

14.

A Critical Discourse Analysis of Hegemonic Ideologies in Selected Speeches of Former Governor Abdulaziz Yari Abubakar of Zamfara State

Bashiru Samaila

Department of English Language,
Zamfara State University, Talata Mafara, Zamfara State
ammabasheeru@gmail.com/+2348088589943

Abstract

This study centres on a Critical Discourse Analysis of hegemonic ideologies in selected speeches by former Governor Abdulaziz Yari Abubakar of Zamfara State. Considering listeners' literacy levels, the study explores why the Governor's audiences struggle to derive value from his speeches, despite the significant energy, time and resources he invests in their preparation and delivery. Using Fairclough's (1989) three-dimensional model of Critical Discourse Analysis, the research highlights how the Governor employs hegemony to establish authority and to create a sense of collective identity between him and his audience. The study reveals that the deficiency in deriving values from the speeches is a result of the former Governor's strategic employment of hegemony to construct a power dynamic with the people of Zamfara State, and to emphasise their roles and responsibilities during his addresses. His intentional use of hegemonic ideologies establishes authority and promotes a sense of collective identity between the former Governor and his audience. The work concludes that since many members of politicians' audiences – especially those who are illiterate – often express dissatisfaction with how the politicians use various styles and strategies to sway their listeners' perspectives, awareness about the subtlety and implications of political discourse on social dynamics should be further created to encourage a deeper understanding of the intersection between language, power and ideology within the socio-political contexts of Zamfara State and Nigeria at large.

Keywords: Critical Discourse Analysis, Hegemonic Ideologies, Discursive Strategies, Language and Power

Introduction

How speeches are delivered and understood, especially in political contexts, has been a concern in discourse studies. Speakers use variety of communication strategies to effectively share their messages, adapting their methods to suit their audiences. Often, listeners engage with prepared speeches without fully understanding the ideologies at play. This issue is particularly evident among less literate audiences in Zamfara State, who may struggle to grasp the content of speeches, despite the significant time, effort, and resources invested in crafting and delivering them. Such circumstances raise important questions about comprehension, particularly when the former Governor of the State, His Excellency Abdulaziz Yari Abubakar, speaks in English. It is perplexing that audiences, who should critically evaluate the Governor's speeches, frequently respond with unreserved praise. This observation led to the decision to analyse the Governor's speeches through Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), which is defined as "the study of discourse in relation to the structure of a society" (Matthews, 1997, p. 87), focusing on the hegemonic ideologies present in the speeches.

CDA forms the methodological foundation for this study, offering a unique perspective within discourse analysis. Drawing from Fairclough's (1989) views on language and power, CDA has become influential across the humanities and social sciences as a multidisciplinary analytical framework. A key tenet among CDA practitioners is the inherent relationship between language and power. Consequently, CDA examines discourse as a form of social practice, revealing how social and political dominance is maintained through both written and spoken communication. Van Dijk (1998) describes CDA as a research approach that explores how social power, dominance and inequality are enacted, produced and resisted through text and talk within various social and political contexts. In contrast, general discourse analysis examines language more broadly, focusing on how it creates meaning in speech and writing, and the connections between different parts of a text. For Durmaz and Yoğun (2022), CDA has evolved over time and has proven to be a valuable method for analysing media texts

and discussions. It offers researchers a framework to examine discourses, which are essential elements of language that shape conversational outcomes. Thus, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) represents a robust research methodology applicable in various contexts for examining discourse. It aims to reveal underlying sources of power, inequality, prejudice, hegemony and disparity (Jan2022). In this context, discourse functions as a crucial tool of CDA, reflecting its role as a form of social practice. While extensive research has addressed various aspects of discourse analysis, certain topics, such as the use of hegemony, need further exploration. This is especially relevant, as listeners often struggle to interpret specific utterances, particularly those used by politicians who rely on hegemonic strategies to emphasise their ideologies in speeches.

In today's world, characterised by widespread media and varied information sources, effective reading and writing skills are crucial for recognising ideologies. Ironically, while students and some scholars may overlook the complexities of discourse creation and understanding, those who capitalise on this knowledge can manipulate and control their audiences. Van Dijk (2000), as cited by Rahimi and Sahragard (2006), highlights that the semantic aspects of language are often exploited for these purposes. Many students remain unaware of the implications of these meaning-related studies as they engage with discourse. This realisation drives the initiative to conduct a Critical Discourse Analysis of the discursive strategies in selected speeches of former Governor Yari, with the goal of improving listeners' understanding of the ideological tendencies in the political speech genres they encounter.

