

Legitimizing Political Choices through Tropes: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Dauda Abdullah Rarara's Political Songs

Dan'Azumi Abdu

Department of English
Federal University Dutsin-Ma, Katsina State
abdudnazumi@gmail.com

S. A. Abaya

Department of English and Literary Studies,
Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Kaduna State

Muhammed Halima Samaila

Department of English and Literary Studies,
Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Kaduna State

Abstract

This study examines the power of tropes in legitimizing political choices. It focuses on Dauda Abdullahi Rarara's political songs. Fairclough's Three Dimensional Model was adopted in the analysis of the data of the study. The theory fits the analysis as it guarantees analyzing relationship between language, power, and ideology in social and political contexts. This relationship can be examined by looking at the speakers' lexical choice and constructions. The analysis is done using descriptive qualitative research method. Specifically, the paper studies two songs of Rarara paying attention to strategies he employs in constructing his ideology (legitimization) through the infrastructure of tropes. To be able to bring out a sense of legitimisation from the two songs (Maimalafa YaKaraya, The Man in a Sunhat Losses Hopes, and Aminu Dabo Ubangayya, Aminu Dabo, the Pendragon), six excerpts were purposively culled and analysed and arrived at interpretations. One of the findings reveals that Rarara, as one of the foremost voices in the political rendition in northern Nigeria is endowed with linguistic power to articulate his ideologies creatively. Another finding authenticates that the singer often leverages on tropes of different categories to achieve his goals. For positive self-representation or legitimisation of choices, positive metaphors, hyperboles, euphemisms are often used; while innuendos and rhetoric questions are basically used for negative representation or condemnation. It is also established that apart from tropes, other linguistic devices – adjective and verbs play immeasurable roles in framing legitimisation of preference.

Keywords: CDA, tropes, songs, legitimization, choices

Introduction

Language, as a means of communication and construction of experiences, beliefs and yearnings, can be seen as an indicator of social and political situations. The relationship between language and politics is very apparent as one cannot exist without it; they influence each other in one way or the other. The former (language) is the raw material for the latter (politics); while the latter also influences

the former. In recent years, investigation of this relationship has expanded enormously, as studies (linguistics and literary studies) have been conducted in different communities by different researchers focusing on different aspects of the nexus (Lippmann 1998; Lippmann and Dewey 1927; Cap & Okulska 2013; Fairclough & Fairclough 2012; Wodak 2011; Wodak & de Cillia 2006; Chilton 2004). These studies, though have bearings on the current study, but differ in some ways. The study focuses on how political actors, singers in particular, use the infrastructures of tropes to construct ideologies of different magnitudes. Language, being the cradle of any development that man has ever seen on the planet earth, allows users of all times weave and unfold plans that could have direct bearing on their lives. Language is a medium through which people conduct politics, business, cause disruption, condemn, or silence other people. Bolinger (1980, p. 7) corroborates the above view by saying language is a loaded weapon that people use to arm themselves against possible attack from other cultures, or even manipulate to cooperation.

From the above explanation, it is clear that language permeates every sphere of human life including politics, education, business, and existence itself. Every social activity, government's actions, plans and policies inclusive, even those that demand physical coercion or exercising roles or obligations in democracy as responsible citizens are unfolded to the public via the system of language. Political singers of every status utilise the medium of language to construct ideologies through texts or talks grandiose quality. Seen in this way, Van Dijk (1997a, p. 12), says that political text is any text or talk of professional politicians or political institutions, it does not restrict to texts or talks produced by such as presidents, prime ministers and other high caliber members of government, parliament or political parties, either at the local, national or international levels. In that sense, van Dijk (ibid) explains that the word "politicians" refers to individual, group, or institution(s) who are paid for their (political) activities, and who are being elected or appointed (or self-designated) as the central coordinators of a state. The definition of the word politicians, the word includes individual or group of artists (political singers), whose works of art synchronize with that of politicians, or who sing for politicians or political parties. Political singers, more especially those with high artistic skills are engaged by individual political office seekers, groups or governments to chant and glorify the manifestos of certain political parties. Language, as a tool of politics and construction of ideology, allows singers develop songs to publicize, approve or disapprove certain policies or systems. Buttressing the above point, Chilton (2004, p. 8) says "political parties and government agencies employ publicists of various kinds, whose role is not merely to control the flow of, and access to information, but to design and monitor wordings and phrasings, and in this way to respond to challenges or potential challenges." He adds that no matter how good a candidate or political party's manifesto is; no matter how superior the political thoughts and ideologies of a political party may be, they can only be expressed and further translated into social actions for social change and social continuity through the instrumentality of language.

