

A SEMANTIC ANALYSIS OF SELECTED PETER OBI'S POLITICAL CAMPAIGN TWEETS AND READERS' COMMENTS

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to analyse the semantic characteristics of Peter Obi's political campaign tweets and comments on Twitter. This study is based on the semantic analysis theoretical framework. This study used a mixed method research design, focusing on Peter Obi's political campaign tweets and readers' comments on Twitter. Data collection involves retrieving tweets and extracting comments via Twitter's API or third-party tools. Data analysis includes rule-based methods, machine learning algorithms, or pre-trained models. A purposive random selection technique is adopted due to impracticality and space constraints.

The study explores the themes in Peter Obi's tweets, focusing on political reformation, ethnicity, and youth development. Obi addresses the political consequences of bad governance and emphasises the need for good governance. He uses ethnicity as a metaphor for national rebirth and progress, recognizing Nigeria's multi-tribal nature. This research reveals key insights into the communication strategies used and the public's response. Through the analysis of language, sentiment, and themes, it becomes evident that Obi's tweets aimed to convey specific policy points while fostering a positive emotional connection with the audience. Reader comments reflect varying degrees of support, skepticism, and engagement with his message. This analysis sheds light on the effectiveness of his online campaign in conveying his political agenda and eliciting public reactions. By continually studying and analysing political discourse on social media from a semantic perspective, we can deepen our understanding of the complex interplay between language and persuasion in the realm of politics.

Keywords: Semantics, Pragmatics, Tweeters, Leadership

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The primary function of language is for the purpose of communication. Man is different from animals since he communicates through language. Language is a tool in the hands of human beings that plays many different roles in society. The different functions performed by language have made its definition multifarious. To a layman, language could be defined as the medium of expressing ideas or the totality of meaningful utterances in any given society. Several scholars have defined language from different perspectives. However, that by Osisanwo (1995:5) seems to sum up the kernel of what other scholars have said.

Human language is characterized by a set of vocal sounds that can be encoded. These are produced by the human organs of speech-lips, tongue, larynx, e.t.c. (Adegbite and Akindele, 2005). According to Adebayo (1995), language is a complex system of habits whose sounds are used as symbols to convey the speaker's experience. In his own view, language is one of the chief means by which a person learns to organize his experience and thought. Language is important to politicians. Most activities performed by politicians are done through the avenue created by language. This includes manifestos, rallies, campaign elections, inaugurations, governance etc. Political speech is becoming a popular term, especially in the aspect of linguistics research. The term "political speech" could be said to have originated from the rhetorical works of Greek philosophers like Socrates, Sophist, Plato, and Aristotle. As a result, Aristotle defined it as the ability to observe the available means of persuasion in any given situation (Agbogun 2011). Nigeria has had ten elections to determine its political leaders since obtaining independence from British colonial rule in 1960.

The tenth Nigerian presidential election was held on 25 February 2023 to elect the president and Vice President of Nigeria. Bola Tinubu, a former Governor of Lagos State and nominee of the All Progressives Congress, won the disputed election with 36.61% of the vote, 8,794,726 total votes. Runners-up were former Vice President Atiku Abubakar, Peoples Democratic Party, and former Governor of Anambra State Peter Obi, Labour Party, who both immediately contested the result; Obi claimed he won. Other federal elections, including elections to the House of Representatives and the Senate, held on the same date while state elections were scheduled to hold two weeks afterward on 11 March, but were postponed by a week and was held on 18 March. The inauguration was held on 29 May 2023.

This study focuses on Peter Obi, a Nigerian politician and businessman whose rose to prominence through his achievements in the private sector and subsequent political career. Peter Obi, does not use traditional means of campaign unlike other politicians in Nigeria. He has been an active user of Twitter throughout his political career. In the lead-up to elections, he has used the platform to share his policy positions, criticize opponents, and mobilize support among his followers.

Despite the growing importance of social media in political campaigns, there has been relatively little research conducted on the language used in political tweets and the ways in which audiences respond to this language. By examining the semantics of Peter Obi's political campaign tweets and comments, this study will provide insights into the language strategies used by political candidates on Twitter and the effectiveness of these strategies in mobilizing support among followers. Additionally, the study will also include an analysis of reader comments, which can provide valuable insights into how audiences interpret and respond to political discourse on social media.

