

PROPAGANDA IN POLITICS: A SEMANTIC ANALYSIS OF THE SPEECHES OF SOME NIGERIAN POLITICIANS

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Abstract

This paper focuses on the speeches of two chieftains of the opposition Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) Mr. Ayo Fayose, immediate past Governor of Ekiti State and Mr. Kola Olagbansiyan, National Publicity Secretary of PDP. Excerpts were drawn from Fayose's alleged regrets of his criticism of Nigeria's President MuhammaduBuhari and his reaction to alleged attempt by the Federal Government to use security to silence opposition on 24th February, 2018 and 24th March, 2018 respectively. The PDP Spokesman's reaction to Supreme Court judgement on Senate President Dr. Bukola Saraki's asset declaration case on 6th July, 2018 and former Finance Minister, Mrs. Kemi Adeosun's NYSC Certificate Scandal of 7th July, 2018 and her subsequent resignation from office on 17th September, 2018 also form the basis of the paper. The work also examines the alleged possession of an 'invalid' O'level GCE Certificate by the President's Senior Special Assistant on Prosecution, Chief OkoiObona-Obla. The paper applies the Speech Act model in carrying out the analysis of the speeches to demonstrate how politicians and other leaders employ propaganda or manipulative skills using language as a means of swaying public opinions in their favour or to achieve pre-determined intentions. The paper concluded that the use of certain linguistic devices helped swayed public opinion in favour of the Speaker which ordinarily could not have been easily achieved.

Political language may be explained as the peculiar language used in politics. According to George Orwell, political language is designed to make lies sound fruitful, respectable and to give an appearance of solidity to pure wind. Politics has to do with power, the power to make decisions, to control resources, to control people's behaviour and their values. Political language therefore has certain features. It involves presupposition, implicature, metaphor, euphemism, structural parallelism and pronouns. ("Speech Act"-Wikipedia).

The importance of language as a medium for communicating political messages cannot be underrated. Language is considered a powerful tool for everyday communication (McDougall, 1975). By implication, language is the vibrant part in all spheres of life's endeavours. It is essential to building relationships, expressing

thoughts, ideas or a need and responses provided as feedback, which may also be positive or negative. Edem (2005) is of the view that language is indeed a force to be reckoned with in persuasive communication and invariably in social mobilization, especially in a democratic setting. The source further observes that since most of our leaders tend to use language for mass mobilization, the larger implications which are examined in this work, it is also important to note that a good Speech event is as a result of careful planning by the public Speaker who pays particular attention to details such as: sources, objectives, contents and import or materials meant for dissemination to the public (cfEdem, 2005, p.204). The interdisciplinary, multifaceted and extraordinary role of language situates it as indispensable in human existence and relationship.

Emeka-Nwobia (2016, P.8) quotes Van Dijk (2006) as saying that propaganda not only involves power, but precisely, abuse of power; that is subjugation or domination. Propaganda can imply the exercise of a form of illegitimate influence over another by means of discourse, where propagandists make others tend to believe or do things that are in the interest of the manipulator and against the best interest of the manipulated (see Ngozi, 2015; Baba and Elegba, 2016, Achadu, 2018 and Udofot and Edem, 2018). It is against this backdrop that the Speech Act theory remains one of the best approaches in handling the notion of propaganda in political speeches by providing an incisive, clearer understanding and interpretations particularly in a semantic analysis of political speeches.

In this case, both the hearer (Nigerians) and the speakers (Politicians) have shared common background knowledge about the precarious socio-economic problems largely credited to poor leadership. In this paper, the semantic analyses of the use of propaganda in political language or speeches as an instrument of mind control by notable politicians in Nigeria are examined.

Theoretical Framework

This paper anchors on the Speech Act theory as an approach because of the new dimensions it introduces to the interpretation of meaning. Speech Act theory is a theory of language that says that our utterances (the things we say) are not just about words and their dictionary definitions. Our utterances can accomplish things and bring about various actions. J. L. Austin and John R. Searle are the two names often associated with the Speech Act theory. In fact, Austin's 1962 book was about the performative potential of language – it's called *How to Do Things with Words*. For his part, Searle refined and tweaked what Austin posited. But there's disagreement among linguists and philosophers about how closely aligned the two men's theories are.