Considering the social roles of language in humans communication system, Dauda Abdullahi Rarara (henceforth, Rarara), one of the foremost voices in the area of artistic renditions of political nature in northern Nigeria and one of the foremost nationwide uses one of the resources of language (tropes) to legitimise political choices through persuasions. Rarara, being a political singer and a key player in the Nigeria political landscape, has lots of songs that need to be approached from critical discourse's purview to identify issues of power relations – legitimisation, dominance and persuasion. The role of legitimisation as pivotal of Critical Discourse Analysis (henceforth, CDA), in the last few years remains on the increase. It is against the backdrop of the foregoing claims that this paper examines how Rarara constructs legitimisations of choices through troped expressions. The paper draws its

theoretical insights from one of the tested-and-proven theories of CDA, known as Fairclough's (2001) Three-Dimensional Models, a prim framework to study relationship between language and power in social and political contexts. The study adopts qualitative research design to identify elements of legitimisation in the expressions in the said singer's songs. In line with the foregoing background, this study formulates the following questions:

1. What tropes does the singer deploy in legitimising his political choices?
2. Which among the tropes are salient in the construct of legitimisation?
3. To what extent does legitimisation of political choices influence acceptance?

To answer the questions posed above, it is of utmost importance to specify and foreground the theoretical framework that this paper employs.

Theoretical Framework

As earlier stated, the paper is premised under CDA, with a particular reference to Fairclough (2001) Three-Dimensional Models, a theory which stresses that issues of power relations (persuasion, hegemony, and legitimisation) are constructed and identified using array of linguistic features (vocabulary, grammar, punctuation). Three-Dimensional Models fits this paper more, for it acknowledges description, interpretation, and explanation of words, phrases and clauses to reveal the covert meanings of a text. The basic claim of the theory, which is relevant to the trust of the present paper, is it helps the researcher expound the songs to identify ideological issues bordering around legitimisation of political choices. This way, Fairclough (2001: 118) states that “If one's concern is with the social values associated with texts and their elements, and more generally with the social significance of texts, description needs to be complemented with interpretation and explanation.”

Having clarified and fore grounded the theory that guides the conduct of this study, it is therefore pertinent to establish the methodology that the paper adopts while collecting the data of the study.

Methodology

As stated earlier, this paper examines legitimisation of political choices through tropes in selected songs of Rarara. Owing to time constrain, the paper examines two songs (Maimalafa YaKaraya, The Man in a Sunhat Losses Hopes, and Aminu Dabo Ubangayya, Aminu Dabo, the Pendragon). However, the said songs were drawn randomly across periods (eve of 2014 and 2019 elections). These songs were chosen for two reasons – (a) they are laden with rhetorical devices of different sorts, (b) they have a tinge of legitimisation structures. Looking at the range of the periods the songs covered, it is a hallmark in the history of Nigeria's politics, where a new political party (APC) clinched the mantle of the nation's leadership. The songs were in audio and video forms derived from YouTube. After they were gotten, the researcher listened and got them transcribed as they were composed in Hausa language. Again, in order to maintain the texture and fluidity of the songs, the English translation is given side-by-side with the original Hausa version. While carrying out the analysis, the researcher culled some expressions deemed ideologically motivated (legitimising choices or interests of the singer). The paper adopts qualitative method of research, a method that allows a descriptive analysis and interpretation of a text to maximise understanding of laymen on certain shrouded issues. Merging this method with theoretical insights from Fairclough's 3Ds offers a thorough analysis of the chosen songs to identify instances of legitimisation in Rarara's political songs. Analysis of the snippets was carried out bearing in mind Fairclough's model of textual analysis.