Statement of the Problem

Although speeches will continue to be written and delivered as long as humanity exists, audiences will often express dissatisfaction with how speakers use various styles and strategies to sway their listeners' perspectives. In any communication process, each speaker aims to convey specific messages to his/her audience. However, when considering listeners' literacy levels, it becomes apparent that many — especially those who are illiterate — struggle to derive value from these speeches, despite the significant energy, time and resources invested in their preparation and delivery. Consequently, this study recognises the importance of discourse in shaping societal structures and notes that, while former Governor Yari and his intended audience (the people of Zamfara State) are part of this societal discourse, listeners have raised concerns about the communication gap between them and the Governor. This observation has led to an investigation into the assumption that the use of hegemony in former Governor Yari's speeches impacts his delivery and effectiveness. It is against that backdrop that this study sets out to provide answers to the following questions,

- i. How is hegemony constructed in the written speeches of former Governor Abdulaziz Yari Abubakar?
- ii. What specific impacts does hegemony in the former Governor's speeches have on audience perceptions and responses?
- iii. To what extent did the former Governor's use of hegemonic strategies effectively advance his ideologies in communication with his audience?

Review of Related Literature

Hegemony: An Overview

A general definition of hegemony is given in the Oxford English Dictionary (edition) Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999: p.24) state that "Hegemony is relations of domination based upon consent rather than coercion, involving the naturalisation of practices and their social relations as well as relations between practices, as matters of common sense-hence the concept of hegemony emphasises the importance of ideology in achieving and maintaining relations of domination." According to Odebunmi (2010), ideology is a system of

integrated tendencies that are expressed through human interactions, fundamentally rooted in knowledge. He argues that ideology shapes how individuals design models and interpret discourse, particularly in the context of hegemonic themes. Hasaballah, Attia and Saad (2020), foregrounding Fairclough's (1989) view on hegemony, explain that power can manifest both physically and ideologically. While the former is evident in the use of force, the latter is represented by soft power. In other words, hegemony emerges from institutions that empower individuals to influence others. To Ahmadi, Ghofur, Effendy, Kusumawati and Hariyati (2023), power and domination are evident in the relationships between authority figures and their subordinates. This describes the control exerted by a dominant group over a less dominant one through consensus and subtle persuasion. The type of hegemony often feels less overt, making it seem as though individuals are not being controlled. Hence, in critical discourse, domination is achieved through consensus, soft language and hidden persuasion.

Citing Childs and Fowler (2006), Kugbayi (2023) highlights that Nigerian society absorbs these ideologically presented ideas which are influenced by reinforced perceptions and values, to form a "normal consciousness" of power dynamics. The ideas have been captured in Therborn's (1980) typology of ideological domination, which includes accommodation, sense of inevitability, deference and resignation, to illustrate how ideology influences obedience and perceptions of authority. The illustration can be connected to the Critical Discourse Analysis of former Governor Abdulaziz Yari Abubakar's speeches in order to reveal how the former Governor's discourse strategies may perpetuate hegemonic ideologies within Zamfara State. Achieving this will provide insights into how power dynamics are constructed and maintained through language to influence audiences' perceptions and responses.

The Place of Politics/Ideology in Language Use

Language, as a phenomenon, is defined by Sapir (1921) as a uniquely human and non-instinctive method for communicating ideas, emotions and desires through voluntarily produced symbols. This intrinsic nature of language positions it as a crucial tool for interaction between political office holders and the electorate. Thorne (1997) believes that language significantly influences thought, enabling politicians to shape public perceptions of events through their chosen words. Thus, Abaya (2008) asserts that politicians leverage language strategically to win political support through distinct ideologies that they use to promote their perspectives on political issues. This establishes the interconnectedness of language and politics. Meanwhile, Rozina and Karapetjana (2009), emphasising the importance of linguistic choices in political communication, assert that politicians should carefully consider how they convey messages to their potential electorate. They note that individuals in positions of power need to exhibit effective communication for informative and persuasive purposes, whether regarding policies or governance. In essence, language is inseparable from politics. It is a means by which ideology, as a set of beliefs about language that rationalise its structure and use, is perpetuated to sustain political significance and implications. It is for this purpose that CDA has emerged as a tool for examining power structures and social constructs across various contexts, such as media, politics, education, and popular culture. It has experienced significant transformations in tandem with the complex changes occurring in the social and political landscape (Nurohmah and Sundasewu, 2024). Therefore, carrying out a Critical Discourse Analysis of former Governor Abdulaziz Yari Abubakar's speeches provides a foundation through which how political figures employ language to assert control and influence perceptions among the people can be revealed. Analysing his linguistic choices and underlying ideologies will create awareness of how politically motivated speeches shape public consciousness and maintain authority through discourse.

