

Political and Ideological Commitments: A Systemic Functional Linguistic and Critical Discourse Analysis of President Buhari's Inaugural Speech

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Abstract

The combined application of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) principles in some modern studies has gone beyond the boundaries of fictional discourse / text. It has witnessed an increasing interest in real-life discourse / text such as newspapers / magazines articles, court verdicts, and presidential and/or political speeches. This new linguistic-discursive trend is substantiated by the fact that the real-life and non-fictional texts/discourses are often ideologically loaded. Therefore, analyzing such speeches would enable to scrutinize, unearth, and reveal their hidden ideologies. It is against this backdrop that this article aims at shedding the SFL projectors' light on the Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari's inaugural speech, by adopting CDA theory as the backbone. The analysis focuses on mood, epistemic and deontic modality choices, as well as recoverable references through personal pronouns used throughout the political discourse under consideration. The study has demonstrated how political leaders' discourses unearth a sort of harmony with ideologies that tally and commensurate the domestic, sub-regional and international realities. Furthermore, it provides sufficient evidence that the grammar of speech is not merely a combinational tool of creating correct constructions, but a method of structuring information and transferring ideology.

Keywords: Interpersonal metafunction, ideologies, epistemic, deontic, recoverable references.

1. Introduction and Literature Review

Language serves as a medium of communication through its *systemic* and *functional* characteristics: *systemic* refers to the view of language as "a network of systems, or interrelated sets of options for making meaning", and *functional* refers to Halliday's view that language is as it is because of what it has evolved to do. Language achieves its communication goal through the three metafunctions: ideational, textual and interpersonal. This paper being concerned with the exploration of interpersonal metafunction, contends with Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) that this metafunction is the grammar of language in use as a resource not only for talking about our inner and outer experiences of the world, but also for communicating our attitudes towards, and expectations of, those with whom we interact. This metafunction deals with people's use of language to relate to their audience, by delivering and conveying information, the meaning of which goes beyond the surface content.

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Modern studies in Systemic Functional Linguistics have been applied to text/discourse in recent times. They are gradually shifting their interest from the traditional linguistic aspects like syntax, morphology, graphology and phonology of a fictional text to focus on how texts construct reality in the social, cultural, political, economic, and judiciary set-ups. Moreover, research in the field of language and politics has expanded enormously in recent years; the field seems to be quite young (Wodak, 2011, p 5). Indeed, it has been noted that the understanding of those aspects of linguistics does not necessarily underpin the true meanings that the writers consciously or subconsciously encode in their discourse/ text.

As such, working on François Hollande's inaugural speech, Koussouhon, L & Koukposi, A. (2013) have pointed out that systemic functional linguistics is a field of much attention in Anglophone universities and in the English studies departments of some French-speaking countries. The application of this theory to the inaugural speech of François Hollande, focusing on material, relational, and mental processes as well as the participants has revealed that most of the processes in this speech are material. This outnumbering of material processes, according to them, denotes a strong political commitment for strategic situations and concrete actions.

Contextualizing the application of systemic functional linguistics principles to judicial parlance, Alo and Ogungbe (2012) have explored the language of justice by focusing on lexical and syntactic choices made by judges in three appellate rulings on cases of election petitions in Nigeria. Using SFL and CDA, the researchers' findings have revealed that the appellate judges adjudicated the cases by deploying lexical collocations and using syntactic devices such as modality and transitivity choices to convey their viewpoints, interpretations and perspectives.

Dossoumou, A. (2005) has embarked on this endeavor by contextualizing the Nigerian Magazine *Tell* through the application of the Textual metafunction and register variables to two articles selected therein. The findings have revealed that the various theme types appear in the articles at varied rates. He ascribes the "over- topicalization" of the themes to a sense of responsibility, courage and determination respectively of the trade-union, and Police Forces with the recurrent oil scarcity and trans-border organized crime which are the topical cankers making the daily suffering of the population across border.

Investigating the ideological underpinnings of Obama's victory and inaugural addresses, Ye (2010) has identified some ideological key components, namely Pragmatism, liberalism, inclusiveness, acceptance of religious and ethnic diversity and unity by focusing on interpersonal metafunction. The analysis revealed that the speech is dominated by positive declarative and imperative. Modal operators like *will*, *can* and *must* are highly used. The first person pronouns *I* turned up mostly in the speech followed by second person pronoun *you*, encoding his political commitment and accountability as well as the American people's supportive inclusiveness.

