

Language Change: Discursive Strategies in *The Guardian* and *Vanguard* Newspapers Reportage of 2023 General Election in Nigeria

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Abstract

The 2023 Nigerian general election reportage in print media discourse generated coinages and other linguistic variants that are non-existent in the current English lexicon. The investigation of these coinages and discursive strategies are worthy of scholarly attention. Previous linguistic studies examined the discursive patterns of campaign songs, slogans, hate speech and propaganda with scant attention on language. Therefore, this study explored language change and the discursive strategies in the news print media reportage of the 2023 general elections. Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) theory and Robert Entman's framing concept served as the theoretical frameworks. A qualitative research method approach was employed. Data was extracted from the e-copies of two widely circulated newspapers in Nigeria: *The Guardian*, and *Vanguard*. Key findings revealed an extensive use of rhetoric devices, including the emergence of neologisms such as "atikulated," "Obidient," "BAT," and "Jagaban" that have evolved into political ideologies in the light of Norman Fairclough's CDA using rhetoric devices as analytical tools. The study concluded that there are linguistic changes in media reportage of the 2023 Nigerian general election as there are new concepts, and new lexical items created and recreated to express new ideologies. The study also contributed to the linguistic inventory of the Nigerian political discourse thereby gaining global prominence

KeyWords: Discursive strategies, 2023 election, Language change, Print media reportage, Political discourse,

Introduction

1. Language Change and Discursive Strategy

Language change and discursive strategies in election media reportage form a dynamic and multidisciplinary field situated at the intersection of linguistics, media studies, political science, and communication studies. The discursive strategies involved in election coverage include examining how journalists frame stories, utilize rhetoric, and employ persuasive techniques to shape public perception and opinion. Van Dijk, (1998), examined language use and communication techniques in election reporting and their impact on public opinion, political discourse, and democratic processes.

Oyeleye and Osisanwo (2013) conducted a study on the discourse pattern in the media report of the 2003 and 2007 elections in Nigeria, arguing that changes in society necessitate new processes of interpretation and perception of ideologies from different media perspectives.

The research on discursive strategies in election reportage traces its roots back to the development of mass media in the 20th century. The advent of newspapers, radio, television, and digital media platforms for disseminating election news and analysis has transformed the conveyance of political messages to the public; McChesney, (1999). Language use in election reporting often intersects with issues of bias and objectivity. Media organizations navigate the balance between impartial reporting and editorial bias, which can influence the public perception of candidates and political ideologies; Entman, (2012); Oyeleye & Osisanwo, (2013). Language itself is not static and continually evolves due to sociocultural changes, technological advancements, and shifting political landscapes. Researchers have examined how linguistic changes in media reporting reflect broader societal shifts, such as changes in gender dynamics, political ideologies, and public sentiment; Fairclough, (2000).

The role of communication is crucial in political discourse, as emphasized by McChesney (2000), who posits that the political economy of communication should be dominant in all communication programs. He perceives communication as vital in the media information subfield, suggesting that media communication is on the path to irrelevance if not rescued. The study of language change in election media reportage is closely linked to political communication research: political actors, including candidates and campaign teams, strategically use language in media communication therefore, allowing space for adaptation and diversity is essential.

The Nigerian News media discourse plays a critical role in election discourse, elections in Nigeria are highly competitive, and often marked by complex political dynamics, including regional, ethnic, and religious factors, understanding the role of the media in this context is crucial for assessing the quality of democratic process and political participation; Ogunleye, (2012)

The genre of Nigerian election News Media discourse possesses distinct characteristics marked by unique features that mirror the diverse political landscape, intricate socio-cultural dynamics, and the continuously evolving media environment in the country. These distinctive elements significantly influence how the Nigerian public engages, absorbs, and comprehends information related to elections. Noticeable shift is evident in the reporting style of Nigerian news. The linguistic diversity in Nigeria has prompted an adaptation in language within the country's news media reportage.

