

Rhetorical Strategies and Ideology in Nigerian Government Minister-Citizen Interactions

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Abstract

Government minister-citizen interactions are political discourse events in Nigeria designed to inform people about government policies and appeal for positive responses. Previous studies have looked at political speeches, language of campaigns, manifestoes, and parliamentary debates, with little attention to these political interactions. This study therefore examines rhetoric and ideology in these interactions using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) approach by drawing relevant aspects from Fairclough's (1989), and van Dijk's (1998) models. Halliday's (1994) Systemic Functional Linguistic (SFL) also helped in explicating rhetoric from texts. The syntheses of these models see language, discourse and power as integral concepts, and their interpretation with regard to context and social practice. Data were sourced from interactions of the National Good Governance Tours (NGGT) of Nigeria through live-recordings. Analysis reveals simple words, short sentences and colloquial language for easy comprehension and to shorten distance between

participants. Incomplete sentences and incorrect grammatical expressions also existed to show speakers as involved in thought processing and speech simultaneously. This was evidenced by self-correction and non-fluency of speech. Prevalent ideologies include Nigerians' belief that government is for personal gains; cynicism/negativism about Nigeria by Nigerians due to bad governance, infrastructural decay, religious, ethnic and political crisis, terrorism and kidnappings. There were efforts by government functionaries to promote a radical shift in the mindset of Nigerians by pointing to achievements, and proposing that citizens actively participate in the governance process. Overall, the study reveals perception of Nigerians and steps by government to change them. We also see language patterns deployed to persuade.

Keywords: Rhetoric, Ideology, Political discourse interactions

Introduction

There is no better time to witness a heightened interest and a plethora of political discourse studies in Nigeria than now. This is because it is the first time the nation is witnessing increased and sustained political activities with about nineteen years of uninterrupted democracy. In 'Metaphors in Nigerian political discourse' Taiwo indicates that several issues shape political discourses in Nigeria. The different socio-political experiences the nation has passed through since independence influenced the discourses some of which can be summarized as: corruption and mismanagement of resources,

human right abuses, ethno-religious violence, resource-related crises, highly flawed electoral processes, power generation crises, and labour-related crises, insecurity of lives and property and terrorism.

Due to the issues identified above, there is a prevalent desire and yearning by most Nigerians for a positive change in all spheres of the nation: a change in the different sectors like the economy, infrastructure - the deplorable state of roads, poor electricity supply, inadequate housing, lack of job opportunities for the teeming youths, improved educational system, and the health system. Other areas in need of this change are: the issue of corruption in government agencies and the tackling of the increased security threats – the Boko-Haram saga in the north and kidnappings especially in the south.

With all the challenges enumerated, what is

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seemingly evident is that politicians are materially flourishing while the majority of the citizens lavish in abject poverty. Sequel to these, there has been growing apathy among many Nigerians about some government policies and promises, and a growing lack of confidence in the credibility and ability of those in government to deliver on the dividends of democracy. The prevalent situation in the country prompted the last administration of President Goodluck Jonathan to embark on interactive sessions between government agents and the citizenry to assuage disaffections and solicit support. This study therefore examines the platform of 'the National Good Governance Tours' (NGGT) with a view to determining the rhetorical strategies and ideologies prevalent therein.

Aim and objectives of the study

This study's aim is to examine interactions of the NGGT with a view to identifying the rhetoric strategies as well as the hidden ideology/ideologies embedded therein. The study will also ascertain the intention behind the interactions, and it is hoped that insights will be gained on how the interactions bring about greater belief and trust in the government, and thus foster greater collaboration and harmony amongst the citizenry. The study specifically seeks to meet the following objectives:

1. to identify rhetorical strategies deployed in the texts,
2. to examine the rhetorical features and the linguistic elements that realise them,
3. to identify the hidden ideology or ideologies in the interactions, and
4. to explain the ideologies in the light of the NGGT.

