

8

Trust-inducing mechanisms in President Tinubu's public conversations

Chiedu Rosemary E. & Onovwiona Solomon

Abstract

Trust is a social concept that plays a critical role in the development and sustenance of relationships. Its critical role in relationship building makes it crucial in political discourse, whereby political actors use it to influence the behaviours of the masses. The aim of this study was to identify the linguistic strategy used by the current Nigerian president to influence Nigerians to trust him. Specifically, the study examined the linguistic features of his public addresses to discover the actions he performed with language, the specific functions of these actions, and how he used them to arouse and sustain the trust of his listeners. Data were collected from four public speeches delivered by the president in 2024. The examined speeches were the president's 2024 New Year, Workers' Day, Democracy Day, and Independence Day speeches, which were collected from the websites of Punch, Vanguard, and Channels TV media houses. The data were analysed qualitatively, using Searle's (2005) Illocutionary Act Theory as the anchor. Findings disclosed that the president used commissive, assertive, directive, and expressive illocutionary acts in public conversations. It was also discovered that he used the acts to appeal for hope, blame the past administrations for causing Nigeria's problems, appeal for inclusivity and active participation of the masses in leadership, and share in the emotions and frustrations of his listeners. The study concluded that by using the four identified illocutionary acts, the president utilised language strategically as his trust-inducing mechanisms.

Keywords: *Trust, illocutionary acts, language, speeches*

1.0 Introduction

Trust is a social concept that plays a critical role in the development and sustenance of relationships. It is crucial in local and international businesses (Schmidt & Schreiber, 2019; Sanders, 2023), leadership, and politics (Weinert, 2020; Lansing et al., 2023). In families, relationships are solidified when there is trust between spouses, parents and children, as well as among

siblings. Trust is also an important factor in education because students need to trust their teachers' capabilities and knowledge before opening up their minds to learn from them. In the social setting, trust is a key ingredient in peaceful co-existence between neighbours, colleagues, friends, and team members (Wubs-Mrozewicz, 2020). In summary, trust is very important in human society because it fosters cooperation and harmony.

Trust refers to the state of mind that influences an individual's willingness to rely on someone, a system, a structure, or an organisation because there is a strong belief that the trusted will behave in an expected way (Robbins, 2016). Schmidt and Schreiber (2019) disclose that the concept involves an individual's willingness to take risks because he has confidence in the other party's integrity and reliability. This means that for trust to be developed, there must be a belief that the trusted is benevolent and honest. Schmidt and Schreiber further explain that a trusting person believes that the actions and decisions of the trusted will be predictable and have a positive outcome. However, Turaga (2013) maintains that when a party trusts another, there is no absolute belief or hope in receiving a positive outcome but there is a willingness to take the risk of relying on others to undertake actions or be in control of situations.

The description of trust by Schmidt and Schreiber (2019) and Turaga (2013) reveals some of the key factors involved in the concept. Among these factors are the willingness to take risks, a belief in the competence of others, an expectation of positive outcomes from the actions and decisions of the trusted, and the willingness to give absolute control of a situation to others. However, the trusted must give them reasons to win their trusts. These observations identify how trust is built by leaders, including the political leaders.

As Sopko and LaRocco (2018) explain, building trust may be easier than sustaining it. With this, they reveal that an individual may successfully influence others to trust him but, over time, fail to give them reasons to continue trusting him. Sopko and LaRocco, however, state that trust can be sustained if there is a constant communication between the parties involved. This proves that communication is an important factor in building and sustaining trust.

The use of communication as the tool for building and sustaining trust calls to mind the speeches delivered by Nigerian presidents and other key political office holders at public and national events. They use those speeches to address the condition of things in the country, and then state their plans and achievements for the nation. But based on the argument of Sopko and LaRocco (2018), these leaders use their speeches to build and sustain the

masses' trust. In other words, despite the current socio-economic challenges faced by Nigerians as a result of policy changes and economic reforms undertaken by the present administration, the current president, President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, occasionally referred to as PBAT, must have won and sustained the trust of many Nigerians through his public conversations.

