

Discourse Strategies in Political Television Interviews with Selected Nigerian Political Party Leaders: An Ideological Exploration

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Abstract

This study examines the discursive strategies political party leaders deployed in television interviews to express their parties' ideologies and the socio-political implications of deploying such strategies in the interviews in Nigeria. The study employed four purposively selected transcribed television interviews with selected Nigerian political party leaders in 2014 as primary data. The data for the study were analysed using van Dijk's Socio-cognitive approach to critical discourse analysis while drawing insights from Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics. The results showed that the party leaders employed such discursive strategies as actor description and authority to positively portray and sustain the identity of their parties as core ideological components. Evidentiality, example and number game were used to showcase the achievements of their parties with the intent of convincing the Nigerian populace of the positive impact of their parties' ideologies toward enhancing a better life. Again, lexicalisation and implication suggest both conservativeness of the party and traits of progressive capitalism in their approach to solving socio-economic problems. Polarisation/categorisation/Us/Them and comparison help emphasise the positive attributes of the in-group and negative attributes of the out-group, while euphemism, metaphor, irony and vagueness were used to de-emphasise the negative traits of the in-group and emphasise those of the out-group. These leaders use style and implicature in emphasising the ideological undertones of their principles, which ultimately shape and control their audience's opinion without doing so.

Key words: Politics, Leaders, Interview, Ideology, Discursive strategies, Discourse

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I. Introduction

Language is a unique characteristic that distinguishes humans from other animals (Fromkins, Rodman and Hyams 2011), especially as reflected in human ability to effectively communicate and disseminate information amongst themselves. People do not just speak or write, but as Smith and Miller (1968) note, the purpose of communication is the preservation of, growth and development of the human species. To achieve effective communication, therefore, the rhetoric intent, coherence and the world view of authors and receptors are crucially emphasised (Kaplan, 1990). Arguably, our words are never neutral, they carry the power that reflects the interest of those who speak or write (Fiske, 1994). This indicates that formal choices constitute choices of meaning, which reveal how media language for instance may work ideologically (Fairclough, 1995). By implication, every discourse has an underlying ideology. Political leaders, opinion leaders, courts, the media, among others contribute largely in shaping issues in the society and determining what receives attention and how it receives attention (Henry and Tator, 2002).

Political party leaders, therefore, find the media a fertile ground to showcase their parties' ideologies. With language, politicians carefully phrase their expressions to convincingly penetrate the heart of their audience with the intention of making them accept the ideologies of their parties. McNair (2011) acknowledges that "political actors must use the media in order to have their messages communicated to the desired audience" (p.11). Van Dijk (2004) lends credence to this saying "it is eminently here that different and opposed groups, power struggle and interests are at stake. ... to compete successfully, political groups need to be ideologically conscious and organised" (p.11). Political party leaders, therefore, attempt to project and protect the identity of their party as part of the crucial element of their ideology. Three aspects of this identity include "the image of

the party policy, the voters' image of the party leadership" and "the 'corporate' image of the party itself" (McNair, 2011:32). It then implies that these aspects of their identity need to be clearly communicated as positively as possible since they influence the political behaviour of the people and electoral outcomes. The media interviews (accountability interview, experiential interview, expert and news interview) identified by Montgomery (2007) become handy tools that politicians employ as opportunity to marshal and air such identity diplomatically and prove the crucial role that skillful use of language in communication plays in ensuring political victory as observed by McNair (2011) in relation to British political scene:

In more recent times, all observers agree that Tony Blair, leader of the British Labour Party from 1994 to 2007, was an excellent communicator leading his party to three consecutive general election victories. His successor Gordon Brown, by contrast, was deemed a failure in this respect, his unease with modern media techniques regarded as a contributing factor in Labour's election defeat of 2010. Brown's alleged insincerity and apparent awkwardness in working with YouTube and other new media channels became a serious liability for him, despite his universally acknowledged strength as a politician of seriousness and depth (p.36).

