

# Discourse Structures and Ideologies in Nigeria's President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's Inaugural Speech

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## Abstract

This paper examines the relations between discourse structures and ideologies in Nigeria's President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's inaugural speech. Drawing its theoretical underpinnings from Critical Discourse Analysis, especially from Teun Adrianus van Dijk's discourse analytical theory and the descriptive qualitative research method, the study specifically analyses the discourse structures and strategies the speaker deploys and demonstrates how they encode his ideologies about the issues he (re-)presents in his speech. To reach this goal, ten textual snippets were purposively selected from the speech and the discourse structures and strategies therein were qualitatively described and interpreted. The findings reveal that the speaker deploys, at the level of meaning, situation description, implications and presuppositions, paraphrase, positive self-presentation, and display of power. They also indicate that he employs, at the level of argumentation, evidentiality, authority and comparison. As the findings further show, the speaker mainly draws on the (political) history of Nigeria to construct his argumentation. The structural features of the propositions as well as the syntactic structures that constitute the argumentation, as observed, vary across the text. Furthermore, the findings exude that the speaker uses, at the level of rhetoric, alliteration, assonance, gradation, idiom, hyperbole, imagery, repetition/anaphora, parallelism, personification, ellipsis, substitution, etc. In point of fact, he deploys all these discourse structures to encode his political beliefs, which in turn indicate the attitudes or ideologies of his political party. As the analysis further exudes, the speaker's political ideologies bear on how he perceives and responds to social reality and uses language.

**Keywords:** CDA, discourse structures, ideologies, inaugural speech, mental models

## Introduction

There is a fairly increasing body of recent linguistic works which have analysed the language of political discourse (Koussouhon and Dossoumou, 2015; Koussouhon and Dadjo, 2016; Koutchadé, 2017; Dadjo, 2018; Koussouhon, Koutchadé and Amoussou, 2018; Amoussou and Koba, 2018; Rahmi, Hamzah, and Fitrawati, 2019; Amoussou and Aguessy, 2020; Koba, 2020; 2021; Imorou and Koba, 2021; Kpohoué, Imorou and Koba, 2022; Yokossi, 2022; Yokossi, Dadjo and Koutchadé, 2022; Anyanwu, 2023; Amoussou and Allagbé, 2023; Allagbé and Amoussou, 2023 to name but a few). What these works actually share in common is that they empirically prove how language shapes political thought or constructs political ideologies. If we consider political discourse as an instance of language use, we may presuppose then that it is an instantiation of social relations which constitutes social actors, social practices, processes and structures. This presupposition subsumes the relations of power and struggles over power too (Fairclough, 1995). According to van Dijk (1997a, p. 12), the term 'political discourse'

denotes “the text or talk of professional politicians or political institutions, such as presidents and prime ministers and other members of government, parliament or political parties, both at the local, national and international levels”. He further adds that “Politicians in this sense are the group of people who are being paid for their (political) activities, and who are being elected or appointed (or self-designated) as the central players in the polity” (ibid., p. 13). In a much similar way, Chilton (2004, p. 8) observes that “Political parties and government agencies employ publicists of various kinds, whose role is not merely to control the flow of, and access to information, but also to design and monitor wordings and phrasings, and in this way to respond to challenges or potential challenges.”

As it appears above, language is considered as crucial in politics in that it contributes to the construction of political ideologies and identities, and the control of public opinion. Considering the foregoing, van Dijk (2006a, p. 138) holds that discourse (or language use) and ideology are related, and that these relations are indirectly mediated by social cognitions or shared mental representations of social actors as group members. He further posits that the “ideologies of speakers or writers may be ‘uncovered’ by close reading, understanding or systematic analysis, if language users explicitly or unwittingly ‘express’ their ideologies through language and communication” (ibid., p. 135). It is against the backdrop of the foregoing claims that the current paper is set. It aims to examine the relations between discourse structures and ideologies in Nigeria’s President Bola Ahmed Tinubu’s inaugural speech. It draws its theoretical underpinnings from Critical Discourse Analysis (henceforth, CDA), especially from Teun Adrianus van Dijk’s discourse analytical theory (van Dijk, 1989; 1997a & b; 2000a & b; 2002; 2006a & b) and the descriptive qualitative research method to specifically analyse the discourse structures and strategies this speaker deploys and demonstrate how they encode his ideologies; i.e. his ideas, beliefs or mental models about the issues he (re-)presents in his speech. In line with the foregoing, this study formulates the following questions that it seeks to answer:

1. What levels of discourse structure does the speaker deploy in his speech?
2. To what extent do these levels of discourse structure encode his ideologies or/and those of his social group?

