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Discourse Representations Of Hate Speeches In Selected Nigerian Presidential Election Campaigns

Victoria Iyabo Francis

Federal School of Statistics, Ibadan, Nigeria

hellovikky2000@yahoo.com

and

Ojeogwu Okwudili Richard

Department of General Studies,

Federal School of Statistics, Ibadan

okwuschard@gmail.com

Abstract

Political discourses have earned a significant place in contemporary studies in Pragmatics and Discourse Analysis. Extant studies on campaign speeches have investigated 2015 the discourse from stylistic, sociolinguistic, phonological, and pragmatic viewpoints with insufficient scholarly attention paid to hate speeches in the 2015 Nigerian presidential election campaigns. This study, therefore, investigates the representation of hate speeches in the 2015 Nigerian presidential election campaigns to show the prominent illocutionary force inherent in the campaign. The study adopts Systemic Functional Grammar and Speech Acts as a theoretical framework to account for form function interface. The data were gathered through the internet from some selected sites and advertorials of the two prominent presidential aspirants. The study reveals that thematic preoccupations of hate campaign speeches range from slandering, condemnation, blackmailing, disparaging statements and mudsling, as well as displaying of

other party's failure. The study concludes that hate speeches are not only injurious but also detrimental to the socio-economic, political and religious realities in a nation.

Key words: *Hate campaign, discourse representations, political discourse, Nigerian presidential election, illocutionary acts*

Introduction

Political Campaigns the world over, can be defined as a series of actions directed at advancing a principle or several related operations aimed at marketing a candidate who is seeking an elective position in government. This is done to persuade the electorate to vote. It is also an organised activity that is targeted at educating the electorates through mass rallies, and debates on public issues of economic, social and security nature to influence the decision and opinion as well as the votes of the electorates. In a democracy, it is also known as an electoral campaign. Most political offices are usually filled through elections.

According to Cook (1991:14), there are different ways of categorizing discourse types: by situation, function, participants, text; substance or a combination of these factors. Just as there are varieties of English or registers so also there are varieties of discourse or discourse genres. Leech and Short (1985:50) posit that there is a language of religion, media, education and others. In like manner, a political campaign could be simply referred to as the language of politics. The linguistic ambience of this research work is political discourse. Kocnerova and Kasenova (2013) argued that the speeches of presidents have always been examples of persuasion and canvassing support to respond to events or actions on political manifestos and strategies or policies.

According to Shaffner (1993), speeches are the most prominent and potentially influential weapon a president can use to solicit support. Hughes (2009) asserts that presidential speeches provide the most effective source for examining the effect of presidential rhetoric on legislation, the public, or the media. He further notes that Presidential speeches, together with other public events, are used to bolster the political image of and boost public support for the president and the president's policies.

Politics is the activity through which people make, preserve and demand the general rules under which they live. It is also the study or practice of the distribution of power and resources within a community or a state. It involves any action that is motivated to rule over others within a country. Politics has received much attention from scholars who have defined it in various ways depending on how they see it. In the words of Hovarth (2009:45), politics is a struggle for power to put certain political, economic and social ideas into practice. This is why in the views of Kasanova and Kocnerova (2013:62) politicians to dominate through language employ certain linguistic strategies such as metaphor, personification, pronouns, empty language, evil and negative construction of the 'other' or pessimistic language. Politics is viewed from different perspectives. According to Mansoor (2014:1), politics is the activity through which people make, preserve and demand the general rules under which they live'. Unlike before, when it was seen as power and distribution of resources.

Every four years, in Nigeria, elections are conducted to bring in new government new leaders to govern the country and all its constituent states. As democratic rule began to take shape and get entrenched in the country, politicians have perfected means of using political office to amass wealth and successive regimes have come to see politics as a lucrative business and as a means of getting rich quickly and launching themselves into a special class of the high and mighty. As a result, politicians have become desperate in their quest to gain political power. Indeed, in Nigeria today politicians spare nothing in their quest to gain political power. The media too, is not left out in the hype of activities marking the electioneering process, especially the campaigns, as everyone wants to grab a share of the monies politicians throw around to woo the electorate to get their votes. The guidelines regulating political campaigns are usually disregarded by desperate politicians who want to win the elections by whatever means.

