

IDEOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF POLITICAL HATE SPEECHES IN NIGERIAN NEWSPAPERS AND SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

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ABSTRACT

This paper investigates the interplay between language and political hate speeches through speech acts and ideological analysis of hate speeches in Nigerian newspapers and social media platforms. Defining hate speech is difficult as any hurtful speech as mostly termed hate speech by Nigerian politicians thereby making the concept more complicated and cumbersome. This study exposes the social political ideologies of selected political hate speeches, and to ascertain the prelocutionary effects of hate speeches on the addressees or the reading public. Utilizing a qualitative research methodology, the study employs one hundred political hate speeches from Punch, Vanguard, Business Day and Nairaland as the population. Purposive sampling technique was used to draw a working population of thirty political hate speeches. Data were generated through critical assessment of the hate speeches from the sources by writing them out for analysis according to the year, date and source. Data were analyzed using Van Dijk Socio-Cognitive theory and Descriptive grammar by Ndimele (2008). It was discovered from the data analyzed that there are certain predominant ideologies that are deployed in Nigeria political hate speech: one by the ruling class, another by the opposition. It was also discovered that hate speeches have perlocutionary effects on the addressee or the reading public. Ultimately, this study underscores the role of ideological influences of political hate speeches in truncating a Nigeria latent democracy that is rooted in aesthetics, values and national unity.

Key words: Ideology, Hate speech, Politics, Newspaper, Social Media and Platforms

INTRODUCTION

Hate speech has become popular in Nigeria of recent due to loath and bitterness in the polity emanating from gross failure in leadership, frustration, hardship, and hopelessness. The country under democracy is gradually becoming intolerant to any form of protest or opposition against the government that never does well, as though we are under military regime. This is coming in the face of great insecurity, high cost of living, inflation, hunger, and insensitive actions and policies by the government which trigger what most hate speech advocates in Nigeria consider as unhygienic utterance. The only way to paint the actions and inactions of the government in every attempt to push their displeasure and dissatisfaction. Besides the citizens, hate speech is most profound among political rivalries prior to and after elections, or at the juncture of critical decision making by the leaders. Lately, aggrieved human right activists have queued in making the concept more pronounced requiring extensive linguistic investigation from a pragmatic perspective so as to engender a clear disparity between what really a hate speech is, and the ideologies behind hate speeches deducible from the context of usage. This is an area that has not been given adequate attention at this needful time that most politicians are clamouring on criminalizing hate speech to the extent of proposing life imprisonment as penalty for a convict. This study, 'ideological analysis of political hate speeches in selected Nigerian newspapers and social media platforms from 2019-2024' becomes sacrosanct as a guide to safely define what constitute hate speech and ideologies behind political hate speeches, in contrast to freedom of expression as enshrined in the 1999 constitution of the federal republic of Nigeria.

This study becomes eminent due to the fact that our political leaders appear to confuse hate speech with freedom of expression lately. Thus, the need to peg the point of divergence to avoid unnecessary conflict and criminalization of freedom of expression in the present raging alacrity to

halt hate speech at all cost so that government could be free from criticism whatsoever. The funny thing about the concept of hate speech in Nigeria is the lopsided adjudication on the disparaging, negative appellation, defamatory, and tension arousing effects of hate speeches. Nothing is said or considered positive about it in respect to its credible information exhibition, justice seeking, fact representation, truthfulness and objective criticism.

Earlier, the phrase, hate speech includes all dissemination of personal ideas based on racial or ethnical superiority or hatred, by whatever means. It is incitement to hatred, contempt or discrimination against members of a group, race, colour, descent, or ethnical origin. To be concise, hate speech is considered as when a speech is baked with hatred; when any action is laced with hatred. This include speeches that are aimed at bringing down, exposing to danger, a person or group of persons. These descriptions of hate speech as exemplified above lack a clear distinction in contrast to objectivity, truth and freedom of expression. If someone is a thief and you call him a thief, the fact must be said, the man is a thief! It is a fact that truth is always bitter but ought to be distinguished from hate speech. The fact is that, the concept of hate speech in Nigeria is still yet to receive a clear definition in accordance with international standard as explained by the United Nation from racial, ethnical, regional and group perspective. Also, not much has been done to create this expected 'holy' definition that would not encroach to affect freedom of expression. Therefore, CDA extends beyond simply recognising language items and seeks to examine the ideological and political forces that shape particular strains of discourse. By using CDA to analyse the hate speech language, it is possible to recognise the elements of power, control, authority, and subtly conveyed ideologies that exist within it. These quietly presented ideologies are communicated through media discourse via the use of so-called commonsense ideas that may go unnoticed by the general public; examining ideologies by using CDA helps to raise awareness of how language can affect our conscience (Wodak and Meyer, 2019) and therefore shape wider public opinion and value judgments about the ethics of particular events such as wars and conflicts.