The above reveals that politically, it is not enough to have something to say but knowing how to say it. No matter how promising the ideologies of a political party may appear, if the party leaders lack the oratorical expertise to communicate them effectively, they will remain irrelevant as far as the western political world is concerned. This study is therefore set to investigate language use in revealing how political party leaders project their parties' ideologies in television interviews as such role influences the social process and the political vibes of the party. It is, therefore, a noteworthy intention to examine how Nigerian political party leaders employ discursive strategies to reveal their respective party ideologies in political interviews.

II. Literature Review

Recently, the notion of ideology has attracted more the attention of different scholars from different fields with diverse meanings attached to it. Among others, van Dijk (2004:6) observes that "...ideologies have something to do with systems of ideas, and especially the social, political or religious ideas shared by a social group or movement" and as "the fundamental beliefs of a group and its members" (ibid p.7). This suggests that ideology is the binding force that holds members of a group together which is firmly expressed as beliefs that are fundamental to the existence and survival of a group. Earlier, Morse (1896), while sharing his view about the centrality of ideology to the activities of political parties argues that ideology, being the durable convictions held in common by party members with respect to the most desirable form, institutions, spirit and course of action of the state, determines the natural attitude of a party towards every public question. Ideology acts as a string that ties members of a party together. Nnoli (2003) asserts:

... that ideology is a very crucial aspect of politics, not only by serving as a cognitive structure for looking at the society generally and providing a prescriptive formula, that is, a guide to individual action and judgment, but also as powerful instrument of conflict management, self-identification, power mobilisation and legitimisation. It may, therefore, be correct to assert that the first and most important vehicle of a political party under an ideal situation should be its ideological stance (177-82).

It is therefore, insightful that ideology is indispensable to any institution that has the tag, 'political party.' Further, with reference to the three sub-headings of ideology- discourse, cognition and society, Van Dijk (2004) insists that:

... ideologies consist of socially shared beliefs that are associated with the characteristic properties of a group, such as their identity, their position in society, their interests and aims, their relation with other groups, their reproduction and their natural environment (ibid.12).

Ideologies define a group among other groups in the society and provide the members of a group something that they are duty bound to project. Political party leaders are those that are prominently placed to sell the party's ideologies to the public and whose use of language is the object of this study. Every text is often controlled by a particular ideological viewpoint which may not necessarily be obvious. Carvalho (2000) rightly asserts that it is "the selection and representation of objects, actors, the language, and the discursive strategies employed in a text that caused the ideologies. However, one should expect the ideological standpoints of an author not to be always explicit in the text; identifying them often requires a good deal of interpretive work" (p. 26). As a collective ideas and beliefs, ideology forms the basis of the belief systems or social representations of specific groups (Van Dijk, 2001). This, however, does not nullify the idea that other forms of ideologies exist besides the collective ideology. This suggests why ideology should be investigated to know it is integrated in expressions.

Reacting to the relationship between discourse and ideology, Macdonald (2003:26) avers that “discourse always carries latent ideological consequences, but the activation of these depends on specific contexts and conditions”. This could mean that unveiling ideology in a particular discourse largely requires an excellent insight into the circumstances surrounding the production and presentation of such discourse. According to Fairclough (1989), discourse refers to “the whole process of interaction of which a text is just a part” (p.24). The totality of means of communication is hereby implied. In his observation, Schaffner (1996) opines that political discourse, as a sub-category of discourse in general, can be based on two criteria: functional and thematic. Political discourse is functional because it originates from politics and fulfills different functions as a result of diverse political activities. It is also thematic because its topics are primarily related to politics such as political activities, political ideas and political relations. Political discourse is not primarily defined by topic or style, but rather by who speaks to whom, as what, on what occasion and with what goals. Political discourse is especially ‘political’ because of its functions in the political process (van Dijk 1997b). The purpose of a critical analysis of political jargon is to represent how a political group and its protagonists act upon their surroundings by means of the power and dynamics of their language (Wodak and Ludwig, 1999). It suggests that political discourse is examined with the intention of revealing the identity of a particular political group through exercise of power and linguistic influence. Van Dijk (2004) holds that it is not sufficient to observe, for instance, that political discourse often features the well-known ‘political’ pronoun *we*. It is crucial to relate such use to such categories as who is speaking, when, where and with/to whom, that is, to specific aspects of the political situation (p. 13). Van Dijk apparently stresses contextual significance of linguistic devices in this explication. Such events include election campaigns, rallies, interviews with the media, protests, demonstrations and so on