A political campaign is majorly characterized by oral speeches in mass rallies, publications, press releases, interviews, debates and the presentation of the parties' manifestos and in most cases it also includes the presentation of the programmes and political agenda and socio-economic, health and other promises the candidates will pursue and implement if elected into political office. Political campaigns can also be described as the process of political marketing whereby the candidates of different political parties present themselves as the best candidates for elective posts. The pre-election period usually marks the display of ideas as to how to rule the country better. The candidates seeking election into public offices engage themselves in debates,

and rallies, for the electorates to know them and assess their worth. During these periods, important matters and issues of national concern and political issues of national interest form the subjects of debate and campaigns. But the year 2015 election campaign deviated completely from issue-based electioneering campaigns to one of hate, intense dislike for the opposing party and candidate and even graduating to the level of candidates wishing their opponents evil.

Indeed, the two major parties (PDP and APC) rather than market themselves and their parties to the electorates went all out on smear campaigns, character assassination and name-calling, all in a bid to develop strong bias and hatred. The purpose is to create bias against the candidates of attack and cause the electorates to shift their support, loyalty and eventual votes to favour themselves.

The 2015 electioneering campaigns will remain in the history of political and electioneering campaigns in Nigeria as one where hate campaigns remain widespread. Matters of national interest and important economic and political issues were relegated to the background by the two dominant political parties (PDP and APC) and their candidates. For this study, we wish to define and establish the concept of hate as “strong aversion; intense dislike; hateful regard; an affection of the mind awakened by something regarded as unpleasant, harmful or evil”. Taken from this perspective, hate speech involves going outside the law in attacking the personality of another. A hate speech is, therefore, a speech that attacks a person or group of persons based on attributes such as gender, ethnic origin, religion, race, character, disability, or sexual orientation.

Statement of the problem

Language is the sole medium through which we express our feelings in the community. Thus, this research work is set to examine the discourse representations of hate in the 2015 election campaigns between the PDP and APC in Nigeria. It is common knowledge that the analysis of the discourse of any genre is the analysis of the language in use. Micira (2014) used Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to analyse and unpack linguistic persuasive strategies, concealed meanings and ideologies in the presidential campaign discourses in Kenya leading to the April 4, 2013 elections. In that research effort, Micira proved that language is a very powerful tool that politicians seeking political power use to not only communicate their policies and ideological positions but also to create certain perceptions to influence and manipulate the voters to gain an advantage over their opponents. Alo and Ayinuola (2017) investigated how ideology is

unmasked in the national anthems of African states. The paper asserts that national anthems are devoid of hate speeches and are a reflection of realities in the African context.

Osisanwo (2016) examined the representation of Nigerian general elections and social actors in selected Nigerian news magazines' reports. Situated within van Leeuwen's socio-semiotic version of critical discourse analysis and Halliday's Systemic Function Grammar as a theoretical framework, the study opines that print media are not neutral but carry power that reflects the ideological posture of the media house as well as social actors during elections. Meanwhile, the present study deviates from Osisanwo (2016) because it focuses on the hate speeches in the 2015 election campaigns.

Adebiyi (2020) investigated modality choices and functions in public opinion on the 2015 Nigerian presidential election results in selected Nigerian newspapers. The paper, situated within, Hallidayan Systemic Functional Grammar, revealed that lexical items such as thanked, promised, congratulate, called, expanded, and think are deployed to explicate people's different opinions and attitudes towards the 2015 presidential elections in Nigeria. While Adebiyi (2020) and the current study investigate the discourse of the 2015 elections, there are differences in that the current study focuses on hate speeches.

From the foregoing, it can be observed that previous studies have not examined hate speeches in the 2015 Nigeria General election campaigns. This study, therefore, examines how hate speeches and expressions (hate campaign), put in proper language was used as a linguistic device and weapon of power to defeat the opponents during the 2015 presidential electioneering campaign in Nigeria.

Aim and objectives

The primary aim of this study is to critically examine discourse representations of hate campaigns employed by APC and PDP in their 2015 Presidential electioneering campaign speeches.