Critical Discourse Analysis and Tropes

CDA, as a sub-field of Applied Linguistics, has revolutionised the domain of Linguistics by

incorporating disciplines like politics business, technology, social issues (gender, migration, power, ideology and (in) security) laden with controversies. This is apparent in the works of the proponents of CDA – like Fairclough, van Dijk and Wodak (Adebayo, 2024). Concurring with Adebayo, Fairclough (1995, p. 132) states that CDA 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 ideologically shaped by relations of power and struggles over power.” Tropes, as devices of rhetoric carry deeper meanings beyond their encyclopedic ones, particularly in situations where the texts are political in their orientations. On this note Ortony (1979) asserts that tropes are not only nice, but necessary linguistic figures that allow language users, especially rhetoricians, politicians and spin-doctors manipulate the minds of their targets. This submission underpins the notion that tropes are employed in language to construct legitimisation of choice of different degrees. Smart (1831, p. 210), on the other hand, describes them as “indispensable to the effective communication of truth.”

Smart's position about rhetoric devices (tropes) corroborates the stance of other scholars like (Lakoff and Johnson 1980; Goossens et al. 1995; Panther & Radden, 1999; and Barcelona 2000a) that tropes are powerful and original texture of language; they make a text or discourse so attractive and nice. Because they are powerful in their own right; they turn expressions from their first purpose to another by comparing or linking things symbolically. Taking the above submission into cognition, it is apparent that tropes are instruments of ideology; language users manipulate them dexterously to achieve purposes. Van Dijk (ibid) avers that ideologies are embedding in lexical meanings, coherence and metaphors. Here, the term “metaphors” stand for tropes, because they are hyponyms of tropes. To Lakoff & Johnson (1980) tropes highlight certain features while suppressing others. They are devices for conceptual thinking, used in almost all kinds of discourses to accomplish desired purposes – comparing one entity with another entity, or used to cancel negative meaning of an utterance. Lakoff & Johnson (ibid) maintain that, tropes, in political discourse are associated with persuasion, domination and legitimisation in superb ways. Confirming the said point, Maalej (2003) states that tropes in discourse are unavoidable linguistic devices of ideology; politicians use them unconsciously to construct powerful structures, reasons, opinions and evaluations.

Songs as a Discursive Practice

Songs as discursive practices are language oriented phenomena laden with implicit ideological structures that call for experts' interpretations. Songs are in most cases framed in a condensed language, and for structuring ideologies of different magnitudes. Fast & Regley (2012) aver that songs communicate feelings, serves as an instrument for praise, legitimisation and delegitimisation of other peoples' philosophy. They are powerful voices used to correct certain social practices. They remain the influential mediums through which human actions, including political statements are expressed. Hiskett (1975) accentuates the validity of the point above by expressing through the medium of songs by which people can showcase their culture and religion, express philosophical thoughts and political affiliations. In the same way, Garofalo (1992) avers that a lot of communities in the world have used songs in one way or the other as means of airing their plights to global communities. Songs, as voices, belong to all levels (oppressed and oppressors) of community. Both the oppressed and the oppressors use songs to enliven the account of their history. For example, African countries at different occasions have used songs to herald new nationhood and important occasions. During colonialism, the oppressed have used the platform of songs in chiding the manners

in which the colonialists maltreated and handled the affairs of the continent.

In Africa, Nigeria in particular, many communities, ethnic groups, and institutions use songs either to chant supports or protest against policies or domination in all forms. In Nigeria, songs are voices for everybody, irrespective of age, status, gender and religion. They empower politicians to enlighten and persuade the electors, particularly when elections come closer. Garofalo (ibid) observes that messages embedded in songs reach places far beyond spaces defined by politics. Garofalo's submission expresses the topicality of songs in politics that politicians of different pedigrees use them in their bid to enlighten voters to cast votes in favour of certain candidates, or at least discourage voters from casting votes to opposition parties. In Northern Nigeria, people like: Sa'aduZungur, Abubakar Ladan, Zaria, MudiSpikin and many other patriotic song artists had, through songs, called for immense participation towards the attainment of independence.