Obviously, every group constitutes individuals and each member of the group identifies and defends the ideology of the group in question. The same thing is applicable in a political party whose interest is to grab the reins of political power. According to Althusser (1984), each person re-enacts the group’s ideology during any interpersonal contact in revealing the ideology of such a group. This leads to the importance of ideologies to political parties such that the party leaders consciously make efforts to acquaint the populace of their ideological stance. This is done with the awareness that a successful projection of their ideologies will largely determine their political victory, which is the basic priority of political parties: “That ideological expressions of group members often appear to be absent, vague, confused, contradictory or incoherent does not imply that ideologies themselves are contradictory or that ideologies do not exist in the first place” (van Dijk, 2009: 246).

Further, Matic (2012) in the ideological discourse structures in two political speeches of two American candidates in the 2008 presidential election focused on the political discourse structures within ideological strategies employed to reveal political position through the topics the speakers have examined. Matic’s findings show that these speeches are based on van Dijk’s ideological square to an extent and that neither of the speakers even indirectly suggests (de-emphasises) any positive information about the opponent. Again, they do not reveal negative information about themselves that should call for mitigating language devices, such as euphemisms and disclaimers. Certain similarities exist between the two speakers in expressing their ideological beliefs, including stating facts, explicit and implicit criticisms, use of implicatures and presupposition. The speakers, however, differ from each other in their use of ideological strategies such as expression of empathy towards the audience in the first speech and its absence in the second speech. Matic concludes that applying critical discourse analysis to the use of these structures within the strategies in political discourse to polarize, unite or manipulate the electorate makes the function and aims of their use clearer to laymen.

Bhatia (2006) in how prominent political figures consciously employ linguistic tools in diplomatic talk to communicate political differences in a positive way to smoothen out socio-political and ideological differences that often divide them employs critical discourse analysis to examine conferences by George W. Bush (US president) and Jiang Zemin (Chinese president) respectively. The study discovers that realities are usually obscured through the use of language in press conferences and that press conferences are creations of socio-political ideologies through skillful use of linguistic resources. The duo succeeded in concealing their ideological differences by the use of positivity for strengthening mutual trust, respect and progress; influence and power are used for subtle persuasion; and evasion to hedge or avoid responses to probing and inconvenient questions from the media. Adopting Fairclough’s critical discourse frame, Bayram (2010) examines the discursive strategies in the speeches of the Turkish Prime Minister, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, during a debate in the World Economic Forum in Davos in January 2009. From the perspective of his ideological, cultural and language backgrounds. Bayram discovers that Erdogan has succeeded in attitudinal and identity construction through the use of language. That is, he rightly depicts how a typical average Turkish person would speak, an act applauded by Turkish people to demonstrate group membership attribute. Precisely, Bayram has shown how ideological elements and linguistic background are reflected in the Turkish Prime Minister’s speech during the debate in strengthening his relationship with the Turkish populace.

Theoretical Framework

This study employs van Dijk's (2004) Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as framework, with insight from Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). These are text-based analytical frameworks that try to make obscurities in texts transparent enough such that a layman can understand. This approach to CDA is a socio-cognitive model which specialises in prejudice and racism in discourse which he explains through the triangle of society, cognition and discourse. He also believes that linguistics and cognition are foundational to CDA. The framework explains two main discursive strategies of 'positive self-representation' (semantic macro-strategy of in-group favouritism) and 'negative other-representation' (semantic macro-strategy of derogation of out-group) " which are materialised through some other discursive moves such as 'actor description', 'authority', 'burden' ('Topos'), 'categorisation', 'comparison', 'consensus', 'counterfactuals', 'disclaimer', 'euphemism', 'evidentiality', 'example'/illustration', 'generalisation', 'hyperbole', 'implication', 'irony', 'lexicalisation', 'metaphor', 'self-glorification', 'norm expression', 'number game', 'polarisation', 'Us-Them', 'populism', 'presupposition', 'vagueness', 'victimisation are employed in the present study.