The specific objectives of the study are:

1. To identify the themes of hate as embedded in the campaign speeches of key candidates of both parties.
2. To investigate the contextual variables of hate campaigns employed by both parties.
3. To account for the illocutionary acts of the presidential candidates and their surrogates

Theoretical framework

This study adopts Speech Acts Theory as a theoretical framework. J.L. Austin proposed speech Act Theory in his posthumously epochal book titled *How To Do Things With Words* in 1962. The theory was a reaction against the logical positivists of Russels and others who want to get rid of language functions (Odebunmi, 2016). It is a theory that accounts for how utterances are used to perform actions. The theory of speech act is premised on the fact that an utterance is not only used to say things but also to perform some actions. Utterances are made to perform actions such as naming, directing, informing, ordering, requesting, begging, and commanding. The performed action suggests that “every utterance a person makes performs an act such as stating a fact, stating an opinion, confirming or denying something, making a prediction, or a request, asking a question, making a promise, and thanking or condoling” (Austin 1962 cited by Olaniyan, 2016). The theory of speech act has received serious scholarly investigations, criticisms and modifications (Levin 1977; Bach and Harnish 1979; Levinson, 1980; Adegbija, 1982; Allan, 1986; Yule, 1996; Kreidler, 1998; Odebunmi, 2006; Shisa 2007 and others).

Austin classified speech acts into three namely: locution, illocution and perlocution. Locution is the exact utterance of a speaker. Austin (1962:100) avers that “locution is the act of saying something in the full sense”. Locution has three sub-divisions namely: phonetic, phatic and rhetic acts. Phonetic act is the act indicated by the uttering noise, phatic act is the act indicated by the uttering noise in conformity with certain grammatical norms of a language. Rhetic is indicated by uttering noises with sense and reference. Locution is achieved when the three acts in locution (phonetic, phatic and rhetic) are performed (Kreidler, 1998). Illocution is the speaker’s intention behind an utterance and perlocution is the effect of an utterance on a speaker (Odebunmi, 2006a:13). In this study, our attention is focussed on contemporary Nigerian Pentecostal gospel singers in the titles of their songs. We, therefore, utilise insights from Searle’s notion of illocutionary force in detail.

Illocutionary force

Illocution is the speaker’s intention in an utterance. It also means an act performed when an utterance is made. Odebunmi (2003) succinctly opines that illocutionary force is performed when the hearer understands correctly the intention of a speaker. Illocutionary force is performed when the communicative intention of a speaker is understood by a hearer. The communicative intention of a speaker varies according to context. It may be to condole, beg, make a request, threaten, promise, inform, incite and congratulate.

Austin (1962) identifies five classifications of illocutionary force namely: verdictives, exercitives, commissives, behabitives, and expositives. The classification has been greatly investigated, criticised and modified by scholars. Some scholars opine that Austin's classification is defective because "English verbs do not correspond accurately with speech act categories, but this is not necessarily so" (Leech 1983; Levinson 1983; Thomas 1995; Odeunmi 2006 cited by Olaniyan, 2016). Searle's classification has been widely acknowledged as a better option because it accounts for interlanguage pragmatics. Searle's classifications of the illocutionary force include the following: assertives/representatives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declaratives. All these classifications are explained below:

- (a) **Assertives/Representatives:** These utterances are used to describe a situation through assertions, conclusions, claims, and others (Odeunmi, 2006:91). Such assertive/representative utterance is Tade is guilty of the offence.
- (b) **Directive:** These are utterances used by a speaker to get the hearer to do something such as ordering, commanding, requesting, suggesting, begging and instructing.
- (c) **Commissives:** Commissives are utterances used by a speaker to commit himself and the hearer to some future actions. Such utterances have the intention of vowing, promising, pleading and others.
- (d) **Expressives:** These utterances are used to describe the psychological stance of a speaker. Expressives deal with how a speaker feels. These feelings are thinking, apologizing, condoling, congratulating, rejoicing, cheering and others.
- (e) **Declaratives:** These utterances cause a change in the external world of a speaker. Yule (1996b:53) avers that, for declaratives to be appropriate in a context, the speaker has to have a special institutional role in a specific context such as "I name this ship, Queen Elizabeth or I pronounce you as husband and wife". The person here must be a priest or a judge of a customary court or a president of a country with some people in attendance and people (husband and wife) to be joined together must be present. If any of these things are missing, the judge or priest has misfired thereby leading to infelicity.

