

Innovations

Critical Discourse Analysis of Pronominal in Political Discourse: An Examination of Inaugural Speech of Nigerian President, Ahmed Bola Tinubu

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Abstract : *This study examines the use of pronouns in political discourse. In political speeches, politicians often employ personal pronouns to strategically categorize the discourse participants as either in-group or out-group, legitimizing self and delegitimizing others. The study framework is hitched on critical discourse analysis of legitimization of self and delegitimization of others as proposed by Chilton (2004, p. 47). The inaugural speech of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu constituted the data for the study. Quantitative and qualitative research approaches were utilized to analyses the data collected for the study. The findings revealed that the singular pronouns: I, me, and my were deployed by the President to foster his positive self-image of tolerance, humility, respect, patriotism, and dominance. The plural person pronouns such as we, our, and us, were deployed to advance his administration's positive image of inclusiveness, collective purpose, effort, and responsibility. While the plural pronouns such as they, them, and their were used to downplay the positive image of his opponents, negatively categorizing them as intolerant, combatant, unpatriotic, and selfish. The study therefore concludes that the president effectively used the pronouns in his inaugural speech to legitimize self -image of himself and to delegitimize his opponents' self- other representation. The study recommends for further work out on the use of pronouns in political speeches in a comparative study across cultural context in order to give another perspective on how pronouns are deployed in the construction and maintenance of political identity and power dynamics.*

Key Words: *Critical discourse analysis, delegitimization, legitimization, inaugural speech, political discourse, pronominal*

1.0. Introduction

Language is a very important and indispensable tool available to man for the facilitation of his day-to-day activities. It has been defined as a system of conventional spoken, signed, or written symbols by which human beings express themselves in a social context. Language aids people to transmit information, express feelings and emotions, influence the activities of others, and comport themselves with varying degrees of friendliness or hostility toward persons. In political discourse, language is used by politicians to express their different ideologies and influence their audience to support and align with their ideas. Politicians also manipulate language to showcase power and dominance.

Emphasizing the inextricability of language to politics, Chilton and Schaffner (1997), insist that it is the use of language in the constitution of a social group that results in politics and that without language, politics cannot be conducted. Pelinka (2007) in her exposition argues that language is a political phenomenon and should be studied as a discursive phenomenon. Politicians use language to manipulate words to suit their intentions. In selling their ideology, and manifesto, politicians employ resources of language to mobilize, persuade, convince, and enlighten the citizenry. Both their messages and mode of presentation are germane to their successful political careers (Akinkurolere 2011).

An inaugural speech is a speech event rendered by a newly elected political official president whose meaning can be understood in its context with its functional properties. This paper, therefore is an attempt to examine some linguistic resources employed by the Nigerian President, Ahmed Bola Tinubu in his inaugural speech to address Nigerians who believe that his emergency as Nigerian President appears to be controversial. Specifically, this paper examines the use of pronominal as indicators of power, legitimacy, authority and dominance in the inaugural speech of the Nigerian President, Ahmed Bola Tinubu.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Concept of Discourse Analysis

Political discourse has been defined from different perspectives by researchers of diverse fields such as political scientists, linguists, sociologists, cultural scientists, as well as psychologists. From a linguistics perspective, political discourse has been defined as the embodiment of all the speech acts employed in political discussions influenced by mental experiences of public and cultural practices (Baranov, 1991, Levenkova, 2011, Rakhmatovna, 2022). Political discourse reflects the use of language in the expression of political ideology, power, and identity. In political discourse, politicians manipulate language to motivate, persuade, convince, and

familiarize the nation with their plans, actions, and socio-economic policies (Kaewrungruang, 2018,). Speaking on this, Valerevna, (2022) avers that the choice of language means is of great importance for political discourse. It allows you to influence the consciousness of the addressee, on how he will perceive this or that information, and how he will behave after comprehending it (p.90).

Jalilifar and Alavi (2011) and Cabrejas-Peñuelas (2015) assert that in shaping people's ideas and opinions, politicians use language to express their points of view and persuade audiences to achieve political effects about political matters. The participants in political discourse are not only politicians but also voters, protesters, activists, bloggers, and media personnel who continuously engage in political discourse. Even politicians are considered as engaging in political discourse only when they are players or political actors. According to Tyrkko, 2016, the audience in a political arena also constitutes political actors as their scope and the social economic constitution can influence political rhetoric.

