# Critical Discourse Analysis of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's Inaugural and Independence Day Speeches of 2023

**By**

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**Abstract**

This research is on critical discourse analysis of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's Inaugural and Independence Day speeches. The specific objectives of the study are to determine the the speech pattern of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's speeches, examine the ideologies of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's reflected through his speeches, and determine the relevance of the speeches in the context they were presented. This study adopted the qualitative method and utilises the descriptive analytical research design, in order to give a detailed explanation on what the research topic is all about. The study observed that President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's speeches were patterned into five sections which include 'Greeting and introduction of occasion, 'Incorporating every Nigerian has contributing to Nigeria's history and current statue', 'Highlighting the achievement made the challenge facing Nigeria and efforts made to handle them', 'Message of hope and promise and call for

collective responsibility', and 'Conclusion with compliments'. It also observed that President Tinubu's ideology is that of a person filled with so much ego, unwilling to assume full responsibility for the failures of his government to provide a better life for Nigerian so far. Hence, he also sees himself as a victim of the economic hardship Nigerians are currently facing, while making a frantic effort to convince the people to persevere, in hope of a better tomorrow, which seems endlessly unattainable as more Nigerians get impoverished. The study, however, observed that the President's speeches were relevant to the occasions/contexts they were delivered as they addressed current issues on unity, security, economy, unemployment, as well as the problems of poverty and hunger. The study encourages more researches on political discourse to help inform the Nigerian polity as a way of academically contributing to creating better awareness for the people, in the quest of the Nigerian population for an honest conscious drive towards the country's prosperity.

**Introduction**

Communication is an attempt to share information, ideas, attitude and feeling with others. It is the act of getting a sender and a receiver tuned together for a particular massage or series of massages. According to Leagans (1961), communication is the process by which two or more people exchange ideas, facts, feeling and impression in ways that each gains a common understanding of the meaning intent and use of massage. Speech is an important component of governance, and also a very crucial way of exercising powers in addition to the power conferred by the law. Politicians use their speeches as important tool to express their views, feelings, and ideologies to the public, with the aim of redirecting and reshaping public opinion to concur with theirs. There are different occasions where politicians' speeches are delivered, such as elections, rallies, inaugurations, national celebrations, policy formulation and implementation, among others.

An inaugural speech is a speech delivered by a new leader, to present his/her vision for the new office or position, and set his/her goals for the new office. A

president's inaugural speech is also used mostly by a President-elect to present his/her vision for the country and set his goals for the nation that have elected him as their president. It also provides the platform for the newly elected individual to address the nation about some pressing issues facing the country, set down rules for their administration, and also present a way forward. Independence day speeches, on their own part, present yearly additional moment for leaders of ex-colonial sovereign states/countries to address their subjects on the state of the nation and on the hopes of the country for a better tomorrow. Achieving the intentions of these political speeches demands a good and effective communication and the major tool for this communication remains language.

According to Anagbogu, Mba and Eme (2010) language is a means which human beings have devised for communicating ideas, feelings, emotion, desires, etc., through complex vocal or Written symbols. Also, Umera-okeke (2009) says that language is a group of symbols used by a particular race to communicate among themselves, both verbally and in written forms. Without language, communicating with one another and will be tedious, and without the right or efficient use of language, intended communication will not be successful towards an audience. Therefore, it is important to know that a good speech should be clear and less ambiguous. Because of the critical roles languages play in communication, and the crucial role of setting agenda for a political administration, it becomes important to critically study the language-use in Nigeria's Inaugural Day speeches usually presented on Nigeria's Democracy Day held in an election year, and Independence Day speeches always presented on Nigeria's Independence Day usually held on 1st October, to analyse the various discourses employed and other relevant information derivable from them.

Several studies have been conducted on media reports on political speeches and researchers have looked into speeches that are relevant to the audience. These studies include Obitube 2014, Nwokolo 2016, Nwoye 2017, among others. However, none of them have addressed Tinubu's Inaugural and Independence Day speeches of 2023, which provide very contemporary data to assess the state of the nation and derive other requisite information that researchers and Nigerian and world audiences can possibly take advantage of. Hence, this work will examine the Inaugural and Independence Day speeches of President Bola Ahmed

Tinubu, in order to address the underlying ideologies and information lying therein. While this statement represents the main objective of this study, the specific objectives are to:

i.) determine the the speech pattern of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's speeches;

ii.) examine the ideologies of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's reflected through his speeches; and

iii.) determine the relevance of the speeches in the context they were presented.

**Literature review**

Language is a significant and vital aspect of human life. It makes sense that it is referred to as "the main method by which people communicate with one another" (Adegbija, 2010). Most communication relies on spoken words, yet it also encompasses written messages, non-verbal cues, and various other forms. Communication manifests in diverse ways, spanning conversations, media broadcasts (like radio and television), sign language, music across genres, and more. Notably, within each medium, information is imbued with distinct interpretations and transmitted to varied audiences, who then derive differing meanings based on their individual perceptions and biases.