Speech Acts are nothing more than the actions that occur, thanks to language. For example, we use language to compliment and persuade, to beg or scold, and to ask for and give information. Put differently, we do things with language even though those things may not be physical actions like swimming, smiling, or taking an elevator.

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Commands, greetings and assessments are all Speech Acts. A promise is a Speech Act. So is an insult or a plea. (cfWikipedia.org).

There's disagreement over how many types of speech act there are and how to label them. The names for these acts change too, based on which source one is reading. According to this source, there are a few types that come up repeatedly in the literature. These are:

1. Representatives which represent a state of things. These are assertions, announcements, statements, claims, denials, disclosures, etc. An example of a statement is 'I like rice'.
2. Commissives, as the name implies, commit a speaker to do something. These are promises, pledges, vows, guarantees, and so on. The utterance 'I'll visit you tomorrow' is a commissive.
3. Directives are designed to get the listener to act in some way. These are admonishments, questions, dismissals, excuses, instructions, orders, requests, warnings, etc. An example is 'I warned you not to eat that entire bowl of corned flakes!'.
4. Expressives, let speakers convey their attitude or psychological state. These are apologies condolences, thanks and so on. We are sorry for the inconveniences this action may have caused you, or I'm sorry to hear about your failure in the interview are expressives.

Most political language spiced with propaganda are directives which are meant to get the listeners to act in a particular way which is the kind of language politicians use as captured by Udofot and Edem (2018, p.4). The Speech Act theory maintains that every Speech has three Acts, the locution, the illocution and the perlocution. While the illocution is the intention of the Speaker, the locution is the utterance or statement that is made and the perlocution is the effect of the utterance such as persuasion; the perlocutionary effect of a political speech is mostly persuasion, manipulation or propaganda. (cfUdofot and Edem, 2018).

A Speech Act Analysis

(i) Plot to silence opposition

Immediate past Ekiti State Governor, Mr. AyodeleFayose, has cautioned the Federal Government over its categorization of hate speeches as an act of terrorism. The former governor accused the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) of being the number one promoter and beneficiary of hate Speeches in the country.

When the APC was looking for power, several provocative statements were made. Nigerians are yet to forget President Muhammadu Buhari's 'the dog and the baboon would all be soaked in blood' hate speeches and the threat by the APC to form a parallel government.

Even if the APC government is sincere with its new found hatred for late speech, the APC government must first apologize to Nigerians for being the number one promoter and beneficiary of hate speech.

(Extract from Fayose's Speech of February 24, 2018).

With the reminders to Nigerians in his speech, Fayose's locution has the illocutionary force of identifying with the people particularly the poor masses and the downtrodden. The people are therefore persuaded that he is one of them and hence has their interest at heart. His perlocutionary force is therefore exemplified as he has successfully influenced his audience to see him as a most reliable and caring leader.

And when former Governor Fayose went on memory lane and asked a rhetorical question thus,

What can be more treasonable than these statements made by President Buhari and his party? It is also on record that during 2011 election campaign, President Buhari's inciting statement led to widespread violence by his supporters in the North after he lost. Over 1000 people were slaughtered in cold blood, including innocent National Youth Service Corp members.

(Extract from Fayose's Speech of February 24, 2018).

By making allusion to the past incidence where President Buhari's incisive statements allegedly led to crises in some parts of the country especially his home base, the North, the illocutionary force is to portray the Federal Government as hypocritical, with the use of phrases like, "what can be more treasonable than these statement..." and his argument that "the President's inciting statement led to widespread violence by his supporters in the North after he lost" which is an indictment of the Federal Government. That utterance made by Fayose which is the locution may have had a perlocutionary effect on the audience especially when reference was made to the over 1000 Nigerians and innocent National Youth Service Corps members who reportedly lost their lives.

The use of phrases such as 'inciting statements, widespread violence, slaughtered in cold blood as well as innocent NYSC members etc' are all intended to attract the attention and sympathy of the public toward the opposition as the one the people should look up to for solutions to their problems. These phrases carry the illocutionary force of persuading the public that Fayose who represents the opposition in the country should be trusted.

Similarly, Mr. Kola Olagbondiyan the National Publicity Secretary of the Peoples Democratic Party PDP in his reaction to the Supreme Court Judgment on the asset declaration case instituted by the Federal Government against Senate President, Dr. Bukola Saraki described it as a "triumph of justice".