The language of hate speech comes in different forms and styles by hate speakers. Interpreting such language is tasking due to possible ambiguity, figurative expressions, bombardment, and deliberate cryptic scabbling to hide the speaker's intent. This points to the significance and eminent nature of the present study which seeks to unravel hate speech from a pragmatic perspective and the ideologies. However, where a citizen's rights stop, there the rights of others commence. Nobody is saying that those in power cannot be criticised but the criticism should embrace where those in power have not done well with evidence of proof and authenticity. The critic ought to be able to show where they need adjustments or totally deviate from programmes that have no direct benefit for the electorates. That is talking of constructive criticisms that will unite and benefit the people in various ways. This is the area the leaders use as a tool to constrain the masses from speaking their minds. However, if hate speech and freedom of expression conflict, the resolution could be found in an attempt to verify the objectivity or truthfulness of the expression termed hate speech which is mostly deducible from the linguistic context or situation of utterance.

Some pragmatic theories are thus employed to embellish the meaning of hate speech in Nigeria in this study in order to be accurate, logical, and objective in analysing political hate speeches in Nigeria comes the present study, ideological analysis of political hate speeches in selected Nigerian newspapers and social media platforms from 2019-2024'.

Statement of the Problem

In Nigeria's multifaceted political landscape language serves as a potent tool for both unity and division. Recent trends indicates such in political hate speeches, which are communications that demean individuals or groups based on attributes such as ethnicity, religion or political affiliation. These speeches have been linked to escalating tensions and in some cases violent, confrontations among different communities. Despite existing research focusing on the critical discuss analysis of such hate speeches, there is noticeable gap in understanding the pragmatic mechanisms such as presupposition, implicature, speech act, and contextual nuances that politicians employed to influence public perception and incite hostility. This study aims to fill this gap by conducting

ideological analysis of political hate speeches in Nigeria, thereby elucidating how language is strategically used to propagate hate and its subsequent impact on societal cohesion.

Research Question

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are the socio-political ideologies behind the selected political hate speeches?
2. What are the perlocutionary effects of hate speeches on the addressee or the reading public?

Purpose of the Study

The study has specific objectives to:

1. Expose the socio-political ideologies behind the selected hate speeches.
To ascertain the perlocutionary effects of political hate speeches on the addressee or the reading public.

Ideology

Van Dijk (1998) presents ideology in a triangle which relates cognition, society and discourse therefore, he calls his theory multidisciplinary theory of Ideology .At the cognitive level ideologies involve shared belief and attitudes. At the social level, they relate to social groups and power structure. "Ideologies are not merely defined in cognitive terms but also in terms of social groups, group relations, institutions, at the macro-level and in terms of social practices at the macro levels". Dangerous speeches emanate as a result of this proposition. The cognitive level involves 'social representations' namely social shared beliefs, values, attitudes and opinions, examples of these social representations are religious beliefs, communism, feminism and racism. Notions which are associated with the cognitive and mental functions of ideology include truth, falsity, false consciousness and common sense.

The social level (the macro- level) involves the social structures of society namely social groups, group relations, classes, institutions and organizations such as school, nursing, church or news media. The social function of ideology include power, control etc.

According to Van Dijk (1998), Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a field that is concerned with studying and analyzing written and spoken texts to reveal the discursive sources of power, dominance, inequality and bias. It examines how these discursive sources are maintained and reproduced within specific social, political and historical contexts. Van Dijk's socio-cognitive model not only takes into account grammatical, phonological, morphological and semantic micro structures, but also deals with some "high level properties" such as the local coherence, overall themes, news topics, schematic structures and rhetorical dimensions of texts. He is attentive to the "production processes" including journalistic and institutional practices of news making as well as the economic and social practices involved in the creation of discourse and, at the same time, he pays attention to the "reception processes" including the comprehension, memorization, and reproduction of text information (Dijk, 1998). Moreover, through the analysis of the macrostructure of news stories, Van Dijk explores the thematic and schematic structures of texts. Van Dijk's basically perceives discourse analysis as a kind of ideology analysis because according to him, "ideologies are typically, though not exclusively, expressed and reproduced in discourse and communication including non-verbal semiotic messages such as pictures, photographs and movies" (Van Dijk, 1995). Van Dijk's Ideology analysis consist of a triangle of society, discourse and cognition (Van Dijk, 1995). While social analysis pertains to examining the 'overall societal structures" (the contexts), discourse analysis is basically text-oriented (syntax, lexicon, local semantics, topics, schematic structures etc). What differentiates Van Dijk's model from all other CDA approaches is the cognitive component. For him, it is the socio-cognitive aspect of discourse consisting of social and personal cognition that mediates between society and discourse (Van Dijk, 2008).In a sense, Van Dijk adopts a cognitive viewpoint when he defines ideology as "the overall abstract mental systems that organize socially shared attitudes" (Van Dijk, 1995). Ideologies according to him indirectly,