Overall, this study will contribute to a deeper understanding of the role of language in political communication and provide insights into how political candidates can use language effectively to engage with voters on social media.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW LINGUISTICS

Linguistics is a large interdisciplinary field that includes psychology, anthropology, neuroscience, computer science, and philosophy. Linguistics is defined by Todd (1987: 5) as “the scientific study of language”. Then, in the definition, he goes over the term “scientific” in greater detail. He claimed that the term “scientific” refers to the methodical study of language, just as physics or chemistry. Linguists strive to eliminate prejudice when studying the language. They attempt to monitor language use, generate theories, test those assumptions, and then gather evidence to support the conclusions. According to Akande (2022), linguists want to learn more about how language works and the common knowledge that people have when sharing information and feelings. Linguistics, on the other hand, is concerned with the important elements of various languages, such as words, as well as their integration in more sophisticated structures, such as phrases. Linguistics is also concerned with the modulation of the speaker's voice, which is affected by the speaker's intention. It is about how the listeners relate the information they already have to the new information they receive. Language, as the object of linguistic research, can be spoken or signed, and everyone has at least one of them, according to Fromkin and Rodman (in Wagner, 2003).

Furthermore, Ozoemena (2021) proposes several language definitions. First and foremost, language is a means of communication used to convey information. Second, language is defined as a system and set of rules for word “combination.” Language, on the other hand, is arbitrary. It denotes the absence of a clear relationship between sounds or words and their meanings. Onomatopoeic terms are not permitted in this circumstance.

Finally, Linguistics might be defined as the study of language in order to communicate information, sentiments, and intentions. The language may be spoken or signed. It can also take the shape of a single meaningful element, such as a word, or a group of elements, such as a phrase or even a clause and a sentence. Linguistics can be studied as a standalone discipline or in conjunction with other disciplines. Linguistics is divided into two categories: macro-linguistics and micro-linguistics. According to Lyons (1981: 36), “macro-linguistics is concerned with language and its relationship to other disciplines”. Furthermore, Nasr and Crabtree and Powers (in Hadi, 2009) state that macro-linguistics is concerned with the external view of language and how to use it in daily life. Stylistics, developmental linguistics, historical linguistics, language geography, psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, neurolinguistics, and other subjects are examples of macro-linguistics. According to Lyons (1981: 36), “micro-linguistics is the narrower one, as it is concerned just with the language itself, with no consideration for anything else”. In other words,

Nasr and Crabtree and Powers (in Hadi, 2009) claim that it is concerned with the internal view of language. Phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, pragmatics, discourse analysis, applied linguistics, and semantics are examples of micro-linguistics topics. Phonetics and phonology are linguistic disciplines that investigate the sounds of human language. The alterations of words and their pairings to make a grammatical sentence are then related to

morphology and syntax. Pragmatics studies the use of utterances in communication, whereas discourse analysis studies the use of language in text. The study of language meaning is classified as semantics.

Linguistic knowledge is also necessary for designing computer systems capable of understanding and producing human language, which is becoming increasingly crucial in the digital age (Jurafsky & Martin, 2018). Furthermore, linguistic research has contributed to our understanding of the global diversity of languages and cultures, as well as to the preservation of endangered languages (Crystal, 2000). Linguistics is a complicated interdisciplinary science that gives important insights into the structure, function, and evolution of language. Phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics are all important subfields of linguistics for understanding the complexities of human communication. Linguistics has far-reaching consequences for language education, language technology, and society at large.

Semantic Relations

According to Hjørland (2007), semantic relations are the study of relationships between concepts or meanings. Fromkin, Rodman, and Hyams (2003: 173) classify semantic relationships into three types: "lexical, phrasal, and sentential". The meaning relationships between words are classified as lexical relations. Yule (2006: 104) goes on to explain that the three types of relationships are "synonymy, antonymy, and hyponymy". When two or more words are synonymous, their meanings are closely related, according to Yule (2006). In some circumstances, the words are interchangeable. When asking someone's answer, for example, people can remark, "What was his answer?" "What was his reply?" In those two queries, the words answer and reply have the same meaning. Trask (2007) describes antonymy as a word relation, as opposed to synonymy, such as when two words have wholly different meanings. Antonymy can be classified as gradable antonyms, binary antonyms, or converse pairings. Gradable antonyms reveal the polar opposites of a group of terms, such as hot and cold or huge and little. Binary antonymy is the second type of antonymy. A binary antonym occurs when the existence of one word eliminates the possibility of another word's existence, such as living and dead. While words like wife and husband and above and below are examples of converse pairs, Yule explains that if A is B's husband, then B is A's wife; if A is below B, then B is above A. Hyponymy is the final form of lexical link. According to Yule (2006: 106), "hyponymy is a relationship between two or more words in which one is a kind of meaning of another". Horse, for example, is a hyponym of animal, which means that a horse is a type of animal. The second semantic relation, phrasal relations, is found in a phrase, according to Fromkin, Rodman, and Hyams (2003). This type of meaning link can be either noun- or verb- centered.