Critical Discourse Analysis: Overview

In Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), empirical research examines the connections between discourse and broader social structures, with text analysis being fundamental to this exploration. The term 'text' in CDA encompasses a variety of forms, which includes speeches, written documents, visual imagery or a fusion of these elements. CDA takes a clear political stance regarding the topics it explores and the implications drawn from its findings. Its objective is to uncover the role that discourse plays in challenging and reproducing dominance (van Dijk, 1993) while establishing and maintaining power relations among societal groups (Fairclough, 1989). This perspective aligns with the assertions of Jorgensen and Phillips (2002, p. 63-64), who state that CDA is 'critical' in its aim to highlight how discursive practices uphold the social world, especially concerning power relations, striving for social change towards more equitable communication dynamics.

Referencing Luke (1977), McGregor (2003) offers various descriptions of CDA by arguing that, due to the influence of written and spoken language, CDA is essential for describing, interpreting, analysing and critiquing social realities embedded in texts. Consequently, CDA provides a systematic framework for clarifying the complex relationships among discursive practices, texts and broader social and cultural structures (Fairclough, 1989). CDA emphasises that empirical research focuses on the interconnections between discourse and social structures. Furthermore, CDA recognises that 'text' holds a multifaceted meaning as it incorporates diverse forms of communication. While Machin and Mayr (2023) note that CDA supplies analytical tools for examining texts and spoken language, McLeod (2024) is of the view that CDA transcends mere linguistic analysis; it considers contextual factors that influence language usage, such as the social identities of speakers and audiences, historical and cultural contexts and prevailing power dynamics. The approach is valuable in analysing the hegemonic ideologies in the speeches of political figures like former Governor Yari of Zamfara State to reveal how language operates within a socio-political framework.

Theoretical Framework

Fairclough's (1989) concept of Discourse as a Social Practice as a theoretical framework is capable of integrating linguistic behaviour with political behaviour in critical discourse analyses. The approach focuses on the explanation of how language can perpetuate the dominance of one group over another. It highlights that awareness of these dynamics is the initial step toward emancipation. To achieve this objective, Fairclough (1995) advocates for an increase in public consciousness. He posits that individuals engaged in discourse often lack a full understanding of his/her actions and utterances, not being aware of the broader social implications of their language choices. This perspective emphasises the importance of critical awareness in fostering social change and promoting equality in power relations. For Fairclough (2001), the primary goal of the theory is to provide detailed explanations—more precise than those typically found in social research on change—regarding how social transformations manifest as changes in discourse. It also aims to explore the connections between these discursive changes and changes in other aspects of social life that are not solely linguistic. This includes investigating how discourse can actively shape and redefine social realities during processes of change. This has some connection with the socio-political situation in Nigeria and particularly among the population of Zamfara State. Many individuals in this demography should be made aware of their rights to review any directives issued by those in power.

Methodology

This study employs a descriptive research design as it is qualitative. It uses critical analysis to explore the discursive strategy of hegemony in selected speeches of former Governor Abdulaziz Yari Abubakar of Zamfara State. The research encompasses all speeches delivered by the Governor during his time in office but applies a

purposive sampling method to choose five speeches from them based on their significance to political discourse and the availability of their transcripts. The primary data collected includes the transcripts of the selected speeches, which were sourced from Zamfara State Government House in Gusau. These speeches were transcribed verbatim and then subjected to a critical discourse analysis, using Fairclough's (1989) three-dimensional model of Critical Discourse Analysis, which includes an examination of text, discourse practice and social practice. The analysis aims to identify the hegemonic tendencies embedded ideologically in the selected speeches of the political figure.

Data Presentation, Analysis, and Findings

Excerpt 1

EXCERPT FROM THE SPEECH BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE EXECUTIVE GOVERNOR OF ZAMFARA STATE, ALHAJI ABDUL-AZIZ ABUBAKAR SHATTIMAN MAFARA, MADE AT INAUGURATION OF THE CHAIRMAN AND BOARD MEMBERS OF ZAMFARA STATE PILGRIMS WELFARE AGENCY, HELD ON THURSDAY, 8TH SEPTEMBER, 2011:

- i. All praise be to Allah, subhanahu wataala, may the peace and blessing of Allah be upon our noble and the seal of the prophets Muhammad Sallallahu Alaihi Wasalam, his family, companions and all those follow his teachings till the Day of Judgment.
- ii. You have to closely monitor hajj
- iii. You are also to provide useful advice to the government
- iv. You are to ensure that the welfare needs of our pilgrims are met both at home and in the holy land.
- v. Indeed the overall success of hajj operation relies heavily on our shoulders.
- vi. I also want remind you that your appointment is call to services.
- vii. You are expected to work tirelessly right from the preparatory stage of hajj operation up to the climax of hajj exercise in the holy land.
- viii. You are expected to actively interact with the pilgrims at the camp, airports and during the hajj exercise in the holy land
- ix. Let me at this point call on you to make a thorough review and reappraisal of the previous hajj operation
- x. You should bear in mind that yours is not just a social responsibility but a spiritual responsibility with faith.
- xi. Before I conclude, let me remind you to fear ALLAH.
- xii. You should also be tolerant and kindhearted as you will be dealing with individuals from varied social, educational and economic backgrounds; some are from very remote areas of the state.
- xiii. You should treat all pilgrims with fairness and always take into account that your primary responsibility is to ensure their welfare.
- xiv. The hajj period is not time for you to go for holidays.
- xv. . . . anyone of you here who cannot cope with the rigors of the exercise he is free to say as now as we will not condone laxity.
- xvi. As you are aware, we are now in the month of shawwal, barely few weeks to the commencement of hajj operation.
- xvii. You must therefore sit up, fully focus your attention and direct your energy towards successful discharge of the task ahead.

- xviii. I would like to assure you of our support towards the overall success of the hajj exercise.
- xix. We are committed to achieving the most successful hajj operation ever recorded in the history of our dear state.
- xx. I wish you Allah's guidance and successful discharge of your assignment.
- xxi. Thank you, wassalamu Alaikum.

Hegemonic Tendencies in the Excerpt

The personal pronoun, *you*, is used as a way of talking down on the addressed This is achieved through the use of the auxiliaries "*have to*" "*are to*," "*are expected to*," "*are to ensure*," "*should bear*," "*should be*," "*should treat*," "*must . . . sit up*," etc.in the text. Although the speaker makes mention of the pronoun *our* in (v) the text, he is specifically telling the addressees that the success of *hajj* is their responsibility. The ideology of power imbalance is further foregrounded in the excerpt through,

1. ***The Use of Hegemony to Give Instruction:*** In the excerpt, the former Governor used his political power to instruct the newly inaugurated committee members by saying:

"***You*** have to closely monitor *hajj*"; "***You*** are also to provide useful advice to the government"; "***You*** are expected to actively interact with the pilgrims at the camp, airports and during the *hajj* exercise in the holy land"; and "***You*** should also be tolerant and kindhearted" etc.

2. ***The Use of Hegemony to Indicate Responsibility:*** The speaker mentions in clear terms the responsibilities of his target listeners as: "***You*** are also to provide useful advice to the government"; "***You*** are to ensure that the welfare needs of *our* pilgrims are met both at home and in the holy land"; "***You*** are expected to work tirelessly right from the preparatory stage of *hajj* operation up to the climax of *hajj* exercise in the holy land"; "***You*** are expected to actively interact with the pilgrims at the camp, airports and during the *hajj* exercise in the holy land" etc.

Excerpt 2

SPEECH BY HIS EXCELLENCY, THE EXECUTIVE GOVERNOR OF ZAMFARA STATE, ALHAJI ABDUL-AZIZ YARI ABUBAKAR (SHATIMAN MAFARA) ON THE OCCASION OF SWEARING-IN CEREMONY OF A NEWLY APPOINTED SECRETARY TO THE STATE GOVERNMENT HELD ON 31ST MAY, 2011 AT THE GOVERNMENT HOUSE COUNCIL

- i. ***We*** are also committed to the full implementation of *Shari'a*. . .
- ii. ***Your*** office should therefore ensure strict compliance with *shari'ah* by all government establishment.
- iii. ***My*** dear Hassan AttoBungudu, as secretary to the state Government, ***your*** role is indispensable to the fulfilling of *our* campaign promises to the entire people of Zamfara State.
- iv. ***You*** must therefore sit tight for the discharge of ***your*** onerous responsibilities . . .
- v. . . . ***you*** should conduct ***yourself*** and avoid any act capable of tarnishing ***your*** image and that of ***your*** office.
- vi. ***You*** should . . . make it duty bound to protect the image of this great office.
- vii. . . ***you*** should bear in mind that all ***your*** actions will not only (be) counted to the public but will also be accounted before Allah Subhanahu Wata'ala.