In this study, Searle's classification of illocutionary force is adopted and applied because of its relevance and positive effects in cross-cultural pragmatics, developmental pragmatics and interlanguage pragmatics (Odeunmi, 2003:47)

Systemic Functional Linguistics

Michael Alexander Kirkwood Halliday developed Systemic Functional Linguistics (henceforth, SFL). SFL is rooted in the works of Malinowski and John Ruppert Firth. SFL believes that language is a form of social action and was popularised by Michael Alexander Kirkwood Halliday in the 1960s. SFL examines the function, internal organisation, and semantics of language in context. SFL is a meaning-making theory. According to Bloor and Bloor (1995:1), “language is a system of meaning... the grammar becomes a study of how meanings are built up through the use of words and their linguistic forms such as tone and emphasis”

Furthermore, Bloor and Bloor (2004:2) assert that SFL is “the study of grammar (that) entails how meanings are built up through the choice of words and other grammatical resources...and other linguistic forms such as tone and emphasis.” The model bifurcates into systemic and functional dimensions. The systemic dimension considers language as “a network of systems, or interrelated sets of options for making meaning” (Halliday, 1994:15), while the functional dimension views language as a means of communication in different social contexts. Meaning is central to SFL and it is a basic feature of Hallidayan's model of grammar. It is both semantic and functional. Semantics is meaning-dependent, while functional is context-dependent. This implies that context cannot be divorced from language because both are intractably interwoven (Banks, 2003).

Context is an important feature of the Hallidayan model of grammar, in which context bifurcates context into the “context of culture” and “context of situation.” According to Halliday (1999:17), the context of culture is defined “as the ideas and the customs and values inherited from the past,” which is given to a text and helps to construe its meanings. Furthermore, Alo and Ayinuola (2017:9) assert that the “context of culture accounts for the larger context that embodies culture, value, and customs of a speech community.” The context of the situation has tripartite functions, which Halliday called metafunctions. The metafunctions are the following namely: namely: ideational, interpersonal and textual. Metafunctions are principles used to express meanings in social contexts. According to Alo and Ogungbe (2012), metafunctions help to analyse language functions as well as analyse how linguistic choices intermingle or coalesce with discourses in a particular social context to achieve specific objectives. The ideational function is concerned with how speakers (re)present their world of experience; while the interpersonal function is deployed to establish relationship among interactants and negotiates

roles in communicative events. The tactical organisation of a text in any communicative event is called the textual function.

Methodology

Data were gathered through the internet from some selected sites and advertorials of the two prominent presidential aspirants namely Alhaji Atiku Abubakar and Muhammdu Buhari. The period covered between December 2014 and February 2015. This was the time when political activities were intense. These data are subjected to content-pragmatic analyses.

Discussion of findings

It is apposite to state that this paper begins its analysis with the major acts, followed by minor speech acts in the text. This section analyses directive, representative, expressive and commissive acts.

Directive acts as macro acts from PDP and APC hate speeches

Directive acts have the highest frequency of 31 occurrences which accounted for 50% of the acts employed. This macro act used six specific acts of questioning accounting for 22.6%, challenging representing 9.7%, condemning at 51.6%, summoning at 3.2%, inviting 3.2% and entreating at 9.7%.

Table 1: Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Directive Acts Performed in PDP and APC Hate Campaign Speeches

Specific Acts	Frequency	Percentage
Questioning	7	22.6%
Condemning	16	51.6%
Entreating	3	9.7%
Inviting	1	3.2%
Summoning	1	3.2%
Challenging	3	9.7%
Total	31	100%

Table 1 presents a simple bar chart and a Pie chart to show the Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Specific Acts. It shows that condemning acts have the highest frequency of Directive Acts with it occurring 13 times and representing 51.60%. Specific acts of questioning occurred 9 times representing 22.6% of the specific acts, both entreating and challenging have a

frequency of 3 each representing 9.70% while inviting and summoning specific acts were evenly employed with a percentage of 3.20% each.

Directive Acts of Condemning in PDP and APC Hate Campaign Speeches

Condemning is the most dominant macro act employed by both PDP and APC in their campaign speeches indicating a high propensity of the elements of hate in their campaigns and this occupies 51.6% of the directive macro acts employed. This is traceable to the fact that both parties painstakingly tried to outwit the other by taunting and emphasising the perceived weakness of their opponents to the electorates and portraying them as a bunch of incapable people who cannot be trusted with the power to occupy the offices they are vying for.

The table below shows the frequency and percentage distribution of the themes as they were freely used in the campaign speeches of both the PDP and APC.

