's Independence Day speech delivered on October 1, 2024, with a primary focus on how language is used to construct power dynamics and express principal ideologies. Using Fairclough's three-dimensional model of critical discourse analysis and Leech and Short's framework for stylistic analysis, the research explores the relationship between linguistic choices and socio-political contexts. Through qualitative textual analysis, the speech is found to articulate multiple ideologies such as nationalism, neoliberalism, populism, democratic liberalism, and religious moralism. These ideologies are communicated through carefully constructed discourse that balances technocratic governance with emotional appeals to the Nigerian populace. The findings of the research show the significant role of political rhetoric in shaping public perception, strengthening social hierarchies, and mobilising collective identity. This research contributes to a deeper understanding of how contemporary Nigerian political leadership uses language as a tool of power, persuasion, and ideological expression.

Keywords: Discourse Analysis, Power and Ideology, Political Discourse, Independence Day

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1. INTRODUCTION

This research undertakes a critical discourse analysis (CDA) of President Bola Tinubu's Independence Day speech delivered on October 1, 2024. However, there is a limited scholarly study on the use of language for power dominance, and to express different ideologies in President Tinubu's Independence Day speech due to the recency of the speech. This study focuses on filling this gap. The study therefore, identifies, examines, and analyses the techniques employed by President Tinubu, during his 1st October, 2024, Independence Day speech with a focus on how he explores the intricate ways language is used to display power dynamics and propagate diverse ideologies. Drawing upon influential theories in discourse analysis and stylistics; Fairclough's three-dimensional framework and Leech and Short's stylistic approach, this study examines the linguistic choices, rhetorical devices, and persuasive strategies that strengthens the speech. By analyzing these linguistic elements, the research seeks to uncover how President Tinubu constructs his authority, appeals to national unity, and navigates competing political and ideological discourses.

Through this analysis, the study aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of the role of language in Nigerian politics, especially how political leaders use rhetoric to shape public consciousness and forge national identity. Furthermore, it highlights the impact of political language on social relations and ideological positioning, thereby underscoring the importance of critical engagement with political communication in contemporary democratic societies.



2. Literature Review

This section reviews literatures that are relevant to the study

2.1 Conceptual Review

This section reviews relevant literature and element surrounding the topic of the research. This review provides a deeper understanding of the work being studied by providing information about aspects that are encompassed in the topic of the research. This will help in gaining a more nuanced understanding of the work's context.

Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis has been widely defined as an investigation of language in use and which is fundamentally interested in the extra-sentential levels. It is regarded as a recent field of linguistics (Brown & Yule, 1983). More specifically, Van Dijk (2003) assumes that discourse analysis is best depicted in the so-called relationship between the text and context in which that text is introduced or generated. Detailing more in this prominent point of view, he adds that the word “discourse” is grasped as a text within context in which data are subjected to empirical investigation. Besides, Fairclough (1989) defines the discourse as a term referring to the whole process of the social interaction of which a text is just part or segment affected by other super-linguistic components such as the speaker, audience, and occasion. Discourse, as such, is a broad term with many definitions.

Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a type of discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context. With such dissident research, critical discourse analysts take explicit position, and thus want to understand, expose, and ultimately resist social equality. According to Van Dijk (2006:252), ‘critical discourse analysis is primarily interested in and motivated by the endeavor to understand pressing social issues.’

Political Discourse

Politicians use language as the most vital instrument through which they communicate their ideologies to the people. So language has a crucial role to play in politics (Sarah & Oladayo, 2018). According to Fairclough (1989), the term refers to “the whole process of interaction of which a text is just a part” (Fairclough, 1989, p.24). Beard (2000) observes that political discourse, language use in politics, helps to know how political office holders use language. Politicians, especially presidents and governors, use language skilfully in their speeches to persuade the people.