The purpose of this study, therefore, is to identify how the current Nigerian president uses language to influence Nigerians to trust him. Specifically, the study examined the linguistic features of his public communication to discover the actions he performed with language, the specific functions of these actions, and how he used them to arouse and sustain the trust of his listeners. That way, it established how he uses public communication events to induce trust in the midst of the present economic hardship.

2.1 Previous Studies on Linguistic Features of PBAT Speeches

Even though President Bola Ahmed Tinubu has spent less than two years in office at the time of writing this report, the linguistic features of his presidential public speeches have attracted the interest of several scholars. Among these scholars are Amoussou et al. (2024), who conducted a pragma-stylistic analysis of the president's inaugural speech. Their study was anchored on Black's (2006) Speech Act Theory and it discovered that the president employed four illocutionary acts, which were commissives, assertives, expressives, and directives, in the speech. Amoussou et al. concluded that these illocutionary forces enabled the president to win the trust of Nigerians and further persuade them to support his administration. This study disclosed how the president strategically used language in his speech to win the trust of his listeners but since the examined speech was his inaugural speech, which he delivered before implementing the reforms and policies that are causing economic challenges, it is difficult to state if he maintained the same trust-inducing strategy in his subsequent communication.

Anyanwu (2024) also studied the use of speech act in the president's inaugural speech. She adopted J.L. Austin's Speech Act Theory and John Searle's Illocutionary Act Theory as the study's theoretical framework and, like Amoussou et al. (2024), discovered that the president used commissives, expressives, directives and assertives in the discourse. Anyanwu, therefore, concluded that the identified illocutionary acts were specifically used to win trusts, inspire hope, promote national unity, and outline the changes the present administration will take. But as in the case of Amoussou et al. (2024), it is unclear if he chose to use those four illocutionary acts because the speech was his first official public conversation as the president of Nigeria.

Another group of scholars that examined the use of speech acts in PBAT's

public conversation is Acheoah et al. (2023). Though their study examined the victory speech made by the president before officially assuming the office, it gives an insight into his (the president's) linguistic strategy. Anchoring their study on Bach and Harnish Speech Act Theory, they discovered that he used language to inform, persuade, declare, promise, condemn, ascribe, respond, direct, and dissent. Acheoah et al. concluded that the identified speech acts were used as linguistic strategies to appeal to the emotions of the audience, explore and share in their knowledge, and further create bonds with them. It is, therefore, important to discover if he maintained these strategies in his subsequent speeches as the president of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

The linguistic features of PBAT's inaugural speech were also examined by Akinseye (2023), Ogundeji (2024), and Olawe (2024). Ogundeji (2024) examined the politeness strategy PBAT used in the speech through the theoretical lens of Leech Theory of Politeness. Findings revealed that he utilised the maxims of sympathy, agreement, generosity, modesty, approbation, and tact to portray himself as capable, intelligent, accommodating, and god-sent. While studying the discursive strategies the president used in the speech through the lenses of Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) and van Dijk's Ideology Stance, Akinseye (2023) discovered that he used lexicalisation technique, such as collocations, synonyms, metaphors, repetition, and parallelism, as linguistic strategy to ensure clarity in his communication. Akinseye also discovered that he created an 'us' versus 'them' polarisation as a way of reinforcing his ideological stance. Furthermore, Olawe (2024) used Halliday's SFL and lexical collocation theory to study the use of collocation as a rhetorical strategy in the speech. The findings revealed that the president used language to make eight appeals, which are appeal to national pride and patriotism, religiosity, political sensibility, hope, unity and cohesive effort, call to action, inclusive government, and action clarifications. The findings of the three studies give further insight into the linguistic strategies the current president uses to persuade and influence his audience. However, they did not focus on the actions he performed with the speech.

While studying the use of language as a manipulative device in the president's fuel subsidy removal conversations through the perspective of Critical Discourse Analysis, Richard (2024) discovered that the president manipulated the audience emotions in order to influence their reasoning and perception of the subsidy removal policy. The research findings disclosed that the president portrayed himself as the helper of the masses and that the removal of the subsidy is the best and only means of helping the masses to actualise their aspirations and dreams. Adelabu et al. (2024) also applied the perspectives of Critical Discourse Analysis on the president's public

conversations on the country's economic challenges. They discovered that while PBAT blamed his predecessors for causing the current hardship faced by Nigerians, he appealed to his listeners' emotion of hope by promising a short-lived economic hardship and a long-term economic relief. These studies show that the president still uses commissives and assertives in his public conversations. Nevertheless, there is a need to further identify how he uses them to win and maintain the trust of Nigerians.