Before answering the questions above, it is expedient to sketch the theory that this paper applied.

### **Theoretical Framework**

As mentioned earlier, this paper draws its theoretical underpinnings from CDA. CDA can be simply glossed as a branch of applied linguistics that studies the relationship between discourse (or language use) and society. Hart (2010, p. 13) concurs with the foregoing when he submits that CDA “is a research enterprise which critically analyses the relationship between language and society”. In fact, “Its objective is to examine critically the relationship between language, ideology, power and social structure, for example, social inequality as it is constructed, re-produced, legitimized, and resisted in language and other modes of communication” (Catalano and Waugh, 2020, p. 1). Without dispelling the foregoing, Fairclough (1995, p. 132) claims

that CDA aims “to systematically explore often opaque relationships of causality and determination between (a) discursive practices, events and texts, and (b) wider social and cultural structures, relations and processes; to investigate how such practices, events and texts arise out of and are ideologically shaped by relations of power and struggles over power.”

The key terms apparent in all approaches to CDA are language, discourse, power and ideology. Critical discourse analysts like Norman Fairclough, Teun Adrianus van Dijk and Ruth Wodak are generally concerned with the study of the relations that exist among these concepts. The current study intends to apply van Dijk’s discourse analytical theory. This theory is a socio-cognitive approach to (critical) discourse analysis (van Dijk, 1997c). It presupposes that discourse and society are related and that these relations are necessarily indirect and mediated by shared mental representations of social actors as group members (van Dijk, 2006a, p. 138). It also presupposes that the very knowledge of language and discourse is a paramount example of the shared social cognitions of groups and their members (ibid.). Again, it assumes that discourse plays a fundamental role in the daily expression and reproduction of ideologies, and that ideologies influence all the various levels of discourse structure (van Dijk, 2000b).

It is very important to emphasise that van Dijk considers the terms ‘discourse’ and ‘ideology’ in his work (see 1997b & c and 2000a & b, for instance) as fuzzy. As such, he does not attempt to provide a specific definition for each of them. In fact, he cogently believes, like other proponents of CDA, that a multidisciplinary approach to both terms will offer a better insight into their meanings. Given space limitations, we will not review all the possible definitions of the two terms provided by social and human sciences (see van Dijk, 1997b & c; 2000a; 2006b for more insights). Hence, let us just bear in mind that discourse is a form of language use (van Dijk, 1997b) characterised by three features: form, meaning, and action and interaction (van Dijk, 1997a; 2000b; 2006a). Let us also bear in mind that ideology is a system of beliefs of a social group and its members (van Dijk, 2000b). In other words, it is “a complex cognitive framework that controls the formation, transformation and application of other social cognitions such as knowledge, opinions and attitudes, social representations including social prejudices” (van Dijk, 2008, p. 34).

In point of fact, van Dijk (2000b) identifies eight levels of discourse structure: meaning, propositional structures, formal structures, sentence syntax, discourse forms, argumentation, rhetoric, and action and interaction. Though the subsequent analysis takes into account all the various levels, it mainly focuses on three of them: meaning, rhetoric and argumentation. The table below presents the features of each level of discourse structure selected for this study:

**Table 1: Levels of discourse structure**

| Meaning                    | Rhetoric                       | Argumentation  |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------|
| Topics                     | Euphemism                      | Authority      |
| Local coherence            | Idiom                          | Comparison     |
| Synonymy; paraphrase       | Irony                          | Counterfactual |
| Contrast                   | Litotes                        | Evidentiality  |
| Examples and illustrations | Metaphor                       | Example        |
| Disclaimer                 | Repetition/Anaphora/Epistrophe | Fallacy        |

|   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| Display of power<br>Implications and<br>presuppositions<br>US-THEM Polarisation<br>Positive self-presentation<br>Negative Other<br>presentation<br>Positive lexicalisation<br>Negative lexicalisation<br>Situation description<br>Hedging and vagueness<br>Topoi<br>Threat<br>Victimisation | Rhetorical question<br>Hyperbole<br>Personification<br>Simile<br>Alliteration<br>Assonance<br>Anastrophe,<br>Ellipsis,<br>Substitution,<br>Imagery,<br>Appositive,<br>Allusion,<br>Gradation, etc. | Generalisation<br>Concretisation<br>Illegality<br>Legality<br>Norm making<br>Norm and value violation |
|---|--|---|

(Adapted from van Dijk, 2000b, pp. 43-60; 2006a, pp. 149-157)

Having clarified the theoretical framework of this study, let us now outline the methodology it adopts.