Political discourse, therefore, can be seen as any well talented or decorated use of language by politicians in any political settings or discussions to present their intents or ideologies in an impressive manner to persuade people

2.2 Empirical Review



This section analyses and evaluates the empirical evidence presented in some particular works of literature.

Sharififar and Rahimi wrote a paper titled “*Critical Discourse Analysis of Political Speeches: A Case Study of Obama's and Rouhani's Speeches at UN*”. In the paper, they were able to analyse through the transitivity system and modality how two presidents' language can incorporate both ideology and power in their political speeches; how they manifest their power, capabilities, and policies through language. They used Halliday's metafunctions: ideational functions, the interpersonal function, and the textual function to analyse their data. Therefore, the basis for their analyses is transitivity. In addition they were able to illustrate the number of words, sentences and paragraphs used in both the speeches. Use of tenses and use of pronouns in both the speeches were also discussed in the paper. However, the paper was not able to detail on the rhetorical devices used in the speeches. The paper also did not present how language is used to express different ideologies and power dynamics in the speeches nor did it discuss persuasive techniques as used in the speeches.

Inpon (2019) wrote a thesis titled “*An Analysis of Syntactical Parallel Structure and the Flouting of the Parallel Structure in the U.S. Presidents' Inaugural Speeches*”. He discussed in detail the syntactic parallelism in the speeches as well as the flouting parallelism. He also touched lexical parallelism, phonological parallelism. The study discussed political inaugural speeches as well as studies of language analyses of presidential speeches. The research reveals that the use of

marked parallel structure is common in real communication. This implies that the instruction of the English language could benefit from making the learners aware of such usage. The researcher also suggested that teachers should guide learners to be aware of the use of parallel structures and unparallel structures in their communication. However, the researcher did not explore rhetorical devices nor did he discuss how language is used in the speech to reflect power dynamics and ideology.

Wang's work "A Critical Discourse Analysis of Barack Obama's Speeches" (2010) analyses Barack Obama's presidential speeches mainly from the point of transitivity and modality, in which one can learn how language is used to serve ideology and power, thus having a better understanding of the purposes of political speeches. The paper discussed briefly the metafunctions, tenses and modality, but the paper was not able to give detailed discussions on how language is used to express different ideologies and power dynamics used in the speech

Uchegbu-Ekwueme (2016) wrote a paper titled: "A Syntactic Analysis of President Umar Musa Yar'adua's Inaugural address". The paper deliberated on syntactic structures and analyses with illustrations on how different meanings are formed from two similar sentence structures by simply changing word arrangements. This process creates sentences that are similar but have different meanings. The paper then discussed in details the syntactic features in President Umar Musa Yar'adua's inaugural speech by pointing out the sentence types found in the speech and analyzing them with clear illustrations using diagrams. The paper also discussed coordination, subordination and apposition as linguistic



processes of linking ideas within a unit of a given written text and illustrated how each of these linking devices is used in the speech to make meaning or elaborate on meaning of other clauses. These devices provide the writer with the linguistic tool of saying exactly what he (President Yar'adua) intends to say. The paper concluded that the effective choice of words and use of linguistic and syntactic features in the speech create emphasis and syntactic beauty, which served as tools for making meaning. However, the paper was not able to discuss other elements for making meanings such as rhetorical devices used in the speech and how meanings are made through these devices. The paper also did not discuss how language is used to express different ideologies and power dynamics in the speech.

Munir (2014) in his work titled: "A Stylistic Analysis of Barack Obama's Second Independence Day Speech" deliberated much on the analysis of figurative language used in the speech, lexical items that were used to make such figurative terms and how the speech achieved effectiveness through the use of figurative language. The research explored literary devices as tools for distinguishing style and making meanings in the speech. The researcher suggests that students who are majoring in linguistics have to learn stylistics seriously since every text, discourse or speech has its own style; it also suggests that readers should acknowledge the language phenomena, especially the phenomenon of figurative language in an Independence Day Speech so that readers can recognise that figurative language is not only employed in literary works, but also in a speech. However, the research was limited only to figurative language. It did not discuss how language is

used to express different ideologies and power dynamics or rhetorical elements used in the speech.

3. Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework for this study is based on Fairclough's (1989) and Leech and Short's (2007) framework for stylistics and discourse analysis. Fairclough aims to bring together social and political thought with linguistically-oriented discourse analysis. According to Fairclough (1995), there are three elements in the critical discourse analysis. The elements are textual analysis, discourse practice analysis and social practice analysis. His goal was to raise awareness of exploitative social relations through language. He believed that discourse has the potential to impact, ensure the continuity of, or change social structure.

The aim of Fairclough's approach is to reveal any hidden relations between language, power and ideology for the sake of raising of consciousness or awareness of the less lay people of the hidden ideologies of dominance and power of the powerful people in the society. This helps in raise awareness to the dominated people and provides them with tools to resist and withstand any power abuse by the dominating group.

Leech and Short's (2007) framework on the other hand, provides a systematic approach to analyzing texts, revealing how language choices shape meaning and interpretation. The framework is used to analyse literary devices by examining how they are utilised to convey meaning,



understand speaker's intent and explore how readers interpret texts based on linguistic features. Leech and Short's framework provides a heuristic checklist of linguistic and stylistic categories. According to the checklist, there are four levels for analyzing the linguistic data in any given text. These levels include lexical categories, grammatical categories, figures of speech, context cohesion, the lexical scheme searched in the form of parallelism, anaphora, and lexical repetitions.

3.1 Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative approach, which is a research method that uses descriptive data to gather information. The speech was studied as the primary data source. The researcher conducted a descriptive analysis, identifying persuasive elements, rhetorical devices, and how language is used to maintain social inequalities.

Research Instruments

Since it is a qualitative research, the primary instrument is the researcher himself. In qualitative research, a researcher is a planner, data collector, analyst, data interpreter, and reporter of the research result. It can be inferred from the above statement that the researcher in qualitative research is the human instrument. Secondary instrument used for data collection and analysis was the transcript of President Tinubu's Independence Day Speech.

Technique for data collection

The data for this study was collected from the internet after which the researcher did a close analysis of language as used in President

Tinubu's Independence Day Speech with focus on identifying ideas and ideologies it promotes, and the context in which it was delivered. The researcher also analysed rhetorical devices and how they are used to make meanings to persuade the audience.

Method of Data Analysis

The research is a textual analysis. This is because the study examined and analysed a text, which is president Tinubu's Independence Day Speech. The researcher performed quantitative analysis on the identified patterns. This involves calculating frequencies of certain structures, examining correlations between linguistic structures and specific communicative purposes or rhetorical strategies employed in the speech. Afterwards, the researcher conducted a qualitative analysis to explore the intended meanings, rhetorical devices or persuasive techniques employed by president Tinubu in his Independence Day Speech.

Source of data:

This study adopts a qualitative approach. The data for this study is specifically the structures which form the manuscript of president Tinubu's Independence Day Speech. This manuscript was obtained from Punch Newspaper, published online (internet, punchng.com) on 6th October, 2024.

Analysis of How Language is used in the Speech to Reflect Power Dynamics and Ideologies in the speech

In his 1st October 2024 independence Day speech, President Tinubu employs various linguistic strategies to express power dynamics. He uses these strategies to portray himself and his authority as the nation's



leader in one place, and in other places, speaks to foster unity and shared responsibility. Here are the key ways language is used to convey power dynamics:

1. Use of Authoritative Tone

In line 1, the president uses authoritative tone such as "It is my unique honor to address you... as the President of our dear country". This shows him as the centre of authority and positions him as the central figure guiding the nation's future.