But then, Jackson (2023) only identified expressives and assertives in the president's 2023 Democracy Day speech. Considering that Richard (2024) and Adelabu et al. (2024) did not specify which of the speeches they studied, it is difficult to confirm if PBAT has dropped the use of commissives and directives in his communication to all Nigerians. If that is so, it means he has adopted another linguistic strategy to influence his listeners to trust his him, administration and the reforms causing economic hardship for the citizens. This makes it more important to examine the trust-winning and sustenance strategies he used in his recent speeches.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on the theoretical perspective of John Searle's (2005) Illocutionary Act, which is one of the models of J.L. Austin's Speech Act theory. Austin posits that language does not only perform communicative functions when used in utterances. He maintains that certain utterances perform actions immediately they are uttered. The actions can be locutionary (the act making utterances), illocutionary (the action performed with utterances) and perlocutionary (the impact of the utterance on the receivers). Searle's (2005) Illocutionary Act Theory further identified five forms of illocutionary acts, which are assertive, declarative, commissive, directive, and expressive.

According to Searle (2005), the assertive illocutionary act refers to utterances that show speakers' viewpoints, positions, beliefs, opinions, interests and conclusions about the truthfulness or falseness of an idea, a topic, a phenomenon, or a concept. The declarative refers to utterances that change the status of the addressee the moment they (the utterances) were uttered. However, for such an utterance to become valid, it has to be said by an authorised person and under the right context. This is the illocutionary act that hires and sacks, promotes and demotes, declare and end wars, sentence and acquit, baptise and excommunicate, marry and divorce, and perform other activities that alter or changes an existing status quo.

Searle (2005) further identified utterances that bind speakers to future actions and commitments as commissives. This illocutionary act is used to

promise, vow, pledge, threaten, guarantee, and agree. Directives, on the other hand, are used to give instructions, permissions, suggestions, advice, order, and warning. They are also used to request, invite, and offer. The essence of directives is to influence the listener to do something, accept an ideology, or follow a particular line of action. Finally, expressives show the emotions and state of mind of the speaker at the time of making utterances. They are used to appreciate, thank, commiserate, apologise, sympathise, congratulate, and welcome.

The taxonomies of illocutionary act by Searle (2005) are used by this study to categorise its data in order to identify the form of actions performed by the president in the selected speeches. It also helped the study to identify the specific functions of these actions and how they were used to win and maintain the trusts of the listeners.

3.0 Methodology

This study focused on the use of language by the current president of Nigeria, Bola Ahmed Tinubu, to win and sustain the trust of Nigerians despite the hardship caused by his reforms and policies. As a result, the data for the study were collected from four public speeches the president made. Specifically, the study examined the president's 2024 New Year, Workers' Day, Democracy Day, and Independence Day speeches. These speeches were sourced online and collected from the websites of three Nigerian national mainstream media, which are Punch, Vanguard, and Channels TV.

The use of language in these speeches were qualitatively analysed to enable the identification and comprehensive description of the linguistic features of the speeches. The five types of illocutionary act identified by Searle (2005) were used to categorise the linguistic forms identified in the speeches.

4.1 Data Analysis

The data for the study are broadly categorised as assertive, commissive, expressive, declarative, and directive. These are the five forms of illocutionary acts identified by Searle (2005). However, the utterances selected as data for this study are those addressing the socio-economic conditions of the country and what the citizens are expected to do about them.

4.1.1 Assertive

Instances of the use of assertive illocution act in the selected speeches are presented in excerpts 1 to 4.

Excerpt 1: Assertives in the 2024 New Year Speech

- i. Though the past year was a very challenging one, it was eventful in so many ways.
- ii. Everything I have done in the office, every decision I have taken and every trip I have undertaken outside the shores of our land, since I assumed office on 29 May 2023, has been done in the best interest of our country.
- iii. Over the past seven months of our administration, I have taken some difficult and yet necessary decisions to save our country from fiscal catastrophe.
- iv. Without a doubt, these two decisions brought some discomfort to individuals, families and businesses.