A noticeable shift is evident in the reporting style of Nigerian news. The linguistic diversity in Nigeria has prompted an adaptation in language within the country's news media reportage. Although English remains the predominant language in Nigerian news media, journalists frequently integrate local languages and employ code-switching or code-mixing strategies to resonate with various ethnic groups and regions. This linguistic adaptation aims to enhance understanding and engage a broader audience during election coverage. With the rise of digital platforms and social media, news media

outlets in Nigeria have experienced language change in their reporting of elections. Online communication platforms allow for more informal and colloquial language use, which has affected how news is disseminated and consumed. Journalists use emojis, internet slang, and other digital language elements to engage with younger audiences and facilitate political discussions. Understanding language change and discursive strategies in election media reportage is crucial for media literacy as it empowers the public to critically assess news coverage, discern biases, and make informed decisions during elections; Livingstone & Van Convening, (2003).

The researcher looked closely at the work of Chadwick (2017), corroborated by Opeibi and Adedeji (2020) stance on political media discourse and technology where they posited that technology-mediated communication, an emerging trend in online language use has enabled language users to become producers and consumers of online discourse products. Computational linguistics and data analytics have become essential tools for studying language change in election reporting. Natural language processing techniques analyse large datasets of media content, enabling them to identify linguistic patterns and trends; Diakopoulos (2016); Ogbulogo, (2020). The processing of data presentation with the use of electronics or computers is digitisation which is relevant in hybrid media logic as posited by Chadwick (2017).

The intersection of language change and Nigerian elections offers a compelling area for exploration. The dynamics of language change within the context of Nigerian election discourse present an intriguing avenue to examine how linguistic shifts reflect and influence the broader socio-political landscape

The research provides valuable insights into the dynamic relationship between language, politics, and society. It offers an opportunity to understand how linguistic adaptations in election discourse contribute to the construction of political narratives, influence public opinion, and shape the democratic process in Nigeria.

This study therefore carried out the discursive strategies deployed by the Nigeria news media on the 2023 general election reportage examining the social-semantic influence of language change phenomena on the Nigerian News Media discourse, its consequences on meaning interpretation to users of English as a second language as well as its effect on the audience.

The analysis considered the various elements, including the framing of political issues, the construction of political identities, the use of persuasive techniques, and the role of media in shaping public perceptions. The study encompasses different linguistic aspects, such as the use of metaphors, narratives, slogans, and other rhetorical devices, to uncover the nuances and strategies embedded in political communication and also investigate multilingualism and code-switching in the Nigerian Media discourse of the 2023 general election reportage.

. The analytical tools used to determine the discursive pattern are: Neologism, Multilingualism Propaganda, Metaphorical and proverbial expression, Phrases and slogans, lexical expansion, Code-switching and Mixing and Figurative expressions.

2. Discursive Strategies in Political Communication

Discursive strategies in political communication are dynamic and multifaceted, shaping the contours of democratic discourse. The synthesis of framing, agenda-setting, rhetoric, and critical discourse analysis provides a comprehensive lens through which researchers can untie the complexities of political language use. As political landscapes evolve, ongoing scholarly inquiry into discursive strategies remains essential for understanding the changing dynamics of political communication. Osisanwo (2020) examined political communication strategies and he identified allusion (historical,

religious, socio-cultural), propaganda, indigenous/native language usage and code alternation, reference to collective ownership, figurative/proverbial expressions, adaptation of common musical tune, and rhythmicity.

Also, rhetorical strategies are inherent in political communication, encompassing techniques such as persuasion, ethos, logos, and pathos. Aristotle's classical rhetorical concepts remain relevant, with modern scholars like Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969) and Burke (1969) expanding our understanding of how politicians strategically use language to persuade and mobilize constituents. The role of media in disseminating political discourse cannot be overstated. Research by Hallin and Mancini (2004) and Esser (2013) delves into the mediatization of politics, exploring how media platforms, journalistic practices, and technological advancements influence the discursive strategies employed by political actors.

The advent of social media has transformed political communication, introducing new discursive strategies. Research by Bennett and Segerberg (2012) investigates how social media platforms amplify political messages, provide new channels for political expression, and reshape the dynamics of political discourse.

While discursive strategies in political communication are rich areas of study, challenges persist, including issues of misinformation, polarization, and the ethical use of language in political discourse. Future research should continue to explore evolving communication technologies and their impact on political language, as well as the ethical considerations surrounding discursive strategies in contemporary political contexts.

