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(IM)POLITENESS AND PRAGMATIC STRATEGIES IN GOODLUCK JONATHAN AND MUHAMMADU BUHARI'S 2015 CAMPAIGN SPEECHES

Akinrinlola Temidayo

Mcpherson University

Seriki Sotayo, Abeokuta

akinrinlolatemidayo@yahoo.com

Abstract

Political actors in Nigeria negotiate political campaigns with the use of linguistic resources to express their ideological positions. They project the ideologies of their respective parties during political campaigns. Studies on political discourse have explored rhetorical cues in inaugural speeches to the neglect of hate campaigns in Nigerian Presidential Elections. This paper engages the pragmatics of hate campaigns with a view to describing the pragmatic strategies of hate campaigns in the selected Presidential campaign speeches. The study is premised on Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory. Campaign speeches of Goodluck Jonathan of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and Muhammadu Buhari of the All Progressives Congress (APC) during the 2015 electioneering constitute the data for the study. The data were collected from print and online sources. The speeches were selected from *Punch*, *Tribune*, *The Guardian*, *The Nation*, *Vanguard Newspaper* and *Daily Trust*. Data were subjected to pragmatic analysis. In a bid to enhance their social acceptance, loyalty, political credibility and self-image, presidential candidates resorted to self justification, amplifying political ineptitude, expressing intellectual weakness, amplifying intellectual ineptitude, making recourse to history, branding, blaming, spinning, counter discourse and rhetorical questions. These strategies were engaged in order to discredit and threaten the face of their opponents. The study reveals that the Nigerian political scene during electioneering is tense and cloudy as political actors pose series of face-threatening acts to their fellow political opponents in a bid to secure political posts.

Key words: (Im)politeness, Hate Campaign, Pragmatic strategies, Goodluck Jonathan, Muhammadu Buhari, Nigeria

1.0 Introduction

The thrust of politics is power and authority. It concerns how power and authority are got and managed. Politics borders on how decisions are made and how resources are managed within a particular society. It has to do with how to shape the views, opinions, perceptions, cognition, behaviour and values of the ruled (van Dijk, 2006; Fairclough, 1995, 2001; Opinach, 2009; Francisco, 2014; Bayram, 2010; Michira, 2014 and Yang, 2015).

Language comes in handy as a veritable means of achieving the aforementioned concerns of the political process. This underscores that politics inseparably relies on the deployment of language. Language is an instrument of power in the hands of political actors. Relationships are created, maintained and sustained between the governor and the governed through language resources.

Since the return of democratic system in 1999, the Nigerian political climate has been very tense and competitive. Political actors tend to influence the electorate through persuasive political manifestoes, some of which are laced with unrealistic intents. Political parties have continually cajoled Nigerians with empty political promises. Voting exercises are carried out just to fulfil electoral requirements. Regrettably, political parties in Nigeria involve in series of hate campaigns speeches prior to elections (Peil 1991). Political actors engage in character assassination, ethnic bias, religious sentiment and verbal wars during campaigns. Political actors concentrate on denting their opponents' image and neglecting issues of national interest. Although sentiment-based campaign is not peculiar to the Nigerian politics; it

is a recurrent decimal in older democracies. The campaigns are laden with offensive and derogatory speeches or pronouncements against political opponents. This unwholesome political development, no doubt, has contributed in no small measure to political underdevelopment in Nigeria (Peil 1991). Nigerian political actors are more interested in projecting the goals of their parties and passing derogatory remarks on the personality, achievement and past deeds and manifestoes of their political opponents.

Hate speech has to do with 'all forms of expressions which promote racial hatred, xenophobia, anti-semitism or other forms of hatred based on intolerance, hostility and discrimination' (Brink 2001:12). Hate speech is also conceived in terms of 'all dissemination of ideas based on racial or ethnic superiority or hatred, by whatever means' (Neisse 1994:18). Neisse sees hate speech as 'all forms of communication whether verbal, written or symbolic that insult a racial , ethnic or political group whether by suggesting that they are inferior in some respect or by indicating that they are despised or not welcome by any reason' Such ugly political scenario was rife during the 2015 general elections in Nigeria. The election was the 5th quadrennial election to be held since the end of military rule in Nigeria in 1999. The elections were first scheduled for 14th February, 2015. However, the Independent Electoral Commission (INEC) postponed it to 28th March, 2015 mainly to curb the Boko Haram insurgency in some Northeastern States. The presidential election was the most thrilling of all the political posts contested for. Fourteen presidential candidates contested for the presidential post under different political parties. Of all the presidential candidates, the notable political figures were the incumbent President, Goodluck Jonathan, of the (PDP), and Muhammadu Buhari of the (APC). Both candidates, in different ways, had the powers to influence the electorate. While Jonathan had the power of incumbency and support of the Southsouth and Southeast, Buhari had built a cult-like following in the North based on his perceived honesty, selflessness and performance as a military Head of State between 1983 and 1985. Besides, Buhari had run for the same post for three consecutive times. These two political giants wrestled for the peoples' support. The competition was very keen between the PDP and the APC presidential candidates. This paper intends to investigate how impoliteness is expressed in the campaign speeches of these notable political actors.