### Methodology

As stated earlier, this paper aims to examine the relations between discourse structures and ideologies in Nigeria's President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's inaugural speech. It draws on the descriptive qualitative research method. Combining this method with the theoretical underpinnings from CDA, mainly from van Dijk's discourse analytical theory, it specifically analyses the discourse structures and strategies this speaker deploys and demonstrates how they encode his ideologies; i.e. his ideas, beliefs or mental models about the issues he (re-)presents in his speech. This speech was delivered on May 29th, 2023, at the Eagle Square, Abuja. And it was downloaded on the same day from a Nigerian online news website called *The Cable* (<https://www.thecable.ng>).

The speech, as observed, does not have an overall topic. But it basically and repeatedly topicalises national unity; i.e. the unity of all Nigerians, and peace. This speech is organised in such a way that it displays what I can term here an introduction-body-conclusion configuration. In effect, the introduction is longer than the other parts, and includes most of the speaker's ideas, opinions or/and socially shared mental models. On the contrary, the body of the speech includes an outline of his administration's key sectors (security; the economy; jobs; agriculture; infrastructure; fuel subsidy; monetary policy and foreign policy) as well as a few initiatives that define his concept of progressive good governance. The conclusion, like the body, only contains the speaker's appreciation of his compatriots, gratitude to them, wishes and exhortation. Due to space limitations, this study only analyses the introduction part of the speech, which is deliberately subdivided into ten (10) textual snippets. The analysis of the discourse structures and ideologies in the textual snippets is carried out following three of the eight levels of discourse structure (Meaning, Rhetoric and Argumentation) put forth by van

Dijk (2000b; 2006a). However, the three levels are not separated in the study. This is to say, the analysis is conducted in a block form. This is meant to avoid repetition across the three levels of ideological discourse analysis.

### **Discourse Structures and Ideologies in the Speech**

Before carrying out the analysis of the discourse structures and ideologies in Nigeria's President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's inaugural speech, there is need to say a few words about Nigeria, especially about her sociopolitical context. Geographically located in West Africa, Nigeria got her independence on October 1 1960 from British colonial rule. According to Falola and Heaton (2008, p. 158), "The geographical area now known as Nigeria was created by the British colonial administration in 1914, not by indigenous peoples themselves." The foregoing observation is highly central to understanding the political history of Nigeria, in general, and the question of national unity and power politics therein, in particular.

In point of fact, Nigeria under British colonial rule was sub-divided into three regions: North, West and East. And these regions, respectively dominated by the Hausa/Fulani, Yoruba and Igbo ethnic groups, have contested for power at the federal level, from independence to date. Note that the relations of power and struggles over power among the aforementioned dominant ethnic groups have often resulted in political instability and unrest in Nigeria. For example, from 1966 to 1999, the country has experienced successive military attempts to interrupt power or/and effective military interruptions of power. The country, History recalls, counts in total five effective military coups d'état: 15 January 1966; 29 July 1966; 29 July 1975; 31 December, 1983 and 27 August, 1985. Today, the country also counts four republics. The fourth republic which began on May 29, 1999 is marked by a multi-party democratic system. Ever since then, there has been a regular peaceful transfer or handover of power in the country. Successive democratically elected Nigerian presidents are: Olusegun Obasanjo (1999-2003; 2003-2007); Umaru Musa Yar'Adua (2007-2010); Goodluck Ebele Jonathan (2010-2011; 2011-2015); Muhammadu Buhari (2015-2019; 2019-2023) and Bola Ahmed Tinubu (2023 to date). Irrespective of their regional and political affiliation, all of them did make considerable efforts in their speeches, especially their inaugural speeches, to unite the country across its regional and political divides and promote peace. The subsequent analysis shows how Nigeria's President Bola Ahmed Tinubu employs language to achieve the preceding purpose.