influence the personal cognition of group members in their act of comprehension of discourse among other social actions and interactions. By discourse, he means "(spoken and written) verbal structures and any semiotic (interpretable) aspect of the communicative event that directly sustains the event, such as relevant sound structures and visual (writing, print) structures, facework and gestures" (Van Dijk 2008). He presents a more neutral definition whereby Ideology can be either positive or negative. He borrows the term '*belief*' from psychology to present a general impression of ideology as the 'system of beliefs' (Van Dijk, 1998). Thus, for him, ideology in its negative senses, can be taken as a mechanism for legitimizing the dominance (such as the dominating ideology in totalitarian systems), while, in its positive sense, it may be used as legitimizing the resistance against dominance and social inequalities such as the anti-racist ideology. He labels the individual's mental representatives involved in social actions and interactions as "mental models" models which specify the individuals' actions, speech and writing and characterise the way he/she perceives others' social interactions (Van Dijk, 1995). He believes that mental representations are often oriented along *us* versus *them* dimensions, in which speakers of one group generally tend to present themselves or their groups in positive terms and other groups in negatives terms. He also states that an analyst who desires to make such an ideological transparent needs to analyse discourse in the following ways:

- a) Examining the context of the discourse (historical, political or social background of ideological oppositions and their main participants);
- b) Identifying groups, power relations and ideological conflicts involved;
- c) Identifying positive and negative opinions and about *us* versus *them*;
- d) Making explicit the presupposed and the implied;
- e) Examining all formal structures involved (lexical choices and syntactic structures, in a way that helps to (de) emphasise polarized groups opinions. Analysing and making explicit the contrastive polarization of *us* and *them*, as described above has been central to Van Dijk's works (1988, 1995,1998).

Key Aspects of Van Dijk Concept of Ideology

1. Cognitive Framework: Ideologies exist as mental representation that help individual and groups interpret the world. These mental structures influence how people perceive events, construct knowledge and make decisions.
2. Social Group Based: Ideologies are not individual beliefs but belong to social groups. They help define group identity, solidarity and opposition to other groups (left vs right, elites vs common people)
3. Power and Dominion: Ideologies are often linked to power structures, where dominant groups used ideology to legitimatise their control, while marginalised groups may develop counter ideologies to resist operation.
4. Discourse and Communication: Ideologies manifest in language and communication, particularly through media, political speeches, education and every day conversations. Discourse is the main way ideologies are produced, reproduced and challenged.
5. Polarization (us vs them). Ideologies create distinctions between in-groups ('us') and out-groups ('them'), reinforcing stereotypes and biases. This can be seen in nationalist, racial or religious ideologies.
6. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA): Van Dijk's uses CDA to study how languages reflects and reinforces ideological structures especially in media, politics, and institutions. His work examines how elites control this course to check public opinion.

For Van Dijk, ideology is a cognitive structure shaped by social groups and reproduce through discourse to maintain or challenge power relations. His work provides a frame work for analysing how ideologies influence media, politics and everyday communication. However, Teun A. Van Dijk a Dutch linguist and discourse analyst conceptualises ideology as a cognitive and social system that shapes group beliefs, influences, discourse and maintains power relations in society. His approach integrates cognitive, social and discursive dimensions of ideology.

Meaning of Hate Speech

Traditionally, the definition of hate speech had tended to include any form of expression deemed offensive to any racial, religious, ethnic or national group. In the 1980s, the definition was broadened to include gender, age, sexual preference, marital status, physical capacity and other categories. Human Rights Watch defines hate speech as any form of expression regarded as offensive to racial, ethnic, and religious groups and other discrete minorities and to women (Haupt, 2005). At the Centre for Information Technology and Development (CITAD) (2018), The definition of Hate speech is seen as:

Insult of people for their religion; abuses of people for their ethnic or linguistic affiliation; contempt because of their place of origin; disparage or intimidation of women or girls because of their gender; discrimination against people living with disability; desecrate or abuse of symbols of cultural or religious practices; denigrate or ridicule traditional or cultural institutions of other people; and deliberate spread of falsehood or rumour that demeans, demonise , maligns, or otherwise ostracises other people on the basis of religion, ethnicity, gender or place of origin for the accident of one form of disability or the other.