- viii. *I* therefore call on *you* to be fair and just (to) all categories of people.
- ix. *You* should not hesitate to seek any assistance from *us* on matters of urgent attention and concern to the well-being of the general public.
- x. *You* are expected to be very committed and make *yourself* accessible to the government departments . . .
- xi. To the Permanent Secretaries, *I* challenge *you* to remain committed to *your* oath of office. . .
- xii. Before *I* conclude this address, let *me* once again remind the new Secretary to the State Government that the people and the Government of Zamfara State have high expectations from *you*.
- xiii. *You* have to work very hard to meet these expectations.
- xiv. Finally, *I* wish *you* all success and *Allah's* guidance in the discharge of *your* new responsibilities.
- xv. Thank *you* and *Wassalamu Alaikum*.

Hegemonic Tendencies in the Excerpt

The use of *We* shows that the power attributed to the speaker is a collectively acquired one. There is also an instance of code switching from English to Arabic in the use of the word, *sharia* for the purpose of emphasis. In addition, the former Governor uses the pronoun, *Your* to achieve dominance over the addressed to foreground the ideology of power imbalance the excerpt through,

1. ***The Use of Hegemony to Give Instruction:*** This is indicated in: *You* must therefore sit tight for the discharge of *your* onerous responsibilities; *you* should conduct *yourself* and avoid any act capable of tarnishing *your* image and that of *your* office; *I* therefore call on *you* to be fair and just (to) all categories of people; *You* should not hesitate to seek any assistance from *us* on matters of urgent attention and concern to the well-being of the general public etc.
2. ***The Use of Hegemony to Indicate Responsibility:*** The Governor does this by saying that, *Your* office should therefore ensure strict compliance with *sharia* by all government establishment; *My* dear Hassan Atto Bungudu, as secretary to the state Government, *your* role is indispensable to the fulfilling of *our* campaign promises to the entire people of Zamfara State, etc.

Excerpt 3

SPEECH BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE EXECUTIVE GOVERNOR OF ZAMFARA STATE, ALHAJI ABDUL-AZIZ YARI ABUBAKAR SHATTIMAN MAFARA, DELIVERED ON THE OCCASION OF THE 3RD QUADRENNIAL CONFERENCE OF THE NIGERIA CIVIL SERVICES UNION, HELD ON TUESDAY 6TH SEPTEMBER 2011, AT MULTI PURPOSE HALL, N.U.R.T.W GUSAU

- i. As *you* have all witnessed during the month of *Ramadan*, government committed enormous resources in the purchase and distribution of assorted grains, milk, cows and clothing materials to both the civil servants and generality of *our* populace.
- ii. These gestures were done with a view to assisting *our* people to observe *Ramadan* fast with ease, conduct *sallah* festival with joy and happiness, and improve the purchasing power of *our* workforce
- iii. *You* should thank God that *you* are part of this age old rich traditions which gives people the opportunities to serve humanity in *their* respective capacities.
- iv. *You* should avoid resorting to unnecessary industrial actions

- v. As **I** told **our** labour activities during the recent *Sallah* courtesy call, **we** the politicians and entire civil servants constitute less than one percent of the total population of the state
- vi. While, therefore, **we** are makings efforts to meet **your** various needs and reposition the civil services for greater efficiency and productivity, **you should bear in mind** that **we** have a greater challenges of meeting the yearnings and aspirations of about four million citizens of Zamfara state
- vii. May *Allah* guide **you** towards a successful conference, *Amin*
- viii. Thank **you**. *Wassalamu Alaikum*

Hegemonic Tendencies in the Excerpt

The use of *Allah* and *Amin* is code-switching from English to Arabic as a way of pronouncing blessing on the subordinate (*you*). In using hegemony, the speaker exercises ascendancy over the addressed, whom he refers to as *you*, thereby foregrounding the ideology of power imbalance in the excerpt through,

1. ***The Use of Hegemony to Give Instruction:*** Using his office, the Governor gives the following instructions to the civil union members in attendance,

You should thank God that ***you*** are part of this age/***You*** should avoid resorting to unnecessary industrial actions.

2. ***The Use of Hegemony to Indicate Responsibility:*** The Governor in his effort to tactically persuade the civil union members, who form his audience, from criticising his government, he says, “. . . ***you*** should bear in mind that ***we*** have a greater challenges of meeting the yearnings and aspirations of about four million citizens of Zamfara State.”