2.2 Pronouns in Political Discourse

In political speech, the pronouns are used to determine whom the speaker refers to, whether they are inclusive or exclusive. The pronoun I is used when the speaker wants to speak as an individual rather than as a representative of a group while the pronoun we is employed to represent a sense of collective responsibility, as against individual reference.

Tecza (2018) examined the use of pronouns in the political arena of the modern world. He discovered that in diplomatic discourses, the language of the elites is often deployed to persuade and manipulate the audience. Pronouns are vital tools in the language of diplomats. His study examined the use of pronouns we and our in the State of the Union speech with 37 weekly speeches by Donald Trump. Using corpus linguistics, Tecza's (2018) findings reveal that we and our pronouns were used interchangeably and recurrently in Donald Trump speeches in both the State of Union address and weekly addresses to refer to groups with unequal power relations. Speaking on this, However, Ogbuehi, (2021), in her study of the presidential media chat with the Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan examined the use of hedges in political discourse. The study discovers that the personal pronoun "you" was deployed as an impersonal construct to achieve politeness.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

The framework of this research inquiry is hinged on critical discourse analysis (CDA) drawing insight from Chilton (2004) legitimization and delegitimization of self-dichotomy in the analysis of the use of pronouns in the inaugural speech made by Ahmed Bola Tinubu as the elected Nigerian President on the 29th May 2023. This

choice is made considering CDA's concern with the social context in the interpretation of a given text and the power dynamics that may be brought to bear. It gives insight on how language is used by the Nigerian President in his inaugural speech to establish power, legitimacy, and authority which are the key features of political discourse and CDA. In political discourse, linguistic choices are made based on the speaker's point of view and ideological representations. The analysis of text is not just limited to textual interpretations of grammatical references but as well captures social and cognitive nuances that induce them. Choices of pronouns by the speakers are not just textually interpreted as anaphors and deictic references but also as reflections of identity and solidarity references in a bid to sustain power relations (Bello, 2013).

Wodak and Meyer (2018) see CDA as a tool for the analysis of structural relations of dominance, discrimination, power, and control as manifested in language. Politicians manipulate language to issue commands, and threats, elicit information, make offers and promises, and assert authority. Fairclough, (1989) emphasizes that in the political arena, politicians enact discourse to project a positive self-image while at the same time tarnishing their opponent's image. Chilton (2004, p.47) refers to this as legitimization of self and delegitimization of the other. Chilton further explains that delegitimization can be reflected in the act of attacking other people's rationality, and sanity, attributing negative traits to others, acts of blaming, excluding, marginalizing, and attacking the communicative cooperation of others. Legitimization orients to self. It promotes positive self-representation, self-praise and promotion, self-explanation, self-justification, and self-identification as a source of authority, reason, vision, and sanity. The self could be an individual or a group with which the speaker identifies or intends to identify with. The idea is to downplay other's positive side and amplify their negative side.

In light of Chilton (2004) legitimization of self and delegitimization of others, an attempt will be made in this paper to provide insight into the deployment of pronouns by the Nigerian President, Ahmed Bola Tinubu to categorize and designate the participants in the political arena of his speech in reflecting the exercise of power, ideology, and dominance.

3.0 Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study makes use of a mixed method of quantitative and qualitative descriptive research design in which the researcher identifies and quantifies personal pronouns in tabular form and as well provides illustrative samples of personal pronouns used to categorize and designate the participants in the inaugural speech of the Nigerian President, Ahmed Bola Tinubu, which forms the data for this study. With the quantitative method, the researcher identifies the types of personal pronouns that

are reflected in his speech, their frequency occurrence, and statistical analysis for accuracy of result and objectivity. However, with the qualitative design, the research provides an in-depth insight into how personal pronouns are manipulated to designate and categorize the key players and participants in the discourse either as insiders, or outsiders, legitimization and delegitimization of self, or others representation, inclusive or exclusive.