Review of related literature

Extant studies indicate that successive administrations have often come with promises and policies, from the federal, states and local government levels – and they do this with the use of language to persuade the people to accept them. Amongst the studies, Alo, in 'Lexical choices and values in political manifestoes in Nigeria' illustrates how political actors present these proposals to the public in the language that speaks of preferred norms and values in a bid to persuade (55). Several scholars, who have focused their research on the

Nigerian political discourse, have looked at different aspects as highlighted above, as they expose deficiencies, with the intention of steering resistance and mounting pressure on various governments to address such issues. Taiwo (223) cites how Awonuga examined the linguistic features in the broadcast to the nation by Olusegun Obasanjo, the former president of Nigeria, on August 25, 2002. His analysis reveals a discourse characterized by the use of personal pronouns, coupling, strings of words, analogy, repetition and eight types of metaphor. A similar study to Awonuga's, but more restricted in focus, is Adetunji (177), who analysed two speeches by Obasanjo, focusing on his use of deixis. Adetunji thus demonstrates through the speeches how politicians use rhetoric to associate and dissociate themselves from their actions. Opeibi looks at the negative political advertising in Nigerian newspapers and provides a structural and functional description of the emerging trends in negative advertising during political campaigns. He observes that most political office seekers abandon positive, issue-focused, image-building campaigns, and engage in rhetorical strategies of direct attack on their opponents (3). His findings are corroborated by Taiwo (220), who identifies political satire as the major campaign strategy of Nigerian politicians during the 2007 general elections. Also, Opeibi discusses how Nigerian politicians demonstrate their multilingual creativity by showing how politicians engage both English and indigenous languages, alongside the pidginized version of English in their bid to persuade. Alo states that rhetorical gambits, vague terminologies and concepts of power are aspects that politicians use in their manifestoes to masquerade personal and hidden motives (20). Taiwo (228) shows how metaphors help to shape the structure of political categorization and argumentation. Guided by Lakoff and Johnson's theory of Conceptual Metaphors, Taiwo identifies the nation, politicians and politics as conceptual metaphors, with 'the nation' conceptualized as 'a family' and 'a person', 'politicians as builders' and 'politics' as both 'a battle' and 'a journey', and cites their deployment by Nigerian politicians as an indication to exploit their persuasive and rhetorical goals.

This present study shares the same position

with the previous studies on the Nigerian political discourse, but its context differs. The NGGT is characterized by mainly unscripted and spontaneous spoken discourse; this is against formal speeches read from scripts, interviews, written texts and other forms of media genres as previous studies have shown. The context of this study is a platform that indicates how the government, through its agent, is trying to counter and surmount dominant mindsets of apathy and disenchantment, and to convince the populace of their bid to deliver the dividends of democracy that Nigerians long for.

Rhetoric

This is the effective use of language for the purpose of persuasion. The term 'rhetoric' has a heritage dating back to the Greek and Roman eras; it is held that the Greeks started rhetoric and the Romans improved on it. The belief was that they relied on rhetoric as the art by which the orator got the business of the world done and at the same time carved out a special position for self in the state. They saw rhetoric as the power with which to move people to action. Aristotle, acclaimed to be the father of rhetoric, saw it as a discipline that aimed at exerting a persuasive action (Akpan 251). In Aristotelian perspective, rhetoric is a means of finding "all the available arguments" on a given issue, and this involves the deployment of logos, ethos and pathos to realize it. What follows is that once persuasion is realized, rhetoric has achieved its end. The underlying notion above validates the idea that rhetoric has style and form and, by extension, is seen as a "body of knowledge and intellectual discipline which is concerned with the effective expression of thought" (Winterowd 53).

As we interact with people daily, sometimes we are faced with situations where we seek their support and cooperation to accomplish our aims and goals. Since we often cannot coerce them into giving their support, we resort to using language for the purpose of persuading them. Words thus matter. Therefore, the careful selection of words is important because it is not just about the words, but how effective the words are to create the desired effect in the people's minds.

The purpose of rhetoric is thus to persuade. In order to realise that, it deploys strategies to structure

or restructure the way people see, feel, think, or act especially where there is conflict. This is because the focus is to resolve conflict, and create harmony. Rhetoric can either be verbal or non-verbal, and both modes can be exploited to arouse feelings, heighten desire and interest, and foster relationships. Sometimes, it does this by naming, labelling a particular phenomenon and putting it alongside other members of that category with the intention of providing the audience with a new experience, which are all designed to persuade by altering their feelings about the tagged category, and hence their evaluation of it. Language thus is the means to realize it.