In view of the foregoing, this paper explores the strategies used by the political actors in negotiating their goals. Of particular interest to this paper is how these political actors deployed impoliteness strategies in influencing the electorate during their campaigns. Strategies, in this context, concern the means through which the political actors achieved their goals. This paper focuses on how political actors managed their self-image during campaigns.

2.0 Statement of the problem

There are quite a number of studies on political discourse. Scholars have engaged the rhetorical cues of inaugural speeches. Some of the studies carried out in this area include those of Ayeomoni (2005); Adetunji (2009); Opinach (2009); Taiwo (2010); Alo (2012); Akinkurolere (2015); Akinrinlola (2015) and Shengua (2015). From the semiotic perspective, Ademilokun (2015) investigates the multimodal analysis of campaign speeches in the 2015 general elections. Studies on hate campaigns are very few. Existing studies have considered the non-linguistic import of hate speeches. Some of these studies are Alakali (2009); Ezeibe (2013) and Joel (2013). Apart from the fact that the studies are non-linguistic in orientation, attempts have not been made to situate the studies in Nigerian context. This explains why this paper pitches its tent on this identified research gap. There is need to engage how the pragmatics of hate campaign is negotiated in the Nigerian political context. The aim of the study was to investigate strategies of negotiating hate campaigns speeches in Nigerian elections. The objectives were to identify (im)politeness strategies of hate

campaigns, and describe how the (im)politeness strategies reveal contextual issues in Nigerian politics. An investigation of the strategies will help to reveal how face management techniques are negotiated; it will reveal the contextual implications of linguistic choices of campaigns, and it will help develop a better approach to political conduct in the Nigerian political scene.

3.0 Perspectives on political discourse

There have been some scholarly works on the discourse of politics. Political discourse explores social issues that border on the welfare of the common man. Discourse analysts are interested in how language is deployed to create persuasive effects in the political scene. This explains why there are different approaches to the investigation of the language of politics. Taiwo (2010) explores the place of metaphor in political discourse. The study is a blend of methods of critical discourse analysis and that of cognitive linguistics. A classification of metaphor is done in the study. He identifies metaphor of persons, journey and battle. He discusses how the metaphorical expressions reveal the ideological underpinnings of the political actors.

Commenting the place of rhetoric in political speeches, Alo (2012) engages a rhetorical analysis of selected political speeches of prominent African leaders. The aim of the paper is to examine how African leaders persuade their people on the expediency of various socio-economic policies. The study adopts Aristotelian rhetoric complemented with Fairclough's model of critical discourse analysis. Sixteen selected speeches constitute the data for the study. The study reveals that African leaders resort to the use of persuasive strategies in a bid to seek peoples' cooperation and accomplish governmental programmes.

Viewing ideological contents in political discourse, Bayram (2010) describes ideology and political discourse from the perspective of CDA. He analyses the political speech of Erdogen. His investigation reveals that there exist a relationship between identity and background. This relationship, according to him, is expressed in language. Shengua (2015) carries out a discourse analysis of Barrack Obama's inaugural speech from the perspective of culture. He traces the origin, the doctrine of the Bible and the multicultural nature of the American society. He submits that the speech is a reproduction of American beliefs. Francis (2015) reviews the import of metaphor in political speeches. He observes that metaphor is a linguistic tool that could be manipulated for pragmatic and strategic reasons. To him, Metaphor helps the electorate to make sense of different political issues, and attitude towards politics. Ayeomoni (2005) explores the language of Nigerian political elites. He opines that certain linguistic choices are common to the speech of political office holders. Moreover, Yusuf (2002) undertakes the use of dysphemisms in the language of President Olusegun Obasanjo. He observes that political actors employ word play so as to persuade voters.

In a related vein, Akinrinlola (2015) examines a rhetorical analysis of President Muhammadu Buhari's inaugural speech. The study adopts Norman Fairclough's model of CDA and Aristotle's rhetoric as its theoretical framework. The intention is to examine the linguistic choices used by the President to persuade the Nigerian people. The study reveals that the President used verbal choices to express strong commitment; pronominal items are used to express inclusiveness, unity and loyalty while metaphors of growth and wars are used to express the socio-economic development and social crises rocking the Nigerian nation. Alo (2004) dwells on values in political manifestoes in Nigeria. He describes how political actors woo electorate during political campaigns. He submits that political manifestoes exploit values and meaning that relate to socio-political milieu. He examines four Nigerian political party manifestoes and submits that values, such as materials, moral, spiritual and cultural are not overtly stated.

