



A Critical Discourse Analysis of the State of Emergency Speech Declared by Olusegun Obasanjo in 2004

Adebomi Oluwayemisi Olusola^{[a],*}

^[a]Lecturer II, General Studies Department, Federal University of Technology, Akure, Nigeria.

*Corresponding author.

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Abstract

Several studies have analysed the way presidential/political speeches are deployed to capture the ideologies of the speech maker. Many as these studies are, scholars have not attempted a critical discourse analysis of the State of Emergency speech declared by former Nigeria President Olusegun Obasanjo, in May 2004. This study examines the State of Emergency speech with a view to examining the way various linguistic categories are deployed to achieve different functions in the speech. The study deploys Norman Fairclough's model of critical discourse analysis as theoretical framework. This model is adopted because it provides a platform for the description, interpretation and explanation of text and talk. The data is sourced through the purposive sampling method. This is because the speech is considered as one of those in which Obasanjo's power consciousness, through his linguistic choices, is enunciated. The study revealed that Obasanjo used nouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives, collocations and assertions to achieve three main purposes in the text: to justify his decision to declare a state of emergency in Plateau State, to castigate purported culprits and to delegitimise, unequivocally, violence/terrorism. The study reveals that Obasanjo uses language to underscore the need to chart a new course for good governance in the war-torn Pateau State.

Key words: Discourse strategies; Democracy day; CDA, Political speech; Muhammadu Buhari

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INTRODUCTION

Political discourses are usually believed to be persuasive in nature; the other types of speeches being informative and entertaining (Dada, 2004). Regardless of the type of speech, language is the central means of expression. Rudyk (2007) points out that language is an indicator of social and, therefore, political situations. It is viewed as a driving force directed at changing people's opinions, politics and society. It is an instrument for or against enlightenment, emancipation and human right. van Dijk (2008) justifies the importance of language in a communicative event when he hints that the centrality of language is so intense that it is intricately related to beliefs, opinions and ideologies.

Moreover, although it is largely argued that political speeches are often persuasive in nature, it also provides the platform for the speech maker to express his ideology. Rudyk (2007) observes that language is a fundamental social institution and, thus, is inherently linked with power and domination even in the freest democracy. He argues further that language reflects and has an impact on power structures. Corroborating the above, Daniel (2008) opines that language helps to define each person's social positioning within the power space. Kress (1989) discusses various means or ways language is used to control and show power relations between participants within a language event. He argues that language is used to create distance within a particular social context as a means of power superiority or to hide powerlessness, depending on each participant's cognition of the power level they hold.

Zaidi (2007) posits that language and ideology as instruments in the hands of the powerful have an overwhelming hold on people; the ability to convince and be convinced, persuade and be persuaded and the possibility of establishing the distinction between the in-group and the out-group. Thus, it is almost impossible to find a site of social practices where language and ideology

do not play a major role. In essence, language is the means through which political leaders express their ideologies and assert their powers. This argument is plausible considering the ends that former Nigeria's President, Olusegun Obasanjo, uses his linguistic choices to meet in his speech on the declaration of state of emergency in Plateau State in 2004.

The speech is considered significant because in spite of the fact that other Nigerian presidents have, at one time or the other, addressed insecurity issues in parts or the whole of Nigeria, none of their speeches is considered as expressive and pushful like the speech under consideration, especially considering the fact that issues of terrorism, violence and insecurity still dominate the Nigerian political landscape. Also, even though scholars have attempted pragmatic analyses of the said speech, efforts have not been made to discuss it using the methods of critical discourse analysis. This is the gap that the present study attempts to fill.

