



Persuasive Strategies Utilised in President Muhammadu Buhari's Speech on New Cashless Policy in Nigeria

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Abstract	Original Research Article
Strategies utilised in a persuasive speech are so important in the sense that they go a long way in determining the positive feedback from listeners. An audience with a negative mind about a particular topic of discussion could be persuaded through the use of some persuasive strategies. This study investigates the persuasive strategies utilised by President Muhammadu Buhari in his speech on the cashless policy in Nigeria, which resulted in scarcity of cash in the country. The discourse analysis approach of Fairclough is adopted to analyse the speech. The study purposively selected President Buhari's speech on the cashless policy in Nigeria in 2023. The speech is extracted from the Daily Trust newspaper and analysed. The analysis of the study revealed that the President utilised the following strategies: creativity and metaphor, intertextuality, circumlocution, and reference strategies. He used creativity and metaphors to highlight reality as it is. Intertextuality is also used by the President to convince the whole nation of his vision. Aside from these, the President utilised neutral references (I, you, our, your) in his speech to show his commitment. The study concludes that President Buhari successfully utilised those persuasive strategies to convey his vision to Nigerians through the implementation of the new cashless policy, and he convinces the whole nation that the policy will surely boost Nigeria's economy, reduce corruption, reduce insecurity, and inflation. Keywords: Persuasive strategies, cashless policy, negative mind, politician, political discourse.	
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INTRODUCTION

Existing studies revealed that discourse analysis (DA) is one of the linguistic methods of analysis that has widely gained prominence in investigating language at the extra-sentential level since the 1990s. The DA aim of scrutinising the intended ideologies between language and society (Haider, 2016) has really shown that language affects social groups. DA, according to Almahasees and Mahmoud (2022), is an interrelated discipline to all sciences, including

politics, to identify the underplaying meaning contained in any discourse.

Furthermore, Van Dijk (1993) opines that critical discourse analysis (CDA) maintains the relationship between culture, society, power, text, and talk. Tenorio (2011) also revealed that CDA is part of critical theories that aim to reveal the power behind discourse. CDA completely analyses the language used in speeches. It also discusses power relations, society culture discourses, ideological and historical



works, and mediation between texts and society (Fairclough, 1992).

It is obvious that politicians use language to convince others to support them. Hence, language plays an essential role in political discourse. It has been observed too that, politicians usually use language to put economic, social and certain political acts into practice. To achieve these, persuasive strategies must be utilised when presenting speeches with the aim of gaining the support of the listeners. Persuasive speech therefore is a type of speech with the goal of convincing the audience to accept the speaker's point of view. It could also be seen as a type of speech that is crafted to convince someone to believe something or to do something.

Nigeria is a country in West Africa that many nations view as the giant of Africa, perhaps because of the natural resources that Nigeria is blessed with. However, Nigeria has been experiencing a bad economic situation for years, as well as insecurity and corruption. As such, the Nigerian government under the administration of President Buhari believes that the money in Nigeria's circulation is on the high side and thereby contributes to the bad economic situation in Nigeria, as well as causing an increase in corruption and insecurity. The government, in its effort to solve the problem, decides to introduce a cashless policy to reduce the amount of money in circulation. To execute this new policy, new naira notes were introduced to replace some existing notes, such as ₦200, ₦500, and ₦1000.

This new cashless policy created hardship for Nigerians, as there was a scarcity of naira notes, thereby making life so difficult for the masses.

As a result of the hardship created by the new cashless policy, Nigerians frowned at the policy. There were several protests, which resulted in the destruction of properties that mostly belonged to various bank sectors. In order to appeal to Nigerians, President Muhammadu Buhari therefore delivered a persuasive speech to the nation.

The president's intention was to persuade Nigerians to support the new policy. It is well known that politicians usually use language to serve their agendas and meticulously manipulate the expedited audience (Van Dijk, 1993). Political speeches are full

of persuasive strategies to support the speaker's vision and agenda.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Although there is no existing study on President Muhammadu Buhari's speech on the new cashless policy in Nigeria, there are other studies on political speeches in the past.