The researcher has opted for the mixed method of research design to provide a more comprehensive and richer understanding of the deployment of personal pronouns by President Tinubu in his inaugural speech and to enhance the validity and reliability of the findings (Creswell & Clark, 2017, p.3; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p. 20). This dual approach offers a detailed examination of the frequency and context of pronoun usage in the political speech under study. This methodological rigor ensures that the conclusions drawn are scientifically sound and well supported.

3.2 Data Collection

The data for this study is drawn from the inaugural speech of the Nigerian President, Bola Ahmed Tinubu as a case study. The speech is retrieved via the official website of The Cable TV online. Since the inaugural speech was made public, the researcher did not seek for special permission to download and make use of the data. The speech comprises of 1,976 words rendered as an hour speech at Eagle Square, Abuja on May 29, 2023. This researcher has chosen only the inaugural speech of president Tinubu for this study so as to have a focused in-depth analysis and thorough examination of the frequency and context of pronoun usage in the inaugural speech, providing a richer understanding of the linguistic features and their implications for political discourse. Speaking on this (Yin, 2014) asserts that case studies allow researchers to delve into the intricacies of a particular case, providing detailed insights that wouldn't be possible with other methods.

4.0 Data Analysis and Presentation

In this data analysis, quantitatively, the researcher identified different types of personal pronouns that featured in the data and quantifies them in tabulated form to ascertain their frequency occurrence with statistical analysis of simple percentage calculation. Qualitatively, the researcher describes the use of personal pronouns to designate and categorize the participants in the political discourse.

4.1 Types of Personal Pronouns; Singular and Plural Form

Table 1 : Singular Person Pronouns

Pronouns	Frequency.	Percentage
Singular		
I	14	34%
Me	8	19%
My	15	37%
You	4	10%
Total	41	100%

The above Table 1 reveals different types of singular pronouns and the frequency distribution of their occurrence identifiable in the inaugural speech of the Nigerian President, Bola Ahmed Tinubu. It is observed from the table that out of 41 singular pronouns used in the data, I appeared 14 times constituting 34%, me appeared 8 times of 19%, my was used 15 times of 37%, while you singular appeared 4 times constituting 10%. From the analysis, my pronoun has the highest number of usage which is 15 in number, followed by I which appeared 14 times. In political discourse, singular personal pronouns are often deployed to express strong opinions and assertions of authority. It is also used to present a positive self-image of the speaker. In light of this, the I and my singular pronouns were employed by the President to assert his authority as the newly elected Nigerian President and also to present a positive self-image of himself.

**Table 2
Plural Person Pronouns**

Pronouns	Frequency.	Percentage
Plural		
We	36	32%
Us	12	11%
Our, Ourselves	43, 3	38%, 3%
Your	2	2%
You	6	5%
They	7	6%
Them, themselves	2, 1	2%, 1%
Total	112	100%

The above Table 2 presents the occurrence of different types of plural person pronouns and their frequency distribution identifiable in the inaugural speech of the Nigerian President, Bola Ahmed Tinubu. It is observed that out of 112 plural person pronouns identified in the speech, we pronoun appeared 36 times constituting 32%, us was used 12 times constituting 11%, our and ourselves appeared 43 and 3 times making 38% and 3% respectively, your appeared 2 times of 2%, they was used 7 times constituting 6%, them and themselves were used 2, and 1 of 2% and 1% respectfully.

The above results of Tables 1 & 2 are indications that the person pronouns employed by the President in his speech are mostly plural. The plural pronouns appeared 112 times, as against the singular pronouns occurring only 41 times. The plural person pronouns are often deployed to invoke a sense of unity, solidarity, shared responsibility, and collective accountability. It fosters a sense of oneness and a call to work together toward achieving a common goal. The recurrence of we and our is an indication of the president's attempt to mobilize Nigerians who were his audience, to support his political goals and agenda in a bid to foster the growth and development of the nation. This finding is resonates with Anchimbe (2016: 515) assertion that "...besides their grammatical functions, plural inclusive (our) and reflexive (ourselves), when used in certain contexts create a sense of collective belonging...". The findings which also revealed a limited recurrence of singular person pronouns I, me, and my is an indication of a tactful style of speech by the Nigerian President to avoid sounding domineering and assertive signaling humility tailored towards restoring people's confidence in him considering the non-popularity of his emergency as the President of Nigeria.