**Discourse**: The word ‘discourse’ is derived from a Latin word "discursus" which means "conversation or speech". According to Ike-Nwafor (2015), discourse is a form of language use. To Johnstone (2008), discourse is the actual instances of communication in the medium of language. It is a continuous stretch of spoke or written language which is larger than sentence that often constitutes a coherent unit. Discourse, according to Sharndama (2015), is a linguistic term that literally refers to a formal talk, a piece of writing or discussion. He adds that discourse could be in the spoken or written form, and sometimes considered as language in use, which is synonymous with text. Ike-Nwafor (2015) adds that discourse is a practice, not just of representing the word, but of signifying the word, and constituting the word in meaning.

**Political discourse:** Political discourse, in Sharndama's (2015) view, is an umbrella term for various political talks made at different political forums such as political campaign rallies, party manifestos, inaugural speeches, bills deliberations, among

others. Political discourse serves different purposes depending on the political activities involved, functioning effectively when it fulfills various roles within those activities. It's considered thematic when its primary focus revolves around political topics, encompassing discussions on political activities and relations.

**Media discourse:** Media discourse, according to O'keefe (2011) is the interaction that take place through broadcast platform, whether spoken or written, in which the discourse is oriented to a non-present reader, listener or viewer. She added that the discourse is oriented towards these recipients; they very often cannot make instantaneous responses to the producer(s) of the discourse. It is also important to note, according to O'keefe that the written or spoken discourse itself is oriented to the readership or listening/viewing audience respectively.

A reflection of a number of theories on which this study is set is necessary at this point. Discourse analysis (DA) encompasses a wide-ranging field that derives its theoretical frameworks and analytical methods from disciplines including linguistics, sociology, philosophy, and psychology. Notably, discourse analysis has contributed models and methodologies for addressing issues arising from fields such as education, cultural studies, communication, and others. The term 'discourse analysis' was initially introduced by linguist Zellig Harris in his 1952 article titled 'Discourse Analysis'. Harris defined discourse analysis as a technique for examining connected speech or writing, extending descriptive linguistics beyond the confines of individual sentences (Harris, 1952).

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) represents an interdisciplinary method for investigating discourse, conceptualizing language as a facet of social activity and emphasizing how social and political hierarchies are perpetuated through text and speech. Fairclough (1989) characterizes CDA as a multidisciplinary analytical approach spanning the humanities and social sciences. He proposes a three-dimensional framework for analysing discourse, aiming to interrelate three distinct forms of examination: textual analysis (of spoken or written language), analysis of discourse practices (encompassing processes of text creation, dissemination, and reception), and analysis of discursive events. This approach integrates micro, meso, and macro-level interpretations. At the micro level, attention is directed towards aspects such as syntax, metaphorical structures, and

rhetorical strategies within the text. Meso-level analysis involves scrutinizing the production and consumption of the text, focusing on the enactment of power relations. At the macro level, analysts explore the inter textual connections and broader societal influences shaping the text under scrutiny.

Another theory of discourse- the Ethnography of Communication (EOC) presents a scientific framework aimed at comprehending communication within specific cultural and social contexts (Gumperz and Hymes, 1972). EOC theory regards language as a social tool facilitating interaction and communication. According to Hymes (1972), language transcends mere formal rules and structures; it serves as a means of establishing, perpetuating, and transforming social bonds and cultural identities. In this examination, we will delve into the fundamental principles and concepts of EOC theory and its relevance to the study of communication. One core concept within the theory of Ethnography of Communication (EOC) is the notion of the speech community, denoting a collective of individuals sharing a common language or dialect along with a set of communicative norms and practices (Gumperz and Hymes, 1972). This community isn't solely defined by linguistic similarities but also by the array of social and cultural customs influencing communication within the group. EOC theory underscores the significance of communicative competence, reflecting the capability to employ language aptly and proficiently across various social settings (Hymes, 1972).

Another pivotal aspect of EOC theory is the concept of communicative events, specific instances of interaction unfolding within distinct social milieus (Saville-Troike, 1982). These events manifest in diverse forms such as conversations, interviews, speeches, or rituals, shaped by the communicative standards and practices of the speech community. EOC theory further acknowledges the influence of power dynamics and social disparities on communication events and language usage (Philipsen, 1992). EOC theory has made substantial contributions to the study of communication by underscoring the pivotal roles of context and culture in shaping language usage and communicative behaviours. It has spurred a plethora of empirical inquiries across various disciplines including anthropology, linguistics, and communication studies. Nonetheless, EOC theory has faced criticism for its narrow focus on verbal communication and its purported

oversight of individual agency in shaping communication practices (Blommaert, 2005).

Proposed by Hymes and Gumperz (1970), the Ethnography of Communication (EOC) theory emerged as a social scientific framework aimed at comprehending language within its social and cultural milieu. This theory underscores the significance of the speech community, communicative competence, and communicative events in moulding language usage and communication practices (Hymes, 1972). One model within EOC theory is the Speech Event Analysis Model, concentrating on dissecting speech events and elucidating how they are shaped by the surrounding cultural and social environment (Saville-Troike, 1992). Another model, the Communicative Competence Model, accentuates the importance of comprehending the societal norms and conventions governing communication across varied social contexts (Hymes, 1972).