In general, political discourse and critical discourse analysis have been the subject of several studies. There are several studies that have tackled the concept of discourse analysis in the political speech of presidential or royals (Carreon & Svetanant, 2017) and royal speech (Khawaldeh & Abu Hatab, 2018). These studies indicated that CDA primarily focuses on the implied ideologies in discourse, racism, social inequality, and power relations. The aim here is to identify how social and power have been communicated within the speech. Fairclough (1992) showed that CDA relied mainly on uncovering the ideological relations of power. It aims to produce explanations, to disclose the ideological relations of power, and to provide interpretation depending on systematic approaches to the analysis of CDA.

Fairclough (1992) introduced the Dialectical Relation approach for CDA. He examines power ideologies and language. He divides CDA into the following three main approaches: description of the text, discursive analysis, and socio-cultural process analysis. But on the other hand, Wodak (2014) brought CDA's historical approach. This historical approach highlights the relationship between historical norms and accumulative information concerning time and place. It also relied on the idea that linguistic analysis is not sufficient for interpreting the intended ideologies since the contextual features are essential in socially, politically and ideologically forming function of the contexts.

Therefore, Fairclough (1992) affirms the importance of extra linguistics component. The approach distinctively employs the socio-political components and co-text utterance in interpreting the discourse. The above techniques necessitate taking of the three stages proposed by (Fairclough, 1992) to prove an

accurate interpretation of such significant speeches presenting president policy. The study has adopted the three stages (Fairclough, 1992) to figure out the main strategies used by the president to convey his vision and ideas. They indicate that President Buhari highlights the importance of cooperation and understanding by the Nigerians in order to achieve success at the end. The three stages are description, interpretation and explanation. The description focuses on the formal aspect of the text, interpretation concerns the relationship between the text and communication, and explanation focuses on the communication between communication and social context.

The literature showed that the previous literature investigated the linguistic functions that have been utilised in some speeches. It is clear that the use of persuasive strategies was not widely prevalent in the previous literature. Therefore, this current study aims to analyse the persuasive strategies used in President Buhari's speech on the cashless policy in Nigeria.

Methodology

The study collected its data through a purposive selection of President Muhammadu Buhari's speech on the cashless policy in 2023. The speech was extracted from The Daily Trust newspaper on February 15, 2023. The extracted speech was critically analysed using Fairclough's discourse analysis approach.

Findings and Discussion

This section presents the persuasive strategies utilised in President Buhari's speech. The following are the persuasive strategies discovered in the speech:

1. Creativity and Metaphors

Really, creativity and metaphor are two distinct strategies, but they are both directed toward serving the same end: a creative speech. As a result, it is good to address the two together to convey the findings concisely. For metaphors, it requires a semantic

mapping from one conceptual area to another, which is frequently done with unusual or deviant language. It is observed that political actors utilise metaphors to compare one idea with another (Crystal, 1994).

According to Van Dijk (1993), creativity is the art of using words to develop ideas to serve the speaker's purpose. In politics, creativity is a central pillar that politicians use to persuade the public about the topic of their initiatives and agenda. Van Dijk (1993) also sees discourse as an ideology. As such, creativity is the most important tool the speaker uses to communicate his ideas to the audience. President Buhari used some expressions to show his creativity in his speech, as we can see in the following extracts.