4.2 Qualitative Analysis

In this analysis, an instance of the President's speech is sampled to explain the deployment of person pronouns to designate and categorize the participants in the discourse for the legitimization of positive self and delegitimization of negative other representation in his construction of social identity, social relations, and political ideology. Different circumstances reflecting the use of pronouns are sampled out and explained.

4.3 The Use of Singular Pronouns I and its Variants my, and me

I and me pronoun in a political arena can be used as a referent to the speaker in conveying his personal view and asserting of his authority. It is mostly used by politicians to convey a positive self-image of their stance, principles, expression of power and dominance, and to showcase themselves as persons of integrity with

clarity of purpose. The variant **my** which is a possessive pronoun can be used by a politician to foster a sense of inclusiveness, unity, and shared identity.

The following instances from the data for this study will show how **I** and its variants **me** and **my** are used in the Nigerian President's inaugural speech and their social impact.

Excerpt 1

My Fellow Citizens,

I stand before you honored to assume the sacred mandate you have given **me**. **My** love for this nation is abiding. **My** confidence in its people is unwavering. And **my** faith in God Almighty is 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.

In the above Excerpt 1, the expression My Fellow Citizen appeared as an opening address used by the President to captivate the attention of his audience. The **My** pronoun is tactfully deployed by the president to personally connect himself to his audience, invoking a sense of unity, belonging, and common purpose. He used it to endear himself to his audience in a bid to strengthen social cohesion.

In the second paragraph of the above excerpt, the President made use of the **I** pronoun when he declared, ' I stand before you honored to assume the sacred mandate...' Here the **I** pronoun was deployed by the President to inject a sense of responsibility, and accountability, as well as underscoring his position as the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria which he recognizes as a sacred mandate. It also reiterates his commitment and readiness to serve and pilot the affairs of the nation. The pronoun **I** in this context also invokes a sense of humility and respect for his audience.

Furthermore, in the following expression " My love for this nation is abiding, My confidence in its people unwavering, And my faith in God Almighty absolute". The use of **my** pronoun recurrently in his pledge as indicated in the above expression emphasizes his total and absolute confidence and commitment to serve as the president of Nigeria. It is used to present his positive self-image as a patriotic citizen who is passionate with love and confidence for the nation of Nigeria and its people and his belief in God as the ultimate ruler.

The use of the **I** pronoun in this expression "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" also highlights his personal belief in God's enabling power. It is a religious allusion that he uses to endear himself to his audience most of who supported him on the ground of the religion of Moslem-Moslem ticket. This could therefore serve as a way to identify with his political com religious supporters. It is also subtly employed by the President to shift blame to an unseen God and avoid taking responsibility when the going gets tough.

Excerpt 2

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.

In the above excerpt 2, the pronoun me was used here to convey a positive self-image of the President that projects him as a person who is fully convinced of the nation's potential for growth, development, and advancement. The use of me in this context presupposes others who he has indirectly referred to as not having such clear vision and conviction about the nation when compared to his. This personal declaration positively positions him as an individual with clarity of purpose, inspiring confidence and trust in Nigerians in his capacity to pioneer the affairs of the Nigerian nation.

From the above explanations, it is obvious that the use of person singular pronouns, I, me, and my was effectively deployed by the President to positively magnify his image as a patriotic leader who is humble, and respectful in relating with the people. It portrays him as passionate and fully committed to serve the nation.

Excerpt 3

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.

In the above excerpt, the singular pronouns I, my, and me are used by the President to refer to himself as an individual and present his personal view, fostering his leadership of accountability and personalized actions. The pronoun My as used in the phrase "My supporters" indicates connection and identification with his supporters. By appreciating his supporters, the President acknowledges their role in ensuring his victory in the election. By personally acknowledging those who did not vote for him with the use of the I pronoun, he demonstrates a sense of tolerance and inclusiveness. The use of me in the following expression "For me, political coloration has faded away" is an indication of his conviction and stance in seeing beyond political biases to foster a sense of unity and common purpose in his regime.