Directive acts of condemning

It has the highest act of the five acts with 31% and 5 occurrences. It is suggestive of the popular use of hate campaigns. Here are two excerpts to show this:

Excerpt 1:

“I *want* to warn you not to listen to the All Progressive Congress. The APC *does not have* materials to match what the PDP *has* on (the) ground. Their candidate *was* there in governance initially. What *did* he do? They only *sent* your fathers to prison” Patience.

Excerpt 2:

“Buhari, to me, *is* a non-issue. Buhari *has* only two things going for him. He *has not improved* himself since he left office; he has not added any value, personally to himself or to any political tendencies that he represents. He is a religious bigot and there *is nothing* he can do about that. He is not even a nationalist”. Ffk

Both excerpts above are forms of condemning the personality of Buhari and the APC as a party, that Buhari is nothing but a religious bigot and that the only good thing he did while the government before is sending offenders to prison.

Condemning as related to the theme of slandering

Condemning acts as related to the theme of slandering as well as disparaging statements have the highest occurrences out of all the specific acts but we will be looking into slandering first. It has 31.25% having occurrences of 5 times. It is used by the speaker in trying to communicate to the audience through directive macro acts to destroy or run down the opponent and also as an act of condemnation to the government programmes, actions and inactions, especially across cultures and nations. For example,

Excerpt 3

PDP cannot stand before us and say things have gotten better under its direction. It has only gotten worse and it's now time for change. PDP's government may say that it needs more time – that what we need now is continuity – but we do not. What we need now is change!

Excerpt 4

We simply cannot afford four more years of PDP's corruption and the corrosive cynicism that it has bred. The time for hope, the time for belief, is now. You cannot trust the corrupt to end corruption. You cannot trust the selfish and self-interested to rule in the best interests of the people.

Using the excerpts above, as an example of directive acts, (which comprises questions, commands, requests, pleading and invitation) we notice that the condemning act was used as a derogatory machine to set the audience thinking in line with the party; that the PDP led government is a failure and should not be allowed to continue in power.

Representative acts as macro acts from PDP and APC hate speeches

Representative is the second macro act with the highest frequency next to Directive acts. It occurs 28 times with 45.2%. The specific acts in this macro act are claiming 21.43%, describing 3.57%, informing 42.86 %, identifying 3.57% and Asserting 28.57%. Now, it is very necessary to examine the frequency of occurrence and percentage distribution of representative acts in the discourse themes in PDP and APC Hate speeches.

Table 6.13 Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Representative Acts Performed in PDP and APC Hate Campaign Speeches

Specific Acts	Frequency	Percentage
Claiming	6	21.43%
Describing	1	3.57%
Informing	12	42.86%
Identifying	1	3.57%
Asserting	8	28.57%
Total	28	100%

Charts 6.6 simple bar chart and Pie chart above show the Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Specific Acts. It shows that informing acts have the highest frequency of Representative Acts with 12 times occurrences at 42.86% and stating having 8 numbers of occurrences at 28.57% of the acts while claiming have 6 at 21.43% and informing have 3 at 42.85% respectively, while describing and identifying have 1 with a percentage of 3.20% respectively.

Representative acts of informing acts in PDP and APC hate campaign speeches

Informing acts is the main specific act used in PDP and APC hate campaign speeches and this takes about 42.85% of the Representative acts. This is traced to the politicians giving information to the electorates as an eye opener to the weakness of the opponents and also the danger of electing somebody not qualify.

Informing acts related to the theme of mudslinging

Informing acts related to the theme of mudslinging have the highest occurrences out of all the specific acts found under representative acts having occurrences of 5 times and a percentage of 41.67%. This is linked to information being used by politicians to attack, blacken, cause character assassinating, defamation, for dirty politics, last-minute lies, malicious defamation, name-calling, political canard, campaign misrepresent, defame and damage opponent's reputation through the theme of mudslinging. For example:

Excerpt 5:

These people did not buy anything for the Nigerian soldiers. They refused to equip them. No attack helicopter, nothing. Ask them what they did with the defence budget for the whole time they were in office. Jonathan PDP

Excerpt 6:

You cannot trust the selfish and self-interested to rule in the best interests of the people. You cannot trust those who believe hope is a tool of government rather than a human right to plant the seed of belief. Buhari APC

Looking at the above excerpts 65 and 66, information is used to misrepresent the political opponents. Jonathan refers to APC presidential aspirants as ‘these people’ which is an indirect way of saying that during Buhari’s regime as head of state, nothing was done concerning the defence of this nation. Also, Buhari used ‘selfish and self-interested’ to damage PDP as a government that does not care for the masses.