2. Inclusive vs. Exclusive Language

In phrases such as "fellow Nigerian" in line 1, and "we are all endowed" in line 3, the president uses inclusive language to create a sense of shared identity, that he and all the audience share the identity of being citizens of Nigeria. Again in phrases such as "We can do it. We must do it. We shall do it" in line 29, he uses inclusive language to bring together the audience under a collective mission of moving the country forward. On the other hand, expressions like "I am different" in line 9, and his references to "a select and greedy few" in line 10 is a use of exclusive language which the president uses to distinguish his leadership style and approach from past failures. He reinforces his moral and political superiority compared to that of the past.

3. Legitimization of Power

The president demonstrates his position as a part of a legitimate tradition in his saying "By democratically electing a 7th consecutive civilian government" in line 6. This appeals to the country's democratic values. In his other words such as his references to "sacred rights" in

line 3 and "unifying ideals of tolerance and justice" in line 4, the president shows and connects his administration with divine and ethical principles.

4. Directives and Promises

President Tinubu's tone sounds imperative, and his words express commands in phrases such as "We must endure" in line 11 and "I also invite all to join this enterprise" in line 29. This calls for obedience as necessary for national progress. His statements about reforms (wage increments, CNG buses, tax policies (13–21), are promises, and this positions as both a benefactor and a decisive actor.

5. Use Symbolic Language

Use of metaphors like "to endure, our home must be constructed on safe and pleasant ground" in line 9 and "A Nigeria where hunger, poverty and hardship are pushed into the shadows of an ever fading past." in line 10, describe Tinubu's policies as inevitable and heroic, and on the other hand portray past failures as chaotic or immoral.

6. Acknowledgment of Hierarchies

The president in his speech indicates his recognition for various hierarchies. He describes security forces and acknowledges them as subordinate groups when he says "Here, I salute and commend our gallant security forces..." in line 23, so also he does to civil society organization when he says "I also thank members of our dynamic civil



society organizations..." in line 27 while reinforcing his role as the ultimate authority who "commends" and "tasks" others.

Analysis of Language use in the speech to Express Different Ideologies:

President Bola Tinubu's Independence Day speech reflects multiple ideologies through its language, blending nationalism, neoliberalism, populism, and democratic ideals. Here is how different ideologies are expressed linguistically:

1. Ideology of Nationalism

One of the ideologies expressed in president Tinubu's 1st October, 2024 independence day speech is that of nationalism. In the speech the president uses terms such as "...our nation" in line 3, "we are joined by a common thirst of peace" in line 4, and "...one indivisible unit" in line 28 to express Collective Identity and to emphasise unity and shared destiny. His words to make references to "founding fathers and mothers" in line 2 evokes Historical Legitimacy. His saying "Here, our nation stands," in line 5 shows Nigeria's resilience and invokes pride in national history. Again, expressing his or the country's opposition to external threats "No other nation or power... shall keep us from our rightful place" in line 3 indicates the uses of the ideology of nationalism, and describes Nigeria as autonomous and defiant against external interference.

2. Ideology of Neoliberalism

Tinubu's words that "Bold reforms were necessary..." in line 8, "...pledges to reshape and modernize our economy" in line 7, and " we embrace more efficient means to power our economy." in line 17 are used by the president to indicate economic rationalization. This points his administration to dwell on market-oriented policies, an administration that takes strict yet justifiable measures (e.g., subsidy removal, CNG buses) that are necessary for growth and long term prosperity. When he says "Wise tax policy is essential to economic fairness and development" in line 19 he expresses his administration's intention for fiscal responsibility. That is how his government is prudent in managing resources. He also talks about entrepreneurship as one of the key areas his government focuses on to increase investment and economic integration, and to emphasise on free market principles such as deregulation, privatization, and reducing government intervention, and also highlights solutions to private-sectors in line 20 when he says " To boost employment and urban incomes, we are providing investment funding for enterprises with great potential" and where he says " We are also setting up training facilities.... for transport operators" in line 17.

3. Populism ideology

Populism is a political ideology that claims to represent the common people against the real or perceived corrupt elite. It emphasises on a division between "the pure people" and the "corrupt elite" and seeks to express the general will of the people.