3. Theory and Method

A qualitative method of analysis was used as a measuring tool for this research. The qualitative approach looked at the effectiveness of the intended meaning communicated in the Nigerian News media reportage. Corpus was collected from The *Guardian* and *Vanguard Newspaper* reportage of the Nigerian election, spanning from May 2022 to June 2023 to determine the discursive pattern of the 2023 media news reportage.

A purposive sampling technique was employed, selecting 50 clauses and sentences for analysis from selected newspapers headlines, news stories, editorials, articles and opinions. 40 quality data that aligned with the set objectives of the research was analysed from each of the selected newspapers. Data was also generated from sketch engine digital tools to further analyse language change and political slogans used in the 2023 general election in Nigeria.

Data was manually collected from each selected newspaper and tagged V and G which is the initial letter of each newspaper and the numerical number. The *Vanguard Newspaper* was tagged V1-V20 while the *Guardian Newspaper* was tagged G1-G20. The data was collected and analysed using Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) three-dimensional framework of text analysis, discourse practise and social-cultural practise. The text practise is based on the analysis of vocabulary, semantics, cohesion, and grammar. The present study deployed theory and structure of Norman Fairclough's CDA to investigate language change and the discursive pattern used in the 2023 Nigerian general election. In fulfilling this, rhetorical devices were used consisting of the following analytical tools: Neologism: Newly coined words or expressions specific to a particular context or discourse, indicating emerging concepts or phenomena, Indigenous or native language usage, Propaganda; this has elements of persuasion, framing narratives, shaping perceptions, and

influencing opinions within political discourse, Metaphorical and proverbial expression; Figurative language and expressions that convey intensity, success, strategies, and criticisms within political contexts, Phrases and slogans ; Memorable and impactful expressions used to capture attention, promote ideas, or emphasize specific, themes, Lexical expansion; Broadening of word meanings beyond standard usage, introducing new nuances or connotations within discourse, Code-switching and Mixing; Alternation or blending of languages or linguistic elements within discourse, reflecting cultural fusion or diversity and lastly Figurative expressions; parallel structures, satire, repetition, and irony to add depth and nuances to political narratives.

4. Analysis and Discussion of Data

The focus of analysis is to identify the discursive strategies deployed by the Nigerian news media in the 2023 general election reportage as evidenced in *The Guardian* and *Vanguard* Newspapers using the following analytical tools: Neologism, Multilingualism, Propaganda, Metaphorical and proverbial expression, Phrases and slogans, Lexical expansion, Code-switching and Mixing, and Figurative expressions.

4.1 Neologism: These are newly coined words or expressions specific to a particular context or discourse, indicating emerging concepts or phenomena. Neologism is usually used in political campaign as to develop political ideologies. New words, expressions and slogans evolved with the 2023 Nigerian general election. Words like "Obidients," "Atikulate," "Emilokan," "Olule," "awalokan", "Batified"

The Guardian Newspaper May, 8th 2023: Soyinka had in an interview accused supporters of Obi known as Obidients of fascism over their alleged attitude of seeing attacks on individuals on social media as their "badge of honour". The term "Obidients" in the context of the 2023 Nigerian general election can be analysed as a neologism. It is combination of "Obi" and "obedient," suggesting a group of supporters aligned with Obi, a political figure who is the presidential candidate of the Labour Party movement. This neologism also stands for new terms and expressions as they emerge to capture the political phenomena. In this case, "Obidients" indicate a sense of loyalty and adherence to the ideology of the "obidient" movement.

The Vanguard, 14th, April, 2023: "Like a wild harmattan fire, Obi's emergence is reawakened many youths and others across the country who pride themselves as 'Obidients' with a vow to recover Nigeria from corrupt leaders".

The term "Obidients" is a neologism, a newly coined word. It is formed by combining "Obi" the surname of the Labour party presidential candidate with the suffix "dients," suggesting a group of people who align themselves with Obi and his principles. This neologism contributes to a sense of identity and community among Obi's supporters. "Obidient" also represents a political ideology as recognised by Norman Fairclough's critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). CDA recognizes that discourse is not just about communication but also about shaping and maintaining social ideologies. The term "Obidient" carries specific connotations and meanings within its political context, reflecting underlying ideologies and beliefs.