The contextual meaning of language is the preoccupation of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) which demonstrates that a word or sentence has no meaning in isolation but receives significance in the context of other words or sentences, coupled with the prevalent social circumstances taken up with the *meta-functions* of language: the ideational, the interpersonal and the textual function. These describe the 'content function of language' (Halliday 2007:183). The ideational function is realised in transitivity, and serves to represent situations and events in the world and the entities, actions and processes involved. Interpersonal meta-function avails us the privilege of engaging in communicative act with other people, while the textual meta-function involves organising the linguistic elements to enhance textual coherence (Matthiessen, Teruya and Lam, 2010).

III. Methodology

The primary source of data comprised 30 excerpts from four recorded purposively selected transcribed versions of the television interviews held with selected political party leaders in 2014. One interview each with the political party leaders- Governors Adams Oshiomhole, Rauf Aregbesola, Godswill Akpabio and Emmanuel Uduaghan was selected. The first two from the People's Democratic Party (PDP) and the other two from the All Progressive Congress (APC) (the two prominent parties in the country) on Channels Television's "Views from the Top" and "Sunrise Daily" political programmes. These interviews held between 2011 and 2015 were selected because of the political agitation emerging from the 2011 general election and importantly, the struggle for the rein of power in 2015 general elections. The interviews were analysed using van Dijk's Socio-cognitive Approach to Critical Discourse Analysis while drawing insights from Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics.

IV. Data Presentation and Analysis

Some of the discursive strategies above are subsequently identified and analysed in the data starting with

4.1 Actor Description

Extract 1: Subsequently, we had what we called interim leadership which was chaired by a seasoned statesman, a former governor, and one that everybody respects as a guy who cannot be manipulated, who is absolutely trusted and reliable(Oshiomhole).

Extract 2: Ikimi has never had to tell me, comrade why are you building that road, why do you want to go and build school in that village, why are you bordering about health sector... (Oshiomhole)

In extract 1, Oshiomhole describes Chief Tinubu as being respected by everybody, a man that cannot be *manipulated*, *trusted* and *reliable*. Adorning him thus is a deliberate attempt to portray Tinubu as a flawless, focused leader, and a pioneer of the All Progressives Congress (henceforth, APC). Despite his political influence in the party and the country at large, extract 2 reveals that Chief Ikimi also restrains himself from interfering in the governance of Edo State. This seems to be a calculative move to portray these party leaders as virtually saintly.

4.2 Authority

Extract 3: This is a tedious process but it started well and I think one of our elder statesmen here, Chief Ikimi, was the founding chairman of the four parties (Oshiomhole).

Extract 4: When Obama says we are going to reinvest in health [...].We have not lost any case in court when we follow the law strictly (Oshiomhole).

Extract 5: Last year we won an award from the CBN, that one we call it WADP, Women in Agricultural Development Programme (Akpabio).

Extract 6: Fortunately, Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) has now come in to assist. We have a skill acquisition centre that has been developed by the United Nations, UNDP; in partnership with UNDP at Gbokodo [...] (Uduaghan).

In extracts 3, 4 and 5, a mere mention of political gurus like Obama, Asiwaju, Buhari and Ikimi in relation to the party seems to reinforce the acceptability of the APC's ideology because of their influence in the political sphere. Besides, extract 6 depicts how PDP gains prominence through associating with CBN and UNDP. It implies that PDP is credited with the fame, honour and recognition attached to these institutions.

4.3 Comparison

Extract 7: In the past, it's like rural area, rural people are substandard people and therefore we talk of rural roads like the (xx) defray days, just make a foot path. Today, the most difficult terrain in Edo has been connected with standard road that compares very favourably, often times even lot better than federal roads (Oshiomhole).

Extract 8: In Benin City ... we even have situations in which because of flood erosion, some children were washed off their mother's bed. Five minutes rain, the flooding there will be like if you are in Lagos. It looks like a lagoon. Today, all of those areas are cleaned up (Oshiomhole).

