

## **A Linguistic Stylistic Analysis of Muhammadu Buhari's Democracy Day Address in June 2022.**

Suleiman Abubakar\*, Fatima Baba Saleh, Maimuna Yusuf Sule.

Department of General Studies, Shehu Sule College of Nursing Sciences, Damaturu, Yobe State-  
Nigeria

**\*Corresponding Author:** [sulei411@gmail.com](mailto:sulei411@gmail.com) +2348030443261

### **Abstract**

This study is aimed at presenting and analyzing the Democracy Day Address in June 2022 by the former President Muhammadu Buhari stylistically. Literatures were reviewed which constitutes the published and unpublished materials that are relevant to the work such as; Mala (2015) and Abubakar S. (2016). The theoretical framework adopted for the study is that of Crystal and Davy (1969). The research findings include: graphitic/graphological deviation, phonological level the rhyming pairs of sentences, lexeme/semantic level. Syntactic brevity, lexical cohesion, epithet, coordination, synonyms, antonyms, lexical organization, sentence analysis and finally summary of the whole works involved in the study, conclusion and bibliography respectively.

**Keyword:** *Linguistic, Stylistic, Graphitic, Syntactic, Democracy*

## **Introduction**

This study is on the Democracy Day Addressed by the former President Muhammadu Buhari. The reason for this study is to be able to identify the stylistic features or rhetoric devices of the address delivered by the former President in June, 2022. This research cuts across words and sentences, which are manipulated to express the contextual meaning of the former President Muhammadu Buhari's Democracy Day Address in June 2022.

stylistics is a branch of applied linguistics concerned with the study of style in text, especially in literary works. "The goal of most stylistics is not simply to describe the format features of text for their own sake, but in other to show their functional significance for the interpretation of the text; or in other to relate literary effects to linguistics "cause" where these are felt to be relevant". (Wales, 2001).

Style refers to the way in which language is used in a given context, by a given person and for a given purpose (Leech, and Short 2007). Sometimes style can be applied to the linguistic habits of a particular writer (the style of Dickens, the style of Soyinka). At other times, it may be applied to the way language is used in a particular genre, period, school of writing or combination of both (the style of Victorian novel, early eighteen century style).

There are several analytical frameworks with different models for doing stylistic analysis. These models include, (Leech and Short, 2007), (Crystal and Davy, 1969), and (Sampson 2004). This study therefore adopts (Crystal and Davy, 1969) model of stylistic analysis. Four categories the model proposes to be followed in

doing stylistic analysis are: Lexical Category, Grammatical Category, Figures of Speech and Context and Cohesion.

## **Literature Review**

A number of scholars have used different methodologies to carry out Stylistic analysis of speeches and texts. The researchers are to highlight write -up of scholars and other literatures that are relevant to this work (i.e. A Linguistic Stylistic Analysis of Muhammadu Buhari's Democracy Day Address in June, 2022). Such as Abubakar (2016).

(Sani, 2022) Analyze the speeches of His Excellency Murtala Nyako the then Governor of Adamawa state and Dr. Jonathan Silas Zwingina, Deputy Senate Leader and Senator representing Adamawa South Senatorial District respectively. He analyzes the speeches based on Leech and Short's (1981) by using their model of approach in stylistic.

Relevant to this work is work of (Mala, 2015)who says; stylistic aids one to understand the literal meaning and the writer's pre-occupation, personality, intentions and also the circumstance of the text. In stylistics generally linguistic structures as well as internal principle of grammar and external social and cultural forces go hand-in-hand. (Abubakar, 2016)says; linguistic choice is a necessary but sufficient condition for the existence of style in a language. It can occur at any linguistic level or condition of all the level as postulated by Bollinger (1975) who states that style involves a choice of form without changing the message.

Mala's (2015) and Abubakar (2016) studies are relevant to this present study because both the two studies used the same model in doing the analysis.

Linguistic is a combination of the system of rules common to speakers and particular use of

such system. On the other hand, stylistic refers to the way that language used in a text. (Fakuade, 2005) says that stylistic is “The confluence between the literary and linguistic rivers”. (Mala, 2015) states that, there are four basic levels of analyzing a text.

1. Lexical Level: This deals with vocabulary the simplicity or complexity of a sentence.
2. Grammatical Level: To show the type of sentence; exclamations, commands etc. The simple or complex structures of a sentence.
3. Figures of Speech: Proverb, idioms, simile, wise-saying metaphor, metonymy etc. Are examined at this level.
4. Cohesion and Context: It examined the discourse to know if they depend on each other or not. Stylistic is generally an artistic way of thinking about a subject matter of a text. It implied a meaning of a text and it involve both linguistic and criticism.