Speech act theory, pioneered primarily by J.L. Austin and further elaborated by John Searle, offers a framework for grasping the multifaceted functions of language beyond its literal meaning, elucidating how utterances carry out actions within social contexts. This theory delves into the pragmatic dimensions of language usage, underscoring the intentionality and consequences of speech acts. The present paper draws upon seminal contributions by Austin and Searle, supplemented by pertinent scholarly discourse. In his seminal treatise "How to Do Things with Words" (1962), J.L. Austin introduces the concept of speech acts, accentuating the performative aspect of language. He posits that utterances not only describe reality but also have the capacity to enact actions. Austin delineates two categories of utterances: constative and performative. Constative utterances depict factual states, whereas performative utterances effectuate actions through their articulation, such as promising, apologizing, or naming. Austin introduces the notion of felicity conditions, requisite conditions for the successful execution of a speech act. For instance, for an apology to be effective, the speaker must genuinely express remorse, accept accountability, and recognise the offence. Failure to meet these conditions renders the speech act infelicitous or potentially insincere.

In "Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language" (1969), John Searle expands upon Austin's groundwork, furnishing a more intricate framework for analysing speech acts. Searle distinguishes between three dimensions of speech acts: locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts. The locutionary act pertains to the act of uttering words and formulating meaningful sentences. For instance, the statement "I promise to assist you" constitutes a locutionary act. The illocutionary act concerns the intended force or purpose of the utterance, encapsulating the speaker's communicative intent and the illocutionary force exerted by the speech act. Using the same example, the illocutionary act of promising implies the speaker's commitment to fulfill the stated pledge. Conversely, the perlocutionary act pertains to the intended effect or repercussion of the speech act on the listener or audience, encompassing the reactions or responses the speaker aims to provoke. In the case of a promise, the perlocutionary act may aim to instill trust, assurance, or a sense of obligation in the listener. Searle identifies various types of speech acts, including assertives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declaratives, each embodying distinct illocutionary forces and executing diverse actions. For instance, an assertive speech act seeks to assert a fact or make a statement, whereas a directive speech act endeavours to influence or guide the behaviour of the listener.

Another vital theory of discourse- Critical discourse analysis (CDA) emerged as an innovative and interdisciplinary approach, addressing various significant social issues. It draws upon methodological tools from established fields like critical linguistics, text linguistics, and sociolinguistics (Osisanwo, 2011). Norman Fairclough's model, in particular, is rooted in Hallidayan systemic functional linguistics (SFL) theory, incorporating sociological concepts to explore the interplay of language, discourse, and power in society (Fairclough, 1992). CDA researchers move beyond mere contextual explanations of language to perceive it as a social practice (Fairclough, 1992).

Discussions on the origins and evolution of CDA often revolve around prominent figures like Norman Fairclough, Ruth Wodak, Teun van Dijk, and Paul Chilton (Blommaert, 2005). Roger Fowler, a leading advocate of Critical Linguistics, has also significantly influenced the development of CDA, with some considering CDA as an outgrowth of Critical Linguistics. Various analysts, particularly

discourse analysts and critical discourse analysts, have sought to define and understand the objectives of CDA. Given its multidisciplinary nature, differing perspectives exist on its essence and goals. Fundamentally, CDA aims to challenge social inequality and unveil societal shortcomings that impact human consciousness. It focuses on investigating both opaque and transparent structural dynamics of dominance, discrimination, power, and control as manifested in language (Wodak, 1995).

It is important to note that several researches have been conducted in such areas as speech, pragmatics and language use of the government officials and politicians. Some of the studies include and, but are not limited to Abuya (2012), Rahim (2014), Obitube (2014), Ononye (2017), Aboh (2019), Anyanwu (2020), among others. These studies made important contributions to the field of discourse. However, with the innumerable studies in this area, new issues on discourse arise on a daily basis as long as humans remain in societies, which remain forever governed by political figures. It is, therefore important that there are studies that follow up new developments and trends in the discourse of political events, speeches or statements. With the recognisable impact of President Tinubu's speechs on the Nigerian polity in recent times, these researchers recognise that studies have not been conducted to evaluate these speeches. Hence, this study conducts a critical discourse analysis of President Tinubu's Inaugural and the Independence Day speeches.

**Research methodology**

This research adopted the qualitative method and utilises the descriptive research design, in order to give a detailed explanation on what the research topic is all about. According to Cresswell (2002) qualitative research is the process of collecting, analysing, interpreting, and writing the result of study. This work, hence, analysed President Tinubu's inaugural speech and his Independence Day speech following the qualitative design. The area of the study is the interface between pragmatics and semantics. Particularly, it delved into critical discourse analysis which is concerned with the speakers use of language above its surface level, to reflect contextual meanings that reflect power and dominance in the society.

The study adopted the purposive sampling technique to select President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's Inaugural speech on 29th May 2023 and his Independence Day speech of 1st October 2023 for its study. Purposive sampling technique, according to Nworgu (2006), involves the specific element which satisfy some predetermined criteria being selected and only those elements that are relevant to the research purpose are being included. The researcher employed the maxims of quantity and relevance within the framework of Paul Grice's cooperative principle, and the requisite descriptive analytical method to properly examine President Tinubu's Inaugural and Independence Day speeches.