Ideology

A universally accepted definition of ideology is hard to arrive at. This is because the concept of ideology has different shades of meaning, depending on the discipline one is coming from. Generally, ideology is a system of belief, doctrine, values, ideas, and opinions that shape the way a person or group think, act and view the world. Olowe (3) opines that "ideology means belief systems that help to justify the actions of those in power...."

In critical linguistic theory, ideologies are embedded in texts (cf. Fairclough 1992, 1995; van Dijk (8). van Dijk asserts that formulations of ideologies in their social reproduction are discourses, which include language use, text and talk as manifested in the media. Thus, language and ideology can be said to be intricately related. Any group of people that share an ideology therefore share a common set of ideas as to what the world is like, and since ideologies are akin to language, it is normal that as people dwell together, they construct social realities that fit their beliefs. Moreover, when a majority of the members of the society share a common belief or ideology in this case, it is referred to as the dominant ideology of the society. Ideology therefore becomes the prescribed way of life in a society. In addition, every society is bound to display a dominant ideology that most members of the society share, consciously or unconsciously. To figure out such ideology however, one needs to cast one's mind back to experiences and the history of the people, and the present to decipher its evolution.

According to Littlejohn (3), most societies have mixed ideologies. He thus categorizes three types of ideologies namely, dominant, subordinate and radical ideologies. The dominant ideology is the idea which is held by most of the people in the society, while the subordinate ideology is a set of ideas that agrees with the dominant ideology in the main, but argues for a limited amount of change. In addition, the radical ideology is the set of ideas that is in direct opposition to the dominant ideology, and sets out to replace the dominant ideology with a new one. Over time, such radical ideology if subsistent can grow to become dominant, and the dominant can dissolve and disappear.

Language and ideology

Language is a very significant concept in human life and endeavour; it is a means by which ideas, emotions, perceptions, intentions and desires are communicated from one person/group to another. Human beings are daily interfaced with encounters that require they transmit information that conveys intentions, and desires, or expresses emotions and/or even performs a series of actions. According to Halliday (9), "The main channel through which the patterns of living are transmitted from man to man is language." He further reiterates that language is equally useful in detecting an individual's stand and perception. This is because language is not experienced in isolation but rather in relation to context – which entails the background knowledge of the person(s) involved in the speech, the period, the socio-situational context, the psychological context and even the linguistic context of the speech event (Halliday 28). This goes to affirm the assertion that language indeed does not just reflect the reality we see, but rather is used to create the reality (Taiwo 20). As a result, no word or speech event is neutral, but carries the power and reflects the interest which the language users carry.

Language, ideology and politics

Language as we have seen is principally a phenomenon of social experience, and human beings, being social beings need and use language to convey and express feelings, ideas, opinions, beliefs, impressions and sentiments among themselves (All these make up ideologies). This tool of language is what politicians need and use to inform, instruct,

direct, assert and persuade the public to gain and sustain power. Beard (2) states that, "... language is used by those who wish to gain power, those who wish to exercise power and those who wish to keep power" to exert control. Thus, language, ideology and politics are so inter-twined and inseparable, and all go together.

Political discourse interactions

Political discourse interactions are communicative exchanges that serve social encounters, where the social processes, which realise social activity unfold in stages and in doing so achieve certain goals. Such discourse interactions are natural with language used by speakers in real situations and contexts to achieve certain goals. They are spoken forms of language that naturally occur, which are not being read from scripts but produced as the discourse encounter progresses. As such, they constitute what can be termed spoken discourse.

Political discourse is that field of discourse analysis which focuses on discourse in political forums - such as debates, speeches, hearings and interactions, as the phenomenon of interest. Political discourse includes the informal exchange of reasoned views as to which of several alternative courses of action should be taken to solve a societal problem and resolve issues. This is against other forms of discourses like religious discourse or medical discourse that have their separate forms, features and goals. The present study is situated in political discourse interactions. Its data are taken from political interactions, and the discourse encounters are naturally occurring speech events.