Discussing the role of pragmatics in political discourse, Adetunji (2009) works on the inaugural speech of Nigerian's President Olusegun Obasanjo and American President, George Bush. He observes that a number of pragmatic tools are used by

President Bush to assert meaning in the discourse. From the perspective of pragmatics, Babatunde and Odegbedan (2009) investigate the pragmatic strategies in the speech of President Olusegun Obasanjo. They opine that certain pragmatic acts are carried out with a view to influencing the people. From the discourse analytical perspective, Opinach (2009) carries out an analysis of President Olusegun Obasanjo's national address on the Labour Congress of 8th October, 2003. She observes that rhetorical cues are manipulated to induce the masses in a variety of ways. Akinkurolere (2015) undertakes a lexical analysis of inaugural speech of the Benue House of Assembly in Nigeria. She opines that legislators employ lexical cohesive devices such as repetition, synonymy, collocation and super-ordination to achieve meaning. Alakali (2013) describes the social and legal implications of hate speech in the Nigerian social media. He submits that hate speech has a far-reaching effect on journalism and the law. In a similar vein, Ezeibe (2013) describes the effects of hate speeches before, during and after elections in Nigeria. He is of the view that recurrent public outburst is a product of intolerance which feeds on hate speeches. Joel (2013) engages an analysis of ethnopaulism and ethno-religious hate speeches in Nigeria. She contends that hate speeches, which are characteristic of religion in Nigeria, remain a turn in the flesh of national growth.

The studies above have interestingly engaged the linguistic dynamics of political discourse with particular attention on the subject of inaugurals. Studies on political campaigns have always tilted towards how political actors persuade the people. A good example is that of Alo (2012). Studies have not explored the subject of hate campaigns, especially with regard to the Nigerian context. Existing studies on political discourse have not engaged the subject of hate campaigns. Besides, few studies on hate campaign are non-linguistic in approach. There is need for an investigation of the pragmatic strategies employed by political actors during electioneering campaign in Nigeria. This explains why this study engages analysis of (im)politeness strategies in the presidential campaigns speeches of 2015 general elections in Nigeria.

4.0 Theoretical Framework: Politeness phenomenon

Taking insight from Goffman (1955), Brown and Levinson (1987) expound the concept of politeness in conversation. The theory explains why people choose to say things in a particular way in spoken or written discourse. It operates within defined social norms and helps to maintain social relationship among people. Brown and Levinson opine that politeness is best expressed as the practical application of good manners or etiquette. It is a culturally defined phenomenon and it varies from culture to culture. They describe politeness as a courteous manner that respects accepted social usage within a cultural context. In other words, it has implicational usage in social context. This attracts pragmatics and discourse analysts. This paper takes politeness as a pragmatic communicative phenomenon. Politeness has been conceived as real world goal, a surface level phenomenon and as an illocutionary force Brown and Levinson 1987).

Politeness is a common feature of social interaction in any human society. It is seen as an instrument to save 'face' and engender self-esteem in public, even in private situations (Holms 1995; Brown and Levinson 1978; Cameron and Kulick 2003 and Mills 2003). It accounts for the redressing of the affronts to face posed by face-threatening acts to addressee. Following Brown and Levinson, (Mill 2003:6) defines politeness as 'the expression of the speaker's intention to mitigate the face threat carried by certain face-threatening acts towards another'. Brown and Levinson identify two forms of face acts: positive and negative face. A positive face is a kind of politeness that ensures consistent self-image or personality. A person's positive face is the need to be accepted, liked by others or be treated as member of the same group and know how his wants are shared by others. On the other side of the coin, negative face means the want of every adult member that his actions be unimpeded by others

or the basic claim to territories, personal preserves, rights to non-distraction, the need to be independent, to have some freedom or action and not to be imposed by others (Thomas 1995; Leech 1991 and Holmes 1995) . A positive face stands for the need to seek social acceptability; a speaker seeks a positive self-image from a listener or hearer, whereas a negative face stands for the need of a speaker to remain independent and protect their rights and freedom from being trampled upon. These interactional goals are negotiated in conversation. Both positive and negative politeness exists in conversation. The existence of these politeness forms engenders face-threatening acts. Universally in human culture, it is believed that face-threatening-acts are inevitable based on the terms of conversation. This damages the face of the addressee or speaker by acting in opposition to the wants or desires of the others. If a speaker says something that represents a threat to other individual's expectation, regarding self-image, it is described as a face-threatening act. Brown and Levinson identify some politeness strategies which include: bald –on record, negative politeness, politeness and off-record.