4.2. Multilingualism: This is the incorporation of indigenous or foreign language elements into discourse, reflecting cultural and linguistic diversity. Data from *The Vanguard Newspaper*, October 22, 2022: "The PDP Presidential Candidate, acted the 'emilokan' script by insisting on running for Presidency despite the tacit zoning arrangement his party has practiced since its inception".

The responsibility for the candidate's actions is attributed to the candidate, framing them as the active agent who "acted the 'emilokan' script." "emilokan" has a cultural reference which help in perception of the intended message of the communicator. The PDP presidential candidate, Atiku is said to act the "emilokan" (I am next in line) script, the presidency has been zoned to the Southwest, Atiku, a Fulani man still contested the election with a strong resolve to win despite the zoning formula.

The Guardian Newspaper, 4th June 2023: "Gullible followers, and unrepentant enablers 'hallelujahing and salaming' their GOs in their synagogues of lies and deceit".

The terms "hallelujahing" and "salaming" introduce a religious element into the text, indicating a form of multilingualism by incorporating terms associated with religious practices 'hallelujah' used by the Christians to praise their God and 'salam alaikum' by the Muslims as a form of greetings into the discourse. The phrase introduces new verbs ("hallelujahing" and "salaming") in a political and critical context, creatively describing actions and behaviours of politicians who are hero worshipped by gullible followers.

V13. *Vanguard Newspaper*, Sept. 15 2022: "Crowd like this is arranged but if the crowd is Obidients, it is organized love even on Mondays. Unna de funny."

The term "Obidients" is non-English and is derived from "obi", the surname of one of the presidential candidates in the 2023 general election. Its use introduces multilingualism into the text, reflecting a linguistic diversity beyond standard English.

4.3. Propaganda: Elements of persuasion, framing narratives, shaping perceptions, and influencing opinions within political discourse. There is evidence of propaganda in the Nigerian 2023 general election as demonstrated in the examples of data and explanation below. Strategic use of slogans like "The victory is ours" and "Only WE can stop us" aims to influence opinions, rally support, and establish a sense of unity among supporters.

The Guardian Newspapers, April 25, 2023: "We must also be vigilant against those who seek to use our differences to instigate a crisis. We must not allow ourselves to be used by the political class to achieve their selfish interests. We must stand together and resist any attempt to divide us.

The expression "stand together" and resistance against external manipulation "not allow ourselves to be used" are emotional appeals intended to evoke a sense of solidarity among the audience. It indirectly criticizes "those who seek to use our differences to instigate a crisis" and "the political class" as selfish actors who aim to divide the populace for their own gain. This sets up an "us vs. them" narrative, portraying the opposition of certain political entities as threats to national unity and stability. The discourse includes a call to action, urging people to be vigilant, stand together, and resist attempts at division. This call to action is a common feature in propaganda, as it seeks to mobilize individuals or groups towards a specific goal or ideology.

The Vanguard Newspaper, October 22, 2022: "The PDP Presidential Candidate, acted the 'emilokan' script by insisting on running for Presidency despite the tacit zoning arrangement his party has practiced since its inception".

The responsibility for the candidate's actions is attributed to the candidate, framing them as the active agent who "acted the 'emilokan' script." "emilokan" has a cultural reference which help in perception of the intended message of the communicator. The PDP presidential candidate, Atiku is said to act

the “emilokan” (I am next in line) script, the presidency has been zoned to the Southwest, Atiku, a Fulani man still contested the election with a strong resolve to win despite the zoning formula. “obedient” “atikulated” and “batified” represent political ideologies as entrenched in Fairclough and Wodak (1997) tenets of Critical Discourse analysis

4.4. Metaphorical and Proverbial Expression: Figurative language and expressions that convey intensity, success, strategies, and criticisms within political contexts. There is the preponderance of metaphorical and proverbial expressions in the Nigerian 2023 general election reportage as evidenced in the data analysed below.

The Guardian Newspaper, April 25th, 2023: “The group will next month organise a three-day event to unveil the meteoric rise of Tinubu, his meritorious service, and his historical chronicle”

The phrase "meteoric rise" employs metaphorical language, comparing Tinubu's ascent to a meteor. This suggests rapid and impressive progress, contributing to the positive framing of his political journey. The phrase serves as a promotional slogan to unveil Tinubu, the presidential candidate of the APC, the event focused on celebrating and showcasing the achievements and history of Tinubu. It emphasizes Tinubu's qualities such as "meteoric rise," "meritorious service," and "historical chronicle," highlighting his perceived strengths and contributions.