Informing acts related to the theme of disparaging statement

Informing acts related to the theme of disparaging statements is of equal percentage and frequency distribution as that of mudslinging. It has the highest frequency of 5 and a percentage of 41.67%. This is traced to information being used to show that politicians do not have a good opinion of each other. Consider the following excerpts:

Excerpt 7:

They refused to build the capacity. They instigated crisis and now they are telling us they will fight insurgency. Jonathan PDP

Excerpt 8:

Failure does not deserve continuity. Incompetence does not deserve continuity.
Buhari APC

The above excerpts show the opinion of Jonathan and Buhari of each other. Here Jonathan is saying somebody that could not build the defence to standard cannot bring an end to insurgency while Buhari is seeing the government of Jonathan as a failure and also as incompetent and hence does not deserve to continue.

Informing acts related to the theme of blackmailing

Informing acts as related to the theme of condemnation has the next high frequency of 2 and 16.67% percentage and this has to do with the politicians using the information to threaten, to reveal a secret about opponents condemning or declaring to be unfit for service. Let’s look at the excerpts below:

Excerpt 9:

“Judging by his temperament, political antecedents and intellectual capacity, General Muhamadu Buhari, the APC candidate, is unfit to be the president of Nigeria.” PDP

Excerpt 10:

“He is the type that would declare his assets publicly, a no-go area for the sitting president who once said, ‘I don’t give a damn’ when challenged to do so in the past.”. APC

The above excerpts are showing informative acts being used to blackmail the politicians.

For example, PDP is taking Buhari’s past against him and so saying he is unfit to be the president while APC is using Jonathan's inability to declare his asset to the public.

Representative acts of asserting in the discourse theme of blackmailing in PDP and APC Hate speeches

Asserting acts that are related to the discourse theme of blackmailing occur more than any other theme. It occurs 4 times and has a percentage of 50%. This is more than all other discourse themes in the data. This reveals that blackmailing is meant to state a fact to convince Nigerians. Blackmailing carried out through assertion aims to tarnish the image of the opposition candidate. In the excerpt below, representative acts of asserting in the discourse theme of blackmailing of PDP and APC hate speeches are shown below:

Excerpt 11:

We have warned them over and over again about the consequences of their reckless and dangerous behaviour, their fondness of physically attacking the President and his campaign team and their irresponsible and insatiable appetite for aggression but General Buhari and the APC have refused to call their supporters to order.

In the excerpt above, the lexical element “warned” and the adverbial phrase “over and over again” are deployed to assert that APC supporters were responsible for inhuman behaviours that have been happenings in the nation. This suggests that PDP, directly or indirectly, blackmailed the leading opposition party for animalistic behaviours that have taken place in the nation. One of these attacks is the one against President Goodluck Jonathan. Jonathan was attacked and stones were hurled at him. This showed the highest disrespect to the office of the president. It

must be noted that PDP blackmailed APC and tagged it a party that is bedevilled with thugs and rascals.

Asserting related to the discourse theme of Mudslinging in PDP and APC campaign speech

Asserting related to the discourse theme of mudslinging has a frequency of 2 and a percentage of 25% and so as we have seen in the previous excerpts, asserting has been used to blackmail the opposition party. In excerpt 51, for instance, asserting is deployed to say bad and often untrue things about someone to make other people have a low opinion of them. There has been a lot of political mudslinging in the battle for votes to condemn the leading opposition party as not being qualified to contest or vie for the exalted office of Mr President. This condemns, attacks as well as criticize APC for presenting a candidate that is not only competent but unqualified. PDP further condemns APC that the exalted office of Mr President is not meant for the mediocre or ordinary person in Nigeria. Let us examine this representative act of asserting related to macro acts of mudslinging in these two excerpts:

Excerpt 12:

Our position is that Buhari **is not qualified** under the law to run for the Presidency because he **has not been** able to produce or display his secondary school certificate as required by law and this is the basic requirement for anyone that wishes to aspire to that exalted office.

Excerpt 13:

Instead they **have continued** to relish and delight in their habitual violence and in the most heinous and hideous forms of unprovoked attacks.