Discursive Legitimation of Tropes

Legitimation is a universal discursive practice constructed in a text. As a universal and language-oriented phenomenon, legitimisation remains the focus of CDA, it plays important roles in communication and politics (Vaara, Aranda, & Etchanchu, 2024; Suddaby & Greenwood, 2005; Vaara, Tienari, & Laurilla, 2006). It is a way of legalising or authorising choices in a text. In this way, Vaara (2014) describes legitimisation as a discourse technique that language users employ to create senses of what are positive, beneficial, understandable, and acceptable in a specific setting. In other way, legitimisation is regarded as act of making choices or needs more established through careful or deliberate lexical selections in order to persuade listeners (Green, 2004; Harmon, Green, & Goodnight, 2015). To other scholars (Van Leeuwen, 2007; Van Leeuwen & Wodak, 1999; Vaara et al, 2006; Vaaran & Tienari, 2008) legitimisation is a stuff of discourse used in legalising choices through highlighting the key roles that the devices play in foregrounding legitimacy. Deephouse et al. (2017: 21) extends the definition of by saying it involves stakeholders' actions to endorse choices or "organisation's actions to defend itself". As it appears above, it is crystal clear that legitimisation is a process of constructing compelling structures with a view to legalising actions, interests, or choices. Linguistically, for one to foreground a choice, the use of rhetoric devices (tropes) can never be ignored. Budd, Kelsey, Mueller, & Whittle (2019) and Cornelissen, Holt, & Zundel (2011) establish that metaphors (one of the salient tropes) are common linguistic devices used in constructing legitimacy at micro and macro level discourse.

Metaphors, as tropes of comparison, influence public events by reinforcing and legitimising the outlooks and beliefs of supporters, thereby attacking that of opponents. They also encourage ways of thinking about the entity referred to, and contributes to conceptually based looks. In justifying how tropes encourage critical thinking, Black (2018) submits that people use words from different semantic fields (war, illness, journey and human body) to describe or refer to political struggle, opponents, actions, choices, or state of a nation. He further explains that, in political discourse the use of tropes is sometimes ideological – speakers resort to them when they contribute to their efforts to convince others, or legitimise actions, interests, and choices. Tropes, as linguistic devices are sometimes context, genre, and culture-bound elements.

Analysis of the Songs

Based on the rhetorical devices the singer employs in the two chosen songs, a critical mind would notice that legitimisation of choices permeate the songs. The singer crafts the songs this way to convince the general public that his political preference sees the light of day. This can be attested from

the titles of the songs (MaimalafaYa Karaya, The Man in a Sunhat Losses Hopes, and Aminu Dabo Ubangayya, Aminu Dabo: The Pendragon).

The title of the first song in its entirety is metaphoric in nature. It is a derogative representation of a political party and a presidential candidate of the then ruling party (PDP) in the 2015 elections. The singer through the title assures Nigerians that right before the conduct of the elections PDP losses to APC. Based on the singer's political calculations, the success of winning the said elections belongs to APC (the then opposition party). In political context, expression of this kind motivates the in-groups' actions to stick to their missions. The title of the second song, the appositive phrase, "the pendragon" validates the qualifications of the political actor, Aminu Dabo. The construction presents him as 'extraordinary pillar' in the political architecture of Kano State. The singer bestows him with a power to conquer his political foes despite their supremacy. The word 'pendragon', bearing the context of usage, connotes power and chieftaincy, and the singer employs these vocative expressions in the bid to persuade and legitimise the acceptance of his preferences.