### **Style in Communication**

(Mala, 2015) States that; Style is the sum total of linguistics features that distinguish one text from another. It is concerned with variations with variations in a different language and analytical choice. Stylistics aids one to understand the literal meaning and the writer’s pre-occupation, personality, intentions and also the circumstances of the text. In stylistics generally linguistics structures as well as internal principle of grammar and external social and cultural forces go hand-in-hand. (Abubakar, 2016) says; style in communication helps in the manifestation of thought. The literary artist consciously or otherwise adopt a peculiar techniques of expression through the recurrent use of certain words, narrative patterns, presenting character, setting and other aspects of reality. Such characteristic traits distinguishing an art form from another.

(Kperogi, 2015)Said; the style of speech delivered by president Buhari was clearly excellent well-informed speech and it will go down in history as one of the most memorable inaugural speeches by a Nigerian president. And he identifies and analyze the rhetorical and grammatical highpoints of the speech.

### **Examples**

1. “I belong to everybody and I belong to nobody”. No expression in a presidential address has simultaneously puzzled and gladden Nigerians as this one. On the surface, the expression appears to be mutually contradictory. You can’t belong to everybody and belong to nobody concurrently. The overlapping duration of belonging to everybody and belonging to nobody appears to be a classic illustration of the Aristotelian law of contradiction, which says “one cannot say of something that it is and that it is not in the same respect and at the same time”.
2. Grammatical slips in the speech or inaugural address.
  - a. “I salute their resolve in waiting long hours in rain and hot sunshine to register and cast their votes and stay all night if necessary to protect and ensure their votes count and were counted”.

There are at least two grammatical errors that stand out like sore thumbs in the expert above. “In rain” isn’t idiomatic. The usual rendering of the expression is “in the rain”. The verb “count” should be rendered as “counted” since the president was referring to an event that has already happened, thus it should be “ensure their votes counted and were counted”.

- b. “I thank those who tirelessly carried the campaign on the social media”.

Unless you’re referring to a social media platform you had mentioned previously. The definite article “the” is unnecessary even

confusing, when it precedes “social media”. Since the reference to social media is generic, not specific.

(Mala, 2015), Style can only exist if there is more than one way of saying the same thing.

For example:

- (a) HE MOUNTED HIS HORSE
- (b) HE MOUNTED HIS BICYCLES

The changes in entities are not two ways of saying the same thing but description of two different actions. In a like manner, when we say:

- (a) HE IS SICK
- (b) HE IS INDISPOSED

These are different ways of conveying the same idea, from the above; we can say that style can be constructed as a linguistic choice.

### **The Nature of Oral Communication**

According to (Mala, 2015), the nature of oral communication is however, simplicity in oral presentation is the key in speech. Using three point is very advisable namely;

- a. Give an overview of the points
- b. Present them to the audience
- c. Summarize them

The writer/speaker encodes a message to convey a meaning is inferred from the speaker. (Bach and Harnish 1979) maintain that there are two types of inference which operates in communication. The direct and indirect speech acts. The indirect goes beyond the literal meaning to unravel the speaker(s) and hearer(s) bewilderment.

(Tabassum, 2015), carried out a stylistic analysis of short stories with emphasis on *The Happy Prince*. She divides her analysis into literary and linguistic devices. The literary

devices include personification, use of simile, symbol character, fairy tale or fiction and language description. On the linguistic devices, lexical and grammatical categories of (Leech and Short 2007) model was employed. The analysis of the data was based on the devices that are either literary or linguistic.

(Leech, 1981)emphasize “matters on pragmatics and rhetoric, that is, how users implement the cognitive or ideational code of language for communicative ends”. (Davy, 1969) see all texts a worthy of stylistic analysis not just the privilege canons of literature.

The objectives of this study are to identify the features and devices stylistic elements used in the speech, analyze and discuss the identified features and devices stylistic elements used in the speech. This study focuses on the analysis of effectiveness of the stylistic features used in the President Muhammadu Buhari’s Democracy Day Address in June 2022.

### **Methods**

The method used in this study is Qualitative analysis method, and the theoretical framework is that of Crystal and Davy (1969). Also the source of data collection is primary source of data collection which has been the former President Muhammadu Buhari’s Democracy Day Address in June 2022. We read the speech several times after which we pinpointed our data

### **Results and Analysis**

The expression “And those aggrieved opted to seek judicial justice as oppose to jungle justice” within the speech is one of the most obvious

deviation features of this speech. The deviation is at the graphological level. The graphological level is the study of the way people write letters and words, especially in order to discover things about their characters. The second stylistic feature is the stronger pattern of sounds of sentences. This deviation is at the phonological level (e.g. anniversary/ occasion in sentence 1). Lexical cohesion is also another stylistic feature (e.g. celebrate freedom – and unity of our Nation). Another stylistic feature in this speech is conjunction; this is the process of joining one or more sentences together to express certain meanings which presuppose the presence of other components in the discourse. E.g. I am also promising you a free, fair and transparent electoral process.