Hate speech directed at racial, ethnic or religious groups is a particularly pernicious form of speech manifestations which causes emotional as well as psychological distress and in extreme cases incites violence against members of the racial, ethnic or religious groups at which it is targeted (Benesch, 2014)

From every indication, it appears that incidences of hate speech have been around from the 1920s and early 1930s in the US and Germany where it was simply known as "race hate". By 1940s, it was generally called group libel. Specific groups in each of these countries have been the target of discrimination. In the case of Germany, after the Holocaust, a heightened sensitivity prevailed when speech that has the potential to harm Jews as a group is discussed. In the case of the United States, the history of slavery and racial segregation led to non-white groups, especially blacks desiring protection against harmful speech (CITAD, 2018).

Hate speech is loosely defined as any speech act that denigrates people on the basis of their membership in a group, such as an ethnic or religious group. It is, thus, in a class of genre of offensive speech. However, unlike offensive speech, which may or may not be targeted at a group, hate speech is specifically defined in terms of its direction in addressing an identified group. The distinction is important because while we cannot criminalize all offensive speech, since the "offensiveness" of a given speech act is situational; it is usual to focus on the segment of it that has clear ability to deliberately expose some of the people to harmful disadvantage. The idea here is that some people can focus on the segment of hate speech which through its evoking of a sense of negative difference invites the audience to act out the consequences of that difference. Hate speech can be harmful, directly or indirectly, or both. Dangerous speech has a reasonable chance of catalysing or amplifying violence by one group against another due to the circumstances in which it is made or disseminated. A speech act in this context includes any form of expression, including images such as drawings or photographs, films, etc. Specifically, dangerous speech is part of hate speech, which is capable of mobilizing people to action.

The dimensions of hate and dangerous speech that are of greater concern include the following:

Insulting people for their religion, race, ethnic group, linguistic affiliation or place of origin; Disparaging or intimidating women or girls because of their gender; Condoning discriminatory assertions against groups because of their difference; Denigrating or otherwise ridiculing traditional, religious or cultural institutions of other people; Spreading falsehood or rumours that demeans or maligns or ostracises other people on the basis of religion, ethnicity, gender or place of origin for the accident of one form of disability or the other (Teo, 2020).

Common forms of hate or dangerous speech include the description of groups as invaders, foreigners, or interlopers, asserting or suggesting that the other group will contaminate, pollute, or despoil the audience group, setting out to dehumanize its targets, e.g. compare them to vermin or insects, asserting that a target group posed or poses an existential threat to the audience group and thereby setting them up for attack.

Nigeria is a country of diversity and has an extensive history of manifestations of hate and dangerous speech. It is multi-ethnic, multi-religious and geographically heterogeneous. Such diversities have been a source of strength as well as a major source of strain on the unity of the nation. Apart from the civil war it fought in the late 1960s, it has also experienced a series of ethno-communal conflicts. A number of these conflicts can be related to or might have been triggered by acts of hate speech (Sanghvi, 2018). Uguanyi (2017) opines that, in general, hate and dangerous speech have tended to manifest along five key divides in the country: the first is religion: politicians have often deployed religion to either mobilize support for or oppose certain candidates. In the process, their use of language has incited followers to commit violence against others. The charge of apostasy declared against ordinary people, who often were not Muslims, for example has resulted in the killing of many people by mob action. The second is ethnicity: political parties were historically organized largely around ethno-cultural associations, which transformed into parties. From the pre-independence period, politicians have deployed ethnicity to protect their 'home' constituencies even as they tried to win other constituencies. The third is regionalism: discourse within the country tended to polarize the citizens along regional lines. The fourth is Minority versus Majority Ethnic Groups: Politically, the three major ethnic groups of Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba not only dominated the earlier three regional governments but also tended to dominate at the national level. That had fueled a sense of the right of entitlement discourses from the minority ethnic groups, which often veered into the realm of hate speech across the divide. The fifth is Biafra's succession struggle: Nigeria fought a 30-month civil war from the late 1960s when the Igbo ethnic group wanted to secede. The result was not only mass atrocities committed by both sides but also bitter memories that left wounds that has remained a key referent for hate speech on both sides. The sixth is Ethno-religious conflicts: across the northern part of the country, there have been several recurring communal ethno-religious conflicts. These conflicts were not originally triggered by hate speech but hate speech has since become the keg with which the fuel for these recurrent conflicts are being ignited. The seventh is Other Communal Conflicts: elsewhere in the country, hate speech had often featured in mobilization by youth in several communal conflicts such as the Ummuleri/Aguleri, Ife/Madokeke, and so on (Uguanyi, 2017).