He was quoted as saying:

The Supreme Court, by the judgment, had further reinforced the confidence of Nigerians in the courage of the institution of the judiciary, as the temple of justice and the last hope of the common man particularly under an oppressive regime.

(Extracts from Olagbodiyan's Speech on July 6, 2018).

The reference to the Supreme Court judgement on Senate President Saraki, a key official of the Federal Government and indeed the number three man as a "triumph of justice", depicting the judiciary as "the temple of justice and the last hope of the common man in an oppressive regime", is a manipulative strategy or subtle use of propaganda to give a very negative image to the Federal Government as incapable of accepting divergent views on issues no matter who is involved or how highly placed.

The opposition party further said that, The judgement had further supported its disposition that the Buhari Presidency's fight against corruption was mere shadow-chasing and a clever attempt at blackmailing the opposition as well as anyone who holds a divergent voice against this administration.

(Extracts from Olagbondiyan's Speech of July 6, 2018).

With this kind of admonitions from Mr. Olagbondiyan the PDP's Spokesman, and coupled with the shared experience of the Speaker and the Public about the politics and intrigues involving the election of Senator Saraki as Senate President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, the people are left with no choice than to buy the argument that the charges against Dr. Saraki were politically motivated.

The anti-corruption posture of President Buhari which had enjoyed global recognition was dented when Mr. Olagbondiyan dismissed the anti-corruption fight as "selective, mere shadow-chasing and a clever attempt at blackmailing the opposition or anyone with any dissenting views or divergent voice against this administration.

This was yet another attempt by the opposition party, the PDP to use propaganda to expose the 'undemocratic tendencies and hard-lined policies' which are contrary to democratic tenets and core values that encourage freedom of expression and divergent views on issues of State policy.

The Speaker and the audience (Nigerians) have a shared knowledge of the fact that Nigeria's current President, Buhari was a former Military dictator and a no nonsense Army General between 1983-2005. With the weighty allegations leveled against President Buhari and his alleged clamp down on the opposition as portrayed by Fayose, and Olagbondiyan, it becomes difficult if not impossible for the unsuspecting public to exonerate the President from blame which was the illocutionary act (the hidden intention of the Speaker). When we put side by side President Buhari's antecedents as a former military dictator coupled with the call for diplomacy and freedom of speech which are the hallmarks of a democratic rule that the country is said to be practicing now, leaves much to be desired.

Alignment with the Masses

Former Governor Fayose made no pretensions about his choice of a democracy against military dictatorship and attempt to draw a line between democratic rule and autocratic rule when he criticized President Buhari's alleged poor handling of the

abduction and release of the Dapchi School girls by the Boko Haran Terrorists as captured thus,

In a democracy, it is the rights of the people to express their views freely and President Buhari must accept that and live with it.

It is the Federal Government that is playing drama and did not come out clean on the abduction and release of the girls.

In a democracy, the people are entitled to their views and can't be silenced in their own land especially when the government has failed to protect Nigerians who are daily being killed by herdsmen and Boko Haran Terrorists.

(Excerpts from Fayose's Speech of March 24, 2018).

This was yet another attempt by the opposition to effectively deploy propaganda in their speeches to attract public sympathy and invariably cast doubts about the Federal Government's sincerity and genuine intentions even as we approach 2019 being another election year in Nigeria.

The use of repetitions, parallel structures and the use of commissives, a special Speech Act which commits a person to take an action as in, "it is the rights of the people, the people are entitled to their views, can't be silenced, Nigerians are daily being killed etc" all added to the perlocutionary force of which the Speaker originally intended to achieve.

The opposition Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) also demonstrated its resentment to anti-peoples policies and alignment with the masses when it reacts to erstwhile Finance Minister Mrs. Kemi Adeosun's alleged forgery of her exemption certificate of the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC).

The party in a statement by its National Publicity Secretary Kola Ologbondiyan said, It is instructive for NYSC to note that all issues in the news report that Mrs. Adeosun forged her NYSC Exemption Certificate as well as reports that the Presidency is mounting pressure on NYSC to cover up for the minister are already in the public domain.

It added,

Moreover, Nigerians are closely monitoring this issue and the public is already aware of the pressure on the NYSC leadership to announce a misplacement of relevant files and other excuses to achieve a dead end in the investigation.

The NYSC must therefore, know that its reputation is highly at stake as Nigerians are already agitated over the questionable delay by the corps in coming out with an answer on a direct issue that requires a simple computer or even manual file check at its headquarters.