Amoussou (2015) has carried out an SFL investigation of the poem *Abiku* by pairing and comparing its treatment by Soyinka and Clark through poetry. His analysis has come up with the mind that the contexts of situation and of culture have not been enough to explain the differences neither between Soyinka and Clark's treatments of *Abiku*, nor between their tenors of discourse. Identifying the many similarities between the two poems, he has observed that they have nearly the same contexts of situation and of culture (a Nigerian/Yoruba issue discussed in the English language). Though they differ in their ideological perception to *Abiku*, the two poets do share many similarities. Clark regards *Abiku* as a mere evil child and thus can be talked to in an authoritarian tone and abused without apology while Soyinka, drawing on his Yoruba cultural background considers *Abiku*, not just as a mere child, but mainly as an ancestor, an elder, a palmist full of knowledge and therefore worthy of respect. In short, while Clark seems to give just a societal treatment, or interpretation to the concept of *Abiku*, Soyinka rather enshrines in this concept a meta-societal, mystical, metaphysical or even philosophical interpretation. *Abiku's* authoritarian tone is the assertion of his will power and correction of the parents' view of him.

Koussouhon, L. & Dossoumou A. (2015) have shed the systemic functional grammar projector's light on how Helon Habila encoded journalistic experience through meanings to create, adopt and manage a gender-balanced and womanist perspective in the novel *Oil on Water*. Focusing on ideational metafunction for the redefinition and representation of African women's personality, ability and identity, they have placed the Nigerian new millennium writer in a good position to reconstruct the African woman's past and present in proper perspectives to project the future of her image.

They concluded that the author moves to sustaining and advancing the literary orientation geared by the fictional movement of redefinition, reshaping, restoration, and re-presentation of African women's personality, ability and identity.

Ayoola (2013), in his study has attempted to present interpersonal analysis of political advertisements. The analysis revealed that there is no one-to-one correspondence between the lexico-grammar and interpersonal meaning of a clause. The study also revealed that the attitude and opinion of the speakers in the political adverts are covertly indicated neither by the use of modal verbal operators nor mood adjuncts but by the lexical choices as well as grammatical structures that reflect the socio-economic and political context of the adverts. Besides, the study has shown that the interpersonal meaning of a structural choice is not determined by the lexico-grammar but contextual factors. Eventually, he has concluded that the analysis done in his study would enhance better understanding of political advertisements from interpersonal metafunction perspective.

To some extent, in line with the previous scholars' works, this article aims at applying the interpersonal metafunction through its aspects of mood, epistemic and deontic modality, and recoverable references to the Nigeria President Muhammadu Buhari's May 29, 2015 inaugural speech. The end-purpose here is to underscore how the president encoded meanings to convey his presidential and political ideologies as well as that of his administration to tally the national realities and, ultimately address the various cankers plaguing his country. Among those cankers range endemic corruption which has crippled the oil industry, insecurity with the religious sect Boko haram, youth unemployment, to mention a few. Certainly, the way Buhari subtly designed and encoded his 1,909 word-political discourse to embed, establish, and handle the distance between himself, his administration, and his audience is ideologically triggered and motivated enough to commensurate his nation's expectations.

2. Theoretical background

2.1. Critical Discourse Analysis and Systemic Functional Linguistics

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a form of discourse that takes critical stance towards how language is used. It analyzes other discourse types with a view to identifying the ideology and values underlying them. In this regard, CDA investigates the relations between language and society. It assumes that language plays a crucial role in creating, maintaining and legitimating inequality, injustice and oppression in society. The most important aims of CDA are to raise awareness of the power of linguistic constructivism (language construing reality) and its impact, and to trigger change (Nørgard, et al., 2010: 69).

The Hallidayan Systemic Functional Grammar particularly suits CDA because of its orientation towards context, that is, situational, generic and ideological. Furthermore, its three-dimensional functional approach to language – the textual, interpersonal and ideational – provides CDA with a broad range of grammatical tools for analysis as well as a theoretical framework. These allow the analyst to disclose the ideologically loaded as well as constructed nature of discourses and 'enact[ed] hegemonic genres – specific ways of using language to achieve purposes of social domination' (Van Leeuwen, 2006a, p. 290).

2.2 A brief account of Interpersonal Meaning and Modality

The theoretical backbone partly adopted in this article draws on the Hallidayan Functional Linguistics, which contends that language has evolved to simultaneously express three different types of meaning: ideational, interpersonal and textual meaning. The main argument in this theory, as observed by Halliday and Matthiessen (2004), is that interpersonal meaning acts as the grammar of language serving as resource not only for talking about our inner and outer experiences of the world but also for communicating our attitudes towards, and expectations of, those with whom we interact. As such, Interpersonal metafunction deals with people's use of language to relate to their audience, because when people embark on human interaction, they take on a series of 'speech roles', the first two of which are identified as 'giving' and 'demanding', which results in the second choice between 'exchanging information' or 'exchanging goods and services'. This includes the various ways the speaker enters a speech situation and performs a speech act. The four basic moves of 'statement', 'question', 'offer' and 'command' are what Halliday refers to as 'speech functions' (Eggins, 2004, pp. 144-145). Interpersonal meaning is analyzed mainly in terms of 'mood' and 'modality'. A mood analysis brings to the fore the grammatical structures that project the various speech functions.