One of the reasons why the impact political of hate speech is so profound is that what is created online gets offline and shapes wider debates and discussions across Nigerian media by influencing content that is printed in newspapers or discussed on television and radio programmes. This impact may be hard to measure quantifiably, but is increasingly important to recognise the fact that in Nigeria, it is increasingly difficult to draw a distinct line between content that is shared on social media and information reported or broadcast by print media, radio and television. The practice is not necessarily that the Nigerian media houses are simply lifting content from social media and printing it word for word - though in some cases they do - but that due to the speed information travels and the way in which content can be created and shared at a community level, social media is increasingly used as a source of content inspiration and proliferation of hate speech to be investigated further. This touches on the media of hate speeches in Nigeria and how the social media and the mass media work together in disseminating hate speeches or objective criticism, as the case may be. (Centre for Democracy and Development, 2020)

The simple words 'hate speech' present a variety of questions. For instance, what exactly is hatred? How strong or enduring must an emotion be to count? And does the 'hate' in hate speech mean that the speaker hates, or seeks to persuade others to hate, or wants to make people feel hated? (Ibrahim and Yau, 2021). There is one common thread among definitions of hate speech, which is that it vilifies a person or group of people because they belong to a group or share an identity of some kind (Uguanyi,2017). Therefore, it is not hate speech to say 'I hate you' without

referring to a group. Most definitions specify types of groups. To be considered hate speech, messages must be directed at people who share a religion, race, or ethnicity, for example. Other types of identity that appear in some definitions (but not others) are disability, sexual orientation, gender, sex, age, culture, belief, refugee status, caste, or life stance. For example, section 135a of Norway's penal code defines hate speech as threatening or insulting anyone, or inciting hatred or persecution of or contempt for anyone because of his or her) skin color or national or ethnic origin, religion or life stance, or homosexuality, lifestyle or orientation (The General Civil Penal Code, 1902). The researcher agrees with the last contribution by the Norwegian penal code as it includes individuals and in-group demarcation asserted earlier on by Ibrahim and Yau. The hate speech provisions of South Africa's equality law specify groups and attributes that are absent from other countries' laws such as pregnancy, marital status, conscience, language, colour, and 'any other group where discrimination based on that other ground (i) causes or perpetuates systemic disadvantage; (ii) undermines human dignity; or (iii) adversely affects the equal enjoyment of a person's rights and freedoms in a serious manner that is comparable to discrimination' (Promotion of Equality, 2000). Most countries' laws don't prohibit hate speech at all, instead criminalising other related forms of speech such as incitement to hatred.

Broad or vague definitions of hate speech and related crimes can jeopardise freedom of speech, since governments often use vague laws to punish their political opponents, or the very minorities against whom hate speech abounds, like the Roma in Hungary (Hungarian Civil Liberties Union, 2013). Indeed, governments in countries as varied as India, Rwanda, and Kazakhstan have used laws against hate speech or hateful speech to punish and silence journalists, dissenters, and minorities (Amnesty International, 2010, p. 28; Mchangama, 2019). This may even increase the risk of violence, by preventing people from expressing and resolving their grievances peacefully. This work focuses on hate or dangerous speech, since it is a narrower, more specific category, defined not by a subjective emotion such as hatred, but by its capacity to inspire a harm that is all too easy to identify – intergroup violence – and that many people can agree on wanting to prevent. One cannot make a list of words that are dangerous, since the way in which any message will be understood – like its effect on an audience – depends not only on its content, but also on how it is communicated: by whom, to whom, and under what circumstances. (Amnesty International, 2010, p. 28; Mchangama, 2019). The very same words can be highly inflammatory, or benign. To understand whether a message is dangerous when spread in a particular context, one must examine both content and context. It is important, also, to be able to compare the dangerousness of different messages. To this end, Ibrahim and Yau (2021) developed a straightforward and systematic way to analyze speech in context which the researcher considers useful to the present study – listing and describing all of the elements that can make a particular example of speech more dangerous. The result is a five-part framework which includes the message itself, the audience, the historical and social context of the message, the speaker, and the medium with which a speaker delivers a message. These five framework constitute the elements of hate speech. Analyzing each of these five elements is not only essential for identifying how dangerous speech operates, it is also useful for designing interventions to diminish the dangerousness of that speech.