(Excerpts from Ologbondiyan's Speech of July 11, 2018).

This is another form of subtle use of propaganda adopted by the major opposition party in its desire to strengthen its support base in the country. The mounting of pressure on the government to expedite action in its investigations on the alleged certificate forgery

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saga involving the then Minister of Finance Mrs. Kemi Adeosun, a London trained economist, further deepened the bond or rapport that had already existed between the speaker and the public which left the Federal Government with no choice than to act to save the government from further image damage which had been at its lowest ebb since the issue came into the public domain via an online medium PREMIUM TIMES about three months ago.

And when PDP Spokesman reminded the Federal Government that “Nigerians are already aware of pressure on the NYSC leadership to announce a misplacement of relevant files and other excuses” was to say the least uncharitable to the Presidency who are struggling to seek a fresh mandate for President Buhari in 2019 and would not want anybody to stand on its way or jeopardize its chances.

Mr. Ologondiyani’s illocutionary force is to use propaganda to blackmail Nigerians into believing that incumbent President Buhari does not mean well for Nigerians as exemplified in his purported teleguided handling of critical issues involving key officials or agents of his government with reference to the recent certificate scandal involving the then Finance Minister Mrs. Adeosun.

Power of the Media

As pressure mounts from different quarters on the Federal Government, the Minister of Finance and leader of the economic team Mrs. Kemi Adeosun resigned her appointment even before the completion of the panel’s investigations. In an eight paragraphed letter addressed to the Nigerian President, Mrs. Adeosun gave a background to her involvement on the NYSC Certificate saga for the first time since PREMIUM TIMES an online medium broke the news recently.

She said,

Let me commence by thanking you profusely for the honour and privilege of serving under your inspirational leadership. It has been a truly rewarding experience to learn from you and to observe at close quarters your integrity and sense of duty.

And then she opens up,

I have today become privy to the findings of the investigation into the allegation made in an online medium that the Certificate of Exemption from National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) that I presented was not genuine. This has come as a shock to me and I believe that in line with this administration’s focus on integrity, I must do the honourable thing and resign.

(Excerpts from Adeosun’s Speech of September 14, 2018).

By saying that the findings of the investigations which showed that her Certificate of Exemption from NYSC was not genuine ‘and it came as a shock to her’ and her decision to voluntarily resign from her exalted position was in a way a manipulative strategy to attract sympathy from the public and further safeguard the integrity of the present administration.

As a further proof of her innocence, Mrs. Adeosun had this to say,

I was informed that due to my residency history in London and having exceeded the age of thirty (30), I was exempted from the requirement to serve, until recent event that remained my understanding. On the basis of that advice and with the guidance and assistance of these, I thought were trusted associates, the NYSC was approached for documentary proof of status, I then received the certificate in question. Having never worked in NYSC,...I had no reason to suspect that the certificate was anything but genuine.

(Excerpts from Adeosun's Speech of September 14, 2018).

Here the speaker made use of parallelism and euphemism, and other rhetorical devices such as "Having never worked in NYSC,... the certificate was anything but genuine", "the certificate in question, until the recent events etc all in the second paragraph of her resignation letter was to play down on the enormity of the crime allegedly committed by her and most importantly, avoid more public outcry against as an individual and moreso the government that She represents.

Simply put, the Speaker by repeatedly referring to the controversial certificate as "recent events, anything but genuine etc tactically used propaganda or euphemism to avoid a more hurting phrase 'forged certificate' ostensibly to avoid or check the perlocutionary effect the harsh expressions 'forged' or 'fake' certificate could have generated in the minds of most Nigerians especially those who have served the one year mandatory National Youth Service Scheme (NYSC) and are currently without jobs.

Although the former Minister of Finance's ability to play with words has won her some converts as some see her resignation as *unNigerian* or novel, a few others are not carried away by rhetorics or use of propaganda and are even calling for stiffer sanctions to be meted on her for the crime she allegedly committed.

According to online reports from PREMIUM TIMES, an unnamed member of the Senate Committee who first screened her certificates in 2015 as a Ministerial Nominee drew her attention to it but she allegedly bribed her way and moved on to be cleared and later sworn-in as a Minister in July 2018. About two months ago; the NYSC disowned the certificate as not from them when a former Deputy Director of Mobilization Mr. Joseph Nnaji told Channels Television, Lagos that the person who purportedly signed the said NYSC Exemption letter was relieved of his position at the time and defended that he could not have been in a position to have signed the said certificate.