THE MAN, OLUSEGUN OBASANJO/ OVERVIEW OF THE SPEECH

Olusegun Obasanjo was born on March 5, 1937 in Ogun State. He is a Yoruba and south-wester. He attended Baptist Boys High School, Abeokuta; Mons Officers Cadet School, Aldershot, United Kingdom; Royal College of Military Engineering, Chattam, United Kingdom; and School of Survey in Newbury also in the United Kingdom. He became the Nigerian Military Head of State in 1976. In 1979, Obasanjo voluntarily handed over power to the civilians, after the conduct of an election which produced Shehu Shagari as the president of the country. He retired from the military and later joined politics. He contested and won the 1999 presidential election under the platform of the Peoples' Democratic Party (PDP). He was sworn in as a civilian president in May 1999. He contested and won a second term in office in May 2003. He is acclaimed to be the longest serving Head of State/President in Nigeria.

In 2004, Obasanjo exercised one of his constitutional rights by declaring a state of emergency in Plateau State. This was a result of the numerous crises that erupted in this part of the country at this period of time. Since it was a crisis situation, the tone of the speech was, expectedly, harsh and direct to the point. The speech reveals Obasanjo's attempt to douse tension as well as condemn violence through his linguistic choices.

Literature Review

A number of efforts have been made to analyse the speeches of Nigeria's presidents, most especially those of Olusegun Obasanjo. Adetunji (2006) examines the use of deixis for personal, spatial and temporal anchorage in Obasanjo's speeches. He uses pragmatic theories to analyse the various personal pronouns deployed in two

of Obasanjo's speeches; the one he gave at the Harvard University in the United States of America in 2000 and the one directing his imposition of the state of emergency in Plateau State in 2004. He argues that Obasanjo deploys the pronouns 'I', 'we' to associate himself with the positivities in government while he uses the pronouns 'they' and 'them' to dissociate himself from/delegitimise violence

Taiwo (2011) examines the enactment of power in political discourse with a focus on the speech delivered by Olusegun Obasanjo at a Peoples Democratic Party's Elders' and Stakeholders' Forum. He argues that the deployment of certain lexical items in the speech reflect Obasanjo's attempt at further heightening the political tension being experienced at that time. He concludes that Obasanjo exercised his powers through direct threat and intimidation of the opposition. Adedun and Atolagbe (2011) attempt a pragmatic analysis of Obasanjo's farewell speech to Nigerians upon the completion of his second term in office. They adopt speech acts and pragmatics theories to argue that the choice of Musa Yar'Adua by Obasanjo as his successor is misplaced or self-serving

Oni (2012) investigates the lexical choices of leadership ideology in selected speeches of Olusegun Obasanjo. She selects her data from speeches produced by Obasanjo when he is both Military Head of State and executive president. Her emphasis is on lexical indices and how they reflect the leadership ideology of Obasanjo. Akinmameji (2018) examines the dimensions of power expressions in the inauguration speeches of Olusegun Obasanjo and Goodluck Ebele Jonathan. She uses van Dijk's socio-cognitive model of critical discourse analysis to argue that the choice of words of these two individuals portrays a lot about their dispositions to power and further lends credence to perceptions about them.

Emeka-Nwobia (2013) carries out a pragmatic analysis of selected speeches of former Nigerian President, Olusegun Obasanjo. She examines the various meanings associated with the language used by the ex-president. She looks at the way contextual factors interact with linguistic resource in the interpretation of speeches and utterances. Deploying Austin's felicity conditions and Fairclough's model of CDA, she concludes that language is an indispensable social phenomenon necessary in demystifying and carrying out political activities.

Similarly, Emeka-Nwobia (2014) carries out a pragmatic analysis of Obasanjo's speech on the imposition of State of Emergency in Plateau State. She applies speech act theory to analyse the way Obasanjo uses the said speech to douse the tension and incessant violence experienced in Plateau State. She adjudges obasanjo speech as felicitous because he adequately deploys declarative illocutionary act to back up his words with action, and concludes that Obasanjo is able to achieve temporary social justice through his speech. Even though these literature focus on the linguistic analysis of one