In these two excerpts, asserting is deployed to condemn the candidate of APC and its supporters. The recent political attacks that happened in the country against the candidate of President Goodluck Jonathan were attributed to the handiwork of APC supporters. The unprovoked attacks on Goodluck Jonathan were highly condemnable because Goodluck Jonathan represents Nigeria. Asserting as a specific act is deployed to condemn and blackmail the candidature of the leading opposition candidate and his supporters.

Asserting related to the discourse theme of disparaging statements in PDP and APC campaign speech

Asserting acts that are related to the discourse theme of disparaging statements occur 2 times and a percentage of 25%. This is 1/3 of the other discourse themes in the data. This reveals that disparaging statement is used by the opposition party to show that they do not have a good opinion of the other party to convince Nigerians to sway to their side. Disparaging statements carried out through assertion aim to tarnish the image of the opposition candidate. In the excerpt below, representative acts of asserting in the discourse theme of disparaging statements of PDP and APC hate speeches are shown below:

Excerpt 14:

Somebody wakes up and says “O, Nigerian women I am going to give you position.” And you ask him when you were a Head of Government, you had a cabinet, I have the list of the cabinet members, there was no one single woman. Not even one in the cabinet. “Let them have all those advantages and tell us about what they are going to do. As long as it is a live debate, we will be prepared to go even to that debate; and even at that point, under those circumstances, we would floor General Buhari and the president will do an admirable job by letting the Nigerian people know precisely what he stands for and he will also expose General Buhari for what he is.

Excerpt 15:

However, despite getting Yoruba votes effortlessly, what did the region get in return? In the last five years, Jonathan’s administration has shown unbearable contempt for the region and its people and their values, especially in the attempt to adulterate their leadership values.

Excerpts 14 and 15 above show how asserting statements are used to show the low opinion of each other in APC and PDP

Representative acts of claiming acts in PDP and APC hate campaign speeches

Claiming is another specific act in representative macro acts. Claiming occurs six times with a percentage of 21.43%. This specific act (claiming) is deployed to slander and tarnish the name and image of the opposition party. Let us examine this in the excerpt below:

Excerpt 16:

It is no wonder that Buhari was once nominated by the terrorist organization Boko Haram as their negotiator and spokesperson when the idea of dialogue with the Federal Government was first mooted in 2014.

This specific act of claiming is deployed to slander Buhari as the main sponsor of the dreaded Boko Haram. Being nominated by Boko Haram revealed that he was a member of this dreaded group. This dreaded group has caused much havoc to Nigerian and has rendered many Nigerians homeless and they have become refugees in their own country. This dreaded group must not be associated with any responsible person. When the idea of dialogue came up with this dreaded group to release Chibok girls, Buhari was the only person nominated by this group. This shows that Buhari is their major sponsor or peradventure hidden disciple of Boko Haram.

Commissive Acts from PDP and APC Hate Speeches

Commissive acts are another macro act in the PDP and APC hate speeches of the 2015 presidential elections. These acts occur two (2) times in the speeches and Commissive acts have the specific acts of warning of 50% each. This suggests that warning as a specific act occurs less than any other specific acts in PDP and APC Hate Speeches in the 2015 presidential election.

Warning related to the discourse theme of disparaging statements in commissive acts

Warning as a specific act occurs one (1) time with a percentage of 50% in macro acts of commissive. It is the least occurring specific act. In essence, warning as a specific act is deployed to reveal the determination of the PDP as well as tarnish the image of the opposition party. Let us examine this specific act of warning related to the discourse theme of disparaging statements in the two excerpts below:

Excerpt 17:

Nigeria must move forward, Nigeria is for the youth. Nigeria **is** not for old people like us

Excerpt 18:

The young generation must redefine this country...We must take this country to where we want it to be... nobody can push us backwards.

From excerpts 54 and 55 above, it can be observed that the grammatical modalities *must* and *can* is deployed to show specific acts of warning in the speeches of President Goodluck Ebele

Jonathan. This implies that Nigeria is moving to the future and the past represents the military era. President Jonathan tactically condemned the age difference between him and Buhari. Young people usually have the energy and wherewithal to run helter-skelter for the government to move forward and old people use conservation methods for things. The young people refer to people within the age bracket 30 and 55. Anybody above that age cannot rule this nation. Jonathan castigates Buhari as being old, and Buhari does not have the energy at 73 to rule Nigeria. Therefore, any attempt to elect is an attempt to Nigeria back to the military years. The warning here is deployed to show not only what he intends to do or say but also to castigate Buhari and those that nominated him as their presidential aspirants.