Bola Ahmed Tinubu starts his speech with the use of a vocative "My Fellow Citizens". He uses this vocative, as it is obvious, to summon or/and identify with his addressees. Then he curiously asserts his love for his country, Nigeria, his confidence in her people and his faith in God Almighty. Consider his recursive use of the parallel structure "My + noun" in the second, third and fourth sentences in the text below. In fact, the nouns (*love...*, *confidence...* and *faith...*) placed after the possessive adjective "My" are all abstract nouns. Consider also his use of a null tense constituent (i.e. he ellipses the verb "is") in the third and fourth sentences. Again, notice his deployment of end rhymes in the second and third sentences. Note too that the verb 'know' in the fourth sentence is a mental process and has "I" as a Senser. Naturally, the Senser denotes the speaker. The Phenomenon in this sentence is a projected clause complex comprising two material processes (*shall provide* and *seem to have reached*): "... His hand shall provide the needed moral strength and clarity..." Notice that, in this clause complex, the

speaker personifies 'His (God's) hand'. As it appears, the speaker deploys all these linguistic and rhetorical features to produce stylistic and ideological effects in his speech:

- (1) My Fellow Citizens, I stand before you honoured to assume the sacred mandate you have given me. My love for this nation is abiding. My confidence in its people, unwavering. And my faith in God Almighty, absolute. 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.

It can be inferred from above that the speaker exclusively uses assertions. His exclusive use of assertions, as it appears, showcases his personal (political) opinions or beliefs. As the speech unfolds, his personal beliefs seem to combine with his previous experiences or old mental models about the (political) history of Nigeria. Of course, this combination features the speaker as an experienced political figure in/of the Nigerian political sphere. Besides this, it indicates that he belongs to a given social group, and certainly shares some social cognitions or ideologies in common with other members of the group. From the foregoing, we can simply imply that the speaker and all Nigerian-born citizens have some socially shared knowledge about the (political) history of Nigeria. As it appears, this shared knowledge only concerns an aspect of the schemata or mental models shared by Nigerians. Other aspects of their schemata about Nigeria would naturally include her origin, founding fathers, persistent struggles to remain unified and united over time, cultures, ethnic groups, languages, topography, polity, past and present forms of government, past and present socio-economic and political problems, crises, etc. In point of fact, all the aforementioned aspects in the mental models of all Nigerians need not be overtly spelled out in the speech. However, as this analysis will show very soon, they are highly instrumental in reading, interpreting and understanding the (intended) meaning(s) encoded therein.

In furtherance to the foregoing, the speaker describes the inaugural event. For instance, he begins his description with a sentence containing two propositions. The first proposition includes four predicative adjectives (*bold*, *majestic*, *bright* and *full of spirit*). These adjectives are joined together by the conjunction 'and' to form two pairs. The two pairs of adjectives qualify the argument "This day" (note that this expression is a temporal deixis, suggesting a coding time (CT); i.e. the date (May 29th, 2023) that the speech was (being) delivered). Likewise, given the presence of the token 'as' which is used to mark agreement in the sentence, it is obvious that the argument 'our precious nation' in the second proposition is qualified too by the aforementioned adjectives. In fact, these adjectives are substituted with 'as'. In the second sentence, the speaker preposes the adjunct "As a nation". Similarly, in the third sentence, he fronts the object "The question". Again, in the fourth sentence, he thematises the adjunct "For me". The fifth sentence, unlike the first four sentences, is a rhetorical device; i.e. it is a hyperbolic expression. The implication of the speaker's use of the aforementioned features is that they jointly interact to realise the sacrosanct values that he upholds as a human being, Nigerian and President or the ideologies he embodies simply. But the linguistic feature that mostly marks the speaker's ideologies is his use of personal pronouns. Consider his recursive use of the pronoun 'we' and its variants 'our' and 'us' in the passage below. This

pronoun is inclusive; i.e. it deictically points to the speaker and all his compatriots. As it appears, the speaker's use of the pronoun 'we' and its variants 'our' and 'us' suggests communitarian or socialist ideologies. Given his ideological orientation, the speaker cogently believes that the ongoing peaceful handover of power in Nigeria is a manifestation of all Nigerians' trust in God and faith in representative governance:

- (2) This day is bold and majestic yet bright and full of spirit, as is our precious nation. As a nation, we have long ago decided to march beyond the dimness of night into the open day of renewed national hope. 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. For me, there is but one answer. We are too great a nation and too grounded as a people to rob ourselves of our finest destiny. This nation's journey has been shaped by the prayers of millions, and the collective sacrifices of us all. We have endured hardships that would have made other societies crumble. 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. To the surprise of many but not to ourselves, we have more firmly established this land as a democracy in both word and deed. The peaceful transition from one government to another is now our political tradition. This handover symbolizes our trust in God, our enduring faith in representative governance and our belief in our ability to reshape this nation into the society it was always meant to be.