Oshiomhole in these extracts refers to the road constructed by his predecessor as *foot path* while that of his administration *federal roads* and that the plight of the people during the PDP administration was so pathetic that some *children were washed off their mother's bed*. These are deliberate moves to discredit the PDP and make it lose its socio-political value before the people while the APC is positively projected for its achievement. It signifies that APC as a progressive party performs better than the PDP in the state.

4.4 Euphemism

Extract 9: I think what is obvious is that Chief Ikimi is not too pleased with certain matters and in a democracy it is like a football. You see some people celebrating the outcome of a match; you find others wondering if they were to replay the match again (Oshiomhole).

Extract 10: Tell the admirers of the uncommon transformation, the admirers of Governor Godswill Akpabio that the governor is a democrat (Akpabio).

In extract 9, Oshiomhole euphemistically likens a serious political misconduct to a game of football, meant for mere entertainment and fun. Oshiomhole also trivialises Chief Tinubu's acclaimed power to *select* and *delete* whoever he wanted in APC in a country where democracy is being practised, just to cushion the effect of the statement by making people to simply laugh it away like they would in a football game. The socio-political implication is that if Oshiomhole had not euphemised the statement, it could possibly stand against the party during elections. He, therefore, de-emphasises *Our negative thing* in this extract. Likewise, the euphemistic, evasive and frolicsome manner in which Akpabio refers the aggrieved people as *admirers* in extract 10 shows that he wants to mitigate the political effect of his statement on his personality, and more important, the PDP.

4.5 Evidentiality

Extract 11: For instance, I know a man I went to inspect a project one day, the man stopped his car on the way, "in fact, I stay in Portharcourt", I'm a pastor [...]. "I will go on my knees and thank God for your life." And he started weeping. "I never thought I could find a way to my house in my life time." (Akpabio)

Extract 12: And I thank the President, President Goodluck Jonathan because he came and commissioned that road. Four hours after he left, women were still sitting on the road crying: 56 kilometres complete with a bridge [...]. (Akpabio)

Extract 13: In fact, just four days ago, I received an award from Niger Delta Young Professionals in Lagos. And I was the only governor so honoured. And they told me that it is because of my policy of youth development. Outside making some of them special assistants, personal assistants... special advisers [...].we also set up different schemes to engage them (Akpabio).

Akpabio in extract 11 provides evidence for his developmental projects where a hopeless state road is incredibly transformed. The pastor's presence and reactions further suggest that God himself is pleased with this administration. Pleased with his achievement, a woman in extract 12 also sat on the road and wept after president Jonathan has commissioned one of the longest roads ever constructed in the state. Extract 13 equally pictures how The Niger Delta Young Professionals in Lagos as well confirm the performance of his administration by honouring Governor Akpabio with a meritorious award. The governor claims to be the only governor to have been so honoured. These are inter-textual evidentials that give credence to the performance of the PDP government in Akwa Ibom.

4.6 Example/Illustration

Extract 14: [...] connecting places like Anebgete that was not accessible during rainy season, places like Imiegba because of the valleys and hills and so on. They have given up on life, blaming witchcraft for the fact that for fifty years they have not known development; places like Okpekpe where we now have an annual sporting event, marathon, to Oronigbe area where we are constructing the longest road of about sixty something

kilometres across every local government [...]. A young woman told me for twenty-five years; even okada couldn't get to her place because of the amount of silt. (Oshiomhole)

Extract 15: Again, as part of our human, welfare promotion and development agenda, we began a school feeding programme that is on its own unique and extremely wonderful. We feed pupils in grades 1,2,3, and 4 of our elementary schools, nourishable food. We support our vulnerable elders, those from age of 65 and above that could not support themselves. ... we are pursuing infrastructure. We are changing the phase of education. To now crown it, we introduced an educational tool that makes learning fun. It's called "Opoimo", tablet of knowledge, such an amazing piece of electronic device that provides for the children in our senior secondary schools; a tool with which to fail final year examination at that level, almost impossible (Aregbesola).