Excerpt 1

"Fellow citizens, while I seek your understanding and patience during the transient phase of implementation, I feel obliged to avail you a few critical points underpinning the policy decision. These include:

- a. The need to restore the statutory ability of the CBN to keep firm control over money in circulation. In 2015, when this administration commenced its first term, currency-in-circulation was only ₦1.4 trillion.
- b. The proportion of currency outside banks grew from 78% in 2015 to 85% in 2022. As of October 2022, therefore, currency in circulation had risen to ₦3.23 trillion; out of which only ₦500 billion was within the banking system while remained permanently outside the system; thereby distorting the financial policy and efficient management of inflation;
- c. The huge volume of banknotes outside the banking system has proven to be practically unavailable for economic activities and, by implication, retards the attainment of potential economic growth;
- d. Economic growth projections make it imperative for the government to aim at expanding financial inclusion in the country by reducing the number of the unbanked population; and

- e. Given the prevailing security situation across the country, which keeps improving, it also becomes compelling for the government to deepen its continuing support for security agencies to successfully combat banditry and ransom-taking in Nigeria.
8. Notwithstanding the initial setback experienced, the evaluation
9. I have been reliably informed that since the commencement of this program, about ₦ 2.1 trillion out of the banknotes previously held outside the banking system had been successfully retrieved.
10. This represents about 80% of such funds. In the short, to medium, and long term, therefore, it is expected that there would be:
 - a. A strengthening of *our* macro-economic parameters;
 - b. A reduction in broad money supply leading to a deceleration of the velocity of money in the economy, which should result in less pressure on domestic prices;
 - c. Lowering of inflation as a result of the accompanying decline in money supply that will slow the pace of inflation;
 - d. Collapse of Illegal economic Activities which would help to stem corruption and acquisition of money through illegal ways;
 - e. Exchange rate stability;
 - f. Availability of easy loan and lowering of interest rates; and
 - g. Greater visibility and transparency of our financial actions, translating to efficient enforcement of our anti-money laundering legislation.”

As we can see in the above excerpt, President Buhari used some expressions to develop the idea that, to stop some of Nigeria’s problems, the cashless policy must be implemented.

In his bullet points 7a and 7b, the president recalled that money in circulation was too much and thereby causing problems. He said "... thereby distorting the financial policy and efficient management of inflation.” This implies that the cashless policy

should be implemented in order to control inflation in the country. Meanwhile, inflation has been one of the challenges facing Nigerian.

In bullet points 7c and 7d, while the president is still talking about the huge numbers of banknotes outside the banking system, he says "...by implication, retard the attainment of potential economic growth.” Here too, the president is still selling his idea through the use of words to show that, to attain economic growth in Nigeria, Nigerians must embrace the cashless policy.

In bullet point 7e, the president was talking about the poor security situation across the country, he says ...”it also becomes compelling for government to deepen its continuing support for security agencies to successfully combat banditry and ransom-taking in Nigeria.” This implies that, to achieve success in combating insecurity in Nigeria, the cashless policy must be implemented, as this will serve as a barrier to ransom-taking.

In bullet point 10a–g, President Buhari, in his further attempt to persuade Nigerians to embrace the cashless policy, he mentioned some of the benefits that will be derived if the policy is implemented, such as: strengthening macroeconomic parameters, reducing broad money supply, leading to a deceleration of the velocity of money in the economy, which should result in less pressure on domestic prices, lowering inflation, collapsing illegal economic activities, exchange rate stability, availability of easy loans, and lowering interest rates, as well as greater visibility and transparency of Nigeria’s financial actions.

The president utilised the above expressions in his speech to convey his idea that the cashless policy implementation will solve some Nigeria problems. His aim was to persuade Nigerian to embrace the policy. The above excerpt shows that creativity is an overall strategy in President Buhari’s speech on Cashless policy. He utilises those expressions to shed light on his ideas which he aims to achieve.

2. Intertextuality

This is another persuasive strategy utilised by the president. Intertextuality refers to the relation

between a text and other texts for interpretation of a text (Merriam-Webster, 2022), it involves borrowing from other texts to enhance the strength of a text. Politicians see it as an essential strategic tool to be used in their speeches. Intertextuality is one of the persuasive strategies proposed by Obeng (1997) to get the audience's attention to believe in the speaker's words.