In addition, the speaker depicts his predecessor, Muhammadu Buhari, highlighting his moral values in terms that unmistakably exude his admiration for and gratitude towards him. In fact, he identifies him as a worthy partner and friend who deserves History's kindness. Consider his use of the social deictic expressions "President Muhammadu Buhari" and "Mr President". Consider also his deployment of the person deixis 'you' (mentioned four times). These expressions are employed to mark the addressee's social status or social position. Besides, note his use of the adjunct 'On a more personal note' thematised in the third sentence. By placing this adjunct in Thematic position, the speaker intends to encode an experiential meaning in the text:

- (3) Here, permit me to say a few words to my predecessor, President Muhammadu Buhari. Mr President, you have been an honest, patriotic leader who has done his best for the nation you love. On a more personal note, you are a worthy partner and friend. May History be kind to you.

The speaker further makes recourse to history to represent his perception of (social reality in) Nigeria. He first paraphrases some Nigeria's critics' claim that the country will break apart and even perish. To prove that these critics' claim is completely false or fallacious, he provides, from experience, some evidence, implying thus that though Nigeria had faced some critical political, social and economic problems in a recent past which had threatened her cohesion and existence, she was able to cope with them all thanks to her resilience and diversity.

Next, he surprisingly asserts that Nigeria is Africa's most populous nation and the best hope and strongest champion of the Black Race. In fact, he takes this assertion as self-evident so much so that he deliberately refrains from providing any evidence to substantiate it. Of course, this assertion sounds hyperbolic in that it exaggerates meaning about the potential of Nigeria. Like the preceding assertion, the speaker declares self-evidently in his name and on behalf of all his compatriots that as long as the world exists, Nigeria shall exist. In reality, this sentence, like the previous one, is hyperbolic in nature. Moreover, note that in the first and fourth sentences, the speaker deploys gradation (*will break ... even perish* and *may make us bend at times but ... shall never break us*). Note also that he forms an alliterative pattern with the voiced bilabial plosive phoneme /b/ (**burdens**, **bend**, **but** and **break**) in the fourth sentence:

- (4) For many years, Nigeria's critics have trafficked the rumour that our nation will break apart, even perish. Yet here we are. We have stumbled at times, but our resilience and diversity have kept us going. Our burdens may make us bend at times, but they shall never break us. Instead, we stand forth as Africa's most populous nation and as the best hope and strongest champion of the Black Race. As citizens, we declare as one unified people devoted to one unified national cause, that as long as this world exists, NIGERIA SHALL EXIST.

As it is obvious, the speaker's formal declaration of Nigeria's existence or survival is a glaring linguistic materialisation of shared social cognitions or ideologies in the speech. Notice that only Nigerian-born citizens who had experienced the Biafran war (July 6th, 1967- January 15th, 1970) or who had read about it in a History or fiction book or heard about it or watched it in a film are likely to understand the importance of this declaration. The Biafran war was a civil war fought between the Eastern secessionist state led by Lieutenant Colonel Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu and Nigeria led by General Yakubu Gowon. The war, as History recalls, caused the deaths of close to three million people and many countless displaced. As the foregoing schematic knowledge about the 'Biafran' war overtly shows, the horrors of Nigeria's sad past are still present in the memories of most (not to say all) Nigerians. This category of Nigerians including the newly elected president, as observed, is not ready to relive this sad past! For this reason, the speaker figuratively exhorts all Nigerians to perceive the peaceful handover of power as "the torch of human progress" they should all, irrespective of their partisan or political coloration, reckon with and safeguard. Note his use of the temporal deictic expression 'Today' in the text below. It contextually refers to May 29th, 2023, the date the speaker delivered his speech. Note also the capitalisation of 'Fate' and 'Destiny'. By capitalising these words, the speaker intends to foreground them in the text. Again, notice that the speaker personifies Fate and Destiny in the text. He further deploys both terms to create a strong visual image in, for example, the expression "Today, Fate and Destiny join together to place the torch of human progress in our very hands":

- (5) Today, Fate and Destiny join together to place the torch of human progress in our very hands. We dare not let it slip. We lift high this torch so that it might shine on every household and in every heart that calls itself Nigerian. We hold this beam aloft because

it lights our path with compassion, brotherhood, and peace. May this great light never extinguish.