Vanguard Newspaper, December 29th, 2022: “Currently, and exactly 58 days to the February 25, presidential election, the polity is turbo-charged”.

The phrase "turbo-charged" is a hyphenated compound word that serves as a metaphor. This metaphorical expression implies a state of heightened energy, acceleration, or intensity. The use of "turbo-charged" suggests that the political atmosphere is not just active but is operating at an exceptionally high level of intensity or speed as it is compared with a turbo-engine. The term "polity" is an economic metaphor used to describe the political system or political organisation of a country. This choice of language adds a layer of formality and seriousness to the description, suggesting that the political environment is not just active but is a complex and structured system.

4.5. Phrases and Slogans: The media reportage of 2023 general election is replete with memorable and impactful expressions used to capture attention, promote ideas, or emphasize specific themes as analysed from data from the *Vanguard* and *The Guardian Newspaper*;

The Guardian Newspaper, February 20, 2023: “Apathy can no longer be a choice, just as last-minute fire brigade approach, can no longer be our choice.”

The use of phrases and slogans like "last-minute fire brigade approach" captures specific behaviours, highlighting urgency or inefficiencies in political actions.

The Guardian Newspaper, April 25th, 2023: “The group will next month organise a three-day event to unveil the meteoric rise of Tinubu, his meritorious service, and his historical chronicle”

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emphasizes Tinubu's qualities such as "meteoric rise," "meritorious service," and "historical chronicle," highlighting his perceived strengths and contributions.

The Vanguard, November, 23rd 2022: "The victory is ours. It is within sight and together we shall enter the Promise Land".

The victory is ours": This part emphasizes collective ownership of the impending success, fostering a sense of unity and shared purpose among supporters.

"Together we shall enter": This reinforces the idea of collective effort and solidarity, suggesting that success is a communal achievement. "It is within sight": This suggests that victory is imminent and tangible, creating a sense of urgency and encouraging supporters to continue their efforts. This phrase functions effectively within the discursive patterns of election reportage in Nigerian newspapers by employing a confident, unifying, and inspirational message that resonates with cultural and religious motifs, aiming to galvanize support and convey a sense of imminent triumph.

The Vanguard Newspaper Nov. 23rd 2022: "NNPP and Kwankwaso cannot stop us. Only WE can stop us and that must NEVER be allowed to happen. Like Iago said in Shakespeare's classic play 'Othello', "it is in ourselves that we are thus or thus".

"Only WE can stop us": This phrase emphasizes internal cohesion and the idea that the only real threat to success comes from within. It underscores the importance of unity and self-discipline among supporters. "That must NEVER be allowed to happen": This part reinforces the message by categorically rejecting the possibility of internal failure, urging supporters to stay united and focused. "Like Iago said in Shakespeare's classic play 'Othello', 'it is in ourselves that we are thus or thus'": The use of a quote from Shakespeare adds a layer of intellectual and cultural authority to the message. It implies that the wisdom of self-determination and internal strength is timeless and universal, this phrase operates effectively within the discursive pattern of election reportage in Nigerian newspapers by asserting dominance over external opposition, emphasizing internal unity, and invoking cultural and literary references to inspire and mobilize supporters.

4.6 Lexical Expansion: Broadening of word meanings beyond standard usage, introducing new nuances or connotations within discourse, the use of lexical expansion was prominent in the reportage of the 2023 Nigerian general election as evidenced below:

The Guardian Newspapers April 20, 2023: "It was the freest and the most authentic Nigeria had ever held; and that is despite the effort of the opposition to delegitimise the election.

The word "opposition" literarily mean resisting, the action of opposing, however in the political discourse, the use of "opposition" in the data G9, has expanded the meaning to mean political opponents.

The Guardian Newspaper, 4th June 2023: "Gullible followers, and unrepentant enablers 'hallelujahing and salaming' their GOs in their synagogues of lies and deceit".