Extract 16: That is, get the people more involved in the administration of their lives, particularly uncommon service. And it's in that bid; it's in our efforts to ensure that government gets closer to the people, particularly in areas where they are jointly connected: road, market, water supply, security, education and organization of light for comfort, freedom and welfare (Aregbesola).

Extract 17: So in Akwa Ibom, we've decided to build security villages where the local government chairman lives there, the vice-chairman stays there, the DPO for that local government stays there, the head of personnel...(Akpabio)

Extract 18: Some of them are building fantastic halls; some have contributed in a lot of ways in agriculture. Some have contributed in infrastructure in various local government areas (Akpabio).

Extract 19: [...] we link up major major major rural communities with good roads (Akpabio).

Extract 20: And for instance, we also decided even in health care, we attempted to build hospitals in rural communities and in places that people never thought could even have a building. I give you an example, for instance in a place like Gibra, we built a general hospital there [...]. And we've built one in Islobolo [...]. (Akpabio)

Extract 21: And then we went just between Islobolo and built a state university which we are now in the third year (Akpabio).

Deploying these devices in extract 14, Oshiomhole mentions places where his administration has put smiles on the people's faces by constructing roads inaccessible during rainy season. The government of APC is portrayed as bringing hope to the despondent citizens of Edo State, indicating that APC is working. Aregbesola in extracts 15 and 16 also itemised practical achievements and democratic dividends during his administration. In extracts 17 to 21, Akpabio showcases the accomplishment of the PDP which include building of a general hospital and a state university. By implication, the exhibition of these achievements is meant to convey the ideological position of the parties.

4.7 Implication

Excerpt 22: We have done what most people claim has never been done in the history of the state (Aregbesola).

Extract 23: Government's responsibility is to create the environment for citizens to create wealth and use instrument of taxation to collect a share of that wealth in order to provide infrastructure for everyone. But press the button, the investors know what is happening in Nigeria where they can get what (Oshiomhole).

Extract 24: And it is after the merger that you now select the name. You don't just sit down and your child is not born and you say my child is going to be called John, and suddenly the child comes out a woman, and then you are now saying o they've taken the name John from me, and I want to call my child Ekaite. You have to know that really you should not have given the child a name before the child was born. You should have waited for the face of the child to come (Akpabio).

Considering extracts 22, Aregbesola's assertion that they had done *what most people claim has never been done* suggests that his administration's achievement is so conspicuous that the people rather than the party are trumpeting it. Using the term, *press the button*, Oshiomhole in extract 23 unveils how he creates enabling environment for both individuals and private firms to thrive through which the government generates fund through taxation. This seems to be an expression of the Progressive Capitalist ideological disposition of the APC. Progressive capitalism is an ideology which believes that there will be accelerated development when individuals and private firms are given better opportunity to operate in the production and distribution of goods and services in a country. The implication of Akpabio's view in extract 24 is that APC is a disorganised party, fond of putting the cart before the horse. Thus, the analogy of naming a child before being born implies giving

the party a name before the merger. Worse still, it suggests that the party leaders do not place the right priority on the identity (name) of the party, which should have been one of the first concerns of every political party. Moreover, that the child was called *John* but eventually came out a *woman* paints a picture of disappointment and confusion that characterises the merger party. This analogy is a deliberate attempt by Akpabio to discredit the APC, depicting an unreliable party to the people to entrust with their votes.

4.8 Lexicalisation

Extract 25: [...] they (local government chairmen) will tell me we want to follow your footsteps, your Excellency to unleash **uncommon transformation** on the people (Akpabio).

Extract 26: [...] we also block the **leakages**; because if you are putting more water in a pot and the **pot** is **leaking**, it's never gona fill up.so the starting point is that we block some of the **wastages** in government. And so we cut off all of those **wastages** which in government parlance they call recurrent expenditure (Oshiomhole).

Extract 27: [...] we respect their age, but in terms of political influence, they have been **substantially demolished**. The evil ones alleged that my intention was to pull down the Oba's palace (Oshiomhole).

Extract 28: But a **progressive** government must find the courage to collect taxes from the rich in order to provide for public infrastructure. ...I understand that you can have progressive taxation (Oshiomhole).