Modality refers to a speaker's/writer's/narrator's attitude towards, and opinions about the events and situations around him/her (Simpson, 1993:47). Fowler (1986) defines modality as "the grammar of explicit comment, the means by which people express their degree of commitment to the truth of the propositions they utter, and their views on the desirability or otherwise of the states of affairs referred to" (p.131). Moreover, it has to do with the interpersonal 'coloring' of utterances in terms of probability, usuality, obligation and inclination, thus encoding the attitude of either the characters or the narrator. SFL scholars generally contend that modality can be expressed in two main axes, or as two main types: *Epistemic* and *Deontic Modality*.

Epistemic Modality, also referred to as *Modalization* in SFL terms, is a kind of connotative meaning relating to the degree of certainty the speaker/writer wants to express about what he or she is saying or the estimation of probability associated to the message that is being conveyed through the discourse (Fontaine, 2013, p 121).

Deontic Modality, also called *Modulation* in SFL terms, is also a connotative meaning, but contrary to the epistemic modality, it relates to obligation or permission, including willingness or ability. In other words, *Modalization* is a complex area of English grammar which has to do with the different ways in which a language user can intrude on his/her message, expressing attitudes and judgments of various kinds (Egins, 2004:172).

Modality is expressed by the following auxiliary verbs (*can, could, shall, should, will, would, may, might, must*) and various lexical items (usually adverbs such as *probably*) or groups which function as modal adjuncts. Other linguistic elements such as vocatives and naming are also of relevance to the construction of interpersonal relations.

Table 1 below presents the various Mood Types and their correlating speech functions.

Table 1: Mood Types and their speech functions (culled from Egins, 2004).

Mood types	Speech functions
-declarative mood	-giving information by stating what is or happens.
-interrogative mood	-request of information.
-modulated interrogative mood	-indirect/tempered request of information.
-imperative mood	-getting someone to do something.
-modulated imperative mood	-getting indirectly/in a tempered way somebody to do something by using, say polite modals
-exclamative mood	-expressing wonder, surprise, bewilderment

3. Practical interpersonal metafunction analysis in the Presidential Inaugural Speech

In light of the above-stated goal, epistemic and deontic modality, mood, and recoverable references analyses have been carried out on President Buhari's inaugural speech. Following the methodological approach guiding Egins (2004), Koussouhon and Allagbe (2013), Koussouhon and Koukposi (2013), Koussouhon and Dossoumou (2014 & 2015), and Akogbeto & Koukposi (2015), this paper analyses the Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari's inaugural speech by highlighting the various aspects of stylistic analysis required for underscoring interpersonal metafunction. This could reveal how a given political discourse constructs relations between interactants, and can also project the presidential attitude by linguistic means.

The keys adopted for the Mood analysis of the extracts are as follows:

[S] = Subject [F] = Finite [Fn] = Finite negative; [Fms] = Finite modalized; [Fml] = Finite modulated; [P] = Predicate; [Pml] = Modulated Predicate; [Pms] = modalized Predicate; [F/P] = fused Finite and Predicate; [C] = Complement; [Ca] = attributive Complement; [A] = Adjunct; [Ac] = Adjunct Circumstantial; [Am] = Adjunct mood; [Ao] = Adjunct comment; [Ap] = Adjunct polarity; [Av] = Adjunct vocative; [Aj] = Adjunct conjunctive; [At] = Adjunct continuity; [WH] = WH-element; [WH/S], [WH/C], [WH/Ac] = fused WH element.

3.1. Practical Analysis of Interpersonal Metafunction in the President Buhari's 1,909-word Inaugural Speech (See Appendix)

In systemic functional tradition, in line with Egins' (1994; 2004) recommendations, each clause contained in the text/discourse has been analyzed through its mood structure (subject + finite) and the modality patterns embedded therein. See in the appendix (page 13) the detailed analysis carried out in the extract.

3.2. Summarized data of the Findings

The salient findings revealed by the interpersonal meaning analysis, namely: epistemic and deontic modality, mood, and recoverable references are, counted, disaggregated, summarized and reported in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Summary of Mood, Modality, and Recoverable References types

Mood Properties in the Inaugural Speech					
Mood Types	Declaratives	Interrogatives	Modulated Interrogatives	Imperatives	
Frequency	115	00	00	03	
Percentage	97.45 %	00%	00%	02.54%	
Modality Types	Epistemic (<i>Modalization</i>)		Deontic (<i>Modulation</i>)		
Frequency	12			39	
Percentage	23.52%			76.47%	
Recoverable References:					
	I	You	S/he	We	They
Frequency	24	00	05	30	05
Percentage	37.50%	00%	07.81%	46.87%	07.81%

4. Critical Discussion of the findings

The analysis of Mood types in the political discourse yielded the following finding: 115 declarative moods, 03 imperative moods, 00 interrogative mood, 00 modulated interrogative mood. The preponderant number of declaratives (97.45%) denotes that Buhari is imparting information about the realities prevailing in the country. The very low percentage of imperative mood (02.54%) denotes that the new administration is not going to get the people to do something else. Its expectation towards the people rather lies in its support of, and cooperation in its actions. Here, the main actors of the fight at stake are and will be the federal government (with its three arms of executive, legislative, and judiciary), as well as the state and local governments.