The terms "hallelujahing" and "salaming" introduce a religious element into the text, indicating a form of multilingualism by incorporating terms associated with religious practices 'hallelujah' used by the Christians to praise their God and 'salam alaikum' by the Muslims as a form of greetings into the discourse. The phrase introduces new verbs ("hallelujahing" and "salaming") in a political and

critical context, creatively describing actions and behaviours of politicians who are hero worshipped by gullible followers.

The Vanguard Newspaper May 10, 2023: “The time has come for the Stakeholders in the opposition and even the aggrieved ones in the ruling party to sheathe their sword and support the President-elect, Senator Bola Tinubu in building a virile nation”.

The word “opposition” literarily mean resisting, the action of opposing, however in the political discourse, the use of “opposition” in the data, has expanded the meaning to mean political opponents.

4.7 Code-switching and Mixing: Alternation or blending of languages or linguistic elements within discourse, reflecting cultural fusion or diversity, the Norman Fairclough’s CDA emphasised the place of historical and cultural expression, the 2023 Nigerian general election had linguistic elements that reflected the culture of the people, code alternation is an evidence as culture is tied to language. Data from the Guardian and the Vanguard Newspapers.

The Guardian Newspaper, 4th June 2023: They must allow those of us in the diaspora who have japa-ed for greener pastures in foreign to start to sapa(da) back to Nigeria. The inclusion of Yoruba terms like "japa-ed" and "sapa(da)" demonstrates code alternation by switching to the Yoruba within an English sentence. This reflects a blending of English with local linguistic elements. The term "greener pastures" implies a perception of better opportunities abroad, while "sapa(da) back to Nigeria" suggests a desire to return or reconnect with Nigerian roots. Fairclough's CDA aligns ideological positions influence language use and discursive strategies in the discourse.

The Guardian Newspaper, March, 7 2023: “All the major democracies and their representatives have congratulated Oga Ahmed Tinubu”.

The inclusion of the term "Oga" demonstrates code alternation by switching to a Nigerian honorific within an English sentence. This reflects a blending of standard English with a local linguistic element, emphasizing a sense of respect for authority.

The Guardian Newspaper, 23rd, February 2023: This line of thought is strong, especially when we consider the modus operandi for the accreditation of these journalists. The inclusion of "modus operandi" involves a subtle form of code alternation by incorporating a term from Latin into an English sentence. This reflects a blending of linguistic elements, demonstrating a certain level of complexity in expression.

Vanguard Newspaper Nov. 13th 2022: “Buhari went first; and instead of openly backing Emilokan for the job forced Asiwaju to fight for the ticket”.

The text involves code alternation by seamlessly integrating English with Nigerian Yoruba language expression "Emilokan." And ‘asiwaju’ This blend of English and Nigerian terms is characteristic of code alternation and adds a cultural dimension to the text.

Vanguard Newspaper October 22, 2022: “It has even been adapted to ‘awalokan’ to make it more inclusive”.

The adaptation of "Emilokan" to "awalokan" involves code alternation, a linguistic adaptation to make the term more inclusive. This demonstrates a shift from the original term to a more inclusive version, possibly reflecting an effort to cater to a broader audience.

Vanguard Newspaper October 22, 2022: "It was in that speech that he referred to a sitting Governor as 'eleyi' meaning 'this one' literally in Yoruba".

The inclusion of "eleyi" involves code alternation by switching to the Yoruba language within an English sentence. This demonstrates a blending of English and Yoruba, contributing to the code alternation in the text.

4.8 Figurative expressions: There is copious use of figurative expressions like satire, repetition, parallel structure from data presented below. Figurative expressions add depth and nuances to political narratives. By applying these analytical tools, we can discern linguistic innovations, persuasive strategies, cultural influences, and thematic emphases within the discursive landscape of the 2023 general election in Nigeria

Expressions like "turn-by-turn affair," "egged on by a crowd of supporters," and "building a virile nation" employ figurative language to describe political processes, support dynamics, and national development goals, respectively. The framing of candidates like "the PDP Presidential Candidate acted the 'emilokan' script" and the re-framing of terms like "awalokan" reflect attempts to shape perceptions, redefine narratives, and create positive associations with certain political figures or movements as evidenced below.

The Guardian Newspapers, April 25, 2023: "The group will next month organise a three-day event to unveil the meteoric rise of Tinubu, his meritorious service, and his historical chronicle".