Politicians usually link their speeches with other texts to support their intention. Hence, Intertextuality plays a significant role in delivering the communication messages of the speaker (Kitaeva & Ozerova, 2019).

Intertextuality is used by President Buhari in his speech on the cashless policy. He uses this on two occasions as we can see in the following extracts.

Excerpt 2

“In appreciation of the system and human difficulties encountered during implementation and in response to the appeal of all citizens, an extension of ten days was authorized till 10th February, 2023 for the completion of the process. *“All these activities are being carried out within the ambit of the Constitution, the relevant law under the CBN Act 2007 and in line with global best practices”*.”

In the above excerpt, the president cited the constitution and the law under the CBN Act 2007. He says "All these activities are being carried out within the ambit of the constitution, the relevant law under the CBN 2007..." with this, the President was trying to use the record of Nigeria constitution to support his action in order to persuade the listeners to reason along with him, making them to realise that he has the support of the Nigeria constitution by introducing the policy.

Excerpt 3

“In line with section 20(3) of the CBN Act 2007, all existing old ₦ 1000 and N 500 notes remain redeemable at the CBN and designated points.”

Just like extract 2 discussed earlier, the president says... “In line with section 20(3) of the CBN Act

2007, all N 1000 and N 500 notes remain redeemable at the CBN and designated points. This was the second time the president utilised the strategy of intertextuality in the speech. This was done to persuade the public that the introduction of the cashless policy in Nigeria is in line with Nigeria's constitution, which does not go against the law.

Apart from the above discussed persuasive strategies, another strategy utilised in the speech is discussed below.

3. Circumlocution

Circumlocution is the indirect way of saying something unpleasant. Political leaders use this regularly to avoid the obvious in order to save their faces. It is also used to defend their views against their opponents. More importantly, circumlocution may be used with politeness to enable the politicians to achieve their goals (Obeng, 1997). Politicians also use circumlocution to add relevant details to serve their agenda and spread terrible stories about their opponents (Van Dijk, 1993). In this regard, politicians utilise hyperbole and exaggeration as the main strategy to disseminate hurtful information on their agendas. The extract below highlights some circumlocutions utilised by the President.

Excerpt 4

“To stem the tide, I have directed the CBN to deploy all legitimate resources and legal means to ensure that **our** citizens are adequately educated on the policy; ‘enjoy easy access to cash withdrawal through the availability of an appropriate amount of currency’; and ability to make deposits.”

The above extract reveals the use of circumlocution by the President. Let's take note of the expression “enjoy easy access to cash withdrawal through the availability of an appropriate amount of currency.” It should be noted that, during the period in which the President delivered this speech, there was tension and anger in Nigeria because people did not have access to enough cash withdrawals from the bank. There was a cash scarcity during the period. Despite the complaints of Nigerians and the agitation for the

removal of the policy so that they can have access to their money in the bank, the President, through his speech, wants the cashless policy to stay. He therefore expressed this in a circumlocutional manner, or indirectly, by mentioning that Nigerians will enjoy easy access to cash withdrawal but through “availability of appropriate amount of currency.” Take note of the expression “availability of appropriate amount”... This implies that access to cash is conditional—that is, “availability of appropriate amount.” The President stated this in a worthy, subtle manner to save face. With this, it is worthy of note that circumlocution is one of the persuasive strategies that could be used by a speaker

to achieve his aim.

Another persuasive strategy utilised by the President is discussed below.

4. Reference

Reference in this context is the use of pronouns in a speech or discourse to reveal agency or identity (Van Dijk, 1993). It indicates that political pronouns are utilised to reveal agency, identity, and self-reference. The table below shows the frequency of references used by President Buhari in his speech on the cashless policy in Nigeria.

Table 1: Pronouns used in the speech of President Muhammadu Buhari that revealed the President's commitment.