An adjective-noun combination, such as nice buddy, and a noun compound, such as doghouse and pickpocket, are both examples of noun-centered meaning relations. The verb-centered relation is then intimately tied to the verb's thematic roles. Thematic functions in the statement the agent and theme of the sentence are "the boy found a red brick." The red brick was placed on the wall by the youngster as an agent, theme, and aim. Thematic responsibilities were determined by knowledge of locating and putting the last semantic relation is the sentential meaning relation, according to Fromkin, Rodman, and Hyams (2003). The meaning of noun phrases and verb phrases in a sentence contributes to its overall meaning. Other components of speech, such as adverbs, also contribute to or impact the meaning of the statement. Finally,

Murphy (2003) contends that there are three major sentential semantic relations. They are inconsistencies and paraphrases. Contradiction is defined by Fromkin, Rodman, and Hyams (2003) as a sentence connection in which the truth of one statement implies the falseness of another. According to Kreidler (1998: 299), "contradiction is the interaction between two opposing propositions".

It means that if one is correct, the other must be incorrect. Contradiction is demonstrated by Fromkin, Rodman, and Hyams (2003) in their example. Elizabeth II being a man is contradicted by the sentence Elizabeth II is Queen of England. A queen is always female and never male. As a result, if the first sentence is correct, the second must be incorrect. Another example is that if Scott is a baby, he is not an adult, because no one can be both a baby and an adult at the same time. Finally, if one statement is stated to be the negation of another, they are in a contradictory relationship. The other two sentential meaning relations, para and entailment, are similar. According to Nishanthi (2020: 113), "the link between the two interactions is analogous to the relationship between hyponymy and synonymy". They go on to say that if synonymy is symmetric hyponymy, then para is symmetric entailment.

Political Language

The connection between language and politics stems from the relationship between language and communication. Man is a political being whose entire life is pervaded by politics, and his gift of speech serves as an apt enabler. Language is important in politics because it prepares, accompanies, controls, and influences every political action (Schaffer, 1996). The importance of studying political language, according to Beard (2000), is to understand how language is utilized by people who aim to achieve, exercise, and keep power. In politics, language is utilized to make speeches and observations.

Thus, political careers are negotiated, secured, and practiced through the use of language, the product of which is primarily speech-making. According to Beard (*ibid.*, 35), "making speeches is a vital part of the politicians' role in announcing policies and persuading people". Lakoff (1990:7) articulates the inextricable link between language and politics better. He claims that "language is politics, politics assigns power, and power governs how people speak and are understood." He goes on to say that political manipulations rely on language since language originates and interprets power relationships. Thus, language bestows or confers power and defines the relationship between its users through the roles it assigns to them. Language is used to exhibit power, and every language user "plays the linguistic power game according to hidden agendas, with the unsaid being far more potent than the said" (*ibid.*, p. 21). The concern of pragmatics is the elucidation of the unsaid meaning, or "hidden agenda" (Mostafa, 2019:67).

Language allows politicians to explore their verbal and communicative resources and manage words to suit their purposes. As a result, language could be seen as a political vehicle.

As a result, the importance of language in persuading, organizing, influencing, and illuminating citizens cannot be overstated. It is the connection to people's hearts. Akinkurolere (2011) suggested that voters' support for politicians is based on their message and method of presentation is correct, as these factors impact the success of candidacies, programs, or policies. As a result, both the political message and the way in which it is delivered are critical. Across multiple social domains (e.g., a workplace discourse, a high school class with popular and

unpopular groups, etc.), there is a clash of interests, a struggle for power superiority, a desire to present the prevailing attitudes as commonsensical, and a tendency to instill specific beliefs in the minds of in- and out-group members.

Politicians, on the other hand, seek to win power conflicts in order to achieve their goals, create parameters for the values formed in a community, and obtain regulatory authority over resource distribution and decision-making (Sajjad, 2015; Bayram, 2010).

Peter Obi

Peter Obi is a Nigerian politician and businessman who rose to prominence through his achievements in the private sector and subsequent political career. Peter Obi established himself as a successful entrepreneur and businessman before entering politics. He gained prominence as the founder and CEO of Next International, an import-export company, and also served as the chairman of several other companies. His business acumen and success in the private sector helped him build a reputation as a capable leader and manager. Obi's political career took off when he was elected as the Governor of Anambra State, Nigeria, in 2006. His election victory was remarkable because he successfully challenged the incumbent governor's victory, leading to a re-run election. As governor, Obi focused on improving the state's infrastructure, education, and healthcare systems. He earned recognition for his fiscal discipline and prudence in managing the state's finances. During his tenure as governor, Obi implemented several reforms and initiatives that transformed Anambra State. He invested in education, built and renovated schools, and provided support for teachers and students. Obi also made significant strides in healthcare, infrastructure development, and agriculture. His achievements in governance earned him respect and admiration, not only in Anambra State but across Nigeria.