In the same line of thought, the speaker plainly spells out what his administration intends to do in order to sustain and perpetuate the ongoing democratic tradition in his country. He actually makes use of a series of promises for this purpose. These promises, as it is obvious, suggest his commitment to such values as consensus, dialogue, inclusion and unity. Consider his use of the personal pronoun 'we' and its variant 'our' and the pronoun 'you' and its variant 'your' in the subsequent text. Note that the speaker exclusively uses 'we' and its variant 'our' to refer to himself and his administration, but he employs 'you' and its variant 'your' to point to all Nigerians, including certainly those who did not vote for him. As it appears, the speaker uses the aforementioned pronouns and their variants to mark some distance between himself and his fellow Nigerians. Of course, the pronoun 'we' can be considered as an honorific person deixis here in that it indicates the speaker's higher status or authority (Yule, 1996, p. 10). Perhaps it is necessary to emphasise that the speaker uses this honorific pronoun for an ideological purpose as well. This is to say, he employs the exclusive pronoun 'we' and its variant 'our' to persuade his addressees or/and manipulate them cognitively (Amoussou and Aguessy, 2020). In addition to personal pronouns, the speaker employs the modal verb 'shall' (mentioned three times) and the modal adjunct 'never' (repeated three times) to ideologically persuade and manipulate his addressees:

- (6) Our administration shall govern on your behalf but never rule over you. We shall consult and dialogue but never dictate. We shall reach out to all but never put down a single person for holding views contrary to our own. We are here to further mend and heal this nation, not tear and injure it.

In what follows, the speaker offers some comments on the election that brought him to power. Here he employs the pronoun 'I' and its variants 'me' and 'my' and 'us' to refer respectively to himself alone and himself and his regime. But he employs the pronoun 'they' and its variants 'them' and 'their' to point to his unfortunate opponents. We notice a polarised representation here: self- and Other (re-)presentation. In the text below, for instance, while talking about the (organisation of the) election, the speaker employs such evaluative terms as 'hard fought'; 'fairly won' and 'better quality'. As it appears, he says only good (in-group's) things about the (organisation of the) election. Recall that the presidential election in question was organised by his predecessor. It can be deduced from the foregoing that the speaker's good evaluation of the election is nothing else but a positive self-presentation. Again, when he talks about his opponents, he refers to them with the pronoun "they" and its variants "them" and "their". He categorises his opponents, as noted, into two groups: those who have taken concerns to court and those who haven't. Of course, the speaker does not explicitly mention the latter in his speech. But he unexpectedly perceives the two groups as his "fellow compatriots and constituencies and concerns that wisdom dare not ignore." This denotes a positive lexicalisation and moderate representation of Others. In effect, the speaker specifically views the group of those who seek legal redress at court as a group whose right he fully defends. This clearly

indicates that the speaker embodies democratic ideologies or is ideologically attached to democratic values:

- (7) In this vein, may I offer a few comments regarding the election that brought us to this juncture. It was a hard fought contest. And it was also fairly won. Since the advent of the Fourth Republic, Nigeria has not held an election of better quality. The outcome reflected the will of the people. However, my victory does not render me any more Nigerian than my opponents. Nor does it render them any less patriotic. They shall forever be my fellow compatriots. And I will treat them as such. They represent important constituencies and concerns that wisdom dare not ignore. Some have taken their concerns to court. Seeking legal redress is their right and I fully defend their exercise of this right. This is the essence of the rule of law.

In furtherance to the above, the speaker attempts to convince his fellow Nigerians, including his opponents, about the importance of unity. We notice at this level that he draws his argument mainly from history. Indeed, he first narrates the price their forefathers paid to place Nigeria on the map as an independent nation. Then he exhorts all his compatriots to recommit their very selves to placing Nigeria in their hearts as the indispensable home for all Nigerians. Consider the speaker's use of the expressions 'Over six decades ago' and 'Today' in the first and fourth sentences in the text below. These expressions are temporal deictic terms. They are employed to indicate two opposing time periods: the past and the present. Consider also his use of the modal verb 'must' followed by the modal adjunct 'never' in the second sentence and the form 'Let us...' in the third sentence. The two sentences in which these features are located are truly directive speech acts. Note that the aforementioned sentences do not have the same grammatical structure. While the second sentence is a declarative, the third one is an imperative. The speaker pragmatically deploys both sentences to encode his communicative intentions in the speech:

- (8) Over six decades ago, our founding fathers gave bravely of themselves to place Nigeria on the map as an independent nation. We must never allow the labor of those who came before us to wither in vain but to blossom and bring forth a better reality. Let us take the next great step in the journey they began and believed in. Today, let us recommit our very selves to placing Nigeria in our hearts as the indispensable home for each and every one of us regardless of creed, ethnicity, or place of birth.