Methodology

The data for this study are sourced from political discourse interactions in the National Good Governance Tour (NGGT) of Nigeria. The tour, intended to go round the thirty-six states and Abuja, at the time of this study, has covered twenty states and Abuja, in four (4) out of the six (6) geopolitical zones of the country: North Central, South-East, and South-South and part of the North-East. To this end therefore, this study adopts a random selection of an interaction from one state in the four geo-political zones so far covered, thereby looking at four interactions.

These interactions were sourced through

downloads, and live recordings on national television and radio. Some of the interactions, especially the much earlier tour had clips uploaded on the website of the ministry of information. The complete interaction at Ilorin, Kwara State was thus downloaded online. While some were recorded during the live proceedings transmitted on national radio and televised, the other interactions, which were in audio format, were played over, listened to, and transcribed verbatim. The transcribed version became the source from which data for this study stemmed from.

Theoretical Framework

This study adopts an eclectic approach that is characteristic of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Aspects of Fairclough's (1989, 1992, 1995) model of CDA supported by relevant aspects of van Dijk's (1993a, 1993b,) model are adopted in explicating hidden ideologies from the text. Halliday's (1985, 1994) Systemic Functional Linguistic (SFL) theory was used in the functional interpretation of meaning. Fairclough's approach, which is the bedrock of this theoretical framework also draws upon Halliday's SFL, and sees language, discourse and power in society as integral to sociological concepts. By this, the approach to language and discourse interpretation is both about context, and language as a form of social practice (Fairclough 2).

The approach to CDA here has three perspectives in analysing data in the discourse interactions. They are *text*, *discourse practice*, and *socio-cultural practice* (Fairclough 57; Chuliaraki and Fairclough 113). Also van Dijk (17) essentially sees the analysis of discourse as ideology analysis because "Ideologies are typically, though not exclusively, expressed and reproduced in discourse and communication...." His approach for analyzing ideologies has three parts: social analysis, cognitive analysis, and discourse analysis (30). For van Dijk, it is the *socio cognition* and personal cognition that mediate between society and discourse. He defines social cognition as "the system of mental representations and processes of group members" (1985:18). In this sense, "ideologies ... are the overall, abstract mental systems that organize ... socially shared attitudes" (18); Ideologies, thus, "indirectly influence the

personal cognition of group members" in their act of comprehension of discourse among other actions and interactions (19); He calls the mental representations of individuals during such social actions and interactions "models". For him, "models control how people act, speak or write, or how they understand the social practices of others" (van Dijk 22).

Data Analysis

A. The National Good Governance Tour (NGGT) of Nigeria – *Source of data*

The National Good Governance Tour (NGGT) started on September 20, 2012. The tour, according to official comments from the federal ministry of information website, was a collaborative project designed by the Federal Ministries of Information and National Planning. The tour, which started in Abuja, the Federal Capital Territory, had the blessings of the Office of the Special Adviser to the President on Project Monitoring and Evaluation, as well as the thirty-six (36) state governments through the Nigerian Governors' Forum. Highlights of the tour included physical inspection of federal, state and local government development projects by a team: ministers and governors with their agents, the mass media, civil society organizations and other citizens. It ended with a 'Citizens' Forum' that engaged in stocktaking and evaluation based on findings in the tour, and other issues of governance.

Text Analysis - *showing its composition, cohesion and coherence*

On 4th October 2012, the then minister of information, Mr. Labaran Maku, addressed the people of Kwara State at the end of the tour, to give his assessment of the tour, and answered questions posed by citizens of the state at the citizens' forum and from other persons via social media: emails, text messages and twitter. On 22nd of February 2013, he was in Asaba, Delta State having a similar discourse encounter, and in Enugu, the Enugu State capital on March 2013 on another discourse encounter.

The interactions and speeches mainly adopted simple words and relatively short sentences; the language is easy and colloquial. The audience at the speech events was varied, cutting across social strata, hence, the adoption of simple spoken

English as the mode of exchange in the interactions. The subject matter of the speech is equally varied, covering different aspects of the country, and the state. It was a rendering of account of what the governments at both federal and state levels have done, and are still doing to bring about the desired dividends of democracy. He talked on the essence of the NGGT, its concept, initiation and progress. On things he has seen and observed in the states: road infrastructure, agricultural development and the aviation sector, he highlights the achievements being made by the government and other challenges.