The president used the assertive illocutionary act in his 2024 New Year speech to affirm that Nigerians were facing difficulties as a result of the new reforms and policies his administration made (entries i, iii, iv) and to insist that the concerned reforms and policies were for the best interest of the country (entry ii).

Excerpt 2: Assertives in the 2024 Workers' Day Speech

- i. Today, I stand before you to tell a fundamental truth: you, the workers of our great nation, are its very backbone.
- ii. Your contributions have played a significant role in our efforts to rescue the economy since we came on board.
- iii. We took office at the time many nations, including ours, were experiencing daunting socio-political and developmental challenges.
- iv. Let me assure you, with the utmost sincerity, that every initiative undertaken by this administration is geared towards transforming Nigeria into a nation that can truly provide for its people.

In the speech he made on the 2024 Workers' Day, the president also used the assertive to affirm and insist. However, this time, he affirmed the crucial roles of Nigerian workers in moving the country forward (entries i & ii) and insisted that the actions and decisions of the government were taken to make things better for the citizens (entries iii & iv).

Excerpt 3: Assertives in the 2024 Democracy Day Speech

- i. As president of this nation, I am morally and constitutionally bound to preserve this precious form of governance.

- ii. Our economy has been in desperate need of reform for decades.
- iii. It (the economy) has been unbalanced because it was built on the flawed foundations and over-reliance on revenues from exploitation of oil.
- iv. In the end, our national greatness will not be achieved by travelling the easy road.

PBAT used assertives in the 2024 Democracy Day speech to insist (i, ii), blame (iii) and conclude (iv). The president insisted that he is bound by his position as the president to take certain decisions for the citizens (i) and the economy is in need of a reform (ii). He also blamed his predecessors for the bad economy (iii) and then concluded that it (the economy) can only be improved through the reforms that were causing hardships (iv).

Excerpt 4: Assertives in the 2024 Independence Day Speech

- i. Fellow Nigerians, as I address you today, I am deeply aware of the struggles many of you face in these challenging times.
- ii. My administration took over the leadership of our country 16 months ago at a critical juncture.
- iii. The more disciplined approach adopted by the Central Bank to monetary policy management has ensured stability and predictability in our foreign exchange market.
- iv. Fellow Nigerians, better days are ahead of us.

The president used assertives in the 2024 Independence Day speech to affirm his knowledge of the sufferings faced by Nigerians (i) and to insist that the policies and reforms by his administration were necessary (ii) and will make things better for Nigerians (iv).

4.1.2 Commissive

Instances of the use of commissive illocution act in the selected speeches are presented in excerpts 5 to 8.

Excerpt 5: Commissives in the 2024 New Year Speech

- i. In 2024, we are moving a step further in our quest to restart local refining of petroleum products with Port Harcourt Refinery, and the Dangote Refinery which shall fully come on stream.
- ii. To ensure constant food supply, security and affordability, we will step up our plan to cultivate 500,000 hectares of farmlands across the country to grow maize, rice, wheat, millet and other staple crops.
- iii. I will fight every obstacle that impedes business competitiveness in

Nigeria and I will not hesitate to remove any clog hindering our path to making Nigeria a destination of choice for local and foreign investments.

- iv. It is in this spirit that we are going to implement a new national living wage for our industrious workers this new year.

In the 2024 New Year speech, the president used the commissive illocutionary act to promise a better life for the citizens (ii & iii) and to guarantee the completion of government's plans and initiatives that will ensure improved living standard (i & iv).

Excerpt 6: Commissives in the 2024 Workers' Day Speech

- i. I assure you, we are fully committed to tackling these security challenges.
- ii. I assure you that your days of worrying are over.
- iii. Indeed, this government is open to the committee's suggestion of not just a minimum wage but a living wage.

The commissive illocutionary act was used in the Workers' Day speech to guarantee government's actions towards solving socio-economic problems facing Nigerians. The president used this illocutionary act to reveal his administration's commitment towards tackling the country's security challenges (i), reassure the citizens (ii), and make promises of better living conditions for workers (iii). In all these instances, he committed his administration to future actions, which his listeners should expect the administration to fulfil.