No	Pronouns	Type	Frequency
1.	I ____	Personal	20
2.	Our____	Possessive	13
3.	You____	Personal	6
4.	Your ____	Possessive	4
5.	We ____	Personal	3
6.	My ____	Possessive	2
7.	Me ____	Personal	1

In the speech, the president uses “I” 20 times. This shows how he emphasised his commitment to bring about a comfortable life for the masses. He said, “I shall remain committed ..., I seek your understanding..., I feel obliged to..., I am not unaware of the obstacles...” etc. The repeated use of “I” by the president shows that he was committed to solving Nigerian problems. Likewise, the word “our” is used 13 times by the president to refer to his administration’s commitment to serve the nation. For instance, he says, “... priority of our

administration...”. At times, he uses “our” to show that he was also included in, or affected by, the nation’s predicament. For instance, we can see this in the following expression: “...to sustain and strengthen our economy..., aimed at boosting our economy..., transparency of our financial action...” etc. The use of “our” by the president shows that he was also involved in the struggle.

The pronoun “you” is used 6 times to refer to the entire nation and to reflect his feelings for them as

well. For instance, he said, "...to identify with you and express my sympathy..." This shows that he has sympathy for the entire nation.

Other political pronouns used by the president are your, we, my, and me. Although these were used in a few instances, they were used to reveal the president's feelings and commitment toward a better life for Nigerians.

Conclusion

It is well known that CDA is an interdisciplinary subject that relies on models and approaches to study political speeches and their social functions. This study examines some strategies utilised in persuasive speech delivered by President Muhammadu Buhari on the Cashless Policy in Nigeria in 2023. The policy, when implemented, generated controversies that resulted in a crisis. However, through the use of persuasive strategies in his speech, the president was able to persuade Nigerians to embrace the policy. This study found that the following strategies were utilised by the president: creativity and metaphor, intertextuality, circumlocution, and reference. The study concludes that, through the use of the above-stated strategies, an audience could be successfully persuaded to accept a policy or an idea that may seem hard or difficult to cope with. It has also been revealed that, through the use of persuasive strategies in speech, speakers can succeed in gaining the support of their listeners.

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Appendix

Data: Daily Trust Online

Full Speech: Buhari's Stand about Old and New Naira Notes.

National Broadcast By His Excellency Muhammadu Buhari, President, Federal Republic Of Nigeria On The Challenges Of The Currency Swap And The State Of The Nation, On 16th February 2023.

1. I have found it necessary to address you today on the state of the nation and to render an account of the efforts of our administration to sustain and strengthen our economy, enhance the fight against corruption, and sustain **our** gains in the fight against terrorism and insecurity, which has, undoubtedly, been impacted by several internal and external factors.
2. Particularly, I am addressing you as your democratically elected President to identify with you and express my sympathy over the difficulties being experienced as we continue the implementation of new monetary policies, aimed at boosting our economy and tightening the loopholes associated with money laundering.
3. And I shall remain committed to my oath of protecting and advancing the interests of Nigerians and the nation at all times
4. In the last quarters of 2022, I authorized the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) to redesign the ₦200, ₦500, and ₦1000 Nigerian banknotes.
5. For a smooth transition, I similarly approved that the redesigned banknotes should circulate concurrently with the old banknotes until 31 January 2023, before the old notes cease to be legal tender.
6. In appreciation of the system and the human difficulties encountered during implementation, and in response to the appeal of all citizens, an extension of ten days was authorised till 10th February, 2023 for the completion of the process. All these activities are being carried out within

the ambit of the Constitution, the relevant law under the CBN Act 2007, and in line with global best practices.