A positive face is the expression of acceptance, wants and desires of interlocutors while negative face-threatening acts exist when an individual does not avoid or intend to avoid the obstruction of their interlocutors' freedom of actions. In the same vein, a positive face can be threatened. It is threatened when the speaker or hearer does not care about their feelings, wants or does not want the other. This can pose damage to both hearer and speaker. Following Brown and Levinson's line of thought, Culpeper (2011) posits that bald-on record impoliteness is performed directly and in a concise way in a situation where face is not minimized. He conceives of positive impoliteness as a strategy designed to damage the addressee's positive wants.

In this paper, strategies are conceived in terms of ways of getting things done in conventional interaction. Presidential campaign speeches of the presidential candidates in the 2015 general elections in Nigeria feature quite a good example of impoliteness strategies used by political actors in negotiating political campaigns. Impoliteness expressions by the political actors foreground the contents of the campaigns as acts that are riddled with offensive and abusive talks. This explains why this paper adopts politeness theory in engaging strategies adopted to engender hate campaign in the 2015 general elections.

5.0 Method

Presidential campaign speeches in print and online media constitute the data for the study. The data were purposively selected from Leading Nigerian newspapers, *Punch*, *The Guardian, Tribune*, *The Nation, Vanguard and Daily Trust*. Presidential campaign speeches were also downloaded online from Nairaland news and News Naija websites. The campaign speeches cut-across the six geo-political zones in the country (Northeast, Northwest, Northcentral, Southwest , Southsouth and Southeast). The newspapers were published between January and March 2015 being the most eventful period of the political campaigns for the March 2015 general elections in Nigeria. Twenty-three campaign speeches were purposefully selected for this study owing to the impoliteness appeals in them. The speeches were basically those of the major political parties: Peoples Democratic Party and All Progressives Congress sponsored by the parties or by the various associations identifying with them and promoting their ambitions. These parties were purposively selected based on the fact that their speeches, rallies and campaigns were widely reported in the media, especially those selected for this study. The campaign speeches are subjected to pragmatic analysis in this study.

6.0 Impoliteness strategies in the campaign Speeches

In the data, it is observed that the concerned political actors resorted to strategies as a means to an end. Strategies, in this context, are described in terms of processes involved in achieving defined goals. Political actors are usually motivated by the need

to uphold the ideologies of their respective parties and pass disparaging remarks on others, especially opposing parties. This usually involves casting aspersions on fellow political opponents. The data reveal that political actors use series of strategies in negotiating the campaign speeches. These include:

6.1 Self-justification

One of the noticeable strategies adopted by political actors is that of posing justification for their actions, programmes and ideological positions. This act involves posing self-approval for their conducts. Politicians provide enough grounds for their righteousness and political uprightness through their campaign speeches. Their parties' ideologies are defended and justified. This stands in sharp contrast to appropriate ethical political conduct. Ordinarily, the masses, whom they are meant to serve, should be the ones to assess politicians' score cards and decide what becomes of their fate during elections. But political actors tend to give credits to themselves, launder their images, and justify their conducts. Examples of this strategy from our data include the following:

Excerpt 1: It is indeed in the public knowledge that the PDP campaigns, press releases and utterances of our officials have always focused on issues that promote the development, unity and prosperity of our dear nation. *(Nairaland News 6th January, 2015. pp. 8)*

Excerpt 2: Our administration is committed to transparency and accountability.

Excerpt 3: Despite threats from the opposition, the PDP has refused to be distracted but rather maintained the high moral ground in our determination to ensure a united, peaceful and prosperous nation. *(Punch Newspaper of 6th January, 2015. pp. 7)*

Excerpt 4: Our party is committed to fighting corruption. It is an assemblage of positive thinkers and people with moral rectitude committed to moving the nation forward. *(The Nation Newspaper 12th January, 2015. pp. 8***).**

Political actors use hate campaigns to negotiate their interaction with the electorate. In excerpt one, for example, the political actor justifies the activities of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP). This act of self-justification is a form of positive politeness strategy. The political actor is geared to present his party in good light so as to gain the affection, support and loyalty of the electorate. In other words, there is a conscious attempt to create a sense of social acceptance before the people. This explains why he justifies the political presentations of his party as that which is capable of addressing social problem. This is a face-saving strategy. This is necessary because the self image of the party is defended by convincing the masses that the party is committed to improving the welfare and interest of the nation at large. Presentation and defense of self are achieved through appeal to the need of the electorate.