**1. Analysis of speech pattern**

**1.1. The speech pattern of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's Inaugural and Independence Day speeches of 2023**

The data obtained on President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's Inaugural and Independence Day speeches of 2023 showed that the president follows a particular pattern in presenting his speeches. These speeches have five sections which do not have strict lines of demarcations. They are presented below**.**

| **Sections of the speeches** | **Content of the section** |
|---|---|
| Section A | Greetings and introduction of the occasion. |
| Section B | Incorporating every Nigerian as contributing to Nigeria's history and current status. |
| Section C | Highlighting the achievement made, the challenges facing Nigeria and efforts being made to handle them. |
| Section D | Message of hope and promise and call for collective responsibility. |
| Section E | Conclusion with compliments |

**Analysis of section A**

The data obtained shows that greeting and introduction of the occasion is the first section of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's Inugural and Independence Day speeches, though through different expressions. Let us look at the following

excerpts; but before then, it is important to note that the numbers seen after each sentence in an excerpt is the serial number allotted to each specific sentence to ensure a better referencing of the sentences in the study data:

> - My fellow citizens. (1) I stand before you to assume the sacred mandate you have given me. (2) it is my unique honour so address you on this day 63rd anniversary of our Nation's independence both as the President of our dear country and, simply, as a fellow Nigerian. (128).

Here, we can observe that President Tinubu offered greetings, and introduced the occasion. In the above statement, it was obvious that the ceremony was an Inauguration ceremony, because the mandate which was given to him is the presidential mandate.

Looking at the above data,with respect to Grice's cooperative principle, it is observed that the above statement is transparent, and unambiguous. This means that it will be easy for anyone to understand what the speaker is talking about. The expression is also as informative as required.

**Analysis of section B**

> - This Nation's journey has been shaped by the prayers of millions and by the collective sacrifices of us all. (12) We have endured hardships that would have made other Societies crumble.(13) yet we have showed that the heavy burden to arrive at this sublime moment where the prospects of a better future merge with our improved capacity to create the future. (14). To the surprise of many but not to ourselves, we have more firmly established this land as a democracy in both word and deed. (15).The Triumphs that Nigeria has achieved shall define us. (134) . The Travials we have endured shall strengthen us. (135). This nation belongs to you, dear people. (137) . Love and cherish it as your very own. (138) .

From the data above, it is observed that expressions where the President incorporated and recognised every Nigerian as contributing to the country's history, and current feature, is the second section of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's Inaugural speech and Independence Day speech of 2023. It is observed that this section of the speech, which is incorporating every Nigeria as being part

of success to history of Nigeria, is very informative as required, based on dictates of Grice's conversational analysis..

**Analysis of section C**

This section highlights the president's claims about his achievements, the challenges facing Nigeria and efforts being made to handle them, which is the third section of this analysis:

> - Over six decades ago, our founding fathers gave bravely of themselves to place Nigeria on the map as an independent nation. (50). We must never allow the labour of those who came before us to whither in vain but to blossom and bring forth a better reality. (51). Those who sought to perpetuate the fuel subsidy and broken foreign exchange policies are people who would build their family mansion in the middle of a swamp . (156). I am not a man to erect our national home on a foundation of mud. (158) to endure, our home must be constructed on safe and pleasant ground (159). Similarly, we are increasing investment in micro, small and medium-sized enterprises.(187) Commencing this month, the social safety net is being extended through the expansion of cash transfer programs to an additional 15 million vulnerable households.(188)

The expressions above point out that the aspects of the achievements were relatable because on the inaugural speech, Nigeria would not have been a sovereign nation if not for the effort and the sacrifice3 of our founding father.

**Analysis of section D**

The section four of these speeches were massages of hope and call for collective responsibility. Excerpts are as follows:

> - On this day, Nigeria affirms its rightful place among the world's great democracies.(122) There, Nigeria shall reside forever.(123) The course of our past and the promise of the future have brought us to this exceptional moment.(124 We can only achieve our better Nigeria through courage, compassion and commitment as one indivisible unit.(204 )I promise that I shall remain committed and serve faithfully.(205) I also invite all to join this enterprise to remake our beloved nation into its better self.(206) We can do it.(207) We must do it.(208) We shall do it.!!!(209)

This expression is very informative because every individual that is a citizen of a country matters, and efforts they make while existing in the country amounts to the good of the country.

> - In this spirit, I ask you to join me in making Nigeria a more perfect nation and democracy such that the Nigerian ideal becomes and forever remains the Nigerian reality.(125) I also invite all to join this enterprise to remake our beloved nation into its better self.(206)

The expressions are clear, easy to understand and unambiguous. Hence, they fulfil the maxim of quantity, as stipulated by Grices's cooperative principle.