Excerpt 7: Commissives in the 2024 Democracy Day Speech

- i. I vow to do my utmost best to protect your rights, freedoms, and liberties as citizens of Nigeria.
- ii. As we continue to reform the economy, I shall always listen to the people and will never turn my back on you.
- iii. These (reasoned discussion and principled compromise) themselves shall continue to animate my policies and interaction with the constituent parts of our political economy.

In the Democracy Day speech, the president used commissives to vow (i), promise (ii) and pledge (iii) improved governance for the people.

Excerpt 8: Commissives in the 2024 Independence Day Speech

- i. As your President, I assure you that we are committed to finding

sustainable solutions to alleviate the suffering of our citizens.

- ii. I promise you, we shall not falter on this (restoring peace in the North).
- iii. As part of our efforts to re-engineer our political economy, we are resolute in our determination to implement the Supreme Court judgment on the financial autonomy of local governments.

Commissives were used in the Independence Day speech to make promises (entry ii) and guarantee (i & iii) government's actions towards solving Nigerian problems.

4.1.3 Expressive

Instances of the use of expressive illocution act in the selected speeches are presented in excerpts 9 to 12.

Excerpt 9: Expressives in the 2024 New Year Speech

- i. I am not oblivious to the expressed and sometimes unexpressed frustrations of my fellow citizens.

Expressive was used in the 2024 New Year speech to show that the speaker shares in the frustrations of the masses as a result of economic hardship.

Excerpt 10: Expressives in the 2024 Workers' Day Speech

- i. Today, I join you to share in the essence of this day and to express my deepest gratitude and admiration for the invaluable contributions each and every one of you makes to keep our nation afloat in its times of greatest need.
- ii. I do not take for granted the understanding, patience, commitment, and support you have shown throughout the implementation of this government's policies and programmes aimed at positively transforming our great nation.

The president used expressives in his 2024 Workers' Day speech to show his appreciation and admiration of the workers' resilience in the face of hardship.

Excerpt 11: Expressives in the 2024 Democracy Day Speech

- i. Although the challenges are steep and multiple, I am grateful to lead Nigeria at this moment in her history and point in her democratic journey.

- ii. I feel your pains.

Expressives in the 2024 Democracy Day speech was used by PBAT to show his emotions towards his role as the president (i) and to share in the pains Nigerians experience from the economic hardship (ii).

Excerpt 12: Expressives in the 2024 Independence Day Speech

- i. I commend the Governors particularly, in Kebbi, Niger, Jigawa, Kwara, Nasarawa, and the Southwest Governors that have embraced our agricultural production programme.
- ii. On the security front, I am happy to announce to you, my compatriots, that our administration is winning the war on terror and banditry.

Expressive illocutionary act was used in the 2024 Independence Day speech to show the president's happiness over the achievements made by his administration.

4.1.4 Directive

Examples of directive illocutionary act in the selected speeches are captured in excerpt 13 to 16.

Excerpt 13: Directives in the 2024 New Year Speech

- i. Dear Compatriots, take this from me: the time may be rough and tough, however, our spirit must remain unbowed because tough times never last
- ii. Like I said in the past, no excuse for poor performance from any of my appointees will be good enough.
- iii. For the new year to yield all its good benefits to us as individuals and collectively as a people we must be prepared to play our part

The president used directive act in the 2024 New Year speech to encourage his listeners to remain resilient (i) and hard working (ii) as well as to participate actively in governance (iii).

Excerpt 14: Directives in the 2024 Workers' Day Speech

- i. On this momentous day, I urge you and all our fellow citizens to place your trust in this administration.
- ii. So, I call upon each and every one of you, as I have consistently done, to join hands in shaping the destiny of our nation towards greatness.

The president used directives in the 2024 Workers' Day speech to encourage Nigerians to trust in his administration (i) and then invite them participate actively in his governance (ii).

Excerpt 15: Directives in the 2024 Democracy Day Speech

- i. I say to you here and now that as we celebrate the enshrinement of our political democracy, let us commit ourselves to the fulfilment of its equally important counterpart, the realization of our economic democracy.
- ii. Together, let us move Nigeria forward.
- iii. Let's keep the torch lit for generations to come.