4.3. The Use of Plural Pronouns our, we, us, they, them

In political discourse, the plural person pronouns can be used by a politician to project a sense of unity, inclusiveness, shared responsibility, solidarity, collective action, pursuit of a common goal, and mobilizing support for achieving such goals. In the present study, the President employed them recurrently and consistently in his speech for diverse reasons as would be exemplified below from the excerpts from the data for this study.

Excerpt 4

As a nation, we have long ago decided to march beyond the dimness of night into the open day of renewed national hope.

In the above expression, the use of the we pronoun is inclusively employed to foster a sense of unity, collective responsibility, and shared identity. The we refers to both the speaker and the listener as key players in the journey of moving the nation forward from the present challenging situation towards a more progressive of renewed national hope.

Excerpt 5

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.

In the first expression of the above Excerpt 4, the pronoun we, is inclusively used to project a sense of unity and shared effort. The President in his speech recognized the burden every Nigerian has experienced so far which may have been occasioned by the incompetence of his predecessors; presupposing his predecessors had long enough plunged Nigerians into a state of despair which he referred to as “bearing burden”. This is an instances of delegitimization where politicians categorize their predecessors negatively to advance their image and leadership as better options. The pronoun our is possessive, indicating collective possession. Here the President speaks about creating a better future that every Nigerian, inclusive of himself must make concerted effort to achieve. This is also a way of portraying himself and his government as entities that will achieve a better future for Nigeria compared with

the performance of his predecessors. The use of ourselves which is a reflexive pronoun emphasizes the involvement and participation of all the stakeholders inclusive of himself as a representative of his administration and the entire Nigerians. By implication, the President tries to create a sense of collective responsibility knowing fully well that fixing Nigeria may not be an easy task and so the best option is to involve all in the event of failure to achieve success. It is a device to avoid taking full responsibility for his actions.

Excerpt 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 the above excerpt, the plural person pronouns are deployed in the light of the speaker and his administration and to the exclusion of Nigerians. By using these pronouns in this vain, he makes promises on behalf of his administration to run an inclusive and fair government that will not discriminate against the opposition. He promised not to witch-hunt his opponents. In the second paragraph, with the use of the inclusive pronoun, he promises to mend and heal the nation, implying that he inherited a sick nation from his predecessors as he presents his administration in light of a great physician possessing the right medication to heal and not to injure or create further wound for the nation. By saying so, he presents his administration as the expected messiah to redeem a nation that has suffered retrogressive down-tones in the hands of his predecessors who were implicitly categorized as incompetent leaders.

Excerpt 7

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. They 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 the above excerpt, the plural pronouns they, them, and their are used exclusively by the President to designate his opponents in the acknowledgment of their presence and formidability within the national context. It is a show of respect for others' perspectives and rights. Their which is a possessive pronoun fosters a recognition of the opponents' entitlement to their rights, actions, and beliefs which underscores his readiness to allow the prevalence of the rule of rule. This expression "Seeking legal redress is their right and I fully defend their exercise of this right" portrays him as one who upholds the rule of law and respects for democratic process regardless of the disagreement and contention at the law court. This is another way of projecting his positive self-image while undermining that of his opponent whom he has subtly presented as being intolerant and contentious.

Excerpt 8

The principles that will guide our administration are simple:

1. Nigeria will be impartially governed according to the constitution and the rule of law.
2. We shall defend the nation from terror and all forms of criminality that threaten the peace and stability of our country and our sub-region.
3. We shall remodel our economy to bring about growth and development through job creation, food security, and an end to extreme poverty.
4. In our administration, Women and youth will feature prominently.

In the above excerpt, the plural pronouns are inclusively deployed by the President in the outline of ideology and programs of his administration to refer to his administration as inclusive of himself; fostering audience inclusiveness in the vision and goals of his administration. This portrays his administration as a government that is based on collective responsibility in tackling the challenges facing his administration. It is equally suggestive of collective celebration of successful outcomes in the form of achievements. The expression "In our administration, Women and youth will feature prominently" is suggestive of an active process that ensures the participation of every stakeholder including women and youths. This is indicative of the running of an inclusive government that prioritizes the interest of the less privileged represented by youths and women. Through the listing of the driving force of the goals and principles that will pilot his administration, the President consistently employed the plural pronouns to referent his administration

and himself. This projects a world view of collective responsibility and the inclusiveness of his government with which he intends to positively mobilize the audience's support for his political ideologies and agenda.