Commenting on the situation, Barr. Akpakan Okoho, an Uyo based legal practitioner and Commissioner Akwalbom State Law Reforms Commission (AKSLRC) reacted this way,

From the preamble of her later of resignation, Mrs. Kemi Adeosun has confessed to committing a crime. Let the integrity process of the present government take its course, Mr. Integrity, over to you (Okoho On Uruan Alert, September 14, 2018).

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The sayings “Mr. Integrity, over to you” let the integrity process take its course, etc are commissives used by the Speaker to remind the Federal Government of President Muhammadu Buhari to ‘walk the talk’, match its anti-corruption sermons with actions starting from its doorsteps. In line with its public awareness campaign ‘change begins with me’.

Again, the President’s inaugural address titled “I belong to everybody and I belong to nobody” (Udofot and Edem, 2018) is further given a litmus test as after the confessions or admissions of crime, the public demands more sanctions like prosecutions for forgery and if possible return to public treasury all her earnings during the ‘illegal appointments’ first as a Commissioner for Finance, Ogun State between 2012-2015 and later as Minister of Finance from October 2015 – September, 2018 because as the saying goes ignorance of the law is not an excuse.

With the resignation of Mrs. Kemi Adeosun as Minister of Finance over certificate forgery, OkoiObono-Obla, another appointee of President Muhammadu Buhari, is back in the limelight over a similar issue.

The Cable an online medium reports that,

Obono-Obla, who is the Senior Special Assistant to the President on Prosecution is alleged to be in illegal possession of an “invalid” O’level result, according to findings by the House of Representatives ad-hoc panel on the Special Presidential Investigative Panel for the Recovery of Public Property (SPIP).

(See The Cable.ng., September 18. 2018).

The Genesis

The issue first came to public knowledge in a petition to the House by a Human Rights Writers Association of Nigeria (HURIWA) regarding the contradictions in the result from the West African Examinations Council (WAEC).

In the petition, HURIWA said it investigated the Presidential aide and discovered thus,

Obono-Obla gained admission into the University of Jos with a suspected fake WASCE result. Evidence available to us shows that OkoiOkono-Obla (OfemOkoiOfem) sat for May/June 1982 examination registration No. 094031247 at Mary Knoll College, Ogoja, where he obtained the following results: English Language – C6; Literature in English – Absent; Bible Knowledge – C4; Government – A1; Economics – C5; Mathematics – F9; Chemistry – F9; Biology – F9. We attach herewith a copy of the result issued by WAEC.

(PREMIUM TIMES of September 18, 2018).

WAEC Confirmed Result was altered. In the light of the startling allegations, the committee had swung into action, digging deeper into the issue and seeking clarification from all parties concerned, testifying before the House of Representatives’ Panel.

Femi Ola, Deputy Registrar of WAEC, had told the committee that “available evidence include that the results were altered and therefore makes them invalid”. Considering the results, particularly on what is before me, I would say what I have brought here is the authentic and genuine one, his is not because it has been altered and such alteration renders it invalid. From our records...The examination number and number of subjects are the same. The difference is the grade in English Literature (sic.) in which he claimed to have scored C6 despite being marked absent in the true certified copy.

(PREMIUM TIMES of September 18, 2018).

The Speaker made use of ‘representatives’ a Speech Act device to make statements, lay claims and make disclosures such as “...I have brought here is the authentic one is not because it has been attached, despite being marked absent in the true certified copy etc” which has the perlocutionary force of further pushing the audience into believing that without doubt the Presidential aide Mr. Obono-Obla indeed committed the said offence of ‘forgery’ of his certificate. The Speaker also made use of commissives such as “from the records...the examination number and number of subjects are the same, the difference is the grade in English Literature”, which lends credence, to the initial intention or (illocutionary act) which is to affirm that the result was altered, hence, renders it invalid.

Nigerians Demand His Resignation

While the Adeosun’s scandal got to its climax, some Nigerians took to the social media to demand action on the allegations against the Presidential aide. They asked the President to act on the House’s recommendations which indicted him and ordered for his sack or order for a fresh investigation into the matter.