Besides, the 00 interrogative mood, 00 modulated interrogative mood, and 00 modulated imperative mood are purposely designed to construct the distance between the president, his administration and the people. This distance denotes that the new administration and its head do not need to learn much from the people, rather they know about all the needs of the population in terms of youth unemployment, social welfare, educational facilities, trans-border organized crime and terrorism, sea piracy, financial crime, cyber-crime, climate change, the spread of communicable diseases, and security calling for combatting and subduing the Boko haram sect militants. In his capacity of retired General of the Armed Forces, and more importantly, of a former president of the Nigerian Federation, Buhari is abreast of the situation. The former general ranged among those military strong men who dominated Nigeria decades ago. Indeed, a military coup brought him to power in 1983, and another military coup toppled him two years later, in 1985. He knows the realities of the power along with daily life and needs of his countrymen. That is why he certainly chose to dig much more the distance between him, his administration and the citizens, on the one hand, and Boko haram, on the other, by qualifying and characterizing it as “a mindless, godless group of militants who are as far away from Islam as one can think of.”

Moreover, he regards this evil group of devils as a typical example of small fires causing large fires. An eccentric and unorthodox preacher followed by a tiny group of social divorcees. Regarding the situation of amnesty program in the Niger Delta, which disarms and rehabilitates militants, ending in December, Buhari emphasized authoritatively that the federal government's intent is to invest heavily in the projects and programs currently in place. Besides, he also promised to ensure and secure a true federalism, with a revamping of the relationships between the executive, legislative, and judicial functions at the federal level, and between the federal, state, and local governments.

Regarding the modality analysis, it revealed 39 deontic modality devices, that is, 76.47% modulations while the epistemic modality counts 12, making 23.53%. This denotes and expresses the level of certainty, assurance and political, security, economic, and social commitment of the incoming president and his administration to address the various cankers plaguing his country.

These cankers are those mentioned above. Indeed, the President's use of modality is not only based on modulation and modalization, it does also cover the three values of modal commitment: high, median and low. The repeated and recurrent use of the modal like "have to", "must", "could", "should", "will", "shall" expresses the high level commitment, moral obligation and accountability of Buhari and his administration. The following clauses are highly illustrative of Buhari's political commitment and strategic plan of actions:

- *This government will do all it can to rescue them alive;*
- *I will try to ensure that there is responsible and accountable governance at all levels;*
- *the legislative arm must keep to their brief of making laws;*
- *we must consciously work on the democratic system*
- *The command center will be relocated to Maiduguri*
- *the Armed Forces will be fully charged with pursuing the fight against Boko haram;*
- *We have to improve the standards of our education.*
- *We have to look at the whole field of mediocre;*
- *We have to upgrade our dilapidated physical infrastructure;*
- *We shall overhaul the rules of engagement to avoid human rights violations in operations.*
- *We shall improve operational and legal mechanisms;*

These modal items used in the political discourse express, according to their degree, appeal to focus on the future, politeness, moral obligation, commitment, personal and collective accountability, responsibility. Definitely, the choice of modal as Buhari used it in his speech strikes the goal as it is ideologically-driven.

The other leg to be considered in the presentation and discussion of the analysis findings is that of the recoverable references used through personal pronouns. In table 3.2 above, personal pronouns are reported according to the distance they establish between the addresser and the addressee. The data analysis of the 1,909-word political discourse / action plan has revealed sixty-four (64) recoverable references distributed into the following personal pronouns: *He* (5 times) with the outgoing President Goodluck as referent; *They* (5 times) referring to the Boko haram militants; *I* (24 times) with incoming president himself as referent and first person narrator; *we* (30 times); *you* (00). Beyond the surface meaning understood, the equal rate of frequency of "*He*" and "*They*" is highly significant regarding the country (Nigeria)' situation. The personal pronoun "*He*" refers to the outgoing president. The incoming president Buhari thanked him for allowing Nigeria to surprise the world through his display of statesmanship in setting a precedent of pride for Nigerians. But above all, his defeat preceded the support and cooperation he has given to the transition process. Certainly, the defeat imposed on him through the vote cast by the five fingers of each voter will precede the defeat of Boko haram insurgency referred to in the speech by the personal pronoun "*They*". Buhari equated President Goodluck's defeat to the forthcoming eradication of the Islamist terrorist sect.

Traditionally, the first person singular (*I*) is loaded with exclusiveness because it refers to the addresser / first person narrator, leaving out the government and its audience, while in most of the cases, the first person plural (*We*) is loaded with inclusiveness, because it brings together the addresser and his audience (the addressee). Following Ye (2010)'s observations, this study contends that the pronoun "*We*" displays a complex functionality because its meaning can be two-fold. It can be used for inclusiveness to include the audience and the speaker/ narrator/ addresser, but also for exclusiveness to refer only to the government or only the addresser like in the royalty. Buhari has made the choice of exclusiveness with his selected use of *I* and *we* (*I* refers to himself and *we* refers to his government). The fifty-four (54) exclusive recoverable references embed a risk.

