

DISCURSIVE STRATEGIES OF POWER IN SELECTED SPEECHES OF FORMER NIGERIAN PRESIDENTS

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Abstract

Previous studies on pronouns have largely focused on their grammatical functions as substitutes for nouns, noun phrases, or other pronouns, with limited attention given to their ideological and power-related functions in political discourse. This study addresses this gap by examining how pronouns are strategically deployed in political speeches to construct, negotiate, and reflect power relations. Specifically, the study investigates the types of pronouns used in selected political speeches and analyses how these pronoun choices reveal underlying power dynamics and ideological positions. The study adopts Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), drawing on Fairclough's (1989) framework, to analyse four political speeches delivered by two Nigerian Heads of State—one military and one civilian—during their respective administrations. Through a qualitative analysis of the speeches, the study identifies the recurrent use of personal pronouns such as *I*, *we*, *you*, and *they* as discursive resources for legitimizing authority, creating solidarity, assigning responsibility, and establishing distinctions between leaders, followers, and perceived opponents. The findings reveal that pronouns function beyond their traditional grammatical roles; they serve as powerful linguistic tools for constructing political identities, reinforcing ideological positions, and negotiating power relations between political actors and their audiences. The analysis further demonstrates that military and civilian leaders employ pronouns differently in line with their leadership styles and political objectives. The study contributes to knowledge by extending the understanding of pronouns from a purely grammatical category to a significant discourse-pragmatic resource in political communication. It also enriches Critical Discourse Analysis scholarship by providing empirical evidence on the role of pronoun choice in the construction and maintenance of power relations within the Nigerian political context.

Keywords: Critical Discourse Analysis, Political Discourse, Pronoun Usage, Power Relations Political Identity Construction

Introduction

Language is the quintessential instrument of persuasion. The analysis of discourse is the analysis of language in use. The majority of studies in Critical Discourse Analysis focus exclusively on one aspect of the language/power relation, language as a context for power and domination. Fairclough (1994:50) argues that power is 'implicit within everyday social practices' and that it is predominant 'at every level in all domains of life'. Chaika (1994:4) remarks that every discourse is 'effective ways of maintaining power relations

within society. Fowler (1985) contends that language continuously constitutes the statuses and roles upon which people base their claims, to exercise power, and the statuses and roles which seem to require subservience. Thus, this study investigates how pronouns are used to reflect power relations in political speech, using Fairclough's CDA approach model.

One of the claims of Critical Discourse Analysis is that language users' express power within social and political context (van Dijk, 1993: 47). It therefore means that the context of political

utterances helps linguists to describe and interpret their relevance as forms of social actions enacting power and dominance within the human social structure. Schaffner (1996:210) further opines that 'any political action is prepared, accompanied and influenced by language'. Language is thus, a power instrument for those interested in controlling people's ideas. According to this line of reasoning, the wide range of potential linguistic choices a politician can make to build up his or her discourse may have a crucial effect in shaping an ideology that will lead people to more easily accept his or her argument.

Power, on the other hand, is a complex and abstract concept, and an infinitely important influence on our lives. The whole research effort in CDA are centred on the discursive dimension of use and abuse of power. Power is defined as the ability of its holders to exact compliance or obedience of other individuals to their will (Thomas, et al. 2004:10). This definition elaborates that the power is used by someone who has more powerful position than the others by using language as the medium to apply it. They use it as a manifestation of their power because language is a reflection of how people in society see each other (Blaske, 1991:1). Wareing (2000:11) describes power as 'the force in society that gets things done and by studying it, we can identify who controls what, and for what benefit'. CDA sees power as a central condition in social life. Discourse and texts are therefore seen as interpersonal sites of struggle for dominance.

Thus, political speech can be defined as a speech associated with either struggle for power or maintenance and control of it. As a sub-genre of political discourse is motivated by the desire to persuade and convince the nation, or society and familiarize the audience with their socio-economic policies, plans and actions (Denton and Hahn, 1986, and Teittinen, 2000). It is a speech delivered at a political forum with the aim of influencing the behaviour, attitudes or political opinions of the general public or target audience. In the words of Uvehammer (2005) the main goal of political speech is to convince the listeners of the speech maker's opinions by choosing the most powerful linguistic devices...