Ku banikidan Aminuubangaiya,
You play for me the music of Aminu Dabo, the pendragon,
Dattijo Aminu Dabo, a gaidaka,
The real gentleman, Aminu Dabo, my greeting to you,
Ga Rararadan Kahutu da wakarka,
Here is Rarara, the son of Kahutu singing your song,
Waraca-waracanbalashikenan,
(sound indicating failure),
Ashe fasutsula sun tafishikenan,
Oh, the red monkey and its ass-kissers have gone forever,
Gakumanamu Aminu Dabogwaninanan,
But, our Aminu Dabo, the expert, is still relevant.
(Excerpt One)

From the excerpt above, the first sentence especially, one may infer that the singer employs imperative sentence just to motivate and command his listeners to actions. The subsequent sentences are declarative in their undertones expressing singer's opinions about a political actor, who he (Rarara) thinks is the best for the people of Kano State. The singer, in an attempt to qualify and legitimise the candidature of the said actor (Aminu Dabo), deploys catchy phrases like, the pendragon, the real gentleman, and the expert to convince the electorates and the entire people of the State that the actor in question fits the position he vies for. For example, the cited appositives offer vivid description of his dexterity. They are also constructions that are done with clarity, brevity, and power.

One might deduce from the frame of the clauses that the singer tries to legitimises the candidature of in-group actor, on the other hand, delegitimises that of the out-group. The singer justifies so in a clause, Oh, the red monkey and its ass-kissers have gone forever. The clause, in its entirety, is a metaphorical and pejorative representation of one of the out-group members, an influential political pillar of the nation. The singer describes the said actor as a red monkey just to deconstruct him, and convince the electorates to avoid casting votes to the said political actor. The phrase has negative cultural connotations; it connotes disapproval and egocentrism. Based on the metaphor, the singer implicitly expresses that the said politician is a destructor and greedy. The expression directly or

indirectly cautions the electors to shun giving mandates to this sort of politicians, as they are out to satiate their personal interests, but not for the electors.

Gadattijonamu, sutsula sun gazakaibara,
Here is an elder statesman that defies a red monkey's cunning tricks,
Dukmaibatunsayazoyafada,
Anybody that wants to express their minds, are free to do so,
Don shilamarinsaazimin ne,
He (AminuDabo) is calculated in his dealings,
Su sun kadaurebiri aka fedeja'irikufahimta ne,
You should know that they were the ones who butchered the red monkey,
Dattijonamunagartacehanyargidanka da bullewa,
The tested and trusted elder statesman who discriminates not,
Tsoho da yayikirakowaburinsayarinkaamsawa,
When an old man calls, everybody answers.
(Excerpt Two)

In addition to what happened in excerpt one above, the singer continues the grandiose description of the political actor in question in an attempt to convince the general public that the actor deserves the office he is contesting. In the excerpt two, the singer employs vocative adjectives to achieve so. For example, the words elder, calculated, old and cunning are dexterously used to qualify the nouns they described. In the expression, here is an elder statesman that defies a red monkey's cunning tricks, the two adjective are used differently. In the first one, elder is used in positive form, it presents the actor as one of the revered living political figures the state has, who if given a mandate, would confidently transform the political landscape of Kano State. Being an elder in any sphere of life connotes expertise and respect in all ramifications. Here, Rarara employs it to showcase Dabo as the best candidate for the people of Kano State in the 2019 gubernatorial elections. The word (elder), however, showcases calculation, accountability, respect, and erudition, amongst other leadership qualities. The second one, cunning, as used in this context has negative representations. It espouses out-groups' (PDP) propensity to resist APC's plans and pressures. The singer uses this adjective "cunning" to notify the people of the state PDP and its supporters have sordid plans to strip the State of all its moral values.

In addition, the other two calculated and old are positive in their functions. The former gives a positive validation of the agent (Dabo) which it post modifies. It positions him as the most suitable candidate whose thinking faculty can help remedy the atrocities that the past administrations caused the State. The latter adjective, on the other hand, though sounds negative, endorses the candidature of the preferred actor. The singer uses it to frame the actor exceptionally exceptional amongst other gubernatorial contestants. Considering the last clause, "when an old man calls, everybody answers", the singer has positioned the actor over all people of the State, describes him as the father of all. On this note, the singer calls for the electors, irrespective of age to come out en masse to vote for Dabo. Furthermore, through the said adjectives, the singer reinforces his personal political inclination towards a candidate and political party. A critical look at them reveals that are ideologically used to consummate political goals (legitimation of a candidature).

Tuni mu katarwatsajankai, jangwalagwadakubakuganeba?