**Analysis of section E**

> - May God bless you and may be bless our beloved land.(127) I wish you all a happy 63rd independence anniversary.(210) Thank you for listening (211). May God bless the Federal Republic of Nigeria.(212)

The expressions are as informative as is required. It can, also, be observe from the above data that the statement were clear, easy to understand, brief and unambiguous.

### 1.2. Analysis of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's ideologies reflected through his Inaugural and Independence day speeches of 2023

According to Zayda (2014), ideology refers to a system of dominant ideas and beliefs affecting every sphere of human social interaction and organisation, which can be reflected through political, economic, scientific, educational and cultural evidence over a period. This means that one ideology has to do with the way a person or group of persons see things, their approach to some things, and this can be seen mostly through speech. Here, President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's speeches will be analysed to show his ideologies through his speeches.

#### 1.2.1. Analysis of his use of pronouns

Pronouns were employed by president Bola Ahmed Tinubu in ways that reflected his ideologies in his Inaugural and Independence Day speeches.

**1.2.1.1. The use of personal pronouns**

It is observed that in his speeches under review, he made use of 1st person singular pronoun 'I' or 1st person plural pronoun 'we'/our (plural) as well as the 3rd person plural pronoun 'they' (subject) or 'them ' (object) in both his Inaugural and Independence Day speeches. The functions, which these pronouns perform differ from each other. We will be analysing the data to show their different functions.

**i. The use of 1st person singular pronoun - 'I'**

The first person singular pronoun was used in many sentences in his Inaugural and Independence Day speeches to perform certain functions. The sentences showing the functions are presented and analysed.

**a. The use of 1st person singular pronoun to express wishes and pleasantries.**

Samples of the use of this pronoun in this regard can be seen sentences 50, 54, 198, 199, and 200, as shown below.

> - Over six decades, ago our founding fathers give bravely of themselves to place Nigeria on the map as an independent nation(50). My supporters, **I** thank you (54). May **I** take this opportunity to congratulate the national assembly of its role in the quick take-off of this administration through the performance of its constitutional duties of confirmation and oversight (198). **I** similarly congratulate the judiciary as a pillar of democracy and fairness.(199) **I** also thank members of our dynamic civil society organizations and labour unions for their dedication to Nigerian democracy.(200)

**b. The use of 1st person singular pronoun in making request and wish**.

Samples of the use of this pronoun in this regard can be seen sentences 18, 37, 77, 155, 164, and 210, as shown below.

> - Here, permit **me** to say a few words to my predecessor, President Muhammadu Buhari.(18) In this vein, may **I** offer a few comments regarding the election that brought us to this juncture.(37)**I** ask you to grasp it in national affinity and brotherhood.(56)Today, permit **me** outline in broad terms a few initiatives that define our concept of progressive good governance in furtherance of the Nigerian ideal (77)**I** wish to explain to you

why we must endure this trying moment (155)**I** wish today's difficulties did not exist (164)**I** wish you all a happy 63rd independence anniversary (210)

**c. The use 1st person singular pronoun to make promises**

Samples of the use of this pronoun to express promises can be seen on sentences 148, 179, and 205, as shown below.

- It was only seen in the Independence Day speech. At my inauguration, **I** made important promises about how I would govern this great nation.(148)**I** pledged a through housecleaning of the den of malfeasance the CBN had become.(179)**I** promise that I shall remain committed and serve faithfully.(205)

**d. The use of 1st person singular pronoun to reflect his high status/high position**.

Samples of the use of this pronoun in this regard can be seen sentences 2, 58, 69, 153, 167, 185, and 205, as shown below.

- I Stand before you honoured to assume the sacred mandate you have given **me** (2)All **I** see are Nigerian (58)As your president, **I** shall serve with prejudice toward none but compassion and amity towards all (69)**I** have a massage for our investors, local and foreign. On that occasion **I** announced the end of the fuel subsidy (153) **I** will now outline the path we are taking to relive the stress on our families and households... .(167)**I** have inaugurated a committee on Tax reforms to improve the efficiency of tax administration in the country and address fiscal policies that are unfair or hinder the business environment and slow our growth. (185)..... **I** shall remain committed and serve faithfully.(205)

**e. The use of 1st person singular pronoun to offer encouragement**

Samples of the use of this pronoun in this regard can be seen sentences 6, 153, 154, and 158, as shown below.

- **I** know that his hand shall provide the needed moral strength and clarity of purpose in those instances when we seem to have reached the limits of our human capacity.(6)…. I am attuned to the hardship that have

come.(153) **I** have a heart that feels and eyes that see.(154)…. **I** am not a man to erect our national home on a foundation of mud.(158)

**f. The use of 1st person singular pronoun to personalise statement**

Samples of the use of this pronoun in this regard can be seen sentences 10, 45, 55, 126, 151, 157, 167, and 201, as shown below.