Thus, from the above explanation, this paper investigates how Power relation is reflected in the use of pronouns in Political Speech of two Nigerian Presidential Speeches, with the view to identifying and comparing the kind of pronouns used and to analysis how these pronouns are used to reflect power relations. The Theoretical Framework adopted for this study is the Norman Fairclough (1989) CDA theory approach of Discourse Analysis, based on its three-tier analytical framework of: Descriptive, Interpretation and Explanation. This is because Fairclough theory shows a relationship between the text, discursive practice and the social-cultural event, which makes it suitable for this study.

Literature Review

Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) can be used for describing, analysing, interpreting, and critiquing social life reflected in text. CDA aims to systematically explore relationships between discursive practices, texts and events and wider social and cultural structures, relations, and processes. Precise analysis and descriptions of the materiality of language are factors which are always characteristic of CDA. It strives to explore how these non-transparent relationships are a factor in securing power and hegemony, and it draws attention to power imbalances, social inequalities, nondemocratic practices, and other injustices in hope of push people to corrective actions (Fairclough, 1992:7).

Critical Discourse Analysis is approach to analysis discourse structures (written or spoken) that involves a study of the way social or political power, dominance, inequality, bias, or resistance to such practices (in society) are mediated through the linguistic system (van Dijk, 1993, and Coulthard, 1996). At the same time, Critical Discourse Analysis views discourse as a 'social practice' (Fairclough, 2001:15) which means that language is determined by social structure and social conditions, and that language also shapes social practice (Wodak, 1996). Titscher et al, provides an explanation of the dialectical relationship between society, culture and language: Society and culture are dialectically related to discourse: society and culture are shaped

by discourse. Every single instance of language use reproduces or transforms society and culture, including power relations (Titscheretal 2000:146) Most specifically, CDA claims that discourse always involves power and ideologies, and aims to explore often opaque relationships between discursive practices, texts and events. Critical analysis is thus concerned to uncover the ideological assumptions hidden in the structure of language to help people resist and overcome various forms of power abuse

According to Fairclough, power is not an explicit top-down relationship. On the contrary, power and dominance are subtle, indirect and in many situations, they are jointly produced when dominated groups are persuaded that dominance is natural and it is therefore legitimized (van Dijk, 1993:250). If the minds of the dominated accept dominance and act in the interest of the powerful, dominance turns into hegemony. Critical Discourse Analysis is best viewed as a shared perspective encompassing a range of approaches instead of a school. The concept represents a strive vision of power relations, and give a salient value to the role of discourse in the maintenance and reproduction of power relations. Thus, CDA emerges as a response and a new approach to the limitation of the existence Discourse Analysis theories.

Critical Discourse Analysis as a research tool is used in many fields of studies especially in humanities and social sciences. It is an integrated or interdisciplinary approach to the study of language and society. Fairclough (1995) refers to CDA as discourse analysis which aims to systematically explore often opaque relationships of causality and determination between (a) discursive practices, events and texts, and (b) wider social and cultural structures, relations, and processes; to investigate how such practices, events and texts arise out of and are ideological shaped by relations of power and struggles over power; and to explore how the opacity of these relationships between discourse and society is itself a factor securing power and hegemony.

Van Dijk (1998) sees CDA as a field that is concerned with studying and analysing written and spoken texts to reveal the discursive sources

of power, dominance, inequality and bias. It examines how these discursive sources are maintained and reproduced within specific social, political and historical context. Thus, what differentiates CDA from other forms of Discourse Analysis is its critical nature. Critical implies going beyond analysis of the formal discourse feature to show connections and causes underlying a discourse.

Wodak and Meyer (2003) also point out that a defining feature of CDA is its concern with Power as a central condition in social life, and its efforts to develop a theory of language which incorporates this as a major premise. Not only the notion of struggle for power and control, but also the intertextuality and recontextualization of competing discourses are closely attended to. These scholars also maintain that CDA takes an interest in the ways in which linguistic forms are used in various expressions and manipulations of Power. Power is signalled not only grammatical forms within a text, but also by a person's control of a social occasion by means of the genre of a text. It is often exactly within the genre associated with given social occasion that power is exercised or challenged.