The parallel structure in this sentence lies in the series of items that follow the verb "organise":

"The meteoric rise of Tinubu, his meritorious service, his historical chronicle"

Each item in the series is structured similarly, with a possessive pronoun "his" followed by a descriptive noun phrase. This consistent structure creates a parallelism that makes the sentence clear and easy to understand, emphasizing the three aspects related to Tinubu that will be unveiled during the event.

The Guardian Newspapers, April 25, 2023: "We must also be vigilant against those who seek to use our differences to instigate a crisis. We must not allow ourselves to be used by the political class to achieve their selfish interests. We must stand together and resist any attempt to divide us".

The repetition of the phrase "We must" is a rhetorical device known as anaphora. This repetition emphasizes a series of imperative actions, creating a sense of urgency and collective responsibility. The statement "We must also be vigilant" "We must not allow ourselves to be used" "We must stand together" use of parallel structure improved the readability of the sentence and lay emphasis on the message being communicated to the audience. The sentence follows a parallel structure in terms of syntax and grammatical construction. This parallelism creates a rhythmic flow, making the statements more memorable and impactful.

The Guardian Newspaper May, 8th 2023: Soyinka had in an interview accused supporters of Obi known as Obidients of fascism over their alleged attitude of seeing attacks on individuals on social media as their "badge of honour".

“Obi known as Obidients of fascism”: The word ‘Obi’, “Obidients” and “fascism” is satirical, the speaker describes obi’s supporters as obidients but fascist referencing obedience or adherence to the ideologies of the Labour party. This statement deride the followers of Obi who are called “obidients” who are accused of promoting or supporting fascist ideologies. The phrase "Obidients of fascism" is a satirical twist on the idea of blind obedience to fascist principles. The use of "badge of honour" in this context suggests a mocking tone, implying that these individuals or groups view criticism or attacks on social media as something to be proud of or celebrated, which is absurd and highlights the irony of their stance.

Vanguard Newspaper, December 29th, 2022: “Currently, and exactly 58 days to the February 25, presidential election, the polity is turbo-charged”.

"Turbo-charged" can also be seen as a form of hyperbole, exaggerating the intensity and energy of the political environment. It amplifies the impact of the metaphor and reinforces the idea of heightened activity and significance. The use of the exact number "58 days" provides numerical accuracy, generating a tangible and measurable depiction of the timeframe. This precision contributes to the overall credibility and specificity of the statement.

The Vanguard Newspaper, 14th, April, 2023: “Like a wild harmattan fire, Obi’s emergence is reawakened many youths and others across the country who pride themselves as ‘Obidients’ with a vow to recover Nigeria from corrupt leaders”.

“Obi’s emergence is reawakened”: The personification of Obi's emergence, inferring that it can be "reawakened," attributes human qualities to an abstract concept. This choice of language imbues Obi's emergence with urgency, suggesting that it has a life or force of its own that can be revitalized.

The Vanguard, November, 23rd 2022: “The victory is ours. It is within sight and together we shall enter the Promise Land”.

Allusion “we shall enter the Promise Land” this expression makes reference to the bible that talks about bringing the children of Israel to the land of promise, here the promise land refers to the political party fulfilling her political agenda.

5. Conclusion

The 2023 Nigerian general election and its reportage depicts evidence of language change through meaning reallocation, neologism, nuances, and semantic expansion such as *Obidients*, *Atikulated*, *Batified*, *Emilokan*, *Jagaban* became political ideology which is in line with Fairclough’s Critical Discourse analysis (CDA) tenets. Meaning reallocation like “opposition” in the data, has expanded

the meaning to mean political opponents. New lexical items like IREV, *BVAS*, nuance words like *emilokan*, and *eleyi*, have added to the inventory of political discourse in Nigeria.

The language change observed in media reportage exhibited a clear semantic framing, subtly influencing the interpretation of events. The selective use of words and phrases demonstrated a possible bias, which demands careful consideration when evaluating the objectivity of election coverage. Since language has the power potential to influence and shape public opinion, the newspaper reportages capture the elaborate assertive expressions, messages are framed such that the audience have a parochial perspective as the news is being presented in a manner that emphasizes certain local or immediate concerns of events which align with Entman's framing concept.

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