In addition, in what follows, the speaker first employs a sentence functioning as a two-place predicate. This sentence actually begins with the vocative 'My supporters'. Compare this vocative with the vocative 'My Fellow Citizens' with which the speaker begins his speech. While the speaker employs the vocative 'My Fellow Citizens' to summon or/and identify with all his compatriots, he uses the vocative 'My supporters' to summon or/and identify only with his partisans. This clearly exudes ideological shift in the speech. The vocative 'My supporters' is, in fact, followed by the group of words 'I thank you'. Notice that the latter contains two arguments: "I" and "you". The first argument points to the speaker and the second one his

supporters. With this sentence, as observed, the speaker performs an illocutionary act of thanking. Next, the speaker uses a two-place predicate sentence. The two arguments therein are “I” and “my hand”. While the first argument refers to the speaker, the second one refers to a part of his body. Again in this sentence still, he thematises the adjunct ‘To those who voted otherwise’. He also deploys the idiomatic expression ‘... extend my hand across the political divide’. In the same vein, the third sentence the speaker employs is a two-place predicate sentence. The arguments in this sentence are “I” and “you”. The first argument points to the speaker and the second one his opponents. In fact, the third sentence is a directive speech act performing the illocutionary act of exhorting. As it appears, the speaker deploys all these linguistic features to encode his intention to work with his opponents. This presupposes inclusive governance, a key feature of democratic systems.

Unlike the first three sentences, the fourth sentence that the speaker produces is a one-place predicate sentence. The unique argument in the sentence is “political coloration”. Like in the second sentence, the speaker thematises the adjunct ‘For me’. This adjunct is followed by the group of words ‘... political coloration has faded away’. As it can be inferred from the foregoing, this sentence is a representative speech act. It serves to represent the speaker’s personal political beliefs. The speaker further reinforces his personal political beliefs with his use of the sentence ‘All I see are Nigerians’. Notice that the subject of this sentence ‘All I see’ is a nominal clause and the verb therein a mental process. This subject (I mean the nominal clause) is considered a Carrier and its complement ‘Nigerians’ an Attribute in systemic functional linguistic terms (Eggins, 2004; Fontaine, 2013). In the sixth sentence, to ideologically persuade his addressees, the speaker uses the inclusive pronoun “we”. In effect, this pronoun is the subject of a directive speech act which performs the illocutionary act of wishing. The speaker’s wish is that all Nigerians, especially his opponents, will “grasp [his extended hand] in national affinity and brotherhood” or “uphold these fitting and excellent notions as the new Nigerian ideal”. As it appears, the speaker’s personal political beliefs express or point to the attitudes or ideologies of his political party. The ideologies are communitarianism, socialism and democracy.

In fact, the speaker’s political party’s ideologies unfailingly bear on how he perceives and responds to social reality, and uses language. For instance, his use of the expression ‘the new Nigerian ideal’ (consider the alliterative and assonantal patterns formed with the phonemes /n/, /ai/ and /i/ in this term), which contextually means the unity of all Nigerians, clearly indicates this aspect. Another example which foregrounds the speaker’s subscription to socialist ideologies is found in the penultimate sentence in the text below. In this sentence, he surprisingly raises the unity of all Nigerians above a mere improvement in economic and other statistics:

- (9) My supporters, I thank you. To those who voted otherwise, I extend my hand across the political divide. I ask you to grasp it in national affinity and brotherhood. For me, political coloration has faded away. All I see are Nigerians. May we uphold these fitting and excellent notions as the new Nigerian ideal. My fellow compatriots, the Nigerian ideal which I speak of is more than just an improvement in economic and other statistics. These things are important; but they can never convey the fullness of our story.