Political Discourse

The term is suggestive of at least two possibilities: First, a discourse which is itself political; and second, an analysis of political discourse as simply example of discourse type, without explicit reference to political content or political context. Given that on some definitions almost all discourse may be considered political, then all analyses of discourse are potentially political, and therefore, on one level all Discourse Analysis is political discourse. This potentially confusing situation arises, in the main, from definition of the political in terms of general issues such as power, conflict, control, ideology or domination (Fairclough 1992, van Dijk 1993, Bourdieu 1991), since any of these concepts may be employed in almost any form of discourse. Diamond (1995) in her study of a psychotherapeutic training institution, refers to the discourse of staff meeting as 'political' simply because issues of power and control are being worked out. By treating all discourse as political,

in its most general sense, we may be in danger of significantly over-generalizing the concept of political discourse. Hence, we simply delimited our subject matter as being concerned with formal/informal political contexts and political actors (Grabe, 1981); and political supporters operating in political environments to achieve political goals. This makes a clearer the kinds of limits we might place on thinking about political discourse.

Schaffner (1976) opines that political discourse as a genre of discourse in general is based on two criteria, that is, functional and thematic. According to Schaffner, political discourse is a result of politics and it is historically and culturally determined and fulfils different political actions due to its different political activities. It is thematic because its topics are primarily related to politics such as political activities, political ideas and political relations. Van Dijk (1993) in his paper entitled “Political Discourse” opines that the easiest and not altogether misguided, answer is that political discourse is identified by its actors or authors, viz politicians. However, Van Dijk (1993) considers defining political discourse its actors and authors as misguided because politicians are not the only actors in political domains. It therefore means that, from a wider perspective of discourse analysis, we should also include the various recipients in political communicative events, such as the public, the people, citizens, the masses and other groups or categories. That is once we locate politics and its discourse in the public sphere, many more participants in political communication appear on the stage.

Empirical Review

Umaru Yakubu, 2016, in his paper “Synta-Pragmatic analysis of Pronouns in Legal Documents”, examined the syntactic and pragmatic functions of pronouns especially “we and I’. Drawing on the tenants of structural grammar and systemic functional linguistics, he concluded that the pronouns functions beyond the structural roles assigned to them in grammar. It gives a different meaning to the legal documents depending on context.

Olawoyin Sarah, 2016, in her Masters

Dissertation studied the function and relevance of modality choices in selected speeches of Governor Tanko Almakura of Nasarawa State. In this research, the researcher using systemic functional linguistics categorized the different linguistic choices used in the speech texts to typify certain ideologies and how committed the speaker is to those promises he made. The study concluded that the speaker relied heavily on deontic choices thereby enhancing his commitment, and willingness to uphold his promises.

Aworo-okoroh Joy, 2016, in her paper entitled ‘Ideology and Power Relations in selected speech texts of Shekau examined the ideologies and power relations inherent in the speeches of the spokesman of the Boko haram sect. Using the Van dijk theory on ideology, it discovered the different ideologies –religious, political and economic ideologies propagated by the sect. The research also revealed that the pronouns used by the speaker establish the superiority power he welds over the other members of the sect.

Several other studies have been carried out with regards to Presidential Speech Texts in Nigeria. However, this paper tends to compare two different kinds of Presidents, military and democratic with a view of ascertaining if same personae within same context-as presidents and different era would make same choices or have same ideologies.

Theoretical Framework

Fairclough’s theoretical framework is adopted for this research. The thrust of his framework is on the belief that language is a complete part of social life. The dialectic relation between language and social reality is realized through social events (text), social practice (order of discourse) and social structures (Fairclough, 2003). Fairclough’s method tries to make explicit the ideological and power patterns in texts. He provided three-dimensional frameworks for text analysis which is widely used today in the CDA. Thus, Fairclough’s analysis framework includes three levels of analysis: the Text, the Discursive Practice, and Social-Cultural practice. And each of these discourse events has three proportions: (i) it is a spoken and written text, (ii) it is an instance of discourse practice involving the production and

interpretation of texts, and (iii) it is a part of social practice. Fairclough (1989) presents a model for the analysis of discourse which is the most elaborate and worked-out in this respect. This is why it has been adopted in the context of this work. It is capable of revealing strategies and devices of power in the speeches.

Methodology

Being a social practice, discourse is not only shaped by the social processes but it also has the ability to shape them. Thus, the corpuses of

data used for the analysis are President Obasanjo and President Buhari inaugurals speeches of 2003 and 2015 and their military speeches of 1976 and 1984 respectively. The paper adopts a qualitative approach, employing Fairclough (1989) CDA, being a complex and multidisciplinary field that deals with the relationships between language, ideology, power, identity, hierarchy, dominance, social inequality and exploitation; as its tool for data analysis.