Peter Obi's successful tenure as Anambra State Governor elevated his profile nationally. He became an influential figure within the political landscape of Nigeria and was seen as a role model for good governance. Obi's reputation as a disciplined and transparent leader attracted attention, and he was sought after for his expertise and advice on economic and financial matters.

In 2019, Peter Obi was chosen as the running mate for Atiku Abubakar, the presidential candidate of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) in the general elections. His selection as the vice-presidential candidate brought him further into the national spotlight. Obi's experience in governance, financial expertise, and reputation for transparency were seen as valuable assets to the PDP's campaign. Through his accomplishments in the private sector, successful tenure as governor, and national political influence, Peter Obi grew to prominence in Nigeria. His reputation as a capable and effective leader, coupled with his commitment to good governance and development, contributed to his rise as a prominent figure in Nigerian politics.

Social Media

Social media refers to online platforms and websites that allow users to create and share content, engage in social networking, and interact with others virtually. These platforms typically enable users to share text, images, videos, and links with their followers or connections. Examples of social media platforms include Facebook, Twitter, Instagram,

LinkedIn, YouTube, and TikTok. In recent years, social media has become an increasingly important tool for political campaigning, providing a platform for candidates to communicate with voters and mobilize support. Twitter, in particular, has emerged as a popular platform for political communication, with many candidates using the platform to share their views and connect with potential voters.

Peter Obi, a Nigerian politician and former governor of Anambra State, has been an active user of Twitter throughout his political career. In the lead-up to elections, he has used the platform to share his policy positions, criticize opponents, and mobilize support among his followers.

3.0 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is based on the semantic analysis theoretical framework, which is concerned with the meaning of language in context (Baker, 2014). The goal of this framework is to identify the semantic relationships between the language used and the intended meaning by analysing the linguistic structure of Peter Obi's political campaign tweets and reader responses.

4.0 METHODOLOGY

The study adopted the mixed methods design which combines integrating qualitative and quantitative approaches. The researcher conducts a qualitative analysis of the semantic elements and employ quantitative measures to assess sentiment analysis, frequency of specific language patterns, or other quantitative indicators.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Tweet I

We have gambled with Nigeria, her children and fate of our children. That must stop. We must revisit lessons learned and missed opportunities. PO

Tweet II

Nigerians remain hopeful for a nation rebirth which implies Nigeria to Nigerians; farmers, teachers and students, lecturers, artisans, workers, pensioners and over a hundred million poor Nigerians who are not sure where their next meal will come from.

PO

Tweet III

My promise is that Nigeria's resources will be most prudently used and as the Commander in Chief, I Peter Obi sincerely pledge that Our Pact with Nigeria will be diligently pursued to create a new Nigeria characterised by sustainable/inclusive growth and development.

PO

Tweet IV

If you don't study history, it's hard to understand your own time. You won't know what's distinctive about it, and what business is as usual.

—Paul Graham

This is time for a generation shift. We are the Isacchar Generation,

We know it's time to build a new nation with PO.

Tweet V

We dare to dream We dare to win

A new Nigeria is POSSible ObiDatti is the key

Go Get your PVCs! 2 more days to go!

Thematic Issues in Peter Obi's Tweets¹ Theme of Political Reformation

The tweets selected for this study are all political campaign tweets which fall under the umbrella of political discourse in critical terms. However, it is important to note that these tweets do not just dwell on political issues only, rather, Peter Obi has also employed the tweets to examine a variety of matters including religion, education, ethnicity and power. In contextualising the tweets into Nigerian reality, it could therefore be inferred that, as a political aspirant, Peter Obi shows and proves to be sensitive as he unveils the dys functionality and inadequacies hanging on the corridor of governance. By situating the tweets into the Nigeria's context, the study therefore attempts to analyze the tweets with the view of showing those salient thematic issues in relation to the political, social and economic reality of the nation.

To start with, the tweets reveals the political consequences of bad governance and the urgent need to embrace good governance. The concept of "good governance" thus emerges as a model to compare ineffective economies or political bodies with viable economies and political bodies.

By drawing upon the language use of the speaker, the reader could understand that the speaker says statements of assurance, hope and progress. The political reality of the nation has been terrible over the years as a result of bad governance and unstable leadership. The speaker therefore uses his tweets to foreground the thematic subject of political reformation with an accent of ethnic respect and tribal love.