Excerpt4

SPEECH BY HIS EXCELLENCY, THE EXECUTIVE GOVERNOR OF ZAMFARA STATE, ALHAJI ABDUL’AZIZ YARI ABUBAKAR, SHATTIMAN MAFARA, DELIVERED AT THE OCCASION OF SWEARING-IN CEREMONY OF CHAIRMAN ZAMFARA STATE INDEPENDENT ELECTORAL COMMISSION AND INAUGURATION OF ITS COMMISSIONERS, HELD ON THURSDAY, DECEMBER, 2011

- i. It is with utmost gratitude to *Allah* that **we** gather here today for the discharge of yet another executive responsibility of swearing in the chairman of Zamfara state independent electoral commission and inaugurating its commissioners
- ii. **We** must therefore work collectively to maintain this enviable status which has been a source of pride to all of **us**.
- iii. **You** are expected to discharge **your** duties with dedication, sincerity and fear of *Allah*, knowing fully well that **you** are going to be held accountable for **your** conducts
- iv. **You** should therefore work hard to justify the confidence reposed in **you**and maintain the enviable democratic credentials of **our** state
- v. **We** should always bear in mind that politics is a means to actualising the dreams and meeting the yearnings and leadership that will bring the much desired development
- vi. **We** should therefore join ranks and work in unison towards taking **our** dear state to higher development pedestals irrespective of whatever differences
- vii. **I** therefore challenge **you** to be honest and committed to this onerous task

- viii. *You* should take into cognisance that these appointments are in consideration of *your* wealth of experience, integrity, dedication and other sterling qualities
- ix. Let *me* remind *you* that both the people and the government of Zamfara state look upon *you* to discharge *your* duties with fear of *Allah*, bearing in mind that *you* will account for all *your* actions and inactions before *Him*
- x. Thank *you* and *wassalamuAlaikum*.

Hegemonic Tendencies in the Excerpt

The political pronouns *We* and *us* are used by the speaker in the text to foreground the connectivity of action between him and the audience, which he needs to influence their action. The speaker makes use of the Name, *Allah* as an authority to create fear in the heart of the addressed, whom he calls *you* and who have to also watch their conduct, thereby promoting the ideology of power imbalance in the excerpt through,

1. ***The Use of Hegemony to Give Instruction:*** Although the speaker does not give the instruction directly by involving himself in the responsibility, the addressers are expected to understand what he means by:

“*We* must therefore work collectively to maintain this enviable status which has been a source of pride to all of *us*”/“*We* should therefore join ranks and work in unison towards taking *our* dear state to higher development pedestals irrespective of whatever differences.”

2. ***The Use of Hegemony to Indicate Responsibility:*** The Governor carries this out in the text when he says,

“*You* are expected to discharge *your* duties with dedication, sincerity and fear of *Allah*, knowing fully well that *you* are going to be held accountable for *your* conducts”/“*You* should therefore work hard to justify the confidence reposed in *you* and maintain the enviable democratic credentials of *our* state.”

Excerpt 5

SPEECH DELIVERED BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE EXECUTIVE GOVERNOR OF ZAMFARA STATE, ALHAJI ABDULAZIZ YARI ABUBAKAR SHATTIMAN MAFARA, AT LAUNCHING CEREMONY OF 2011/012 DRY SEASON FARMING AND FLAG-OFF OF DRILLING OF 1,000 TUBE WELLS/WASH BORE HOLES AT YANKUZO VILLAGE IN TSAFE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, HELD ON 15TH MARCH, 2012

- i. (225) If *we* are to fully harness *our* agricultural potentials and effectively fight hunger, farming must be an all year around activity
- ii. (231) *INSHA-ALLAH* another programme will follow immediately which is expected target 5,000 farmers in addition the 1,000 farmers that will benefit from the programme *we* are about to launch now
- iii. (254) May *Allah subhanahu wata'ala* bless *our* farmers with abundant harvest . . .

Hegemonic Tendencies in the Excerpt

The Governor, charging the target listeners, expects them to harness the agricultural opportunities in Zamfara State. He authoritatively states that farmers in the state must engage in farming all year. The speaker uses the pronoun, *our* and code-switches from English to Arabic to identify himself with the farmers and their religious beliefs. He also shows some level of superiority to the listeners by praying for them, for, culturally and religiously, it is the superior who blesses the subordinate. This ideology of the imbalance of power is foregrounded in the excerpt through,

1. ***The Use of Hegemony to Enact Political Authority:*** As a political office holder, the speaker uses the first-person plural pronoun 'We' to refer to his cabinet in his speeches, ". . . the programme *we* are about to launch now." This is where the issue of power as a basic tenet of CDA comes in, when a speaker will serve as a representative of the cabinet. A single individual cannot run a government; he needs the support of other people. But with the power vested in him as the leader of the state, he uses 'We' to refer to the government as a body or a cabinet. This device shows the power and authority of the speaker to speak on everybody's behalf.
2. ***The Use of Hegemony for Association of Authority with Commoners:*** The speaker also made use of the personal pronouns 'We' and 'our' in "If *we* are to fully harness *our* agricultural potentials and effectively fight hunger, farming must be an all year around activity" to refer to himself and the audience. This is one of the strategies used by public office holders to co-opt the audience into their speeches.