Data Presentation and Analysis

This section analysed how these two Nigerian Head of State used Pronouns to reflect some ideologies and power Relation. Both their Military and Civilian Speeches were analysed.

i. Military Era of the Two Presidents' Speeches

Under the Military era, both Presidents were very careful in their used of the first person singular **I** in their political speeches. In Obasanjo speech of 1976, the pronoun **I** appeared only once against 4 times in Buhari speech of 1984. It can therefore be inferred that both Presidents did not want to take any form of commitment, responsibility and involvement as individuals as against the Supreme Military Council, whose action brought them into power. As such they did not demonstrate any power relation in their used of the first person singular pronoun **I**, which according to karapetjana's (2011:43) study suggested that the pronoun **I** implies a person level, and make it possible for speaker to show authority (power) and personal responsibility as well as commitment and involvement. Instead they both used more of the first-person plural **we**, referring to the Supreme Military Council as inclusive **we**, in other to reflect power relation as against the **they** and **them**. This fact can be seen in the below excerpt:

(1) **I** Major General Muhammadu Buhari of the Nigerian army have after due consultation amongst the services of the armed forces, been formally invested with the authority of the Head of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. It is with humility and a deep sense of responsibility that **I** accept this challenge and call to national duty.....my colleague and **I** –Supreme Military Council, must be frank.....(Buhari)

(2) **I** am therefore calling on every one of you to rise to the challenge. God Night (Obasanjo)

From the above excerpt both Presidents run away from responsibility as well as commitment and involvement, to mere affirmation of their identity as against demonstrating their determination and strength (power), authority of their leadership. This situation confirmed Bramley's view. Bramley (2001) argues that **I** is a term of self-reference and not a substitute for a noun or name as is the case with third person plural pronouns. Similarly, Sacks (1992) cited in Bramley (2001) points out that **I** is the way **I** refer to myself in talk not a substitute for my name. **I** stand alone as marker of the speaker referring to himself/ herself.

Malones (1997) cited Bramley also maintains that **I** not only index the speaker, it anchors the talk in the moment by providing subjectivity and stating the speaker's position. However, Karapetjana opined that the pronoun **I** implies a personal level, and make it possible for speaker to show authority (power) ... (karapetjana, 2011)

Thus, from the above discussion, and analysis how both presidents used the pronoun **I** in the speech to reflect power relation with Nigerians and others; they did not demonstrate power relation in the choice of the first person pronoun **I** in other to determine their strength of leadership faculties; as against Karapetjana's viewed which suggested that pronoun **I** shows authority (power) and personal responsibility as well as commitment and involvement, as against just mere introducing of self.

However, form the above submission, we can further argued that between the two Presidents,

President Buhari has relatively constructs power relation in his use of the pronoun **I** as against President Obasanjo. It has been opined that the most motivating reasons for a politician to use the pronoun **I** in his speech is to come across as good and responsible, to describe himself in a positive way and highlight personal qualities and according to Bramley (2001:28) such personal qualities that politicians want to express include being someone with principles, moral, power and who is not afraid to take action when necessary. This fact has relatively seen in President Buhari, thus:

- (3) In pursuance of the primary objective of saving our great nation from total collapse, **I** Major General Muhammadu Buhari ... after due consultation amongst the services of the armed forces...invested with authority of the Head of the Federal Military Government and the Commander- in- chief...it is with humility and a deep sense of responsibility that **I** accept this challenge and call to national duty. (Buhari)

In this statement, President Buhari shows a little sense of commitment and responsibility which reflect little power relation between him and his audience and others.