Excerpt 9

With the plural pronouns of they and their, he designates and categorizes his opponents as out-group, implicitly and exclusively delegitimizing them as intolerant, selfish, inconsiderate, unpatriotic, and combatant who had gone to court to seek redress which has the potential to mar the unity of the country and undermine the effort of our founding fathers who sacrificed their lives to the establishment of democracy in Nigeria, hence his declaration:

They 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.

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.

With the above assertion, he presupposes his opponents as lacking understanding for not conceding defeat, compared to him who shows understanding, that despite their contention, he is ready to work with them and never discriminate against them as he declares:

“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.”

5.0 Discussion of Result

From the above analyses, it is evident that President Bola Ahmed Tinubu made use of both the singular pronouns and plural pronouns to categorize and designate his discourse participants in a bid to foster a positive ideological view of his administration as a representative of inclusiveness, tolerance, collective effort and responsibility. The tabulated analysis revealed that the President employed more of plural pronouns than singular pronouns. This is an indication that the President effectively explored the rich endowment of language properties of pronouns to

present a positive self- image of himself of an unassertive and non-domineering personality.

The context analysis reveals that the singular pronouns such as I, my, and me were strategically manipulated to promote his positive self-image of a humble, non-domineering, and respectful individual who has regard for his audience, political opponents, his supporters, and his predecessor. He also used it to register and assert his authority as the elected President of Nigeria who believes and stands for the unity of Nigeria and is confident and ever-ready to redeem Nigeria from all manners of criminality, poverty, and insecurity that have plagued the nation. The plural pronouns such as our, we, and us, were inclusively deployed by the President to promote and enhance self-representation of his administration which he presented as will be administered as a government of inclusiveness, unity of purpose and idea, collective effort, and responsibility. However, in categorizing his opponents and rivals, he employed plural pronouns such as they, them, and their to downplay their positive image. To achieve this, he implicitly portrays them as selfish, intolerant, combatant, and inconsiderate which is depicted by their action of taking their dissatisfaction with the election outcome to the court to seek redress. This particular move, according to the President, is capable of undermining the unity and democracy of Nigeria which our founding fathers sacrificed their lives to actualize for Nigeria.

5.1 Conclusion

This paper therefore concludes that the President effectively deployed the person pronouns in his inaugural speech to legitimize self-image of himself and to delegitimize his opponents' self-other representation. The singular person pronouns were used to foster his positive self-image of tolerance, humility, respect, patriotism, and assertion of authority. The plural person pronouns such as we, our, and us, were deployed to advance his administration's positive image of inclusiveness, collective purpose, effort, and responsibility. While the plural person pronouns such as they, them, and their were used to downplay the positive image of his opponents, negatively categorizing them as intolerant, combatant, unpatriotic, and selfish. This is an indication that language played a pivotal role in the articulation of the President's act of categorizing and designating the participants in the political arena of his inaugural speech in a bid to reflect the exercise of power, ideology, and dominance.as he assumes his mandate as the 16th President of Nigeria.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this research, this study, therefore, recommends that further work should be carried out to examine the use of pronouns in political speeches in a comparative study across cultural contexts to provide a different perspective of how pronouns can be deployed in the construction and maintenance of political identity and power dynamics.

Further work should be carried out to explore the use of hedges as a linguistic strategy in the inaugural speech of President Ahmed Bola Tinubu. This will further provide insight into how politicians can take advantage of language milieu to foster a positive self-image of themselves and their administration in an attempt to persuade their audience to believe and support their policies and ideologies.

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Funding Statement

This research is not funded yet until its publication by the University of Religions and Denominations, Pardisan, Qom, Iran. The contract of agreement stipulates that the research has to be published before payment can be made.

Statements and Declarations

I hereby declare that this research work is an original work carried out by me and that it is not under review in any other journal publication.