This exclusiveness means that the President and his administration hold the strategic solutions and answers to all the problems and cankers holding back their nations. These policies spelt out in the action plan may seem to perpetuate the culture of effortlessness, reliance on handout and laziness among the citizens despite the crucial role they are to play as lifeblood of the nation. As a matter of fact, the role of the president and his administration is to create a smooth environment conducive for all the stakeholders of the societal development. Of course, as the citizen n°1, he must create that distance between him and his countrymen and women to imply the sense of chieftaincy and authority. In so doing, he made the addressee feel that the president and his administration are strong and reliable enough to initiate and implement all the development-oriented actions for the nation.

Beyond the positive selfishness embedded in Buhari's choice (*we* and *I*) in those clauses, those linguistic choices are meant to insinuate a sense of spontaneous patriotism and nationalism rallying all the citizens around the president's developmental initiative and crusade against any kind of canker like the endemic corruption.

The way this article has unpacked the analytical significance and dual functions consciously or subconsciously embedded in "*we*" in Buhari's political inaugural speech has helped recover the profound meaning being conveyed that might be lost if only the shallow understanding and meaning were taken into consideration.

5. Summary and Conclusion

This study is premised on epistemic and deontic modality to text analysis, contending that language is the functional means for the expression of content, the enactment of the social world, the construction and deconstruction of texts or discourses (Eggins, 2004; Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004; Fontaine, 2013; Nørgaard, et al., 2010)

Through the specific choice of mood types, recoverable references, deontic and epistemic modality, Buhari has used a language of candour and sincerity in his short 1,909 -word political discourse packed with loaded meanings. In order to get across his inaugural speech serving as political action plan, Buhari made recourse to systemic functional grammar's devices, in particular, those existing under the umbrella of the interpersonal metafunction. The practical analysis in this article has focused on exploring the mood choice, the modality between deontic and epistemic distribution and eventually recoverable references through personal pronouns. As a result, the analysis has revealed the preponderant use of declarative clauses (97.45%) in the political discourse under study along with their potential of being exclusively information-oriented.

Imperative clauses ranked second (02.54%) to get the populations' full support on board. It was observed that the Inaugural speech in question is devoid of interrogative (modalized or modulated) clauses, which strictly and definitely set the audience at the listening edge, giving it no single opportunity of direct speech act interaction. High and median auxiliaries profusely dominate the modal choices (*must, have to, shall, should, and will*). The purpose of such a linguistic choice is to convey the sense of moral obligation, accountability, and responsibility of the President and his administration. While examining the recoverable references, it exudes that the first person exclusive pronoun *we* dominate the speech, followed by the first person singular exclusive pronoun *I*. This choice of exclusiveness revealed by the analysis showcases the authority conferred upon the president and his administration. The discussion of this salient pattern rather suggests and ascribes the use of inclusive "*we*" to a regalian obligation, the one binding the government and the audience to strive and work hand in glove so as to deliver the common objectives of the nation.

This paper has demonstrated how political leaders can consciously or subconsciously make use of interpersonal metafunction devices to load their political speech/discourse/text in order to give sufficient evidence of their political will, but also and mostly to share their political ideologies with their nation, sub-region and the international community as a whole. Systemic functional grammar (SFG), through its interpersonal meaning devices helps speakers, writers, and political leaders to combine lexical items, convey messages loaded with ideologies so as to eventually achieve and deliver their objectives.

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Appendix

Practical analysis of interpersonal metafunction in President Buhari's 1,909 word-inaugural speech

I [S] am [F] immensely [Ao] grateful [Ca] to God Who [WH/S] Has [F] preserved [P] us to witness this day and [Aj] this occasion. Today [S] marks [F/P] a triumph [C] for Nigeria and [Aj] an occasion [C] to celebrate her freedom [C] and [Aj] cherish her democracy [C]. Nigerians [S] have [F] shown [P] their commitment [C] to democracy and [Aj] are [F] determined [P] to entrench its culture [C]. Our journey [S] has not [Fn] been [F/P] easy [Ca] but [Aj] thanks to the determination of our people and [Aj] strong support from friends abroad we [S] have [F] today a truly [Ao] democratically [Ao] elected [P] government [C] in place.