Theme of Ethnicity

It is important to note that ethnicity is a complex concept and can be fluid, overlapping, or influenced by various factors such as migration, intermarriage, and historical events. It is also distinct from race, which primarily focuses on physical characteristics and genetic traits. From a critical perspective, Peter Obi employs his campaign tweets as metaphors for national rebirth and progress through ethnic respect and sense of ancestral belonging. Paying attention to the Nigerian society, the nation is a multi-tribal entity with over 500 ethnic groups co-existing. By

implication, the idea of projecting ethnic companionship and solidarity is necessary as it has an integral role to play in achieving tribal and ethnic integration.

Stylistic Analysis and Discussions Lexical Choice

The Lexical Choice of "Gambled"

In the opening of the tweet, the speaker says "We have gambled with Nigeria..." The use of the linguistic item "gambled" is significant to the understanding of the message and intended meaning of the text. By appealing to the knowledge of semantics, the meaning of gamble in the context of the text functions as a linguistic resource. The idea of "gamble" refers to the act of wagering money or something of value on an event with uncertain outcomes, in hopes of winning additional money or material goods. One thing to note is that, the idea of gambling has no assurance. And this implies that anyone that gambles only takes a risk.

In relation to stylistic analysis of the tweet, it could be inferred that the speaker has used the linguistic lexical item of "gamble" to portray the delicate state of affairs of the country. From a critical perspective, it implies that the speaker exposes the gambling nature of Nigerian politics with respect to the leadership development of the nation. The semantic import of the linguistic item connotes that the speaker understands the implications and dangers underpinning the irresponsible governance of the political leaders. From a broader perspective, the effects and implications of gambling can vary for individuals and society, and they may include the following:

- i. Financial consequences: Gambling can lead to significant financial losses. Many people develop an addiction to gambling, which can result in excessive debt, bankruptcy, and financial ruin.
- ii. Emotional and psychological impact: The thrill of gambling can become addictive, causing individuals to prioritize gambling over other important aspects of life. This addiction can lead to feelings of anxiety, depression, stress, and even suicidal thoughts.
- iii. Relationship strain: Excessive gambling can strain personal relationships, as individuals may prioritize gambling over spending time with loved ones or meeting family responsibilities. Trust issues and financial disputes can arise, leading to broken relationships and households.
- iv. Health concerns: Stress, anxiety, and depression associated with gambling can lead to physical health problems, such as insomnia, digestive issues, headaches, and even substance abuse.
- v. Legal issues: For some individuals, gambling can lead to illegal activities, such as theft, embezzlement, or fraud, in an attempt to fund their addiction or recoup their losses.
- vi. Socioeconomic impact: Gambling can have wider societal implications. It can contribute to increased crime rates in certain areas, impact local economies, and potentially exploit vulnerable populations.
- vii. Positive aspects: While gambling has negative implications for many individuals, for some it may be a form of entertainment and recreation. It can also contribute to local economies through the creation of jobs and tourism revenue. In some cases, gambling proceeds fund public services or charitable organizations. It is essential to approach

gambling responsibly, recognizing its potential risks and seeking help if it becomes problematic.

The Lexical Choice of "National Rebirth"

The speaker uses the linguistic lexical choice of "nation rebirth" to expose the reader to the need to embrace social change and kick again an irresponsible government. In relation to the context of the tweet, an irresponsible government refers to a form of governance where officials fail to fulfill their duties and obligations in a responsible and ethical manner. It involves negligence, mismanagement, corruption, inefficiency, and a lack of accountability towards the needs and welfare of the people. national rebirth as a linguistic metaphor implying the need to embrace progressive governance. National rebirth is a complex and long-term endeavor that requires a comprehensive approach addressing political, social, economic, and institutional aspects. It involves a shared commitment from government, civil society, and citizens to work together towards a common vision of a renewed nation.

The Lexical Choice of "Promise"

Semantically, judging from the ordinary surface, the idea of "promise" has to do with a declaration of hope that one will do something or that a particular thing will happen. Without mincing words, to make a promise simply means giving assurance about something. However, from the critical perspective, judging from the Nigerian political and socio-economic context, the idea of making a promise has the connotation of rebuilding, reshaping and reforming the future for a better governance. In relation to stylistics, the lexical use of "promise" as implied in the tweet could infer that the speaker is on the verge of reformation so as to assure the people about their future being secured, especially when he becomes the leader.

The Lexical Choice of "a new nation"

In the tweet, the speaker says "...it's time to build a new nation..." The idea of building a nation as implied by the author or the speaker is clearly expressed without mincing words. It is important to note that, nation-building and the interplay of politics have become two potential sides of same coin which should reasonably meet at an ideal equilibrium. However, in the Nigerian context (and Africa by extension), there have been series of critical issues and fundamental problems pertaining to the politics of nation-building even before the attainment of independence in 1960. Apparently, till this present moment, these issues and possible remedies being proffered by analysts and scholars are yet to yield expected results.