Excerpt 15 captures the use of directives in the president's 2024 Democracy Day speech. Here, he used the illocutionary act to participate actively in making Nigeria a better place.

Excerpt 16: Directives in the 2024 Independence Day Speech

- i. Once again, I plead for your patience as the reforms we are implementing show positive signs, and we are beginning to see light at the end of the tunnel.
- ii. I urge you to believe in our nation's promise.
- iii. Together, we will cultivate a Nigeria that reflects the aspirations of all its citizens, a nation that resonates with pride, dignity, and shared success.
- iv. Please join our administration in this journey towards a brighter future.

The president used directives in the 2024 Independence Day speech to request that the citizens remain patient with the reforms (i) and believe in the country (ii). He also used the illocutionary act to invite them to participate actively in governance (iii & iv).

4.2 Discussion of Findings

The president of Nigeria, Bola Ahmed Tinubu, employed different kinds of illocutionary acts in his 2024 New Year, Workers' Day, Democracy Day, and Independence Day speeches. The four kinds of illocutionary acts, according to Searle (2005), found in these speeches were assertives, commissives, expressives, and directives. Instances of the use of declarative illocutionary act were not found in the speeches. These findings confirm the observations of Amoussou et al. (2024) and Anyanwu (2023), who identified the use of the illocutionary acts in the president's inaugural speech. This shows that

President Bola Ahmed Tinubu maintains the use of the acts in his public communication events.

But what is most outstanding about the use of the recognised illocutionary acts is the kind of actions the president used them to perform in his speeches. For instance, he used the assertive to affirm the adverse situation of things and socio-economic challenges faced by Nigerians. He also affirmed the impact of his policies and reforms on the citizens and his knowledge of the hardship in Nigeria as a result of government's acts and decisions. In addition, the president used the assertive to insist that the country is in dire need of the concerned reforms and policy changes and that those facts will improve the condition of things in the country in the long run. Tinubu further utilised this illocutionary act to blame his predecessors for the economic situation of the country and to conclude avoiding the hardship-causing reforms and policies will not benefit the citizens in the long run. That way, he created the impression that he is making efforts to ensure that the mistakes of his predecessors do not impact heavily on the masses and, as a result, should be trusted because he was doing the right thing.

Furthermore, the president used commissives to promise, pledge, vow, and guarantee good governance, improved living standard, and execution of government's plans and initiatives that will solve Nigeria's problems. This illocutionary act was used to give hope to the masses, an emotion, which Anyanwu (2023) identifies as a trust-inducer. Hence, PBAT used commissives to elicit hope in order to win and sustain the trust of his listeners.

The expressives, though used sparingly, captured the president's emotions towards the predicaments faced by the citizens, the efforts made by individuals and groups to salvage the country's economy, and the achievements of his administration. With this illocutionary act, he was able to share in the pains and frustrations of his listeners. This, therefore, affirms the observations of Ogundeji (2024) and Olawe (2024), who revealed that PBAT uses the maxim of sympathy, modesty, and generosity in his inaugural speech. This linguistic strategy gives the impression of understanding and empathy, thereby making the masses believe the president has their best interest at heart and should, as a result, be trusted.

The directive illocutionary act was used by the president to appeal and encourage his listeners to remain resilient and hard working as well as trust and believe in his administration. He also used it to invite them to participate actively in his government so they can make their unique input towards making the country great. This last observation aligns with the discovery of Olawe (2024), who also observed that the president appealed for inclusive government in his inaugural speech. The strategy of inclusivity

gives the impression that the president runs an open-door administration and welcomes every suggestion and criticism. This means he can be trusted to consider and attend to the demands of the masses.

5.0 Conclusion

Trust is a social concept that plays important roles in leadership. With this concept, leaders can foster cooperation from their followers and also promote stable, supportive and peaceful communities. But to build and sustain trust, these leaders have to remain in constant communication with their followers. In Nigeria for instance, the president addresses the masses at intervals through his public speeches, which he strategically uses to influence his listeners to trust him and his administration.