We have already destroyed the redhead lizard, didn't we?
 Mu fagyadarmu ta nunatsafa Kano, saidai mu nemiabuntona,
 Our groundnut in Kano has matured; we should just wait for a hoe,
 Kagatsumagi yarkanyamaitabayara-yara da ma manya,
 You are a cane that beats both children and adults,
 Yaudairuwan dare yaritsa o o,
 The night rain has drenched that man.

(Excerpt Three)

The singer in furtherance of his mission to foreground the candidature of his preference employs condemnation techniques through symbolism and innuendo. Bearing the context of the song in mind, one may understand why the singer uses symbolism and innuendos in representing the out-group actors. The phrase, the redhead lizard, in the excerpt above is a symbolic and metaphorical representation of a powerful political actor, who Dabo (the singer's preference) bends down to dethrone. The singer leverages on tropes, symbolism in particular, to avoid mention of proper names just to shun the wrath of the law, or profanity. The singer describes this actor redhead lizard for reasons – vilification and disqualification. He is however, described so because the description has negative cultural representations. In some cultures, Hausa inclusive, a redhead lizard is bad omen. It also connotes excessive power; it bullies, despises, and sometimes devours the small ones.

Innuendo, as a pejorative trope has been used. The phrase, that man, in the last clause in the excerpt three above, is derogative in form and meaning. It represents the political actor in question as callow, who does not merit the position he vies for. Considering the expressive power of these linguistic devices, the singer deploys them ideologically to disapprove the candidature of the opposition political actors, and at the same time, legitimise and popularise that of his preference. He cautions the electors to desist from voting opposition party in all posts, that, if elected the nation will turn miserable.

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Another situation worth noting is how metaphor is used to express possession and to represent the preferred actors conspicuously. Consider these clauses, our groundnut in Kano has matured; we should just wait for a hoe. The words 'groundnut' in the first and 'hoe' in the second clause do not hold their encyclopedic referents. Groundnut, taking into cognizance the situation at hand, represents ideology; while hoe refers to a tool used to execute the ideology. Based on the cited clause, the singer persuades his addressees that success belongs to them (in-group) hence they possess everything it takes to win elections. That the addressees should stay committed to actualising the set mission. The clause, however, assures the electors of political dividends that await them as soon as they win elections.

Another instance of troped constructions that seek to foreground and legitimize the singer's preferred actor are found in the penultimate and last clauses of excerpt three. In these clauses, the singer uses metaphor to present Dabo as a symbol of strength and strong weapon that scares the out-group. The singer (re)-represents Dabo as a cane and night rain. Connotatively, a cane metaphorises Dabo as a dreadful pillar to members of the opposition parties, as he can subdue members of the opposition party irrespective of age and status. The description “the night rain” in the last line above, equally, qualifies Dabo as peaceful and calmed figure, who wishes progress and bountiful political moments to the general public.

Malafa ta kwashedala,
The PDP rakes all the dollars,
Sun bar mu a halinkoinkula,
They leave us in abject poverty,
Gyara Allah SamadunKafatattaki 'yanmalafasugusa,
May the God Almighty, the Owner of All help us get rid of the PDP.
(Excerpt Four)

In furtherance of the singer's mission of legitimising his political choice; he also leverages upon hyperbole to persuade the electors of how the then ruling party and its members have subjected Nigerians into abject poverty. This instance can be seen in clauses number 1 and 2 in the excerpt four above. He convinces the electors that the PDP and its leaders have embezzled the nation's treasury, leaving no single penny in the purse of governments, while the masses, who are the majority, live in miserable conditions. In order to make his argument foregrounded, Rarara sought for God's intervention to come to the rescue of Nigerians. The last clause, "May the God Almighty, the Owner of All help us get rid of the PDP" is a hyperbolic expression justifying that the condition that Nigerians find themselves is sympathetic and beyond ordinary man redemption, but the God almighty. The singer, in the same clause, tactically adjures the electors to dethrone the PDP and vote in the APC, his preference.