General Discussion

The critical analysis of the selected speeches by former Governor Abdulaziz Yari Abubakar reveals significant insights into how hegemony is constructed and communicated within his political discourse. Establishing how hegemony is constructed in Yari's speeches, the impact of this hegemony on audience perceptions and the effectiveness of his rhetorical strategies in advancing his ideologies, the analysis identifies the strategic use of personal pronouns, particularly "you" and "we," as tools for establishing authority and responsibility. Yari frequently employs "you" to direct and instruct his audience and to emphasise their obligations through the reinforcement of power dynamics. This linguistic choice illustrates the use of hegemony to assert control and shape public perception, thereby foregrounding the reasons why the former Governor's directives are often expected to be carried out with implicit compliance. The analysis also highlights how Yari's discourse fosters a sense of collective identity through the use of inclusive pronouns like "we." This approach positions him as a leader working alongside his audience. It also serves to co-opt the listeners into his political narrative. By framing responsibilities as shared activities between him and his listeners, he cultivates solidarity and simultaneously maintains his authoritative stance.

The analysis further foregrounds the ideological implications of Yari's speeches as they reflect broader social dynamics in Zamfara State. The study, therefore, establishes that the Governor's rhetorical strategies are meant to effectively mobilise support and navigate political opposition. It underscores the importance of critical listening skills for the audience to enable them to discern the underlying ideological messages and the hegemonic structures at play in political discourse. Hence, the analysis provides an understanding of how language functions within the socio-political landscape of Zamfara State and reveals the intricate relationship between language, power and ideology.

Findings

This study is on a critical discourse analysis of hegemonic ideologies in selected speeches of former Governor Abdulaziz Yari Abubakar of Zamfara State. The work finds that,

- i. hegemony is constructed in the written speeches of former Governor Abdulaziz Yari Abubakar through the strategic use of personal pronouns to position the Governor as an authoritative figure, thereby shaping his audience's perception of their roles and obligations.

- ii. hegemony has impacts in the former Governor's speeches on his audience's perceptions and responses by creating a sense of collective identity through the inclusive use of pronouns like "we" and "our" to promote compliance with his directives among the addressed
- iii. the former Governor's use of hegemonic strategies effectively advances his ideologies in communication with his audience to navigate the political landscape, secure loyalty and promote trust among his subjects.
- iv. it is necessary that audiences develop critical listening skills to discern the underlying ideological messages and hegemonic structures present in political discourses with which they are addressed

Conclusion

This paper has studied hegemonic ideologies in selected speeches by former Governor Abdulaziz Yari Abubakar of Zamfara State. Considering listeners' literacy levels, the study explores why the Governor's audiences struggle to derive value from his speeches, despite the significant energy, time and resources he invested in their preparation and delivery. The study reveals that the deficiency in deriving values from the speeches is a result of the former Governor's strategic employment of hegemony to construct a power dynamic with the people of Zamfara State, and to emphasise their roles and responsibilities during his addresses. His intentional use of hegemonic ideologies establishes authority and promotes a sense of collective identity between the former Governor and his audience. By framing the responsibilities of his audience, Governor Yari is able to persuade them to align with his ideologies and reinforce a shared narrative that positions him as a leader who is working alongside his listeners. This rhetorical strategy allows him to navigate the political landscape, mobilise support and discourage opposition. The work concludes that since many members of politicians' audiences – especially those who are illiterate – often express dissatisfaction with how the politicians use various styles and strategies to sway their listeners' perspectives, awareness about the subtlety and implications of political discourse on social dynamics should be further created to encourage a deeper understanding of the intersection between language, power and ideology within the socio-political contexts of Zamfara State and Nigeria at large.