Populism is seen in president Tinubu's 1st October 2024 Independence Day speech in statements such as "...a future Nigeria where the abundance and fruits of the nation are fairly shared among all, not hoarded by a select and greedy few." In line 10 vs. "...lend more support to the poor and the vulnerable." In line 13. These are Elite-versus-People statements. It pits corrupt elites against the masses. Tinubu's use of direct appeal "I have a heart that feels and eyes that see" in line 9 is also use of populism. It positions Tinubu as the champion of the masses, an empathetic leader, and in tune with the suffering of the masses as against the entrenched corrupt elites.

4. Ideology of Democratic Liberalism

His speech praises and reinforces democratic norms when in lines 25-27 he "Congratulates the National Assembly, judiciary, and civil society". This is an institutional praise by the president. He also stresses constitutionalism, the rule of law in his words such as "Commitment to democracy and the rule of law remains our guiding light" in line 6 and " We shall continue to make key appointments in line with the provisions of the Constitution and with fairness toward all " in line 24. Not only this, his statement " Women, Youth and the physically challenged shall continue to be given due regard in these appointments" in line 24, indicates inclusivity. It signals progressive values. Such statements legitimise Tinubu's administration through adherence to democratic institutions and pluralism

5. Religious Undertones

Expressions such as "Sacred rights... God has bestowed" in line 3 and "May God bless Nigeria" in line 32 portray divine blessings, and "...our home must be *Constructed on safe and pleasant ground*" in line 9 indicates moral duty. These statements imply that Tinubu's administration is ethical, and also appeal to Nigeria's religious majority, and instilling that national progress is morally ordained.

The language serves to balance technocratic authority with emotional appeal, aiming to secure broad consensus for contentious policies. The dominance of neoliberal and nationalist frames, however, suggests a prioritization of market-driven growth and state sovereignty over redistributive or radical equity agendas.

4. CONCLUSION

This research underscores the powerful role of language as an instrument of power, persuasion, and ideological expression in political leadership. President Tinubu's Independence Day speech serves not only as a vehicle for communicating policy priorities but also as a means to construct social realities and negotiate dominance within the Nigerian political landscape. The speech deploys strategic rhetorical and linguistic techniques through which Tinubu crafts a narrative that legitimises his administration. It also reveals how discourse shapes and reflects power relations, making visible the underlying ideologies that guide governance and public communication. This study contributes to the broader understanding of political discourse in Nigeria. It



demonstrates that political speeches are key sites where power and ideology are contested and reinforced through language.

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framework and Leech and Short's stylistic approach, this study examines the linguistic choices, rhetorical devices, and persuasive strategies that strengthens the speech. By analyzing these linguistic elements, the research seeks to uncover how President Tinubu constructs his authority, appeals to national unity, and navigates competing political and ideological discourses.

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This study adopts a qualitative approach, which is a research method that uses descriptive data to gather information. The speech was studied as the primary data source. The researcher conducted a descriptive analysis, identifying persuasive elements, rhetorical devices, and how language is used to maintain social inequalities.

Research Instruments

Since it is a qualitative research, the primary instrument is the researcher himself. In qualitative research, a researcher is a planner, data collector, analyst, data interpreter, and reporter of the research result. It can be inferred from the above statement that the researcher in qualitative research is the human instrument. Secondary instrument used for data collection and analysis was the transcript of President Tinubu's Independence Day Speech.

Technique for data collection

The data for this study was collected from the internet after which the researcher did a close analysis of language as used in President Tinubu's Independence Day Speech with focus on identifying ideas and ideologies it promotes, and the context in which it was delivered. The researcher also analysed rhetorical devices and how they are used to make meanings to persuade the audience.