However, both Presidents demonstrate power relation in the used of the first-person plurals – **we**, **our** and **us** with their audience. The pronoun **we** have been seen to took the centre stage. **We** is an important pronoun in political speeches in the sense that is expresses ‘institutional identity’, that is, when one person speaks as a representative of or on behalf of an institution. **Weis** also used to separate **us** from **them**. By establishing an **us** and **them** separation the can create an image of the group he belongs to in a positive way and the other group in a negative way. And according to Bramley (2001: 76) the intention of **us** and **them** separation is to set one group apart from the other and their actions, and to include or exclude hearers from the group membership. Pennycook (1993) sees **we** as always simultaneously inclusive and exclusive as a pronoun of power and solidarity and of rejection, of inclusion and exclusion. Any construction of a **we** clearly presupposes the existence of **they** or **you**. Fairclough (1989) opines that when **we** is used by a leader inclusively as part of the led, it assimilates the leader to the people possibly as a humbling tactic. All these examples can be seen in both the Presidents speeches in their used of pronouns **we**, **us** **our**, as against **they** and **them** to reflect power relation between them and their audience; and also to show that they are not alone. Thus:

- (4) ... we shall do **our** best to settle genuine payments to which government is committed, including backlog of worker’s salaries after scrutiny (Buhari)
- (5) In spite of all this, every effort will be made to ensure that the difficult and degrading conditions under which **we** are living are eliminated (Buhari)
- (6) ...**we** have resisted the expediency of trying him in absentia because of **our** belief that he should be given a chance to be fully heard and fairly tried (Obasanjo)
- (7) **We** have all learnt valuable lesson from the sad experience (Obasanjo)

In Excerpts 4 and 6, the used of **we** by both presidents tend to referred to the Supreme Military Council which include the speaker inclusive, thereby indicating he is not alone. This shows power and authority of the Supreme Military Council over and above other audience that were being referred as **they** and **them**. However, in Excerpts 5 and 7, the **we** suggests the entire Nigerian citizens constructing solidarity for the Nigeria people.

Furthermore, both Presidents mentioned other less people using the pronouns **they** and **them**, showing unequal power between the Presidents and those people. For instance,

- (8) ...the situation could have been avoided if the legislators were alive to their constitutional responsibilities...took no account of the state of the economy and the welfare of the people **they** represented...being apprehensive of the frequency of fraud scandals and the government incapacity to deal with deal (Buhari)
- (9) ... those that are diligent and honest in their work need not fear. Indeed, **they** would be rewarded (Obasanjo)

It can be seen how the pronoun **we** is used by the presidents to reflect power relation with other

people, using the pronouns **they** and **them** to referred to the corrupt politicians, legislators and military officers. Hence, separating the speakers from the third person plural **they** and **them**, reflect power over them.

Furthermore, politicians use third person plural '**they**' to separate themselves or their group from others. They point to those who are not **we**, and is used to form an oppositional relationship between him or her and others, often with negativity towards the others. '**They**' is, just like **we**, used to create an '**us**' and **them** separation. It can be used to make the speaker seem less responsible for his or her actions and show ideological difference among people and positive presentation of self of the speaker (Bramley, 2001:18). Moreso, by separating **us** and **them**, the speaker sometimes creates an image of **them** being inferior to **us** (Karapetjana 2011:4).

ii. Civilian Regime Inaugural Speeches of Both Presidents

In their use of pronoun **I**, both Presidents used it to introduce themselves demonstrating acceptance. President Buhari inaugural speech of 2015, he used the pronoun **I** 22 times, representing 32%. While in his 2003 inaugural speech, President Obasanjo used it 26 times, representing 17.2%. The both used it to show commitment, involvement and authority to their audience, and this usage of the pronoun **I** reflect power relation between them and their audience. For instance, we can see sure from the following except.

- (10) Personally, **I** saw the retrogression as a failure of leadership and **I** was emboldened my earlier experience (Obasanjo)
- (11) **I** can say that to the best of my knowledge, our Administration has been consistent in staying focused on our vision (Obasanjo)
- (12) **I** intent to use my mandate to provide quality leadership for all of Nigeria and for all Nigerian (Obasanjo)

From the above excerpt President Obasanjo used the pronoun **I** to introduce himself, conveying his opinion. According to Bramley (2001:27), the pronoun **I** can be used to create a relationship with the audience and to show commitment to the audience and personal involvement on issues; given the speaker a personal voice that distances him from others. This means that it cannot always be expected that the other members of his party agree with the speaker's opinion when pronoun **I** is used. In the light of this, President Obasanjo usage of the pronoun **I** showed commitment, involvement and authority (power relation) with his audience.... **I** ...use my mandate to provide quality leadership for all of Nigeria.... In a softer way.