### **Interpretation**

And – additive conjunction that add the previous information to another one. Another prominent stylistic feature in this speech is ellipses. A method whereby a part of a sentence is totally omitted as it is not seen to change the actual meaning of that sentence. E.g. Nigerians saw the best in our citizens as we all went out to vote peacefully. Another stylistic feature in this speech is repetition (e.g. And those aggrieved opted to seek judicial justice as oppose to jungle justice). The president used ‘justice’ twice in the sentence in order to impress the people of Nigeria. The speech also featured lexical and semantic deviation, that words are given more than their denotative and connotative meanings. E.g. an animate or human being “stands” is endowed with non-human “stand”. Another stylistic feature in this speech is epithet. This is a stylistic device that is markedly subjective and evaluative. Example: Simple epithet:

### **Adjectives**

- a. Citizens
- b. Accountable
- c. Peaceful
- d. Suspicious
- e. Unfortunate
- f. Victorious

Based on the above explanation; the epithet makes a strong impact on the reader so much so, that he unwillingly begins to see and evaluate things as the writer want him to. Another stylistic feature in this speech is syntactic brevity (e.g. we also saw the worst of our leadership as the elections were annulled). The syntactic brevity here, is on the word “Annulled” in normal circumstances we use “Invalid” instead “Annulled” President Muhammadu Buhari’s writer used this word in order to show his richness and specialization in the language.

- Synonyms in Democracy Day address 12<sup>th</sup> June, 2022.

Anniversary – Year

Annulled – Invalid

Patriotism – Nationalism

Transition – Move

- Antonyms:

Magnanimous – Selfish

Augurs – Narrate

Possible – impossible

Reform – Abandon

Majority – Minority

- Synecdoche: Individual as a whole – Muhammadu Buhari
- Litotes: It is not the job of government alone.
- Assonance: Democracy Day

- Consonance: Democracy Day, Currently in Captivity in sentences 22 and 19 respectively.
- Alliteration: Alliteration occurs in sentences in the democracy day address e.g.: Track and Trace in sentence 21, Security Structures in sentence 20, Peaceful and Prosperous in sentence 23, Jungle Justice in sentence 9.

### **Sentence Analysis**

Sentences 1-5 and 9 are simple sentences; simple sentence is a type of sentence that make a complete thought and have a subject and one or more predicate tied to them. Sentences 6,7 and 10 are compound sentences. Compound sentence give continuity of action on the part of the subject within the sentence. This sentence type consists of two or more sentences joined by conjunction, comma or a semi-colon. Sentence 8 is complex sentence. The complex sentence is the process that give a complete meaning of a context. There is a main clause which is independent and also a subordinate clause which is dependent on the main clause to give a complete meaning of a context, those sentences are good example of complex sentences. The stylistic effect of these types of sentences are that they aid clarity and then simplicity of theme.

From the above analysis, we learned that simple sentence has the highest frequency of occurrence in Democracy Day Address in June 2022 delivered by President Muhammadu Buhari. A simple sentence can be long and have a compound subject and compound verbs or long and have compound verbs or predicates. A compound subject has more than one noun

performing the action and a compound predicate has more than one verb using the same subject. And are joint by conjunction like “and” President Muhammadu Buhari prepared and chooses simple sentence in his speech more frequently than other types of sentences. This is so because he wants to make his speech more understandable to his audience.

### **Lexical Organization**

The lexical organizations in this speech are in the following words:

1. Citizens (adj): An inhabitant of a particular town or city.
2. Accountable (adj): Willingly accepting responsibility for your actions.
3. Peaceful (adj): A state or period in which there is no war.
4. Suspicious (adj): A state of feeling that someone has done something wrong.
5. Unfortunate (adj): Suffering from bad luck.
6. Victorious (adj): A state of having won a game, competition, election etc.
7. Governance (n): The act or manner of governing.
8. Judicial (adj): Having the function of judgement.
9. Patriotism (n): Feeling of attachment and commitment to a country, Nation or political community.

10. Transparent (adj): Free from pretense or deceit.

### **Interpretation**

From the above terms we get the following messages first, there is a hint of politics in the speech. Secondly, the most important, word give the hint that the speech is about the Democracy Day Address in June 12<sup>th</sup>, 2022. Most of the terms used are simple lexemes; some political terms are also used. Going through this very speech, we see the important of Democracy Day. A day of remembrance. Lastly, there is some hint of a good democracy to the citizens.

### **Conclusion**

This research work “A Linguistic Stylistic Analysis of Muhammadu Buhari’s Democracy Day Address in June 2022”. The researchers were able to identify the following features as the findings, amongst are: graphitic/graphological deviation, phonological level, lexeme/semantic level, syntactic brevity and also in this research we were able to identify the lexical cohesion: - epithet, coordination, litotes, synecdoche, synonyms, antonyms, assonance, consonance, and alliteration. Also, this speech featured the lexical organization and sentence analysis

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