Some rhetorical strategies used in the speeches include the use of lexico-semantic devices such as lexical repetitions to emphasize ideas portrayed and series of pronominal references and conjunctions to achieve cohesion and coherence. There was a profuse use of declarative sentences for the purpose of educating and informing the people on government activities and achievements in order to garner support and win confidence from the populace. Direct address was the main tool used to create warmth and a friendly atmosphere in order to achieve solidarity with the audience, which enhances persuasion.

Transitivity Analysis – *demonstrating the verbs of action in texts*

The Ideational function is represented in the text by transitivity. It is the basic semantic system that construes the world of experience of a speaker to a recognizable set of process types. Halliday (1973) divides these processes into six types: material, mental, relational, behavioural, verbal and existential processes. Instances of such in the texts include the following:

Excerpt 1:

...another objective of **this tour is to give the people a say**...

- NGGT Kwara State 4/10/12

This is an instance of a material process capturing one of the essences of the NGGT. Material processes usually are indicated by a verb expressing an action, concrete or material, from an actor to a receiver, referred to as the goal. In the above the 'tour' serving in the noun position is 'giving' – verb,

the people – object, a say.... This is to be construed in the fact that Nigerians before now had no say in the affairs of governance. Those in governance elected or those that seized power via the barrel of the gun governed with impudence.

Excerpt 2:

...the East West road is one of the most difficult roads that this government inherited ah! And **we** (Actor) have been working (material process) on that road (goal)... the president, the government, **we** (Actor) are committed (Mental process) to the completion of the road, (goal) and more activity will be witnessed there from this year. **You** (actor) will see (Mental process) it (goal) yourselves...

- NGGT Delta State 22/2/13

Here also, we notice a series of transitivity processes from material to mental which the actors highlighted to signify their starting point. These forms of actions abound in the texts with the above typifying their existence.

The following reveal an aspect of the verbal processes captured in the texts:

Excerpt 3:

...**I want to say** that I am here as a member of the civil society organization... **let me quickly say** without fear or equivocation that **what we are saying** in the course of this tour remains what we have seen. **I want to say** this because we have come in this country to the point where people feel that the easiest way to gain popularity is to say negative things about government and leadership. And **I say** that the hallmark of civil society movement does not lie in negativism...

-NGGT Kwara State 4/10/12

Verbal processes are characterized by the participant roles as it relates to the verbal process of the 'sayer' (the speaker) and 'receiver' (addressee) and the 'verbiage' (what is said). Example of verbs that can operate in verbal processes include 'say', 'claim', 'assert', 'reply', 'suggest', 'report', 'promise', etc. The example above highlights some of the

verbal processes as seen in the texts as understood through the functional interpretation of the texts as espoused by Halliday (1985).

Modality Analysis – showing the degree of possibility and willingness to act by speakers

Modality refers to a speaker's attitude or opinion towards a proposition expressed by a sentence. It could either be positive or negative and the level of politeness low, median or high. For Halliday modality operates within the interpersonal function of language, and Halliday's (339) semantic distinction of modal verbs according to their value indicates that modal such as “must” is significantly high, and “will” is in the median category. Example of such could be expressed in the following verb forms:

Table 1 MODAL VERBS

	Low Politeness	Median Politeness	High Politeness
Positive	Can, may, could, might, dare	Will, would, should, shall	Must, ought to, need, has/had to
Negative	Needn't, doesn't/didn't, need to, have to	Won't, wouldn't, shouldn't, isn't/wasn't	Mustn't, ought not to, can't, couldn't, may not, might not, hasn't, hadn't

Wang (259) notes that compared to other verbs, modal verbs are more easily identified and understood and can be more easily accepted in spoken discourse because at the time of listening to the speech, there is no time for the audience to reflect. The following are extracted from our data for illustration:

Excerpt 4:

...the people **must** have their say... that is why we consciously designed this program to inform you... so that you **will** take advantage of some of these programs and improve on their implementation. ...the Abuja light rail... we **will** be delivering by

January...

-NGGT Kwara State 4/10/12

... We **will** work on that and I **will** resource with my colleague in the ministry of power. We **will** forward the answers to you... we **will** still call you to discuss the progress... we **will** do everything possible to ensure that actions are taken so that Sapele that generates power has some of those power to energize itself development.