Jama'aku tare ku tare dakinbarayeza mu baje,
My fellow compatriots, let us guard our treasury and demolish the den of rats,
Mu fatattaki PDP, APC saksamahardaƙasa,
Let us dethrone PDP, and vote for APC from top to bottom.
(Excerpt Five)

The persuasion continues in a superb tone convincing the electors that the PDP and its leaders have worsened the living condition of Nigerians, for this, Nigerians should not spare them peace and chances anymore. On this note, for Rarara to convince his audience and justify his claims as valid, he uses vocative construction "My fellow compatriots" to appeal to the senses of the audiences before he could introduce the action(s) they should embark on. Rarara, curiously through imperative constructions in clauses 1 and 2(excerpt five) above commands his audience into actions (demolish the houses of members of the PDP, vote them out of their offices, and vote the APC at all levels). He also employs a reproaching description against members of the PDP just to legitimise voting the APC. Refer to clause one above "...demolish the den of rats". Here, Rarara, calls members of the PDP rats just to blur their victory, by presenting them as thieves and shallow brains.

An cucitalakawa 'yan PDP sutafkakure,
The masses were seriously marginalised, the PDP has committed a grievous offence,
Mu fatattaki 'yanwawa, APC saksamahardaƙasa,
Let us chase looters away, and institute APC from top to bottom,
Ba wuta, kumababuruwa, babutitunakomaijaga ne,
Things have deteriorated – they have deprived us energy, pipe-borne water, and roads network,
Mu bi APC jama'a, ruwa ta sha in mu kakaisuƙasa,

Let us vote for APC and oust them out.
(Excerpt Six)

Rarara continues citing hyperbolic evidences to substantiate his stance that the masses, who are the majority in the politics of Nigeria, must shun PDP, on the grounds that they are deprived. Clause one “The masses were seriously marginalised” in excerpt six above evidently states so. Considering the intensity of the expression, the singer craves for the audience indulgence to agree his point that PDP has gaffed. Buttressing the basis of his argument, he itemises the basic amenities (energy, pipe-borne water, and roads network) that Nigerians are lacking. These amenities are basic to the extent that any nation that falls short of them is classified a vulnerable nation. The expressive power of this example is evident in the psyche of the audience; it motivates them to seeing the exercise of their franchise. The singer is explicit of his mission in clauses 2 and 4 through imperative expressions (commands the audience) to chase away looters (PDP and its leaders), and vote in APC. Expressions of this kind are no doubt hyperbolic, as they are laden with devices that may evoke audience's immediate responses.

Summary

From the analysis above, it is evident that tropes are indispensable tools of political discourse; they allow speakers to manipulate situations to achieve purposes. They give speakers rooms to avoid appearing unfair, thoughtless, insulting, or rude in their utterances. Apart from being shields through which speakers protect themselves from committing profanity, tropes are paths through which language users convey messages to audience in systematic ways by making implicit or explicit comparisons of objects. The original data being derived from Hausa language, it can be deduced that in Hausa culture, it is allowed to borrow the quality of inanimate objects to assign to human beings for comparison purposes. The comparison may be positive or negative ones. For examples, concepts like rain and cane are used to achieve legitimisation. This substantiates Lakoff and Johnson (1980) that tropes are very basic tools of peoples' thought, not mere figures of beautification as claimed by traditional rhetoricians. It also corroborates Smart (1831:210); Mulligan (1994); and Fontaine (2008) that tropes compare things symbolically with something else, and make blunt points clearer.

Conclusion

This paper examined legitimisation of choices in political songs through tropes, and drawn its theoretical basis from CDA, Fairclough's Three Dimensional Model, in particular. From ordinary men's lanes, political songs are not more than entertainment pieces, because they are sung and listened to mostly by non-elites. But a critical analysis of the two songs above reveals that they are more than that, as singers construct ideologies of different magnitudes – legitimisation and delegitimisation of choices, orientation, sensitisation of policies, persuasion and dissuasion, etc. The findings reveal that the singer often leverages on the positive linguistic devices to legitimise his political choices. For example, expressions like the pendragon, the expert, the calculated, the elder statesman, my fellow compatriots, let us, and the night rain to mention but a few. However, the findings revealed again that the singer skillfully employs metaphors, euphemisms, hyperboles, innuendos, and rhetoric questions to make his ideology conspicuous.

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