Writing via his Twitter handle, ChidiOdinkalu, former Chairman of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) said keeping Obono-Obla in his job would be a “mess”. “With a forged certificate, Obono-Obla isn’t even a graduate to begin with” he tweeted,

It’s impossible to see any excuse for retaining Chief Obono-Obla in the role heading asset recovery for government as Kemi Adeosun’s case began as compliance failure. With a forged WASC Obono-Oblaisn’t even a graduate to begin with, keeping him there is “messed up” and beyond ends.

(Extracts from Odinkalu’s Speech of September 15, 2018).

Transparency International Nigeria in its twitter handle etransparence/Tng had this to say,

The SA to the President on Prosecution, OkoiObono-Oblahas been accused of forgery of WAEC certificate. The WAEC Registrar testified before the eHouse NGR that the result was altered and thus invalid. He was indicted in July 2018, but no action was taken by the Presidency eMBuhari.

T. Rankin eAfroVII expressed similar sentiments when she said,

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Kemi Adeosun has gone rightly. But what's sauce for the goose should be sauce for the gander. The women shouldn't be the ones who fall more often than not when the government is mostly men. But hey!

Nafiu T @ his twitter handle *enfeezi* came a little bit harder on the APC led Federal Government when he said,

OkoiObono-Obla is currently holding onto the position of SA to Buhari on Prosecution despite forging WAEC result for his law degree. Buhari has refused to act on the report that found OkoiObono-Obla guilty of WAEC result forgery. Buhari, the grand patron of corruption.

(PREMIUM TIMES, September 17, 2018).

President Buhari's main campaign promises hinged on improving economy, providing security through a purposeful leadership and fighting corruption to a standstill. (cf Udofot and Edem, 2018, p.48). By accusing President Buhari of selective treatment against women in a male dominated society as alleged in the case of Mrs. Adeosun when compared with Obono-Obla's case, is a dummy or propaganda aimed at arm-twisting the unsuspecting public particularly the women folk who are in the majority to move against the Federal Government.

Secondly, when PREMIUM TIMES quotes Nafui(2018) as describing Buhari as the 'grand patron of corruption', this was another manipulative strategy or propaganda whose illocutionary force was geared towards passing a vote of no confidence on the current administration's anti-corruption campaign as merely a fairy tale or the government is paying a mere lip service to social contracts it had with Nigerians.

Obono-Obla Headed to Court

Obono-Obla, the Special Assistant to the President on Prosecution has since headed to court, challenging the power of the committee to investigate both the Presidential Panel as well as his educational qualifications. Before going to Court, he had this to say about the allegations, "they are the outcome of a 'hatchet job' masterminded by some members of the National Assembly who are under investigation by 'my panel', the intention is to 'smear' and 'ridicule' me". (cf TheNigeriaLawyer.com, September 20, 2018).

Any attempt to dismiss his petitioners as embarking on a 'hatchet job', just 'to ridicule him' is to most observers diversionary. Hence, this use of propaganda by the Speaker (Obono-Obla) is a lame excuse and therefore unconvincing especially coming at a time that a Deputy Registrar of the Examination body had deposed to an affidavit that his 1982 WAEC result was altered from being absent during Literature in English examination (sic.) to allegedly scoring C6 in his copy which they affirmed to have been 'altered' or 'forged'.

Summary and Conclusion

This paper has availed us with yet another opportunity to demonstrate how most Nigerian leaders whether in government or in opposition made use of propaganda to arm-twist or manipulate the people to achieve certain pre-determined objectives or set targets.

The Speech Act model was at various times used by the speakers either to assert their opinions on issues, (illocution), ensure that their opinions have great impact on their unsuspecting audience (perlocution) who are easily swayed by their creative used of certain linguistic devices such as parallelism, euphemism and rhetorical devices to persuade the people to toe a particular line of thought, take specified political actions or to adopt crucial political decisions which ordinarily could not have been easily achieved.

This work, tends to show how the opposition party as represented portrays the ruling party or government in power as incapable of meeting the yearnings and aspirations of the people and through the use of propaganda harps on the perceived excesses of the ruling government with a plea that the opposition should earn their trust even as another election year approaches in 2019. The government functionaries on the other hand, also used propaganda to convince the people about their readiness to ‘walk the talk’ or give back to the people what they had been clamouring for over the years.

It is however, very pertinent for most Nigerians especially the elites to decipher which of the messengers comes with “the right message” that is free from undue influences of propaganda or other manipulative tendencies if the country must move forward.

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