-NGGT Delta State 22/2/13

Above are few out of the numerous modal verbs in the text under study used to express the interpersonal function embodied by the speaker in different speech situations espoused using Halliday's functional interpretation in SFL.

A. Extracts showing prevailing Ideologies in the interactions

Excerpt 5

...what we have set out to achieve is simply *to promote good governance, to promote democracy*. And you cannot lead in a democratic society without involving the people...The purpose of the NGGT therefore is *to project what the federal, states and the local governments are doing to promote the welfare of the people*, through the numerous things and projects and other welfare packages for the people.

-NGGT Kwara State 4/10/12

The excerpt above was made by the then minister of information to set the tone for the commencement of the NGGT, by projecting its essence. The dominant mindset, belief and attitude of most Nigerians as indicated from the excerpt above are that of apathy. It reveals how people have looked up to governments for long but have got little or nothing to show for it in terms of development, and have lost trust and hope in the ability of government to deliver on its mandate for credible leadership, and needed infrastructure, hence, the apathetic disposition described of the populace. What the government was out to achieve through this tour was to change the people's mindset, and to get them

involved in governance by showing them what the government is doing, and also convincing them that the government is working.

Excerpt 6

...This tour is non partisan. It is not about any party. That is why all the thirty six (36) state governors, no matter which parties they were elected from are part of this tour...And that is why we have brought civil society across board so that this tour will be a true assessment tour of the progress and the challenges being faced by the federal, states and local governments in implementing projects and programs for the good welfare of Nigerians.

-NGGT Kwara State 4/10/12

From the excerpt above, another prevailing mindset that can be seen amongst Nigerians is that, even where things are done by the government, one must belong to the ruling party to have and enjoy such benefit(s). The minister of information again sets out to counter that notion, and portrays the administration's desire to be fair and equitable in its affairs.

Excerpt 7

...Another objective of this program is to give the people *a say*, because this is democracy. It is no longer military rule. It is not for people to just be led. It is not sufficient for leaders to lead the people. The people must have *their say*; the people must express their opinion. The people must be mobilized to be part of the developmental process.

...The job of developing Nigeria truly, *it belongs to* the people. *It belongs to* the teacher in the classroom; *it belongs to* the farmer on the farm; *it belongs to* the doctor and the nurse in the hospital; *it belongs to* the artisan in his workshop; *it belongs to* all Nigerians, in all their various professional places for the development of Nigeria.

...No governor can do a miracle unless the people support him. No president, no prime minister can do anything. It is the people

that develop a nation. And that is why we consciously designed this program to inform you and constantly about government programs and policies and to bring you on board so that you will take advantage of some of these programs and improve on their implementation.

-NGGT Kwara State 4/10/12

From the excerpts above, it is deducible also that due largely to the long, oppressive and dictatorial presence of the military in Nigeria, who rule by subjugation, the prevalent mindset and belief of most Nigerians was to sit back and let the government initiate and do everything. But the minister again opines that such orientation has to change. The people have to be involved, from the decision making to the implementation of policies that will bring about the needed development as no government can do it all.

Excerpt 8

...What we have seen in this place is the spirit of continuity. (Applause) not only from Kwara's State, when we went round Abuja, the same spirit exists in Abuja – FCT capital, and we have seen the same thing in Kwara's State. That is to say, majority of the projects we visited since we arrived this place are projects that were in existence before now, (applause). If there is this spirit of continuity, our railway system will not be in this state of a comatose system that we met it. If there is this spirit of continuity, our roads will not be as bad as we have it today...

...Let me quickly say without fear or equivocation that what we are saying in the course of this tour remains what we are seen [sic]. I want to say this because we have come in this country to the point where people feel that the easiest way to gain popularity is to say negative things about government and leadership... I will have to insist that whatever we see that is good, we will not shy away from saying 'this is good'... and when there is need for criticism... we will criticize accordingly...

-NGGT Kwara State 4/10/12

The above extracts from the president of RATAWU and Engr. Nwosu, the president, Transformation Movement Nigeria - a civil society organization in the interaction at the NGGT town hall meeting in Kwara State also buttress the fact that there is general apathy and lack of confidence and trust in the government to deliver any meaningful dividend of democracy. But their opinion as depicted in the excerpts is that the situation is changing, and they are attesting to such facts, and by extension are calling for a change of attitude.