From a critical view, the tweet has some silences which the reader is expected to dig deeply to decode. The tweet critically shows two problems affecting the Nigeria's systems. One is the issue of misguided democracy and the other is sentimental ethnic politics. These two issues pose to be challenges affecting nation building as implied by the speaker. In relation to stylistic analysis, the use of "a new nation" reveals the speaker's true intention towards achieving newness, growth and development.

The Use of Pro-nominal Item "We"

In the tweet, the use of language with respect to the pro-nominal item "we" is significant to the message of the text. As used in the context of the text, "we" has a semantic connotation of collectivity. This implies that the presupposed author uses the idea of "we" as a stylistic marker to signal the need for a collective effort so as to attain economic growth and political prosperity. Although he is the only one talking, however, using the plural pro-nominal linguistic item "we" semantically connotes that there is a need for a division of labour, in which the people of the nation will come to partake in the exercise of nation-building. In the tweet text, the speaker repeatedly uses "we", and this is a case of linguistic prominence through the use of repetition. In relation to stylistics, the deliberate attempt of repeating the first person plural grammatical pro-nominal item "we", the speaker therefore foregrounds the imminent need of political collectivity and pragmatic efforts towards achieving a responsive governance.

The Use of Imperative

In the tweet text, the speaker makes use of an imperative statement that also contributes significantly to the message of the intended speaker. In the tweet, the speaker says "That must stop". In grammar, imperative statements are sentences that are regarded as commands. This is because they tend to give an instruction to the hearer or listener. In relation to stylistic analysis, based on the context of the tweet, it could be inferred that the speaker employs the use of imperative to politely command the urgent need for a reformation, such that the nation must put an end to unproductive and unprogressive democracy with the view of embracing progressive one.

The Use of Polite Command

In the tweet, there is the use of imperative sentence which is otherwise known as a statement. In the tweet, the speaker says "Nigerians remain hopeful for a nation rebirth which implies Nigeria to Nigerians; farmers, teachers and students, lecturers, artisans, workers, pensioners and over a hundred million poor Nigerians who are not sure where their next meal will come from." In relation to stylistics, using a polite imperative sentence with a simple and clear tone could semantically imply that the speaker intends to stylistically use language to pass a message of hope and assurance to the audience or the general populace. In the Nigerian context, leadership has become ruptured and polluted. Therefore, judging from the speaker's view, it is imperative to secure the future by proposing good governance that will benefit all persons irrespective of their occupations and statuses.

The Use of Personal Pronoun

In the excerpt, the speaker opens with "My promise". The use of personal pronouns "my" and "I" as used in the excerpt critically reflect the speaker's personal willing, desire and conviction towards achieving his own leadership agenda of sustainable growth. Sustainable growth refers to a form of economic development that can be maintained over the long term without depleting resources or causing harm to the environment and society. It involves balancing economic progress with social well-being and environmental preservation, ensuring that future generations can also meet their needs. The linguistic lexical choices of personal pro-nominal items "my" and "I" as used in the tweeted text imply that the task is considered personal to the speaker of which he is ready to undertake.

According to the speaker, to achieve sustainable growth, both organizations and countries can adopt strategies such as social responsibility and good moral judgement. One thing to note is that the speaker uses the personal pro-nominal items to show a great sense of inclusivity towards sustainable growth. The idea of sustainable growth requires addressing social inequalities and promoting inclusivity. Organizations and countries should ensure fair wages, provide access to quality healthcare and education, promote gender equality, and strengthen social safety nets to uplift disadvantaged groups and foster social cohesion.

The Use of Nominal Phrase "generation shift"

The nominal phrase "generation shift" is used in the text to capture the intended message of the speaker. Semantically, the idea of shifting connotes moving to the next level. It connotes leaving a particular location for another. As a political discourse, the tweeted text uses the linguistic lexical nominal phrasal element with an "MH" structure to show the need to move. The semantic import of the nominal phrase points to the speaker's optimism about nation building.

In relation to stylistic analysis, the use of language of the speaker is politically sensitive and significant to modern democracy. By using the linguistic expression "generation shift", the speaker challenges the nation to shift from a generation of politically corrupt leadership to a generation of hope and progressive governance. The speaker uses language to foreground the urgent need to embrace nation building for a better tomorrow.

The Use of Singular Linking Verb "is"

In grammar, linking verbs are used as connecting verbal elements which are also known as copula verbs. One thing about copular verb "is" is that, it is sometimes used as an equational verb that requires a complement element which complements the subject. In the tweet, the speaker says "A new Nigeria is POSSible" and "ObiDatti is the key". The essence of "is" as a linking verb in the tweet is seen. In relation to linguistic stylistics, the use of "is" as a linking verb could be inferred as a linguistic metaphor projecting the idea of unity. Peter Obi, being a political aspirant may have repeatedly used "is" to foreground the idea of political oneness in one spirit, one mind and one language.