In furtherance of the socialist ideologies presupposed above, the speaker recalls the mission of all Nigerians. Notice that the mission is clearly spelled out in terms that basically represent acts of doing or actions more than any other thing. For example, note his use of such material processes as ‘to improve’, ‘nurtures’, ‘rewards’, ‘to resolve’, ‘seek to divide’, ‘give’, ‘must work’, ‘develop’, ‘must... seek’, ‘are served’, ‘comes’ and ‘shall serve’ in the text below. As it appears, all the verbs but three (*must work*, *comes* and *shall serve*) are transitive; i.e. these verbs take on a direct object. Likewise, as observed, only one of the verbs is passivised (*are served*). These verbs all, as we can observe as well, function to encode the speaker’s mind-style, worldview or point of view in the text:

- (10) Our mission is to improve our way of life in a manner that nurtures our humanity, encourages compassion toward one another, and duly rewards our collective effort to resolve the social ills that seek to divide us. Our constitution and laws give us a nation on paper. We must work harder at bringing these noble documents to life by strengthening the bonds of economic collaboration, social cohesion, and cultural understanding. Let us develop a shared sense of fairness and equity. The South must not only seek good for itself but must understand that its interests are served when good comes to the North. The North must see the South likewise. Whether from the winding creeks of the Niger Delta, the vastness of the northern savannah, the boardrooms of Lagos, the bustling capital of Abuja, or the busy markets of Onitsha, you are all my people. As your president, I shall serve with prejudice toward none but compassion and amity towards all.

### **Conclusion**

This paper has examined the relations between discourse structures and ideologies in Nigeria’s President Bola Ahmed Tinubu’s inaugural speech. It has drawn its theoretical underpinnings from CDA, especially from Teun Adrianus van Dijk’s discourse analytical theory (van Dijk, 1989; 1997a & b; 2000a & b; 2002; 2006a & b) and the descriptive qualitative research method. With this, it has specifically analysed the discourse structures and strategies this speaker deploys and demonstrated how they encode his ideologies; i.e. his ideas, beliefs or mental models about the issues he (re-)presents in his speech. The analysis has yielded some important findings. The findings reveal that the speaker employs, for instance, at the level of meaning, situation description, implications and presuppositions, paraphrase, positive self-presentation, and display of power. They also reveal that he deploys, at the level of argumentation, evidentiality, authority and comparison. The findings further indicate that he repeatedly makes recourse to the (political) history of Nigeria to construct his argumentation. The structural features and the syntactic structures that constitute the argumentation, as observed, vary across the text. In addition, the findings show that the speaker uses, at the level of rhetoric, alliteration, assonance, gradation, idiom, hyperbole, imagery, repetition/anaphora, parallelism, personification, ellipsis, substitution, etc. All the aforementioned features from the three levels of discourse structure jointly interact to encode the speaker’s personal political beliefs.

As the analysis indicates, President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's personal political beliefs express or point to the attitudes or ideologies of his political party. In point of fact, the analysis reveals three major ideologies of his political party: communitarianism, socialism and democracy. These ideologies do consistently bear on how the speaker perceives and responds to social reality, and uses language. For instance, as observed, the speaker effectively uses language to identify with his partisans, opponents and fellow citizens with the aim of promoting national unity and peace in the country. He also represents himself and the aforementioned social actors. But, as his representation unfailingly exudes, he polarises the actors: self or in-group and Other or out-group. When he addresses his compatriots, for example, he employs the vocative "My Fellow Citizens" but he calls his partisans "My supporters". Likewise, when he identifies with his fellow compatriots, he uses the inclusive pronoun "we" and its variants "us" and "our", but he employs the exclusive pronoun "we" and its variants "us" and "our" or the pronoun "I" and its variants "me" and "my" when he refers to himself and his administration. This denotes both display of power and ideological shift in his speech. It also indicates cognitive manipulation therein.

Again, when the speaker evaluates the organisation of the election that brought him to power, he only says good things about it. This indicates positive self-presentation. In addition, when the speaker talks about his opponents, he refers to them with the pronoun "they" and its variants "them" and "their". He even categorises his opponents into two groups: those who have taken concerns to court and those who haven't. However, as observed, he surprisingly perceives the two groups as his "fellow compatriots and constituencies and concerns that wisdom dare not ignore." This exudes a positive lexicalisation or moderate representation of Others. In conclusion, it can be established that President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, as his use of language shows, appears to be a social democrat committed to uniting Nigerians across the country's political divide.

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