Excerpt 9

The interactions in the extracts that follow are from the town hall meeting in Asaba, Delta State on 22nd February, 2013.

...I think this is a very good exchange; this is the purpose of the good governance tour. That we will offer citizens the opportunity to ask questions and get answers from their government. And to hear your own suggestions...

...somebody talked about power in Sapele, Our mummy, she said, power has been flying over Sapele, (echo – Yes!) power has not come down to Sapele (echo – No!). And she is very worried about that. And now that Sapele is producing power for Nigeria, it must have power.

...yesterday, when we were at the plant, the youths of the area also asked that question... what is going on in Sapele? Why is it generating power and it does not have light in the environment?

...Now there was a question on... by the youths, one of those vibrant youths that spoke...

...there was a question on whether the 'SURE P' money is being diverted by the PDP...?

...Now I was asked a question on the dredging of the Niger by my elder eeh! Colleague eeh! I think Mr. Willy Bosimoh, as to whether the Niger has been dredged properly?

-NGGT Delta State 22/2/13

From the foregoing excerpt, we observe how citizens hold those in government accountable, as they demand answers for actions or in-action from the government. That is the purpose of NGGT, to engage and hold those in governance accountable. Unlike what hitherto obtained, the mindset being proposed here is one where everyone has the right to contribute to governance by deciding what should be or should not be and find out why some things are the way they are.

Excerpt 10

...I am not the one directly in charge of running Sapele, and I do not know the entire circumstances, but I offer to carry the message to the ministry of power, to find out what is happening in Sapele, why it is generating power and it does not have power in its environment.

...On the East – West road,... we met with the contractor yesterday... Celtraco... told us they are mobilizing and going back to site with high activity. ...the president, the government we are committed to the completion of the road, and more activity will be witnessed there from this year. You will see it yourselves.

...The 'SURE-P' money is divided into three (3) portions from the federation account. The Local governments take their money – I hope you are aware? ...the federal government does not dictate to them how the money is to be spent. The state governments take their own money directly. And the ministry of finance has been advertising what... is being collected throughout the country. So the federal government is not in charge at all about 'SURE-P'...

...The dredging of the Niger, the capital dredging has been completed, I can tell you that... and there is a subsisting contract ah! For maintenance dredging to keep sewage out of it, Baggies are moving up the Niger. ...this is a technical issue which you can't just stand by the side of the river and make

conclusions...

-NGGT Delta State 22/2/13

The extracts above are sequel to the demands and probes made by citizens in the interactions. They thus would want explanations for the actions and inactions of the government. It is a display of a steward accounting for his stewardship. It is argued that a mindset is being created and crafted by the NGGT, which is suggested by the words that the citizens must have a say, and contribute in issues of governance. This is a clear deviation from what was obtained and seemed a norm – where citizens had no such privileges of asking questions and demanding answers and proffering solutions on issues of governance in the country.

Excerpt 11

...so the federal government is not in-charge of the 'SURE-P' program. The federal government only takes its portion, the states are taking their own, and the local governments are taking their own. And no question is being asked about what is going on at the other levels. I am the only one telling you that the federal government is using its own to give you jobs, so it is left for all of us to demand for how the money is being used...

...I thought it is important that you know, that yes we have challenges. I can tell you at the federal level that there are challenges, why? Almost all our roads are looking for attention at the same time...

...it is a pity that in some places the roads have not been delivered, but there is renewed activity and more funding is going on into our road system...

...and so we ask for patience by Nigerians to understand that a government that is facing an emergency in power, an emergency in rail – it has never worked, emergency in all areas. We must prioritize...

...we are fixing these things, they may not be going as fast as we want, but the president

and all of us are committed to ensuring that the three levels of transportation are put in place for Nigerians.

-NGGT Delta State 22/2/13

From the excerpts above, we notice also that the government through its officials are decrying and showing their challenges to the citizenry. This is done to whip up sentiments and understanding from the people towards the government and its programs and activities and the beliefs they are trying to pass across. The mindset is that the socio-political situation as indicated in the current dispensation is changing; even though the government appears slow in fulfilling its promises, it is due to the enormity of the challenges.