However, this seen differently from President Buhari's usage of the pronoun **I** for instance

- (13) **I** belong to everybody and **I** belong to nobody. (Buhari)
- (14) A few people have privately voiced fears... **I** shall go after them... there will be no paying off old scores (Buhari)
- (15) For **I** will not have kept my own trust with the Nigerian people, if **I** allow others abuse theirs under my watch (Buhari)

Buhari's use of the pronoun **I** differed a little bit from that of President Obasanjo, in the sense that, Buhari use of the pronoun **I** implied a personal level and showed authority (power relation) and personal responsibility as well as commitment and involvement as against that of Obasanjo. This revealed that Buhari speaker with power and authority than Obasanjo.

Furthermore, both President used the pronoun (**we, us and our**) to show power relation with between them and their audience and others, who they referred often to as (**they and them**). For instance:

- (16) To achieve **our** objective, **we** consciously work the democratic system... (Buhari)
- (17) **We** have to upgrade **our** dilapidated physical infrastructure... (Buhari)
- (18) **We** are determined to fight this evil to a standstill...(Obasanjo)
- (19) There is a limit to which **we** can depend on outside help, as illustrated in **our** campaign (Obasanjo)

From the foregoing excerpt, both Presidents used the pronoun **We** and **our** to separate **us** from **them**. This reflect power relation between the Presidents and others (**they and them**). They tried to show power over other. Thus, the pronoun **we** also show collective responsibilities of leadership from both Presidents. Consequently, both Presidents used pronouns (**they and them**) to refer to people of unequal power that is,

less power. For instance

- (20) We shall charge **them** to apply themselves with integrity to stabilize the system (Buhari)
- (21) But **they** were united in establishing a progressive country... some of their successors behaved like spilit children breaking everything and bringing disorder to the house (Buhari)
- (22) But all our efforts, all our materials inputs will come to nothing if **they** are not complemented with a change in our attitude (Obasanjo)
- (23) We plan to complete the refurbishment of our educational institutions at all levels in order to make **them** fully operational (Obasanjo)

In Excerpts 20 and 21, President Buhari used the pronoun (**they, them**) to refer to people, to separate them from his group. Thereby show authority over them. He used the pronouns **they** and **them** to refer to the legislators and bad leaders. However, in 22 & 23 excerpt, President Obasanjo used (**they** and **them**) to refer to things- like challenges instead of people. Thus, it therefore means that Buhari demonstrates power relation over people than things as showed by Obasanjo.

Findings

From our data analysis, we found out that both presidents used pronoun to reflect power relation in their speeches. However, President Buhari use of the pronoun revealed and reflected high level of power relation, demonstrating power and authority along with high level of commitment and involvement and responsibility between him and his audience especially in the used of pronoun I as against President Obasanjo.

Similarly, in the use of the pronouns (we, us, our), both President used them to reflect power relations and solidarity between them and their audience. However, our analysis revealed that President Obasanjo used more of them to share responsibility and inclusiveness as against President Buhari, who used a few of them. This goes to show that between the two Presidents, President Buhari like to take responsibility for his action and inaction as against President Obasanjo, who used a lot of we in his speech and less I. furthermore, this goes to show that President Buhari demonstrate power, authority, commitment and involvement in his speech when compare with that of President Obasanjo.

Conclusion

Politics is a struggle for power in order to put certain political, economic and social power and ideology into practice. Language, in this process plays a crucial role for every political

action is prepared, accompanied, influenced and played by language. It is undeniable that language varies according to the speakers' age, class, education, religion, sex, ideology, position etc. it is suggested that discourse is associated with topic being explored, such as social relation, group identity, power and ideology. Van Dijk (1993) maintains that ideology can create a relationship in term of group relation, such as power and dominance; and one of the Systematic Functional Linguistics elements used to cover the ideology and power is pronoun.

The discourse analysis carried in this study between the two presidential speeches of President Buhari and President Obasanjo, both as Military and Civilian Heads of State, has showed that both Presidents used Pronouns in their speeches to reflect power relations. The work also showed that President Obasanjo used more first-person plural: **we, us, our** and second person **you** than President Buhari. However, President Buhari used more first-person pronoun I than President Obasanjo, showing him to have more power relation than President Obasanjo, as asserted by Karapetjana's study that suggested that the pronoun **I** implies a personal level, make it possible for the speaker to show authority and power) and personal responsibility, as well as commitment and involvement (2011:43).

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