Method of Data Analysis

The research is a textual analysis. This is because the study examined and analysed a text, which is president Tinubu's Independence Day Speech. The researcher performed quantitative analysis on the identified patterns. This involves calculating frequencies of certain structures, examining correlations between linguistic structures and

specific communicative purposes or rhetorical strategies employed in the speech. Afterwards, the researcher conducted a qualitative analysis to explore the intended meanings, rhetorical devices or persuasive techniques employed by president Tinubu in his Independence Day Speech.

Source of data:

This study adopts a qualitative approach. The data for this study is specifically the structures which form the manuscript of president Tinubu's Independence Day Speech. This manuscript was obtained from Punch Newspaper, published online (internet, punchng.com) on 6th October, 2024.

Analysis of How Language is used in the Speech to Reflect Power Dynamics and Ideologies in the speech

In his 1st October 2024 independence Day speech, President Tinubu employs various linguistic strategies to express power dynamics. He uses these strategies to portray himself and his authority as the nation's leader in one place, and in other places, speaks to foster unity and shared responsibility. Here are the key ways language is used to convey power dynamics:

7. Use of Authoritative Tone

In line 1, the president uses authoritative tone such as "It is my unique honor to address you... as the President of our dear country". This shows him as the centre of authority and positions him as the central figure guiding the nation's future.

8. Inclusive vs. Exclusive Language



In phrases such as "fellow Nigerian" in line 1, and "we are all endowed" in line 3, the president uses inclusive language to create a sense of shared identity, that he and all the audience share the identity of being citizens of Nigeria. Again in phrases such as "We can do it. We must do it. We shall do it" in line 29, he uses inclusive language to bring together the audience under a collective mission of moving the country forward. On the other hand, expressions like "I am different" in line 9, and his references to "a select and greedy few" in line 10 is a use of exclusive language which the president uses to distinguish his leadership style and approach from past failures. He reinforces his moral and political superiority compared to that of the past.

9. Legitimization of Power

The president demonstrates his position as a part of a legitimate tradition in his saying "By democratically electing a 7th consecutive civilian government" in line 6. This appeals to the country's democratic values. In his other words such as his references to "sacred rights" in line 3 and "unifying ideals of tolerance and justice" in line 4, the president shows and connects his administration with divine and ethical principles.

10. Directives and Promises

President Tinubu's tone sounds imperative, and his words express commands in phrases such as "We must endure" in line 11 and "I also invite all to join this enterprise" in line 29. This calls for obedience as necessary for national progress. His statements about reforms (wage

increments, CNG buses, tax policies (13–21), are promises, and this positions as both a benefactor and a decisive actor.

11. Use Symbolic Language

Use of metaphors like "to endure, our home must be constructed on safe and pleasant ground" in line 9 and "A Nigeria where hunger, poverty and hardship are pushed into the shadows of an ever fading past." in line 10, describe Tinubu's policies as inevitable and heroic, and on the other hand portray past failures as chaotic or immoral.

12. Acknowledgment of Hierarchies

The president in his speech indicates his recognition for various hierarchies. He describes security forces and acknowledges them as subordinate groups when he says "Here, I salute and commend our gallant security forces..." in line 23, so also he does to civil society organization when he says "I also thank members of our dynamic civil society organizations..." in line 27 while reinforcing his role as the ultimate authority who "commends" and "tasks" others.

Analysis of Language use in the speech to Express Different Ideologies:

President Bola Tinubu's Independence Day speech reflects multiple ideologies through its language, blending nationalism, neoliberalism, populism, and democratic ideals. Here is how different ideologies are expressed linguistically:

6. Ideology of Nationalism



One of the ideologies expressed in president Tinubu's 1st October, 2024 independence day speech is that of nationalism. In the speech the president uses terms such as "...our nation" in line 3, "we are joined by a common thirst of peace" in line 4, and "...one indivisible unit" in line 28 to express Collective Identity and to emphasise unity and shared destiny. His words to make references to "founding fathers and mothers" in line 2 evokes Historical Legitimacy. His saying "Here, our nation stands," in line 5 shows Nigeria's resilience and invokes pride in national history. Again, expressing his or the country's opposition to external threats "No other nation or power... shall keep us from our rightful place" in line 3 indicates the uses of the ideology of nationalism, and describes Nigeria as autonomous and defiant against external interference.