The same logic operates in excerpt one above. The political actor exalts the political values of the party. This is also an expression of positive politeness strategy to give the party a kind of social face-lift. However, in excerpt three, there is a manifestation of negative politeness. The political actor uses an adverbial group 'despite threats from the opposition party' to impugn the values of the opposition party. This phrase expresses a threat to the face of the APC. The author goes further to present a positive account of his party's ideology which is that of maintaining high moral values towards issues of political interest in the country. Justification of self is also stressed in excerpt 4. The presidential candidate of the APC expresses positive

politeness by seeking approval of the masses. He appeals to the senses and cognition of the masses by resorting to the political composition of his party. This implies that the PDP lacks such political prowess to administer the country. This amounts to a face-threatening act. There is an attempt to kill the political self-esteem of the PDP.

6.2 Amplifying opponent's ineptitude

This strategy takes the form of passing unprintable remarks on political opponents during campaigns. Political actors see this act as a means of expressing politeness before their teeming supporters during campaigns. Examples of such from our data are:

Excerpt 5: Jonathan lacks the will to crush Boko Haram.

Excerpt 6: A vote for PDP would mean a vote for continuity of the problems bedeviling our dear country. PDP does not have what it takes to take us to the promise land. If you vote PDP, it means Nigeria will not change. *(The Guardian, 7th January, 2015. pp. 8)***.**

Excerpt 7: If you allow PDP to continue to run this country, you are ruining yourselves and you are ruining your country. *(The Nation News 9th February, 2015. pp. 8)*

Excerpt 8: The APC has no definite manifesto. The leaders are bereft of result-oriented initiatives. *(Nairaland News Online)*

Bitterness and hatred is perceived in the campaign speeches of the presidential candidates of the APC and PDP. A good example is established in the excerpt above. In a bid to present a positive self so as to be accepted by voters, Buhari tags Jonathan as someone who lacks the will to crush Boko Haram. Buhari attacks Jonathan's self-image by amplifying the fact that he (Jonathan) does not have the will to tackle the menace of Boko Haram. This is a face-threatening act which projects Jonathan as someone who is incapable of providing security for the masses. Buhari also dwells on the prevailing social situation in the country to pose threats to Jonathan's face. The challenges assailing the security system in the country gives grounds for overwhelming criticism of the Jonathan-led administration. The killing spree instituted by the Islamic fundamentalists, Boko Haram, sets the stage for unending castigation of Jonathan. The last straw that broke the camels' back was the incident in Chibok Secondary School, Borno State, Nigeria, in April 2014, when over 200 school girls were kidnapped. Buhari threatens Jonathan's face by making reference to the Chibok incident. Buhari's expression of negative politeness is underscored by the fact that he needs to present a positive self before the people. This he does by damaging Jonathan's face and amplifying his perceived political ineptitude. He presents himself as someone who is capable of improving the security situation of the country if returned elected.

In excerpt 2, the APC continues to paint a positive self-image by making recourse to prevailing economic situation in the country. He appeals to the masses to consider the APC as the only party that is capable of bringing Nigeria out of her present economic doldrums. In excerpt 3, there is a conscious attempt to single out the PDP as the cause of the nation's woes. This negative impoliteness expression is targeted at presenting a positive image of the APC. Buhari charges the electorate to desist from voting the PDP as that singular act could foment unending disaster for the nation. In excerpt 8, negative politeness is expressed as Jonathan questions the sincerity, definiteness and purposeful leadership proclaimed by the APC. The

statement threatens the face of the APC as per its planned goals for the nation. This statement is capable of making the APC to lose its face before the electorate.

6.3 Appealing to History

One of the effective weapons of political campaigns as revealed in the data is deliberate recourse to historical antecedents. Political actors make constant allusions to historical occurrences in a bid to either make positive presentation of self or make negative presentation of others. There are constant reminders of the political conducts, actions, programmes or ideologies of the opponents when they were in office. History is engaged in order to create a sense of trust, integrity and respect before the electorate. In these data, historical allusions are used as a form of bitterness and hate in the campaign speeches. The use of allusions is aimed at projecting political opponents in bad light. Examples abound in the following excerpts:

Excerpt 9: Is it the Buhari that cannot even remember his own phone number that can change the economy? He ruled between 1983 and 1985. We cannot run the government where somebody said he would throw people into jail. We cannot go back to old days. You are not a Medieval king. When he ruled, the initial objectives of Buhari intervention was betrayed as there was general deterioration in standard of living in the country. *(Tribune 9th 2015. pp. 8)*

Excerpt 10: The Federal Government collected money from the youth in the name of job. Nigeria got into Guinness Book of record that interviews were conducted at the stadia. Private consultants made over 8 billion naira. Unable to deal with the crisis, they asked you to go the stadia and died. And I ask you, was anybody punished? Was anything done to them? No! Something was done; the man who presided over this fraud was given a national honours. *(Daily Sun 16th 2015.) pp. 8*