Hate speech is any speech that attacks a person or group on the basis of attributes such as race, religion, ethnic origin, nationality, disability; sex or sexual orientation and gender identity. Hate speech, for the purpose of this study is more than the verbalisation of venom directed at persons on the basis of the attributes above; it focuses on contrasting such attributes with freedom of expressions using the weight of truth and objectivity. Hate speech is anchored on both verbal or nonverbal words or actions but the present study aims at the verbal/written form of hate speech. Hate speech may mean utterances, handwritten, typed documents advertorials, musicals or any form of writing used to attack an individual, a group that could be religious, political, business, social, gender or race. Ezeibe (2015) asserts that hate speech is any speech, gesture, conduct writing or display which could incite people to violence or prejudicial action. Speeches based on false and bias ideas. It may include any non-verbal communication or body language and micro-expressions which may even incite the deaf and dumb to unwholesome actions. Essentially, such

speeches or actions rob others of their dignity and honour. The researcher finds phrase 'false and bias ideas' substantial to the work at hand as it is a measurement yardstick in determining what constitute hate speech. Hate speech uses insulting, discriminatory, degrading and derogatory words to stigmatise and deride others based on their group or political membership, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation.

Segun (2016) observes that Hate speech is often the gateway to discrimination, harassment and violence as well as a precursor to serious harmful criminal acts. It may not be far from the truth to say that there is no hate motivated attacks on the opposition group without hate-speech from a clandestine angle. Hate speech is not a recent phenomenon, but there are varying degrees to which they occur. Morphologically speaking, hate-speech is a compound word comprising two words 'hate' and 'speech'. The preceding word belongs to the grammatical class of adjective and it qualifies the noun speech. Hence, Okafor and Alabi (2017) are of the view that hate speech are words that wound which can lead to harm and violence. Following the belief of Austin (1962) in '*How to do things with words*' where he purposely states that when an utterance is made, an action is being performed. Relating that to hate speech, it implicates that when somebody makes a hate speech, she is inciting people to violence. This is the resultant effect of hate speech. This contribution is vital as it touches on one of the theories proposed for the study: Speech Act. In similar manner, Neisser (2018) refers to hate speech as all communications (whether verbal, written, symbolic) that insult a racial, ethnic and political group, whether by suggesting that they are inferior in some respect or by indicating that they are despised or not welcomed for any other reasons. In other words, engaging in hate speech is inciting verbal war. Hate speech may take the form of defamation, calumny, vilification, or inducement which results to the communication of a false statement that harms the reputation of others depending on the law of such a country, an individual, business, product, group, government, religion or nation.

Today, unlike many years in the past, hate speech is deployed by the ego-massaging individuals to prepare the ground for acrimonious and hostile political disruption and controversy. They can cause religious, communal and ethnic chauvinism ending in violence and kidnapping in Nigeria. They sometimes use media to propagate hate-speech, taking cultural, political economic and social dimensions to cause crisis and cruelty among the innocent masses (Omotoyinbo, 2019).

Implications of Hate Speech

The 2015, 2019, and 2023 General elections in Nigeria witnessed series of hate speeches being used by politicians against their opponents and opposition parties. This statement was corroborated by the Chairman of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC). Professor Chidi Odinkalu, confirming that the 2015 general election witnessed a rise in hate speeches during the campaign prior to the election. Emanating from this, the election witnessed violence and killings in different parts of the country. In fact, there were fears on the minds of masses, and many people envisaged that the country was on the edge of precipice and total disintegration. Thank God for His prompt intervention! Ayo-Aderele (2017) in his paper published by Punch Newspaper on March 10, 2015 with the caption 'When Hate Speeches Threaten Election'. There he decried the hate speeches that characterised political campaigns in Nigeria. He added that the hate speeches ranged from both uncouth, to the uncultured and absolutely damning statements emanating from both camps of the PDP and the APC. Nigerians could not have heard anything more surprising in recent times as far as political campaigns are concerned in the country. Hate speech affects and pollutes electoral processes, disrupts opposition, political, and civic norms. The attack and condemnation of the person of Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu (now the President) and the APC presidential candidate, General Muhammadu Buhari by politicians in a documentary aired on African Independent Television (AIT) warranted the Nigerian Broadcasting Commission to indict and sanction the two television stations alongside 21 others for violation of its code. (Nigerian-eye 28, 2016) This step, more or less, will affect the lives of some innocent citizens in the families of those concerned. For instance, if the salaries of the workers of such a Television station were not paid, it will be cumbersome for them

to take care of their families. The feelings of children from such families at that critical and trying period may be incredibly unimaginable!