- For **me**, there is but one answer.(10) And **I** will treat them as such.(45) **I** ask you to grasp it in national affinity and brotherhood.(55) All **I** see are Nigerians.(58) With full confidence in our ability, **I** declare that these things are within our proximate reach because my name is Bola Ahmed Tinubu and I am the president of the federal Republic of Nigeria.(126)On that occasion **I** announced the end of the fuel subsidy.(151)**I** am different (157) **I** will now outline the path we are talking to relieve the stress on our families and households.(167) We may not always agree but **I** value your advice and recommendation.(201)

From the data above, it is observed that this pronoun performed a number of roles in the speeches. The number of roles this pronoun performed increased from 5 roles in the Inaugural speech, to 6 roles in the Independence Day speech, and that is the role of making promises to citizens of federal Republic of Nigeria.

**ii.. The use of 1st person plural pronouns 'US' 'WE' in the speeches.**

In certain instances, he utilised these pronouns in referring to all Nigerians, including himself; and in other instances, they were used to refer to only himself and his administration.

**a. Used to refer to all Nigerian**

Instances of this can be seen in the sentences presented below.

As a nation, **we** have long ago decided to march beyond the dimness of night into the the day of renewed national hope.(8)The question **we** now ask ourselves is whether to remain faithful to the work inherent in building a better society or retreat into the shadows of our unmet potential.(9)**We** are too great a nation and too grounded as a people to rob ourselves of our finest destiny.(11)**We** have endured hardship that would have made other

> societies crumble.(13)Yet. **We** have shouldered the heavy burden to arrive at this sublime moment where the prospect of a better future merges with our improved capacity to create that future.(14)**We** are a broad and dynamic blend of ethnic groups, religions, traditions, cultures.(140) Here, I salute and commend our gallant security forces for keeping **us** safe and securing our territorial integrity. (192) **We** remember them today and their families.(194) **We** can do it. (207) **We** must do it. (208) **We** shall do it.!!!(209).etc.

**b. Used to represent himself and his administration only**

Instances of this can be seen in the sentences presented below.

> **We** dare not let it slip.(29) **We** lift high this torch so that it might shine on every household and in every heart that calls itself Nigerian. (30) **We** hold this beam aloft because it lights our path with compassion, brotherhood, and peace.(31) ) **We** now carry the cost of reaching a future Nigeria where the abundance and the fruit of the nation are fairly shared among all not harboured by a selected and greedy few. (161) **We** are introducing a provisional wage increment to enhance the federal minimum wage without causing undue inflation .(169) **We** shall continue to make key appointments in line with the provision of constitution and with fairness was all. (196) **We** can only achieve our better Nigeria through courage, compassion, commitment in one indivisible unit.(204), etc.

An observation based on the data above shows that the President made use of 1st person plural pronouns 'WE' or 'US' as an out-group expression (his team versus others) in his inaugural speech more than as an in-group expression (24 against 20). However, in the independence day speech, it was used as an in-group expression (his team inclusive among the rest) more than as an out-group expression, (17 against 12). This shows that in the Inaugural speech, he was more focused on painting his administration fair. That means; paying attention on what his administration will be, rather than paying attention to himself as part of Nigerian citizens.

**iii. The use of third person plural pronouns (them /they)**

These pronoun were used to represent group(s) the speaker does not belong to.

- Our burdens may make us bend at times but **they** shall never break us. (25) **they** shall forever be my fellow compatriot. (44) **they** have taken their consent to court. (47)without **them** there will be no Modern Nigeria (130). **they** are Forever mistaken one (146.)

The data above shows that the President used the pronouns three times in the Inaugural speech, which he used to refer to the burden on the shoulder of Nigeria citizens, and the other presidential candidates. In the Independence Day speech, it was used two times, to refer to the effort and sacrifices of the founding fathers, and other nations against Nigerian unity.

**1.2.1.2. The use of possessive pronouns**

**i. Use of possessive pronoun - 'My'**

**-** **My** fellow citizens. (1)**My** love for this nation is abiding. (3). **my** confidence in its people unwavering .(4). And **my** faith in God Almighty absolute. (5)It is **my** unique or not to address you on this day this is the third anniversary of our Nations independence but as the president of our dear country and simply as a fellow Nigerian. (128)**My** administration shall always Accord the highest priorities to be safety of the people. (189). You are **my** brothers and sisters and you have my due respect. (202).

Observing the above data, it shows that the President made use of the possessive pronoun in few cases across his speeches. In the Inaugural speech, he made use of the pronoun 11 times but in the Independence Day speech, he limited his use of the possessive pronoun to three times.

**ii. The use of possessive pronoun - Our/Ours**

**a. To include himself among Nigerians**

Instances of this are seen in the instances below:

- This day is bold and majestic yet bright and full of spirit as is **our** precious nation. (7) The question we now ask ourselves is whether to remain faithful to the work inherent in building a better society or Retreat into the Shadows of **our** own unmet potential.(9). We are too great a nation and too grounded as a people to rub ourselves of **our** finest destiny. (11). This

peaceful transition from one government to another is now **our** political tradition. (16)... On this so long hopeful day let us commend **our** founding fathers and mothers .(129).And no other nation or power on this earth shall keep us from **our** rightful place and destiny. (136). Yet **our** bonds are intangible yet strong invisible yet universal. (141) **Our** service Chiefs have been taxed with the vital responsibility of rebuilding the capacities of a security services .(191). Here I salute and comment **our** Gallant security forces for keeping us safe as securing **our** territorial integrity. (192). We can only achieve **our** better Nigeria through courage compassion and commitment as one indivisible units. (204) I also invite all to join this enterprise to make **our** beloved nation into Its better self (206).