7. Ideology of Neoliberalism

Tinubu's words that "Bold reforms were necessary..." in line 8, "...pledges to reshape and modernize our economy" in line 7, and " we embrace more efficient means to power our economy." in line 17 are used by the president to indicate economic rationalization. This points his administration to dwell on market-oriented policies, an administration that takes strict yet justifiable measures (e.g., subsidy removal, CNG buses) that are necessary for growth and long term prosperity. When he says "Wise tax policy is essential to economic fairness and development" in line 19 he expresses his administration's intention for fiscal responsibility. That is how his government is prudent in managing resources. He also talks about entrepreneurship as one of

the key areas his government focuses on to increase investment and economic integration, and to emphasise on free market principles such as deregulation, privatization, and reducing government intervention, and also highlights solutions to private-sectors in line 20 when he says " To boost employment and urban incomes, we are providing investment funding for enterprises with great potential" and where he says " We are also setting up training facilities.... for transport operators" in line 17.

8. Populism ideology

Populism is a political ideology that claims to represent the common people against the real or perceived corrupt elite. It emphasises on a division between “the pure people” and the “corrupt elite” and seeks to express the general will of the people.

Populism is seen in president Tinubu’s 1st October 2024 Independence Day speech in statements such as “...a future Nigeria where the abundance and fruits of the nation are fairly shared among all, not hoarded by a select and greedy few.” In line 10 vs. “...lend more support to the poor and the vulnerable.” In line 13. These are Elite-versus-People statements. It pits corrupt elites against the masses. Tinubu’s use of direct appeal “I have a heart that feels and eyes that see” in line 9 is also use of populism. It positions Tinubu as the champion of the masses, an empathetic leader, and in tune with the suffering of the masses as against the entrenched corrupt elites.

9. Ideology of Democratic Liberalism



His speech praises and reinforces democratic norms when in lines 25-27 he "Congratulates the National Assembly, judiciary, and civil society". This is an institutional praise by the president. He also stresses constitutionalism, the rule of law in his words such as "Commitment to democracy and the rule of law remains our guiding light" in line 6 and " We shall continue to make key appointments in line with the provisions of the Constitution and with fairness toward all " in line 24. Not only this, his statement " Women, Youth and the physically challenged shall continue to be given due regard in these appointments" in line 24, indicates inclusivity. It signals progressive values. Such statements legitimise Tinubu's administration through adherence to democratic institutions and pluralism

10. Religious Undertones

Expressions such as "Sacred rights... God has bestowed" in line 3 and "May God bless Nigeria" in line 32 portray divine blessings, and "...our home must be *Constructed on safe and pleasant ground*" in line 9 indicates moral duty. These statements imply that Tinubu's administration is ethical, and also appeal to Nigeria's religious majority, and instilling that national progress is morally ordained.

The language serves to balance technocratic authority with emotional appeal, aiming to secure broad consensus for contentious policies. The dominance of neoliberal and nationalist frames, however, suggests a prioritization of market-driven growth and state sovereignty over redistributive or radical equity agendas.

4. CONCLUSION

This research underscores the powerful role of language as an instrument of power, persuasion, and ideological expression in political leadership. President Tinubu's Independence Day speech serves not only as a vehicle for communicating policy priorities but also as a means to construct social realities and negotiate dominance within the Nigerian political landscape. The speech deploys strategic rhetorical and linguistic techniques through which Tinubu crafts a narrative that legitimises his administration. It also reveals how discourse shapes and reflects power relations, making visible the underlying ideologies that guide governance and public communication. This study contributes to the broader understanding of political discourse in Nigeria. It demonstrates that political speeches are key sites where power and ideology are contested and reinforced through language.

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