Conclusion

From the foregoing, we decipher that the interactions of the NGGT were basically made of simple words and short sentences instead of complex and difficult ones. There is also an indication of simple sequences or phrases, often incomplete sentences, and sometimes incorrect grammatical expressions. These are some of the characteristics of spoken language that are found in the interaction of NGGT. Also, the language is colloquial, and as a result, it shortens the conversational distance between the interlocutors. These are some of the characteristics of spoken discourse interaction that are naturally occurring, which political discourses of this nature fall within. Admittedly, spoken language is typically less structured than the written form. The purpose is for ease of comprehension.

Understandably, speaker(s) are both involved in processing of thoughts and delivery of speech, which is why they sometimes intersect their speeches with 'eeh!' 'aah' 'well' 'I think' or brief pauses, to enable them complete such thoughts before proceeding to the next aspect of the speech event. Also probably because there is so much to talk about, or one is obsessed with so many words, as they display a tendency to want to produce all at once, there is usually some sort of self correction and non fluency of speech. That explains why often in spontaneous speech situation, strict grammatical rules are often not observed but that notwithstanding the pragmatic relevance of words

and their associative meaning as used in context aid the comprehension of intended meaning.

Also observed in the texts are the prevalent or dominant ideologies held amongst most Nigerians. These ideologies reflected in the beliefs of the people are that governments in the country are concerned mainly for their personal gains and not for the country's development, and better living condition of the masses. There is also a national cake, and successive governments go in for their share and not to develop the nation. The populace are generally believed to have no say or control of how those in government manage the nation's resources. These ideologies were uncovered using CDA as manifested in the purpose of the NGGT to promote a radical shift in the perception and mindset of Nigerians, thus, proposing the positive attitude of participatory governance – where every citizen has a say and is actively involved in the act of governance. These words by the honourable minister of information, in one of the NGGT interactions, buttress this:

Another objective of this program is to give the people a say, because this is democracy. It is no longer military rule. It is not for the people to just be led. It is not sufficient for leaders to lead the people. The people also must be mobilized to be part of the development process... the job of developing Nigeria truly, it belongs to the people. It belongs to the teacher in the classroom; it belongs to the farmer on the farm; it belongs to the doctor and the nurse in the hospital; it belongs to the artisan in his workshop; it belongs to all Nigerians, in all their various professional places for the development of Nigeria.

As observed earlier, radical ideologies are set of ideas that are in direct opposition to the dominant ideology, and set out to replace the dominant ideology with the new if they subsist and are allowed to grow. Thus the mindset or ideology being crafted by the NGGT is that which every citizen can contribute to national governance and a radical change from the military rule where everyone is subjugated with the barrel of the gun to freedom of expression.

Another prevalent ideology is that due to the so much publicized negative news about Nigeria and in Nigeria, from bad governance to infrastructural decay, to religious, ethnic and political crisis and lately terrorism, assassinations and kidnappings, one least thinks of developmental strides of any sort in the country. This is a clear instance of another radical change in ideology and mindset that is counteracted by the NGGT. Again the honourable minister's words buttress this:

...it is important that you know, that yes we have challenges... almost all the roads are looking for attention at the same time throughout the country... but there is renewed activity and more funding is going into our road system, so we will ask for patience by Nigerians, to understand that a government that is facing emergency in power, an emergency in rail, it has never worked, emergency in all areas, we must prioritize. And so we are fixing those things, they may not be as fast as we want, but the president and all of us are committed to ensuring that the three levels of transportation are put in place for Nigerians.

The whole reason for the NGGT as enunciated is to showcase the achievements, level of progress and challenges faced by the various tiers of government in administering governance. It is also geared towards giving Nigerians a chance to lend their voice and contribute in the administration's governance process by asking questions, seeking clarifications and offering suggestions where applicable. In this way, the desire and intentions of the government are made known to the populace and at the same time the confidence of the people towards the government is being built as they are shown the achievements and level of works being done by the government. This is done in order to further build trust in the government and to garner support. It is an attempt at persuading the people to accept and support the policies of the government. We also discovered that CDA is indeed a tool that can be used to explore the relationship between language and ideology of political interactions.

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