**b. To represent him and his Administration**

Instances of this are seen in the instances below:

- Today faith and destiny join together to place the torch of human progress in **our** hands 28. we hold this beam I love to because it's lies **our** part and compassion Brotherhood and Peace (31). **Our** administration shall govern on your behalf but never rule over you (33).We shall reach out to all but never put down a single person for holding views contrary to **our** own (35). **Our** government will continue to take proactive steps such as championing a credit culture to discourage corruption while strengthening the effectiveness and Efficiency of the various-corruption agency (77). Security shall be the top priority of **our** administration because neither prosperity not Justice can prevail admits of insecurity and violence (78). To actively tackle this manners we shall reform both **our** security doctrine and its architecture (79).

From the above data, it is observed that in the Inaugural speech, the President made use of the pronoun as an in-group expression more than an out-group expression which is (18 against 15). This means that the president prefers collective responsibility than individual work. Then in the Independence Day speech, it is (15 against 0) which shows that the president did not make use of the pronoun as an art group expression at all. This shows that the president prefers to place the responsibility in the hands of every citizen.

**iii. Use of possessive pronoun -Their**

Instances of this are seen in the instances below:

> - Seeking legal redress is **their** right and I fully defend their exercises of this right. (48) Our government shall review **their** complaints about multiple taxation and virus anti-investment inhibition. (90)From the fading embers of colonialism **their** activism, dedication and leadership gave life to the belief in Nigeria as a sovereign and independent nation (131). We shall equip our forces with the ways and means needed to perform **their** urgent tax on behalf of the people. (195). I also think members of our Dynamics civil Society organization and labour Union for t**heir** dedication to Nigerian democracy. (200)

The data above shows that the president rarely uses this pronoun, as it only appears 2 times in the inaugural speech, and three times in the Independence Day speech. In the inaugural speech, it points at the other presidential candidate and the complaints of the Nations investors. On the other hand, it was used three times in the Independence Day speech where it is used to refer to the founding fathers and their effort to bring Nigeria to the world map as a sovereign nation.

**iv. The use of demonstrative pronouns- This/These**

Instances of this are seen in the instances below:

> This day is bold and majestic yet bright and full of spirit as is our precious nation.(7). **This** Nations journey has been shaped by the prayers of millions and they collective sacrifice of us all. (12).Commencing **this** month the social safety net is being extended through the expansion of cash transfer program to an additional 15 million vulnerable household. (188). May I take **this** opportunity to congratulate the national assembly for its role in the quick take-off of **this** administration through the performance of it constitutional duties of confirmation and oversight. (198).

**1.2.2. Analysis of the use of declarative expressions**

English language has various sentence types, such as declarative, interrogative, exclamatory, and imperative sentences. It was observed that declarative sentence was more widely used in these President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's Inaugural and Independence Day speeches of 2023 speeches under analysis. Declarative sentence

is a sentence that states things the way they are, and gives the facts about things; and ends with a period. This study observed that declarative expressions span through almost all lines and paragraphs, from sentence 1 to 212. Instances of declarative sentence in these speeches include;

> - Over six decades ago, our founding fathers gave bravely of themselves to place Nigeria on the map as an independent nation. (50). Dear Nigeria shall reside forever. (123).Thank you for listening (211). May God bless the Federal Republic of Nigeria.( 212)

These declarative sentences used by President Bola Ahmed Tinubu in his speeches reflect his effort to portray his words as true and filled with certainty or surety, and are unquestionable. He also employed them to portray himself as having the personality of a strong, confident, and reliable leader.

**1.3. Analysis of the relevance of the speeches in the context they were presented**

Every speech have to be relevant in the content it was presented. This section of this study analyses the relevance of these speeches presented by President Bola Ahmed Tinubu on the day of his Inauguration and 63rd Independence Day anniversary of Nigeria in 2023. It investigates whether the speeches are important to the situation of the country; that is, if the speeches address the issues and the challenges the country is facing as at the time they were delivered. An excerpt from President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's Inaugural speech of 2023 reads:

> -The peaceful transition from one government to another is now our political tradition (16)..... our enduring faith in representative governance and our belief in our ability to reshape this nation into the society it was always want to be (17)

The above sentences are relevant to the situation because of the chaos as a result of the just concluded election, which was unacceptable to many citizens of the country, due to the failure of the electoral umpire- the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) to comply with its own rules, hence leading to the massive riggings in the general elections.

Some sentences also deal with the issues of unity:

- We have stumbled at times, but our resilience and diversity have kept us going (24) The south must not only seek good for itself but must understand that its interests are served when good comes to the north (66) the north must see the south likewise (67)…. some said our country would be fall apart,(145) they are forever mistaken (146) here our nation stands and here we shall remain (147)

Some sentences addressed good governance;

- Our administration shall govern in your behalf but never rule over you (33) We shall consult and dialogue but never dictate (34) we shall reach out to all but never put down any single person for holding views contrary to our own (35).