I [S] would [Fml] like [Pml] to thank President Goodluck Jonathan [C] for his display of statesmanship in setting a precedent for us [C] that [WH/C] has [F] now made [P] our people proud [Ca] to be Nigerians [C] wherever [WH/C] they [S] are[F]. With the support and [Aj] cooperation he [S] has [F] given [P] to the transition process, he [S] has [F] made [P] it [C] possible [Ca] for us [C] to show the world that [WH/C] despite the perceived [Ca] tension in the land we [S] can [Fms] be [Pms] a united [Ca] people capable [Ca] of doing what [WH/S]is [F] right [Ca] for our nation. Together we [S] co-operated [F/P] to surprise the world that [WH/S] had [F] come [P] to expect only the worst from Nigeria. I [S] hope [F/P] (this act of graciously accepting defeat [C] by the outgoing President) [S] will [Fml] become [Fml] the standard of political conduct [C] in the country.

I [S] would [Fml] like [Pml] to thank the millions of our supporters who [WH/S] believed [F/P] in us even when [WH/C] the cause [S] seemed [F/P] hopeless [Ca]. I [S] salute [F/P] their resolve [C] in waiting long hours in rain and [Aj] hot sunshine to register and [Aj] cast their votes and [Aj] stay all night if necessary to protect and [Aj] ensure their votes count, and [Aj] were [F] counted[Ca]. I [S] thank [F/P] those [C] who [WH/S] tirelessly [Ao] carried [F/P] the campaign [C] on the social media. At the same time, I [S] thank [F/P] our other countrymen and [Aj] women [C] who [WH/S] did not [Fn] vote [P] for us but [Aj] contributed [F/P] to make our democratic culture truly [Ao]competitive [Ca], strong [Ca] and [Aj] definitive[Ca]. I [S] thank [F/P] all of you. Having [F] just [Aj] a few minutes ago sworn [P] on the Holy Book, I [S] intend [F/P] to keep my oath and [Aj] serve as President to all Nigerians. I [S] belong [F/P] to everybody and [Aj] I [S] belong [F/P] to nobody.

A few people [S] have [F] privately [Ao] voiced [P] fears [C] that [WH/C] on coming back to office I [S] shall [Fml] go [Pml] after them. These fears [S] are [F] groundless [Ca]. There [S] will [Fms/n] be [Pms] no paying off old scores. The past [S] is [F] prologue [C]. (Our neighbours in the Sub-region and [Aj] our African brethenen) [S] should [Fml] rest [Fml] assured [Ca] that [WH/C] (Nigeria under our administration) [S] will [Fms] be [Pms] ready [Ca] to play any leadership role that [WH/C] Africa expects [F/P] of it. Here, I [S] would [Fml] like [Fml] to thank the governments and [Aj] people of Cameroon, Chad and [Aj] Niger for committing their armed forces to fight Boko Haram in Nigeria.

I [S] also wish [F/P] to assure the wider international community of our readiness to cooperate and [Aj] help to combat threats of cross-border terrorism, sea piracy, refugees and [Aj] boat people, financial crime, cyber-crime, climate change, the spread of communicable diseases and [Aj] other challenges of the 21st century.

At home we [S] face [P] enormous [Ca] challenges. (Insecurity, pervasive corruption, the hitherto unending and [Aj] seemingly [Ao] impossible [Ca] fuel and [Aj] power shortages) [S] are [F] the immediate [Ca] concerns. We [S] are [F] going [P] to tackle them head on. Nigerians [S] will not [Fml/n] regret [Pml] that [WH/C] they [S] have [F] entrusted [P] national responsibility [C] to us. We [S] must not [Fml/n] succumb [Pml] to hopelessness and [Aj] defeatism. We [S] can [Fml] fix [Pml] our problems [C].

In recent times Nigerian leaders [S] appear [F/P] to have misread our mission. (Our founding fathers, Mr Herbert Macauley, Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe, Chief Obafemi Awolowo, Alhaji Ahmadu Bello, the Sardauna of Sokoto, Alhaji Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, Malam Aminu Kano, Chief J.S. Tarka, Mr Eyo Ita, Chief Denis Osadeby, Chief Ladoke Akintola and their colleagues) [S] worked [F/P] to establish certain standards of governance. They [S] might [Fml] have differed [Pml] in their methods or tactics or details, but [Aj] they [S] were [F] united [P] in establishing a viable and [Aj] progressive country. Some of their successors [S] behaved [F/P] like spoilt children [C] breaking everything and [Aj] bringing disorder to the house.

Furthermore, we as Nigerians [S] must [Fml] remind [Pml] ourselves that [WH/C] we [S] are [F] heirs [Ca] to great civilizations: Shehu Ousman Dan fodio's caliphate, the Kanem Borno Empire, the Oyo Empire, the Benin Empire and [Aj] King Jaja's formidable domain. The blood of those great ancestors [S] flows [F/P] in our veins. (What [WH/S] is now required [P]) [S] is [F] to build on these legacies[C], to modernize and [Aj] uplift Nigeria[C]. Daunting [Ca] as the task [S] may [Fms] be it [S] is [F] by no means insurmountable [Ca]. There [S] is [F] now a national consensus [C] that [WH/C] (our chosen route to national development) [S] is [F] democracy [C]. To achieve our objectives [C] we [S] must [Fml] consciously [Ao] work [Pml] the democratic system[C].