Extract 29: Of course, one main **challenge** is power infrastructure. So we are trying to deal with the **challenge** of equipping our hospital under the current infrastructural circumstance [...]. Some of the **challenges** we've had, we can deal with them. Now, the major challenges in infrastructure are of course, the well-known ones the area of power, the area of transportation (Uduaghan).

Extract 30: But having said that, our youth especially, they are the **biggest challenge** [...] they are still giving us some challenges. So we have all those **challenges** of youths that are facing us (Uduaghan).

Extract 31: The **challenge** for any leader or most leaders in Nigeria who are into planning is the **challenge** of statistics. So the **challenge** of statistics is quite, a difficult thing to handle. So statistics is quite em, it's a **challenge** to deal with statistics. But even this, this **challenge** of population in Asaba has now increased as a result of the airport we put there (Uduaghan).

Extract 32: So we've tried to put strategies on ground to **gradually** deal with the infrastructure. And this number of schools requires one form of development or the other, and you cannot start using all our money [...]. So what we've done is to stick them systematically. (Uduaghan).

In extracts 25, the term *uncommon transformation* is used by Akpabio to depict that his performance as a governor is exceptional and as such, unparalleled by any other administration before him, thereby presenting PDP in a positive light. In extract 26, the word *leakages* suggests wastefulness. To make it even more picturesque, Oshiomhole employs the metaphor of a *leaking pot*. He further uses another synonymous terms like *wastages*. These terms refer to, and paint the picture of what the PDP administration looked like in Edo State. The PDP administration is depicted as being uneconomical with government fund, engaging in profligate spending, implying that PDP is unworthy with the people's mandate. Thus, the government treasury is compared to a *leaking pot* that can no longer retain fund for judicious profit to citizens of the state. Therefore, APC will provide remedies as it *blocks* those *leakages*.

The word "demolish" means to wreck or damage something irreparably. It could also be used in the sense of beating an opponent soundly or convincingly. To refer to the opposition party's political influence as having been "substantially demolished" in extract 27 is a signal that PDP has completely lost its political significance, value and relevance, implying a defacing of the political image of PDP in the state. The term *progressive* in extract 28 is reminiscent of progressive capitalism which seems to be an element of the ideology of APC as a political party. It signifies that the idea of progressivism in the ideology of the APC is still being emphasised. Oshiomhole, in line with his party's ideology believes that economic power resides in individuals and private organisations who are supposed to control the economy. Using different qualifiers in extract 29, 30 and 31, Uduaghan deploys different forms of the word *challenge* in not less than ten occasions in the interview. Although Delta is an oil producing state, everything is considered virtually as a challenge. What others would have ordinarily appropriated to the advantage of the state is still a challenge to Uduaghan e.g. the youth's presence. According to Uduaghan, *our youth especially, are the biggest challenge*. The youth are known to be the future of any nation and the annihilation of the youth needs to be mourned with dirge for a loss of the future generation. One peculiar characteristic of the youth is that they are dynamic. They are full of vitality which can yield positive result if tapped by any progressive government. The deployment of those lexical elements by Uduaghan indicates that he is too conservative, willing only to maintain status quo. This seems to be reflective of the conservative ideology of the PDP. Conservatism is a political ideology that is reluctant to accept abrupt change. It subscribes to gradual and slow approach to change. Thus, Uduaghan has expressed such conservative values in the extracts above. To further buttress his conservative tendency in extract 32, Uduaghan in the course of the interview says, *So we've tried to put strategies on ground to 'gradually' deal with the infrastructure*.

Even in oil producing state where one would normally assume there are better resources and opportunities to enhance speedy development, such development must still be gradually dealt with, according to Uduaghan.

4.9 Number Game

Extract 33: So we raised our locally generated revenue from about 280million naira in a month to, at a point, we hit 2.1billion naira in a month. My first year we saved about five billion naira in recurrent expenditure ... (Oshiomhole).

Extract 34: Don't forget we employed 20 thousand youths barely 100 days after our inauguration. It's unparalleled in the history of governance in Africa, not only in Nigeria (Aregbesola).