Van Dijk Socio-Cognitive Theory of Ideology

This research anchored on Van Dijk's socio-cognitive theory because hate speeches align with the propositions. The researcher used this theory to expose the socio-political ideologies behind selected hate speeches. The theory states that when people observe a model performing a behavior and the consequences of that behavior, they remember the sequence of events and use this information to guide subsequent behaviors. It emphasizes the importance of perceived incentives, self-efficacy and personal standards in explaining people's motivation. Research strongly supports the relation between these motivational factors and later behavioral outcomes (Bandura, 1997, 2001; Bussey & Bandura, 1999). This theory focuses on the interplay between discourse, cognition and society, emphasizing the cognitive mechanism underpinning discourse processes.

Van Dijk (1998) presents ideology in a triangle which relates cognition, society and discourse therefore, he calls his theory multidisciplinary theory of Ideology. At the cognitive level ideologies involve shared belief and attitudes. At the social level, they relate to social groups and power structure. "Ideologies are not merely defined in cognitive terms but also in terms of social groups, group relations, institutions, at the macro-level and in terms of social practices at the macro levels". Dangerous speeches emanate as a result of this proposition. The cognitive level involves 'social representations' namely social shared beliefs, values, attitudes and opinions, examples of these social representations are religious beliefs, communism, feminism and racism. Notions which are associated with the cognitive and mental functions of ideology include truth, falsity, false consciousness and common sense. The social level (the macro-level) involves the social structures of society namely social groups, group relations, classes, institutions and organizations such as school, nursing, church or news media. The social function of ideology include power, control etc.

Data Presentation, Analysis and Discussion of Findings

The work centers on two major issues: socio-political ideologies behind hate speeches and perlocutionary effect of hate speeches on the addressee or the reading public.

Research Question One: What are the socio-political ideologies behind the selected political hate speeches?

It is paramount to represent the two major sides of political ideologies in any given polity. The first ideology is the one usually initiated, enacted, disseminated, and forced upon the masses in relation to social power abuse, dominance, and inequality; how they are enacted, reproduced, and enforced. The second side of the coin is the ideology of resistance to the powers and dominance of the ruling class and their ideology.

S/N	Hate Speeches	Ideologies
1	Nnamdi Kanu: Buhari married his wife after raping her several times, the records are there. (Nairaland, Jan. 23 11:12am, 2019)	On the contrary to the usual ideology propagated and enforced by politician, the speech here comes with an ideology of resistance to power and manipulation by the government.
2	Femi Fani-Kayode. The Igbos are collectively unlettered, uncouth, uncultured, unrestrained and crude in all their ways...Money and the acquisition of wealth is their sole objective and purpose in life. (Business Day, August 8, pg7 2019)	This speech also treads the same path with an ideology of social power abuse, dominance, and inequality; enactment, reproduction, and dissemination. It is a dominant ideology targeting the Igbos as victims of political manipulation and subjugation.
3	Dr. Junaid Mohammed - Second Republic lawmaker, "I don't believe Buhari or Nigeria owes any Igbo anything. I don't care what Ezeife says – if they	Just like the first one above by Kehinde Adekusibe, the speech has an ideology of social power abuse, dominance, and

- (Igbo) had seceded, there would have been no Nigeria today. As people who acted outside the interest of Nigeria as a country, to expect compensation is a very odd logic. If the Igbo don't like it, they can attempt secession again. If they do, they must be prepared to live with the consequences – nobody owes them anything and nobody is out to compensate them for anything.” (Nairaland, August 25 9:28pm, 2019)
- 4 Alhassan Ado Doguwa, the majority leader in the House of Representatives, was seen in a video threatening to beat anyone caught voting for a party other than the ruling APC in the upcoming election. “If we catch you voting for any other party apart from APC, we will beat you to pulp,” he said. (Punch, February 2, 2019)
- 5 Abdul Isa: ‘The 2019 gubernatorial election shows that violence pays and since there is no way we can get what we voted for but through preparing for the violence, we are ready for it even though we pray that peace prevails,’ (Nairaland, April 23, (:28pm 2019)
- inequality; enactment, reproduction, and dissemination. It is a dominant ideology targeting the Igbos as victims of political manipulation and subjugation.
- This speech conveys an ideology in of the ruling class, of social power abuse, dominance, and inequality enactment, reproduction, and dissemination. It is a dominant ideology targeting other political parties. It is meant to manipulate the electorates to vote for the ruling party, APC, irrespective of whether they belong to opposition or not.
- The speech carries a political ideology of resistance and opposition against the oppression and subjugation by the government and ruling party. It is a counter ideology against the ruling classes’ who believe that violence is the only way to winning election in Nigeria. It is a factual negative speech aim to rouse awareness about the violent nature of election and the need to be prepared to wrestle for better government as it takes a like mind to defeat an opponent.