In excerpt 9 above, Jonathan resorts to presenting a positive self-image of himself, his party and political ideology by using an impoliteness strategy to present the negative side of Buhari. This is achieved through making deliberate recourse to historical antecedent as it concerns his opponent. It could be recalled that Muhammadu Buhari ruled Nigeria between 1983 and 1985. He overthrew the administration of President Shehu Shagari, a democratically elected government and became the Military Head of State. Buhari's administration engendered discipline and zero tolerance for corruption. His administration launched a frontal attack on corrupt government officials. One negative reality of his administration was a drop in the standard of living of the people. Bearing this in mind, Jonathan premised his campaign speeches on the realities of Buhari's first stint as Head of State. The aim of dwelling on Buhari's past is to make a negative presentation of the political actor and make him (Buhari) lose his positive social value and respect. In excerpt 10, the APC alludes to the crisis that rocked the nation during Jonathan's administration. The Federal Government, through the Ministry of Interior, collected #1,000 from many jobless Nigerian youths, in the name of employment. It was an employment into the Nigeria Immigration Service. There were stampedes at the various screening centres, which led to the death of a number of the job seekers. Eventually, none of them was employed. The APC uses this unfortunate development to present a negative impression of the Jonathan-led administration. The intention of making such negative projection is to make a positive presentation of the APC.

6.4 Blaming

Political actors often blame their opponents during electioneering. Blame games are common in the campaign speeches of rival political parties. They cast aspersions

on the conducts and programmes of political opponents during political rallies in order to score cheap political points. Examples from our data include the following:

Excerpt 11: The PDP has worsened the unemployment situation in the country. The situation has become intolerable. There is insecurity, corruption and poor economy in the land. *(Premium Times News online, 23rd February, 2015.)*

Excerpt 12: For 16 years, PDP has ruled the country and the country has nothing to show for it. It is called 16 years of waste, misrule and backwardness. Therefore, anybody who has the interest of this nation at heart will stand for change, which wind is blowing across the country. *Naija News Online 4th March, 2015.)*

Considering the picture painted in the excerpt above, a negative presentation of the Jonathan-led administration is reflected. The PDP is alleged to have instituted massive unemployment, corruption and moribund economy. These are social problems that concern the common man in Nigeria. Since the common man is largely instrumental to voting in Nigeria, there is an attempt to threaten the face of the PDP by damaging its reputation before the masses. It is an attempt by APC to create a feeling of mistrust, disrespect and disloyalty in the people so that the PDP and its ideology would be renounced in its entirety. Even when these social problems had been in existence before the PDP came on board, the APC uses blaming as a strategy to discredit the PDP by holding it responsible for the social woes bedeviling the country. Blaming is used as a veritable impoliteness strategy to threaten the face of the PDP. In excerpt 12, a positive self is presented by the APC. This is achieved through the use of the slogan, 'change'. The use of the word connotes a reversal of the deteriorating social situation in Nigeria. It means a transformation from bad to good. It is meant to assure Nigerians that the APC is capable of redeeming the already battered image of the nation at the international community. It is also meant to paint the picture of gross mismanagement of the nation's income by the PDP. Blaming in this context is used to present the APC as the right party that can salvage the country. The APC uses this strategy to boost the corporate social image of its party by posing a threat to the face of the PDP.

6.5 Branding

Another form of impoliteness campaign strategy is branding. Adolphsen (2009:5) conceives of branding as 'any organization's activities aimed at the creation and fostering of a distinct brand image in consumers' minds'. He posits that such activities involve focusing resources 'on selected tangible and intangible attributes to differentiate the brand in an attractive, meaningful and compelling way for the targeted audience'. Branding is creatively used by political actors to achieve their set goals during campaigns. Evidence of this is present in the excerpt below:

Excerpt 13: On the other hand, APC press statements and that of their leaders have always been laced with bitterness, insults and inciting statements, symptomatic of frustration and disgruntled elements desperate for power.*(The Nation, 13th January, 2015. pp. 11)***.**

Excerpt 14: The PDP therefore charge the APC to purge itself, heed the advice of Nigerians and the international community and change its politics of bitterness and desperation. *(Punch Newspaper 11th February, 2015. pp. 8)*

Excerpt 15: The president of Federal Republic of Nigeria from the South south admitted that he has done nothing. He has failed. For 6 years, all he has done is to enrich himself.

Excerpt 16: If we stop corruption, which we can, the money ploughed back will be put into power industries, security, unemployment and APC will break the vicious cycle of corruption. *(Vanguard News 3rd February 2015. pp. 7)*

Political actors describe their opponents' views, opinions and ideologies using unacceptable and derogatory remarks. This act is a means of presenting themselves in good light. In excerpt 13, there is a manifestation of negative impoliteness form. The statement presents the APC as a party which is desperate about leadership. This perceived desperation manifests in their campaigns speeches which are said to be riddled with hate and bitterness. This is an attempt by the PDP to make a positive presentation of its party by posing a threat to the face of the APC. Branding is used as a negative impoliteness strategy to level allegation against, criticize and fault the activities of the APC. The rationale behind the use of such impoliteness strategy is to discredit the party's (APC) ideology. Furthermore, in excerpt 14, the PDP presents the APC as a party that lacks moral value. This is a threat to the face of the APC.