Extract 35: I can tell you as I speak without being boastful; we've done up to 4000 completed projects (Akpabio).

Extract 36: We've done at least 1200 kilometers of road. ... at least 300 urban roads. ... 5 brand new general hospitals (Akpabio).

Oshiomhole demonstrates this device on several occasions. One of such instances is the effort of his administration in extract 33 to increase locally generated revenue from an incredible rate of 280 million to 2.1 billion naira monthly. The ratio at which the revenue generation has been increased is practically quite alarming. It is capable of attracting the attention of the most absent minded listener in a discourse. Oshiomhole also maintains that his administration has saved five billion naira in recurrent expenditure during his first year in office. Recounting his exploits in Osun State, Aregbesola reminds the audience of employing 20 thousand youths barely 100 days after his inauguration in extract 34. He refers to this as an unparalleled landmark achievement in Africa. Of course, one could imagine how appealing this would be since one of the greatest challenges in Nigeria today is youth unemployment. The use of these devices by Governors Oshiomhole and Aregbesola reveals their intention to convince the people that the APC government is unimaginably performing and such excellent performance should be reciprocated with the people's political support, by implication. In extracts 35 and 36, Akpabio validates his achievement by employing the device of number game to cite numerous instances such as road and housing units. Rather than just making general statement about what his government has done, Akpabio has painstakingly listed his achievements of providing infrastructural facilities for the state to prove the PDP's performance.

4.10 Polarisation/ Us-Them/ Categorisation

Extract 37: [...] no one political party can continue to lord it over the other and wielding away god-fathers and demystify people who celebrate electoral fraud and who have persuaded Edo people to resign their fate that they are only going to be distant spectators in the democratic process where they are supposed to be the key drivers (Oshiomhole).

Extract 38: In the last election, as hard as PDP tried, out of 24 seats, we won 20. And they were only able to win only 4 or 5 in Edo Central.... When you look at the fact that PDP was completely in control of the state, you will appreciate how much damage they have suffered since I came on board. And we have won and defeated them in every by-election that has been conducted by INEC since 2009. Now they want to go through the back door to procure some Assembly men so that they have the number to try to intimidate me and to cause distraction. There are too many in the system that has access to cheap money. Many that is the result of hard work.... So they paid huge sums of money to procure four, five Assembly members so that they can increase their number in the House (Oshiomhole).

Extract 39: The PDP is such a fantastic party. It's the only national party in Nigeria. ...that's the only party that is not ethnic inclined. That is the only party that has no regional agenda. That is the only party that has no tribal agenda. That is the only truly national party that belongs to nobody. That is the only party without a god father (Akpabio).

In extracts 37 and 38, Oshiomhole portrays the PDP as losers whereas APC is a proud winner. By going through the back door, it suggests that PDP is corrupt. The party is depicted as engaging in unwelcome electoral practices which is why they "celebrate electoral fraud". It shows that PDP is incapable of winning elections through the normal electoral process. They are described as looters who use such money to buy over some Assembly members in order to have their support since they are unable to win elections normally. Oshiomhole has succeeded in polarizing between Us (APC) and Them (PDP), using positive and negative terms respectively. Akpabio on the other hand eulogizes the PDP in extract 39 by referring to it as the only "fantastic party" "national party", the only party without "ethnic inclination", the only party without "regional agenda", the only party without "tribal agenda", the only party without "a god father". Not having god father suggests that PDP is an independent party, free of all external influences and cannot be easily manipulated. With the repetitive use of the word "only", Akpabio seems to depict the PDP as a unique party, tactically categorizing the PDP as being "good" while all other parties are "bad".

V. Conclusion

The study concludes that one of the purposes of language is to project ideologies, which could be individual or group based. With the application of critical discourse analysis, implicatures are unearthed for a layman's understanding of political statements. Again, with the power of language imbued with linguistic tools as identified by CDA, party leaders are equipped to express and project their identity, achievements, beliefs which are reflections of their ideological stance, to make the people accept their party's ideology and reject the other party's so as to gain political power and popularity.

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