Research Question Two: What are the perlocutionary effect of hate speeches on the addressee or the reading public?

S/N	Hate Speeches	Perlocutionary Effect
1	Nnamdi Kanu: Buhari married his wife after raping her several times, the records are there. (Nairaland, Jan, 23, 11:12am, 2019)	The speech is a hate speech as it is not build on truth and objectivity. It contains element of hate, bitterness and dislike for Buhari as the then president of Nigeria. Above all, it is subjective as there is no direct proof to establish his claim. It has perlocutionary effect as it is meant to defame the victim and make people distain him. The speakers intention is to profame the victim and subject him to public ridicule. This altrance has a strong negative effect or consequence on the listener, essentially the impact or reaction produce by the aultrance such as scaring or convincing, persuading, enlightening and inspiring them to do something or otherwise affecting the interlocutor (Wikipedia)

- 2 Femi Fani-Kayode. This speech is conceived with the intention of defame, ridicule and abash the Igbos. There are element of faith, bitterness, insult and push for others to see them from that perspective of being uncultured and money mongers. The speech is malicious and subjective and not the real portrayal of the Igbo race. It is a hate speech because it is not built on truth and objectivity. It has perlocutionary effect on the listeners and other tribes who definitely will be scary and persuaded to hate the Igbos.
- 3 Dr. Junaid Mohammed - Second Republic lawmaker, "I don't believe Buhari or Nigeria owes any Igbo anything. I don't care what Ezeife says – if they (Igbo) had seceded, there would have been no Nigeria today. As people who acted outside the interest of Nigeria as a country, to expect compensation is a very odd logic. If the Igbo don't like it, they can attempt secession again. If they do, they must be prepared to live with the consequences – nobody owes them anything and nobody is out to compensate them for anything." (Nairaland, Aug. 25, 9:28pm 2019)
- 4 Alhassan Ado Doguwa, the majority leader in the House of Representatives, was seen in a video threatening to beat anyone caught voting for a party other than the ruling APC in the upcoming election. "If we catch you voting for any other party apart from APC, we will beat you to pulp," he said. (Punch, February 2, pg11 2019)
- 5 Aisha Yesufu: Dear Governor Nasir Elufai: Just so you know, nobody has monopoly of violence! You keep waving violence at us as if you alone on it. YOU DON'T! Body bags we already are used to in APC government! Zamfara bled yesterday. They have been bleeding. We all have bled!!!! (Facebook, February 6, 2019)

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study ponders through some selected Nigerian political hate speeches from 2019 to 2024. It approached the ideologies behind political hate speeches and perlocutionary effect using Van Dijk's socio-cognitive theory of ideology. This effort is quite vital in the present dispensation that every

statement against the government is termed a hate speech. The ideologies behind the political hate speeches and perlocutionary effects of political hate speeches on the addressees or the reading public were also explained which brings intention and meaning glarier in political hate speech discourse.

This will go a long way to ameliorating the friction of discord between the ruling class and the ever-opposing citizens, deepen democracy and foster human right and freedom of expression.

From the findings discussed above, the researcher has the following recommendations to make.

1. The researcher recommends that a further field survey involving legal practitioners should be conducted to better understand what constitute hate speech from the legal perspective. This will go a long way in describing what hate speech is legally. More so, referential theory of meaning should be applied to hate speech analysis to expose the meaning of hate speeches in Nigeria.
2. The researcher solicits that truth conditioning theory should be applied to hate speech so as to better establish the disparity between hate speech and freedom of expression since the major element of disparity is based on truth, fact and objectivity.
3. The researcher directs that hate speeches be subjected to Rhetoric analysis to ascertain the speaker's method of persuasion in relation to the three elements of rhetoric: ethos, pathos, and logos. This will assist in projecting the ideology better and clearer. This will also make motive obvious.
4. The researcher calls for a further study involving systemic functional linguistics so as to establish the functions hate speech is meant to serve. This will add more credence to the illocutionary force
5. To capture the form hate speeches take, the researcher recommends that syntactic approach should be applied so as to define the structure of the language of hate speech in Nigeria.

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