The speeches of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu examined in this study disclosed that he uses language as a trust-inducing device. Some of the ways he achieves this include appealing to his listeners' emotions (especially hope), blaming his predecessors for causing the problems in Nigeria, disclosing the best strategy for solving the problem, showing empathy and understanding, and then imbibing the spirit of inclusivity in governance. All these help in making the president appear empathetic, unbiased, competent, respectful, trusting, and trustworthy. In other words, he is able to utilise language as a trust-inducing mechanism in his public conversations by using four illocutionary acts, which are assertives, commissives, expressives, and directives. This study, hence, contributed to research in political discourse by revealing that the four mentioned illocutionary acts are used by political actors to stir and build trust in the masses.

REFERENCES

- Acheoah, J.E., Balogun, B.J., Zulfaa, Y.W. (2023). A speech act analysis of Bola Tinubu's election victory speech. *American Research Journal of English and Literature*, 9(1), 15-21.
- Adelabu, O.T., Olanihun, S.Z., Daniel, H.A., Olawuwo, G.O., Okoji, C.T., & Oladipupo, A.A. (2024). Analysing President Tinubu's speech on economic challenges: A critical discourse analysis of persuasive tools. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Linguistics, Marketing and Communication*, 11(3), 1 – 11.
- Akinseye, T.A. (2023). Persuasion and connection of words: Discursive strategies and interpersonal resources in President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's inaugural speech of May 29, 2023. *ATRAS Journal*, 4(2), 143

– 179.

- Amoussou, F., Allagbe, A.A., & Toboula, C.M.Z. (2024). A pragma-stylistic analysis of Nigeria's President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's inaugural speech. *International Journal of Educational and Psychological Sciences (IJEPS)*, 2(1), 27 – 48.
- Anyanwu, E. (2023). Speech act theory and political speech: An analysis of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's inaugural address. *Nigerian Journal of Arts and Humanities (NJAHA)*, 3(1), 78 – 88.
- Jackson, B.I.P. (2023). A Pragmatic analysis of 2023 democracy day speech by President Bola Tinubu. *Journal of Humanities, Music and Dance*, 3(4). 36 – 43.
- Lansing, A.E., Romero, N.J., Siantz, E., Silva, V., Center, K., Casteel, D., & Gilmer, T. (2023). Building trust: Leadership reflections on community empowerment and engagement in a large urban initiative. *BMC Public Health*, 23, 1 – 25.
- Ogundeji, A.O. (2024). Linguistic politeness strategy of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's inaugural speech of May 29, 2023. *International Journal of Arts, Languages, Linguistics and Literary Studies*, 13(2), 79 – 86.
- Olawe, O.E. (2024). Rhetorical functions of lexical collocations in the inaugural speech of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu. *ATRAS Journal*, 5(1), 117 – 143.
- Richard, B. (2024). Discursive strategies of manipulation in President Bola Tinubu's subsidy removal discourse. *Journal of Languages, Linguistics and Literary Studies (JLLLS)*, 4(2), 43 – 48.
- Robbins, B.G. (2016). What is trust? A multidisciplinary review, critique, and synthesis. *Sociology Compass*, 10(10), 972 – 986.
- Saunders, F. (2023). The role of trust in international business relationships. *Journal of Research in International Business and Management*, 10(2), 01 – 02.
- Schmidt, S., & Schreiber, D. (2019). Inter-organizational trust: Definitions, elements and operationalisation. *Desenvolvimento em Questão*, 17(48), 71 – 82.
- Searle, J.R. (2005). *Expression and meaning: Studies in the theory of speech acts*. Cambridge University Press.
- Sopko, K.M., & LaRocco, D.J. (2018). Leading and growing in a culture of reciprocal trust. *Young Exceptional Children*, 21(2), 63 – 75.
- Turaga, R. (2013). Building Trust in Teams: A Leader's Role. *The IUP Journal of Soft Skills*, 7(2), 13 – 31.
- Weinert, F. (2018). The Role of Trust in Political Systems. A Philosophical

Perspective. *Open Political Science*, 1, 7 – 15.

Wubs-Mrozewicz, J. (2020). The concept of language of trust and trustworthiness: (Why) history matters. *Journal of Trust Research*, 10(1), 91-107.