Graphological Choice The Use of Punctuations

In the tweet, the implied author uses a well-constructed punctuation technique. By drawing on this punctuation accuracy, it could therefore be claimed that the implied author achieves linguistic norm giving that he maintains a good use of punctuation marks. In the tweet, the comma and full stop are used where necessary. In relation to stylistics, it could therefore be inferred that the good and decent use of punctuation marks shows the true idea of reformation and functional accuracy which the speaker intends to achieve in power. The smoothness of punctuation use stylistically underpins the smooth governance hoped for.

The Use of Caesura

In literature and linguistics, caesura is a pause that occurs within a line of poetry, usually marked by some form of punctuations such as a period, comma, ellipsis, or dash. A caesura

doesn't have to be placed in the exact middle of a line of poetry but the most important thing is that, it always connotes short pauses which the reader needs to observe while reading. In the tweet, the speaker says "...farmers, teachers and students, lecturers, artisans, workers, pensioners and over a hundred million poor Nigerians..." Here, the speaker achieves a linguistic norm by over using caesura in form of comma.

The over use of comma in the tweet is a graphological style marker that contributes significantly to understanding of the tweet. In relation to stylistics, the over use of comma implies short pauses which creates an atmosphere of calmness, such that the reader becomes slow and steady. Thus, it could therefore be inferred that the calmness achieved in the tweet is a metaphorical pointer to the feasible, workable, slow and steady ideology of the speaker.

The Use of Capitalisation

The use of capitalisation in the excerpt is semantically significant to the message of the speaker. One thing to note is that, there is a case of linguistic foregrounding and thematic prominence through the use of capitalisation. In the excerpt, the speaker uses the linguistic expression "Commander in Chief" and "Our Pact" which reflect a graphological stylistic feature. The use of capitalisation achieves emphasis to a great extent. By capitalising those linguistic items, the speaker therefore draws the attention of the listeners to his political intention of becoming the national leader. By capitalising "Our Pact", the speaker wants to catch the interest of the reader. In terms of semantic import, the linguistic item "pact" is significant. The idea of "pact" semantically connotes agreement or a contract. Based on the context of the excerpt, it implies that the speaker intends to establish a responsible governance by collectively soliciting the supports of the people. Given that the nation is blessed with natural resources, it could therefore be inferred that the speaker intends to maximize the nation's wealth through a collective agreement with the masses.

Punctuation Patterning

In the tweeted text, there is the use of comma, full stop, dash and apostrophe. These punctuation marks are well structured in their appropriate places. By observing the punctuation marks in an appropriate manner makes a critical statement about the personality of the speaker who is same as the implied author. By drawing upon this graphological appropriateness, it could stylistically be inferred that the speaker is diligent and steadfast. The pattern of using the punctuation marks is such that is appropriate and consistent. In relation to stylistics, the steadfastness in the punctuation mannerism could imply that the speaker will be a meticulous person whose sense of governance will be committed to nation-building and communal growth.

The Use of Graphological Design

In the text, the speaker uses some graphological designs which are regarded as strategic and significant to the intended message of the author. To start with, the idea of using capitalisation in "POSSIBLE" is a case of graphological foregrounding and prominence. By capitalising the letter "P" and "O", it basically spells out the name of the political aspirant (Peter Obi). This implies that the idea of using capitalisation in that manner is stylistic and meaningful to the reader. The speaker uses that graphological mannerism to sell his own name through the use of symbolic abbreviation. The speaker critically positions himself as a mandate who is ready to

move the nation forward. By drawing on the semantic import of "POssible", the speaker is therefore perceived to be a catalyst for social change and reformation.

5.0 CONCLUSION

This research reveals key insights into the communication strategies used and the public's response. Through the analysis of language, sentiment, and themes, it becomes evident that Obi's tweets aimed to convey specific policy points while fostering a positive emotional connection with the audience. Reader comments reflect varying degrees of support, skepticism, and engagement with his message. This analysis sheds light on the effectiveness of his online campaign in conveying his political agenda and eliciting public reactions. By continually studying and analysing political discourse on social media from a semantic perspective, we can deepen our understanding of the complex interplay between language and persuasion in the realm of politics.

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Aim and Objectives of the study

The aim of study is to examine the semantic characteristics of Peter Obi's political campaign tweets and comments on Twitter. The specific objectives of the study are to

- i. identify the thematic issues in Peter Obi's tweets;
- ii. describe the lexical features in Peter Obi's political campaign tweets and comment;
- iii. analyse the grammatical features of the selected tweets and comments; and
- iv. relate the lexico-semantic features of the tweets to the political context of Nigeria.