References

- Abaya, S. A. (2008). *A pragmatic analysis of Nigerian military coup announcement* (Doctoral dissertation). Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.
- Ahmadi, A., Ghofur, A., Effendy, M. H., Kusumawati, N., & Hariyati, N. R. (2023). Leftist narratives in Tempo books: Van Dijk's critical discourse analysis (CDA) perspective. *OKARA: Journal bahasa dan sastra*, 17(1), 32-50.
- Anyanwu, E. C. (2020). *Stylistic analysis of President Buhari's addresses to Nigerians in the face of COVID-19 pandemic*. International Students in Iraqi Colleges. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/330225079>
- Chilton, P. A. (1998). Politics and language. In *Concise encyclopedia of pragmatics* (pp. 688-694). Elsevier.
- Durmaz, Z., & Yoğun, M. S. (2022). A critical discourse analysis of a visual image in Norman Fairclough's CDA model. *International Journal of Scholars in Education*, 5(1), 25-33.
- Enemaku, O. S. (2005). *Publication layout and design: A course text for the National Open University of Nigeria*. National Open University of Nigeria.
- Fairclough, N. (1989). *Language and power*. Longman.
- Fairclough, N. (1995). Critical discourse analysis. In *The critical study of language*. Harlow.
- Fairclough, N. (2001). Critical discourse analysis. In A. McHoul & M. Rapley (Eds), *How to analyse talk in institutional settings: A casebook of methods* (pp. 25-38). Continuum.

- Germadnik, K. (2021). *Use of pronouns in political discourse: A study of the 2016 US presidential election debate and the 2019/2020 Croatian presidential election debate* (Master's thesis). University of Zagreb.
- Hasab Allah, D. M. H., Attia, M. F., & Saad, M. E. (2020). Power and hegemony in legal-diplomatic discourse: a genre critical discourse analysis of UN documents. *دورية أكاديمية علمية محكمة تهتم بنشر الدراسات الإنسانية والاجتماعية -مجلة كلية الآداب* 51(2), 3-34.
- Jan, R. (2022). Critical discourse analysis: A retrospective approach to examining social issues and challenges. *International journal of early childhood special education*, 14(5), 6273-6281. DOI:10.9756/INTJECSE/V14I5.780.
- Jorgensen, M., & Phillips, L. (2002). *Discourse analysis as theory and method*. SAGE Publications.
- Kaewrungruang, K., & Yaoharee, O. (2018). The use of personal pronouns in political discourse: A case study of the final 2016 United States presidential election debate. *REFlections*, 25(1).
- Kugbayi, L. I. (2023). Pragmatics of hegemonic ideologies in Nigerian English usage of subtitles in selected Nigerian home videos. *EKSU Journal of Education*, Vol. 10 No. 1.
- Luke, A. (1998). Ideology. In *Concise encyclopedia of pragmatics* (p. 366). Elsevier.
- Machin, D., & Mayr, A. (2023). *How to do critical discourse analysis: A multimodal introduction*. SAGE Publications.
- Matthews, P. H. (1997). *Oxford concise dictionary of linguistics*. Oxford University Press.
- McCutcheon, R., Schaffer, J., & Wycoff, J. R. (1994). *Communication matters*. West Publishing Co.
- McGregor, L. T. (2003). Critical discourse analysis in critical science and CDA: A primer. *Kappa Omicron Nu Form*, 15(1).
- McLeod, S. (2024). Critical discourse analysis as a research tool. <https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.27974.48960>
- Nurohmah, H., & Sundasewu, R. U. (2024). Research trends in multimodal critical discourse analysis: a bibliometric analysis. *Tamaddun*, 23(1).
- Oyeleye, A. (2004). *Language and discourse in society*. Hope Communication.
- Parikh, P. (2001). *The use of language*. CSLI Publications.
- Rozina, G., & Karapetjana, I. (2009). The use of language in political rhetoric: Linguistic manipulation. *SDU Fen Edebiyat Fakultesi/Sostal Bilimler Dergisi*, May.
- Sapir, E. (1921). *An introduction to the study of speech*. Harcourt, Brace and Company.
- Thorn, S. (1997). *Mastering advanced English language*. Palm Grove.
- Van Dijk, T. A. (1993). *Elite discourse and racism*. SAGE Publications.
- Van Dijk, T. A. (1990). Racism and press. In R. Miles (Ed), *Critical studies in racism and migration* (pp. xxx-xxx). Routledge. (Note: Please provide page numbers if available.)
- Woolard, K. A., & Schieffelin, B. B. (1994). Language ideology. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 23, 55-82.
- Yunana, A. (2012). *A critical discourse analysis of Presidents Goodluck Jonathan and Barrack Obama* (Master's thesis). Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.