He then went further to explain how he will handle other issues relating to good governance, such as security;

- we shall defend the nation from terror and all form of criminality that threaten the peace and stability of our country and our subregion (74). Security shall be top priority of our administration because neither prosperity nor justice can prevail amidst insecurity and violence (78)..... we shall reform both our security doctrine and it's architecture.(79) we shall invest more in our security personnel, and this means more that an increase in number (80) we shall provide better training, equipment,pay and fire power (81)…. our service chief have been tasked with the vital responsibility of rebuilding the capacities of our security services (191)

The sentences below addressed economy;

- We shall remodel our economy to bring out growth and development through job creation food security and an end of extreme poverty (75).

The sentences below addressed youth empowerment;

- In our administration, women and youth will feature prominently (76)

The sentences below addressed the agricultural sector;

- Agricultural hubs will be created throughout the nation to increase production and engage in value added processing (98).

The sentences below addressed the issue of hunger;

- Through these actions, food shall be made more abundant yet less costly (100).

These speeches were what so many Nigeria's yearned for because of the hardship they are facing. The problem of ethnicity/tribalism, where certain groups feel left out of issues or felt that they were being deprived of their rights as citizens of Nigeria, necessitated the statements on unity.

**2. Summary of findings**

This research studies President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's Inaugural Day speech and 2023 Independence Day speech. To do this, a systematic procedure was adopted with the objectives of finding out the pattern of these speeches, examining the ideologies of these speeches, and determine the relevance of these Speeches in the context they are presented. From the study and analysis of the data conducted, the study observed that President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's speeches were patterned into five sections which include 'Greeting and introduction of occasion, 'Incorporating every Nigerian has contributing to Nigeria's history and current statue', 'Highlighting the achievement made the challenge facing Nigeria and efforts made to handle them', 'Message of hope and promise and call for collective responsibility', and 'Conclusion with compliments'.

In the attempt to analyse the ideology of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's through his speeches, the study observed his use of the first person singular pronoun 'I' (subjects), 'Me' (objects), 'my' (the possessive form) to personalise his statements and reflect his high status or position, thus, brandishing his power and dominance over his audience, which comprise the Nigerian population. He reflected these in the manner with which he expressed offers of encouragement and promises. The study observed a greater use of these personalised pronouns in his second speech (the Independence Day Speech, when compared with his first speech (the Inaugural speech). This shows how high his ego has risen over the 5 months that existed between the two speeches.

The research also observes that the President employed the pronoun 'we'/'us'/'our' to either refer to himself and his administration, or the entire Nigerian citizens. In the inaugural speech the President made use of the pronoun as an out-group expressions (differentiating himself and his government from the rest of the Nigerian population) more than in in-group expressions (incorporating himself and his government as part of the rest of the Nigerian population), but in the Independence Day speech, he utilised them as in-group expressions more than as out-group expressions. This depicts a conscious effort to soften the minds of the Nigerian people, who have experienced increased economic hardship and poverty over those 5 months since he assumed office as the President of the country. Hence, he attempts to make his speakers believe that he is in solidarity with them, and joins them in suffering the economic hardship as well, which he claims is a sacrifice that will only lead to an immediate progress and abundance for the entire population. In addition, he uses them to reflect his unwillingness to take sole the responsibility for the harsh economic situation of the country.

The study further observed President Tinubu employed more of declarative sentences, which were more widely used in his Inaugural and Independence Day speeches of 2023 speeches under analysis, to portray his words as true and filled with certainty or surety, and to assert the validity of his statements as unquestionable. He also employed them to portray himself as having the personality of a strong, confident, and reliable leader. The study also investigated the relevance of the speeches to the situation of the country at their respective periods of delivery; that is, if the speeches address the issues and the challenges the country was facing as at the time they were delivered. It observed that President Tinubu addressed issues of good governance, unity, security, economy, youth empowerment problems (unemployment), poor agricultural and general goods productivity, as well as the problems of poverty and hunger, which are biting hard on the citizens of Nigeria as at the time the speeches were delivered.

## 6. Conclusion

Based on the comprehensive analysis of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's Inaugural Day and 2023 Independence Day speeches, this study has provided valuable insights into the patterns, ideologies, and relevance of these addresses within the Nigerian socio-political context. Through meticulous linguistic analysis, it is

evident that President Tinubu strategically personalised his rhetoric, which have been laid bare in this study. Hence, the Nigerian populace can better understand the deliberate attempts of the speaker to connect with the citizens amidst the economic challenges they face, which his government have so far shown ideas towards ameliorating.

In conclusion, this analysis of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's speeches serve not only as an exposition of underlying ideologies of the Nigerian president, but also as strategic study that will help in shaping public perception, and understanding of his government's approaches to issues in the immediate future. The findings of this study contribute to our understanding of political discourse and leadership communication in Nigeria, emphasising the significance of linguistic analysis in uncovering underlying ideologies and motivations. As Nigeria navigates its socio-political challenges, the insights gleaned from this research can inform future discourse and policy-making endeavours aimed at fostering inclusive governance and national development.

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