08:51 · 13/02/2023 from Earth · 244K Views

4,460 Retweets 44 Quotes 11.5K Likes 6 Bookmarks



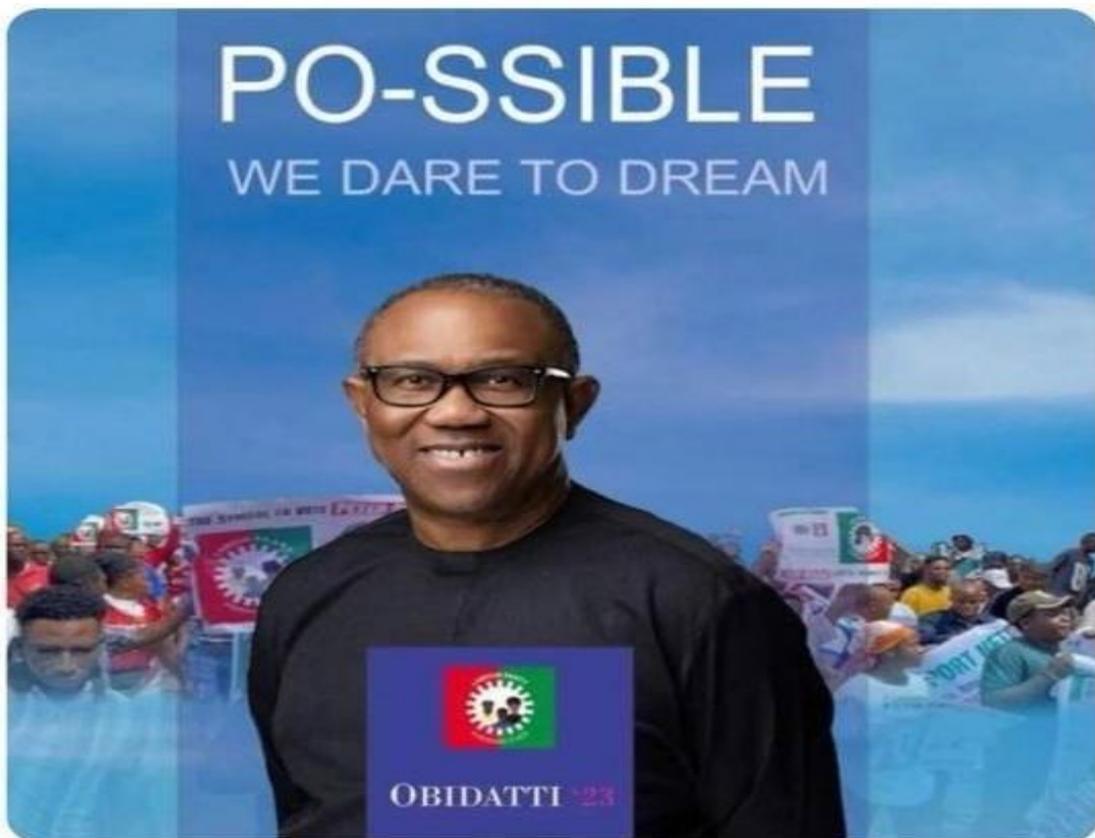
Tweet



Peter Obi ✓
@PeterObi



Nigerians remain hopeful for a national rebirth which implies returning Nigeria to Nigerians; farmers, teachers and students, lecturers, artisans, workers, pensioners and over a hundred million poor Nigerians who are not sure where their next meal will come from. -PO



08:40 · 28/01/2023 from Earth · **664K** Views

8,843 Retweets **270** Quotes **25K** Likes **18** Bookmarks



Peter Obi ✓

@PeterObi



my promise is that Nigeria's resources will be most prudently used and as the Commander in Chief, I Peter Obi sincerely pledge that Our Pact with Nigeria will be diligently pursued to create a new Nigeria characterised by sustainable/inclusive growth and development. -PO

18:15 · 16/01/2023 from Earth · **67.5K** Views

750 Retweets **13** Quotes **2,893** Likes **2** Bookmarks



Tweet



Ottified Youth Ambassador
@Ottified_YouthA



If you don't study history, it's hard to understand even your own time. You won't know what's distinctive about it, and what's business as usual.
– Paul Graham

This is time for a generational shift
We are the Isacchar Generation,
We know it's time to build a new Nation with PO.



08:58 · 13/02/2023 from Earth · **2,391** Views



Tweet



Pearls 
@MissPearls



We dare to dream
We dare to win
A new Nigeria is POSSible
ObiDatti is the Key
Go Get your PVCs! 2 more days to go!

08:42 · 28/01/2023 from Earth · **5,747** Views

25 Retweets **220** Likes