Warning Related to the Discourse Theme of Slandering in Commisive Acts

This specific act of warning occurs one time (1) with a percentage of 50%. This warning is issued by FFK in a newspaper to Nigerians. In essence, this specific act is done to show the solidarity which the PDP have for the welfare of Nigerians because Nigerians are intellectual people and cannot be governed by mediocrity who has not passed any examination. Let us examine how PDP has tactically done this and slandered the opposition party as well:

Excerpt 19:

His history and the whole history is shrouded with double speak and double standards and we shall continue to alert the Nigeria about the dangers of electing such a questionable character as their president and putting him in power.

From excerpt 19 above, PDP promised to alert Nigerians about the need to be careful in selecting a leader because the nation is great and cannot afford to be governed by a questionable character. FFK warned the masses that they will give the best information that will help them on whom to vote for so that people who do not qualify will not emerge as the President. FFK damaged the image and personality of Buhari as being questionable because he was an old military officer who refused to change. He decided to remain with his old mentality and such an individual cannot rule a great nation like Nigeria which have diverse people, culture and traditions. This excerpt slanders the personality of Buhari as a man of questionable character who should not be trusted with power. His desire to rule Nigeria despite three losses is questionable because he is not Nigerian Abraham Lincoln.

Declarative Acts from PDP and APC Hate Speeches

Declarative acts are the least occurring macro acts in the Hate Speeches of the PDP and APC 2015 presidential elections. Declarative acts occur once with a frequency of 100%. The specific act in this macro act is declaring. The specific act of declaring occurs once with a percentage of (100%). Now let us examine how this specific act of declaring occurred in the discourse themes of APC and PDP presidential campaign speeches'

Excerpt 20:

There **is** no crisis of Boko Haram violent attacks, but also crises of the PDP-President Jonathan's inept mismanagement, crisis of Nigeria's military response and operations, crisis of refugees and internal displacement and a crisis of insecurity in general.

This excerpt tactically declares that the government led by President Goodluck Jonathan as being incompetent. Buhari made a defamatory statement about the then ruling President. Buhari called the Jonathan led government incompetent because there was a magnitude of problems facing the nation which the government neglected and faced his re-election into the office of Mr President. Buhari blamed Jonathan led government for the crisis of corruption, mismanagement and crimes and criminality that pervaded the atmosphere of the nation. These crises brought about a system not working which in variable led to the crisis of Boko Haram. The Boko Haram crisis was an adverse effect of the ineptitude and incompetence of Mr Jonathan. This ineptitude of the then-ruling party occurred at the state level. This can be seen at the level. An example is Ekiti State. This is exemplified in this excerpt:

Excerpt 21:

From all intent and purposes, governance has stopped in Ekiti State as the governor has been functioning as a campaign manager with the resources of Ekiti people than as a governor.

From the excerpt above, it can be observed that APC tactically declare the governor of Ekiti State as being insensitive to the needs of the state. The governor is supposed to provide basic amenities to the citizenry rather than being a mouthpiece to the PDP. The political situation in Ekiti State was favourable to the PDP alone because the last gubernatorial election was won by the PDP and APC planned on how to wrest the state from the PDP. The political atmosphere in

Southwest was not friendly to PDP because it was only in Ekiti State that the party rule. It must be said that APC was on the verge to clear all the southwestern states from PDP. Therefore, APC tactically declares the governor of Ekiti State for leaving his constitutional functions and becoming campaign manager for PDP.

Excerpt 21:

Ignorance and lack of knowledge is a terrible affliction but in this context, it is not only terrible but also very dangerous

In this excerpt, the author of this statement is Buhari who made defamatory remarks about the PDP government. He remarks that the PDP lacks the basic knowledge to govern a great nation like Nigeria.

Conclusion

The paper has investigated speech acts in PDP and APC hate campaign speeches in the 2015 presidential election in Nigeria. The most prominent speech act is directive, which has the specific acts of questioning, condemning and requesting followed by representative, which performs specific acts of informing, claiming, describing, identifying and asserting. Other speech acts are Commissive and Declarative. Commissive has specific acts of warning while declarative has the specific act of declaring.

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