However, the APC makes a positive presentation of self by charging and imploring the APC to redirect their party's ideology towards accounting for the nation's interest. In excerpt 15, Jonathan is branded as a failed politician. This negative impoliteness is a form of bald-on-record which constitutes a threat to his face. As the then incumbent president seeking the votes of the electorate for a second term in office, a positive presentation of his face would have enabled him garner the needed support to ensure the accomplishment of his party's goals. The statement in excerpt 15 tends to threaten the social acceptance of the former president. In excerpt 16, the PDP government is branded as an organization or party which is corrupt. Jonathan is presented as the one who propagated corruptive tendencies in the nation's political scene.

There is the use of negative impoliteness to question the integrity, social prestige, sincerity and accountability of Jonathan. This constitutes a face-threatening act which is capable of discouraging the masses during elections. The APC says 'if we can stop corruption'. There is the manifestation of negative politeness form with the use of the inclusive pronoun, 'we'. Such implication is far-fetched. Rather, the plausible implication is that the masses are involved in the efforts to stamp out corruption. In other words, the fight against the scourge is a collective one. That is what guarantees success. He further uses a positive politeness by adding 'which we can'. This means we can stop corruption as a nation. Buhari uses positive politeness by presenting his party as a saint which will get rid of corruption in Nigeria. The APC harps on fighting the menace of corruption and bringing sanity to Nigeria. Buhari pledges to deliver on his promises by retrieving and reinvesting money stolen by politicians into the economy. The statement is meant to present a positive image of the APC.

6.6 Amplifying intellectual ineptitude

Political actors negotiate campaign speeches through appeal to intellectual deficit of political opponents. This kind of appeal to intellectual disability is geared towards presenting positive self and destroying the social worth of others. Examples from the data are presented below:

Excerpt 17: Wetin him (Buhari) dey find again? Him dey drag with him pickin mate. Old man wey no get brain./ What does Buhari want again? He is

competing with his son's mate. Brainless old man. *(Nairaland News,2nd February, 2015.)*

Excerpt 18: The school certificate presented by the presidential candidate of the APC was forged. They were fraudulently procured. *(Vanguard News 20th January, 2015. pp. 8)*

Excerpt 19: Possession of a PhD does not guarantee good governance. They are two different things. *(Nairaland News,7th January, 2015.)*

There is a conscious attack on Buhari as foregrounded in the excerpts above. The PDP presents him in a negative light by claiming that he is intellectually weak. The first excerpt questions Buhari's involvement in the presidential race given that he had once ruled the country in the 80s. This explains why Patience Jonathan, Jonathan's wife and a strong supporter of the PDP, questions his interest in the presidential seat. He wonders why he has to compete with his 'son'. He describes Buhari as an old man that is not brainy enough to handle the demands of the political office for which he aspires. This is a threat to Buhari's face. It is a strategy to dissuade prospective voters from voting for Buhari in the elections. The acts of abusing, castigating and ridiculing Buhari amount to a threat to his face. Negative impoliteness is also expressed in excerpt 18. Jonathan accuses Buhari of presenting fraudulently procured certificates. This constitutes a threat to Buhari's face. The goal of posing such negative impoliteness is to discredit and tarnish the self-image of Buhari. In the same vein, Buhari, as recorded in excerpt 19, resorts to negative impoliteness by asserting that Jonathan lacks the intellectual will to administer Nigeria. He stresses a dichotomy between being intellectually sound and possessing a PhD certificate. This statement implies that Jonathan's possession of a PhD certificate has not reflected in his style of administration. Buhari resorts to the use of such negative impoliteness in order to build a sense of acceptance and face.