The Federal Executive [S] under my watch will not [Fml/n] seek [Pml] to encroach on the duties and [Aj] functions of the Legislative and [Aj] Judicial arms of government[C]. The law enforcing authorities [S] will [Fms] be charged to operate within the Constitution. We [S] shall [Fml] rebuild [Pml] and [Aj] reform [Pml] the public service [C] to become more effective [Ca] and [Aj] more serviceable [Ca]. We [S] shall [Fml] charge [Pml] them to apply themselves with integrity to stabilize the system [C].

For their part, the legislative arm [S] must [Fml] keep [Pml] to their brief of making laws [C], carrying out oversight functions [C] and [Aj] doing so expeditiously [Ao]. The judicial system [S] needs [F/P] reform [C] to cleanse itself from its immediate [Ca] past. The country [S] now expects [F/P] the judiciary [C] to act with dispatch on all cases especially [Ao] on corruption [C], serious [Ca] financial crimes [C] or abuse of office [C]. It [S] is [F] only when [WH/C] the three arms [S] act [F/P] constitutionally [Ao] that [WH/C] government [S] will [Fms] be [F] enabled [Pms] to serve the country optimally [Ao] and [Aj] avoid the confusion [C] all too often bedeviling governance today.

Elsewhere (relations between Abuja and [Aj] the States) [S] have to [Fms] be [F] clarified [Pms] if we [S] are [F] to serve the country better. Constitutionally [Ao] there [S] are [F] limits [C] to powers of each of the three tiers of government but [Aj] that [S] should not [Fml/n] mean [Pml] the Federal Government [S] should [Fml] fold [Pml] its arms [C] and [Aj] close [Pml] its eyes [C] to what [WH/S] is [F] going [P] on in the states and [Aj] local governments. Not least, the operations of the Local Government Joint Account. While [WH/C] the Federal Government [S] cannot [Fml] interfere [Pml] in the details of its operations [C]; it [S] will [Fml] ensure [Pml] that [WH/C] (*the gross corruption at the local level*) [S] is [F] checked [P]. As far as the constitution [S] allows [F/P] me [C], I [S] will [Fml] try [Pml] to ensure that [WH/C] there [S] is [F] responsible [Ca] and [Aj] accountable [Ca] governance at all levels of government in the country. For [Aj] I [S] will not [Fml/n] have [F] kept [P] my own trust with the Nigerian people if I [S] allow [F/P] others [S] abuse [P] theirs under my watch.

However [Aj], no matter how well organized [Ca] the governments of the federation [S] are [F], they [S] cannot [Fml/n] succeed [Pml] without the support, understanding and [Aj] cooperation of labor unions, organized [Ca] private sector, the press and [Aj] civil society organizations. I [S] appeal [P] to employers and [Aj] workers alike to unite in raising productivity so that [WH/C] everybody [S] will [Fml] have [F] the opportunity to share in increased [Ca] prosperity[C]. The Nigerian press [S] is [F] the most vibrant [Ca] in Africa. (*My appeal to the media today – and [Aj] this includes the social media*) – [S] is [F] to exercise its considerable [Ca] powers with responsibility and patriotism. My appeal for unity [S] is [F] predicated [P] on the seriousness of the legacy we [S] are [F] getting [P] into. With depleted [Ca] foreign reserves, falling oil prices, leakages and [Aj] debts the Nigerian economy [S] is [F] in deep [Ca] trouble and [Aj] will [Fml] require [Pml] careful [Ca] management to bring it round [Ca] and [Aj] to tackle the immediate [Ca] challenges confronting us, namely [Ao]: Boko Haram, the Niger Delta situation, the power shortages and [Aj] unemployment especially [Ao]among young people. For the longer term we [S] have to [Fml] improve [Pml] the standards of our education. We [S] have to [Fml] look [Pml] at the whole field of medicore. We [S] have to [Fml] upgrade [Pml] our dilapidated [Ca] physical infrastructure [C].

(The most immediate [Ca])[S] is [F] Boko Haram's insurgency. Progress [S] has [F] been [F/P] made [P] in recent weeks by our security forces but [Aj] victory [S] cannot [Fms] be achieved [P] by basing the Command and Control Centre in Abuja. The command centre [S] will [Fms] be relocated [Pms] to Maiduguri and [Aj] remain [Pms] until Boko Haram [S] is [F] completely [Ao] subdued [P]. But [Aj] we [S] cannot [Fml/n] claim [Pml] to have [F] defeated [P] Boko Haram [C] without rescuing the Chibok girls and [Aj] all other innocent persons [C] held hostage by insurgents.

This government [S] will [Fml] do all it [S] can [Fml] to rescue them [C] alive [Ca]. Boko Haram [S] is [F] a typical [Ca] example of small fires [C] causing [P] large fires. (*An eccentric and [Aj] unorthodox preacher with a tiny following*) [S] was [F] given [P] posthumous fame [C] and [Aj] following by his extra judicial murder at the hands of the police. Since then [Aj] through official bungling, negligence, complacency or collusion, Boko Haram [S] became [P] a terrifying force taking tens of thousands of lives and [Aj] capturing several towns and [Aj] villages covering swathes of Nigerian sovereign territory.