7. Fellow citizens, while I seek your understanding and patience during the transient phase of implementation, I feel obliged to avail you of a few critical points underpinning the policy decision. These include:
 - a. The need to restore the statutory ability of the CBN to keep firm control over money in circulation. In 2015, when this administration commenced its first term, currency in circulation was only N1.4 trillion.
 - b. The proportion of currency outside banks grew from 78% in 2015 to 85% in 2022. As of October 2022, therefore, currency in circulation had risen to N3.23 trillion, remaining permanently outside the system; thereby distorting financial policy and efficient management of inflation.
 - c. The huge volume of banknotes outside the banking system has proven to be practically unavailable for economic activities and, by implication, retards the attainment of potential economic growth;
 - d. Economic growth projection make it imperative for government to aim at expanding financial inclusion in the country by reducing the number of the unbanked population; and
 - e. Given the prevailing security situation across the country, which keeps improving, it also becomes compelling for government to combat banditry and ransom-taking in Nigeria.
8. Notwithstanding the initial setback experienced, the evaluation
9. I have been reliably informed that since the commencement of this program, about ₦ 2.1 trillion out of the banknotes previously held outside the banking system, had been successfully retrieved.
10. This represents about 80% of such funds. In the short to medium and long term, therefore, it is expected that there would be:

- a. A strengthening of our macro-economic parameters;
 - b. Reduction of broad money supply leading to a deceleration of the velocity of money in the economy which should result in less pressures on domestic prices;
 - c. Lowering of inflation as a result of the accompanying decline in money supply that will slow the pace of inflation;
 - d. Collapse of Illegal economic Activities which would help to stem corruption and acquisition of money through illegal ways;
 - e. Exchange rate stability;
 - f. Availability of easy loans and a lowering of interest rates; and
 - g. Greater visibility and transparency of our financial actions, translating to efficient enforcement of our anti-money laundering legislations.
11. I am not unaware of the obstacles placed on the path of innocent Nigerians by unscrupulous officials in the banking industry,
 12. To stem the tide, I have directed the CBN to deploy all legitimate resources and legal means to ensure that our citizens are adequately educated on the policy; enjoy easy access to cash withdrawals through the availability of appropriate amounts of currency; and have the ability to make deposits.
 13. I have similarly directed that the CBN should intensify collaboration with anti-corruption agencies, so as to ensure that any institution or person(s) found to have impeded or sabotaged the implementation should be made to bear the full weight of the law.
 14. During the extended phase of the deadline for the currency swap, I listened to invaluable pieces of advice from well-meaning citizens and institutions across the nation.
 - 15 I similarly consulted widely with representatives of the State Governors as well as the Council of State. Above all, as an administration that respects the rule of law, I have also noted that the subject matter is before the court of our land and that some pronouncements have been made.
 16. The further ease of supply pressures, particularly for citizens. I have given approval to the CBN that the old N200 bank notes be released back into circulation and that is should also be allowed to circulate as legal tender with the new N200, N500, and N1000 banknotes for 60 days from February 10, 2023 to April 10, 2023, when the old N200 notes cease to be legal tender.
 17. In line with section 20(3) of the CBN Act 2007, all existing old ₦ 1000 and N 500 notes remain redeemable at the CBN and designated points.
 18. Considering the health of our economy and the legacy we must bequeath to the next administration and future generation of Nigerians, I admonish every citizen to strive harder to make their deposits by taking advantage of the platforms and windows being provided by the CBN.
 19. Let me assure Nigerians that our administration will continue to assess the implementation with a view to ensuring that Nigerians are not unnecessarily burdened. In this regard, the CBN shall ensure that new notes become more available and accessible to our citizens through the banks.
 20. I wish to once again appeal for your understanding until we overcome this difficult transient phase within the shortest possible time
 21. Fellow citizens, on the 25th of February 2023, the nation will be electing a new President and National Assembly members. I am aware that this new monetary policy has also contributed immensely to the minimization of the influence of money in politics.
 22. This is a positive departure from the past and represents a bold legacy step by this administration toward laying a strong foundation for free and fair election.
 23. I urge every citizen, therefore, to go out and vote

for their candidates of choice without fear, because security shall be provided and your vote shall count.

24. I, however, admonish you to eschew violence and avoid action capable of disrupting the election

process. I wish us all a successful general election.

Thank you for listening. God bless the Federal Republic of Nigeria.