6.7 Counter discourse

The term counter discourse refers to the use of language by political actors to discredit the views, claims and assertions made by their political opponents. This strategy is used to create control and challenge existing social order or oppositional views. Van Dijk (2001) sees it as a form representing reality by projecting the views of a group over others. This strategy manifests in the presidential campaigns in the 2015 general election in Nigeria. Examples from our data include:

Excerpt 20: APC preaches change. A party promoting abuses, hatred, violence, lies and verbal wars cannot bring about change. The party lacks good manifesto. *(Vanguard Newspaper 10th February, 2015. pp. 9)*

Excerpt 21: The much orchestrated change slogan of the APC is deceitful and baseless. *(Naija News Online, 5th January, 2015.)*

There is no gainsaying the fact that a frontal attack on the ideologies of the APC is launched by the PDP in the excerpts above. An exemplification of how political actors use counter discourse as a veritable weapon of mass campaign during the 2015 general elections in Nigeria is underscored in the excerpts. In excerpt 20, there is an indictment on the much preached change slogan of the APC. The ideology behind the use of the lexical item is to foreground the intent of the party to overhaul the Nigerian society if elected by the people. The use of the word 'change' expresses a positive politeness strategy which is aimed at seeking social acceptance and approval of the electorate. The PDP debunks the APC's change slogan by asserting that it is riddled

with hypocrisy and deceit. This is an instance of negative politeness expression. PDP deliberately debunks the 'change' slogan in order to redirect the thinking of the masses. It is a means of preventing the masses from being cajoled by the APC. This amounts to a face-threatening act. The PDP tends to threaten the face of the APC by claiming that the APC has been promoting violence, lies and verbal wars. These claims are made to present a negative image of the APC. The PDP equally asserts that the APC's change slogan is deceitful. The essence of expressing such negative impoliteness is to persuade prospective voters not to vote for the APC. There is a deliberate attempt to threaten the face of the APC.

6.8 Posing rhetorical questions

There is the deliberate use of rhetorical questions in the speeches to engage the psyche of the electorate. Political actors use rhetorical questions to pose threat to the face of their opponents during campaigns. This strategy manifests in the data under study. Examples are:

Excerpt 22: Will you allow poverty to continue in Nigeria?

Are you ready to save Nigeria from the present mess?

The PDP is toiling with the security of Nigerians. Are you ready to secure the nation? Do that through your votes.

Excerpt 23: Are you ready to put an end to corruption and restore the lost glory of our dear nation? *(Daily Trust, 11th 2015. pp. 7)*

Political actors employ questions to achieve interactional goals during electioneering. There is the use of rhetorical questions to control the mindset of the electorate. The questions take the form of reordering of the elements in the structure of the sentence such that the operators are fronted. The structure of the questions tends to restrict the scope of voters' responses to either affirm or disapprove of the question raised. The questions are used to present the PDP as being responsible for the social problem inherent in Nigeria. This strategy is aimed at persuading the electorate to have some forms of affiliation with the APC. It is meant to engineer voters to identify with the values, needs and ideologies of the APC. This is a form of negative impoliteness strategy aimed at making the PDP to lose the support of the people. In excerpt 22, there is the use of the inclusive 'you' to create a sense of belonging for prospective voters. This strategy is used to justify the place of the voters in the electoral process in the country. The form of interrogative construction in the excerpts is that which forces voters to implicitly respond in the affirmative. This explains why the political actors resort to negative impoliteness strategy, a form of bald-on-record to appeal to the voters to change the existing status quo through their votes. The strategy is meant to seek social recognition, acceptance and cooperation of the electorate by damaging the reputation, image and ideological value of their political opponents. This poses threat to the face of fellow political actors in the other party. The use of the rhetorical questions is also meant to challenge the voters on the present socio-economic realities in Nigeria. It is a strategy to woo the voters to be pragmatic in their efforts to ameliorate the system through their votes.

7.0 Conclusion

This paper has engaged the pragmatics of hate campaign in the presidential campaigns of the 2015 general elections in Nigeria. The framework of politeness phenomenon adopted in this paper reveal some infelicitous acts with which political actors negotiate the subject of political campaigns. The study has described how political campaigns are carried out with recourse to the Nigerian context. It is

customary for political actors to seek voters' attention during campaigns, but the manner in which they conduct the business is not in tandem with established and conventional political conduct. Political actors are quick to project the ideologies of their parties and cast aspersions on their opponents. There is a deliberate attempt to justify the appropriateness of their manifestoes and human resources so as to win the acceptance of the electorate. In their bid to affirm their political uprightness, they pose threat to the face of their opponents.

In all the aforementioned impoliteness strategies, political actors pose face-threatening acts to fellow political actors with aim of seeking the support of the electorate. The expression of impoliteness in the campaign speeches reveals the nature of politics in Nigeria as that which is riddled with hatred and bitterness. Politicians are preoccupied with damaging the reputation of fellow opponents rather than initiating good manifestoes that will impact on the lives of the masses. Instead of focusing their campaign speeches on issues of national interest, politicians are saddled with expressing politics of bitterness and hatred towards one another. This paper posits that the culture and ethics of electioneering in Nigeria should be overhauled such that prospective political actors should be armed with enlightenment or education on what good campaigns entail. Political parties are advised to make their education unit active. Political parties should be made to provide basic electoral education, both for members and voters. This should be complemented by the electoral body and the National Orientation Agency.

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