Boko Haram [S] is [F] a mindless [Ca], godless [Ca] group who [WH/S] are [F] as far away from Islam [C] as one can [Flm] think [Plm] of. At the end of the hostilities when [WH/C] the group [S] is [F] subdued [P] the Government [S] intends [P] to commission a sociological study [C] to determine [F/P] its origins [C], remote [Ca] and [Aj] immediate [Ca] causes of the movement [C], its sponsors, the international connections to ensure that [WH/C] measures [S] are [F] taken [P] to prevent a recurrence of this evil. For now, the Armed Forces [S] will [Fms] be [Pms] fully [Ao] charged [Ca] with pursuing the fight against Boko haram. We [S] shall [Fml] overhaul [Pml] the rules of engagement to avoid human rights violations in operations. We [S] shall [Fml] improve [Pml] operational [Ca] and [Aj] legal [Ca] mechanisms so [Aj] that [WH/C] disciplinary steps [S] are [F] taken [P] against proven human right violations [C] by the Armed Forces.

Boko Haram [S] is not [Fn] only [Ao] the security issue bedeviling our country. (*The spate of kidnappings, armed robberies, herdsmen/farmers clashes, cattle rustlings all*) [S] help [P] to add to the general air of insecurity in our land. We [S] are [F] going [P] to erect and [Aj] maintain an efficient [Ca], disciplined [Ca] people – friendly [Ca] and [Aj] well – compensated [Ca] security forces within an over – all security architecture.

The amnesty program [S] in the Niger Delta is [F] due [Ca] to end in December, but [Aj] the Government [S] intends [F/P] to invest heavily [Ao] in the projects [C], and [Aj] programs [C] currently [Ao] in place. I [S] call [F/P] on the leadership and [Aj] people [C] in these areas to cooperate with (*the State and [Aj] Federal Government in the rehabilitation programs*) [C] which [WH/S] will [Fms] be streamlined [Pms] and [Aj] made [Pms] more effective [Ca]. As ever, I [S] am [F] ready [Ca] to listen to grievances [C] of my fellow Nigerians. I [S] extend [F/P] my hand of fellowship to them so that [WH/C] we [S] can [Fml] bring [Fml] peace [C] and [Aj] build [Pml] prosperity [C] for our people.

No single cause [S] can [Fms] be identified [Pms] to explain Nigerian's poor economic performance [C] over the years than the power situation. It [S] is [F] a national shame that [WH/C] an economy of 180 million generates only 4,000 MW, and [Aj] distributes even less. (*Continuous tinkering with the structures of power supply and [Aj] distribution and [Aj] close on \$20b expanded [F/P] since 1999*) [S] have [F] only brought [P] (*darkness, frustration, misery, and [Aj] resignation*) [C] among Nigerians. We [S] will not [Fml/n] allow [Pml] this to go on. Careful [Ca] studies [S] are [F] under way during this transition to identify the quickest, safest and [Aj] most cost-effective [Ca] way [C] to bring light and [Aj] relief to Nigerians.

Unemployment, notably [Ao] youth un-employment [S] features strongly [Ao] in our Party's Manifesto. We [S] intend [P] to attack the problem [C] frontally [Ao] through revival of agriculture, solid minerals mining as well as credits to small and [Aj] medium-sized businesses [Ao] to kick – start these enterprises. We [S] shall [Fml] quickly [Ao] examine [Pml] the best [Ca] way to revive major industries and [Aj] accelerate the revival and [Aj] development of our railways, roads and [Aj] general infrastructure.

Your Excellencies, [Av] My fellow Nigerians, [Av]

I [S] cannot [Fml/n] recall [Pml] when [WH/C] Nigeria enjoyed [F/P] so [Aj] much goodwill abroad as now. (*The messages [C] I [S] received [F/P] from East and [Aj] West, from powerful and [Aj] small countries*) [S] are [F] indicative [Ca] of international expectations on us. At home, the newly [Ao] elected [P] government [S] is [F] basking [P] in a reservoir of goodwill and [Aj] high expectations. Nigeria [S] therefore [Aj] has [F] a window of opportunity [C] to fulfill our long – standing potential of pulling ourselves together and [Aj] realizing our mission as a great nation.

Our situation [S] somehow reminds [F/P] one of a passage in Shakespeare's Julius Ceasar: "There [S] is [F] (*a tide in the affairs of men which [WH/C], taken at the flood*) [C]. [S] leads [P] on to fortune Omitted [P], all the voyage [C] of their life, [S] is [F] bound [P] in shallows and [Aj] miseries. We [S] have [F] an opportunity [C]. Let us [S] take [P] it[C]." Thank [P] you [C].