aspect of Obasanjo's speeches or the other, their focus is different from that of the present study. The most related literature, Emeka-Nwobia (2014) which analyses Obasanjo's declaration of state of emergency in Plateau State, is a purely pragmatic study. The present study is stylistic and the intentions of the two researches are different.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical model for this study is Norman Fairclough's socio-cultural approach to critical discourse analysis. According to Ahmadvand (2009), the socio-cultural approach to CDA is a method for examining social and cultural modifications that are employed in protesting against the power and control of an elite group on other people. Again, it should be noted that the focus of the socio-cultural model is on the relationship between language and society, and power distribution across the various strata of the society. The socio-cultural approach attempts to investigate the distribution of roles amongst the various classes in the society, and seeks to probe the nature of social interactions among these various groups or societies. This is why Fairclough (1995) argues that language shapes people's social identities and interactions, while knowledge systems and beliefs are also shaped by them. The thrust of this study is to look at the way former Nigeria's president Olusegun Obasanjo uses his 'constitutional' power to impose a state of emergency on the crisis-ridden Plateau State.

The socio-cultural approach admits three stages of analysis. These are: description, interpretation and explanation stages. Description is the stage which is concerned with the formal properties of the text. Fairclough (1995) suggests that at the descriptive stage, the vocabulary, metaphors grammatical structures and modes of a text can be ideologically motivated. Besides the vocabulary and the metaphors, the logical connectors and interactional conventions used in a text can also reveal power relations. The second level of analysis is the interpretation stage. This has to do with relating the result of the linguistic practices, the socio-cultural practices and the social practices that inform the production of the text. This stage is also concerned with the relationship between text and interaction. The relationship between text and social structures is an indirect but mediated one. These discourse processes and their dependence on background assumptions are the concern of the interpretation stage (Fairclough, 1989, p.117).

At the third level of analysis, which is referred to as the explanation stage, the focus of analysis is on the relationship of discourses to processes of struggle and power relations. This stage deals with the relationship between interaction and social context as well as the social determination of the processes of production and interpretation and their social effects (Fairclough 1989, p.117). The three analytical frameworks of CDA show

how text producers and interpreters draw upon the socially available resources that constitute the order of discourse.

The accompanying model, SFG, is often regarded as a grammar of language system. Its approach to linguistic study is an improvement on previous theories because it takes language away from the abstract level to the realm where it is applicable to real life situations. de Beaugrande (1998, p.12) notes that "SFG moves further towards text and discourse more than any form of theory of grammar". Corroborating this, Clarence-Fincham (2001) and Jennings (2009) argue that this approach is useful in text production, because it foregrounds specific linguistic choices and treats structure as derivable from the choices made via realization rules. They posit that SFG is a conceptual framework which facilitates the understanding of the production and interpretation of text, and helps to capture the elusive relationship between language and social structure because language is systematically related to both its social environment and functional organization. The intention of this study is to provide a systematic explanation of the linguistic elements that constitute the data for analysis using SFG, while such linguistic elements are connected to ideological permutations using CDA.

Research Methodology

The speech under consideration was sourced from the online edition of the Vanguard Newspaper. Excerpts for the study were collected from the declaration of the state of emergency speech of Obasanjo in 2004. This speech is one of those where Obasanjo's perceived self-assertion/self-righteousness finds expression; hence, its significance. Extracts from the speech are randomly sampled through a selection of only the features that foreground the ideological intention of the subject. These features include nouns, verbs, adjectives, collocations and assertions. These linguistic features are analysed with a view to explaining their various functions in the text. Norman Fairclough's socio-cultural approach to CDA is adopted as theoretical framework because it explains the relationship between discourse and society.

Data Analysis

The various linguistic excerpts culled from the text are analysed in the ensuing sections. The analysis is presented under three categories: Obasanjo's delegitimation of violence, his castigation of Plateau State governor and leaders, and the legitimisation of his (Obasanjo's) actions.

DELEGITIMISATION OF VIOLENCE

One of the things that Obasanjo does in his declaration of the state of emergency speech in Plateau State is to show utmost disapproval for violence and its perpetrators. He achieves this through the deployment of lexical indices and assertions. The following examples would suffice:

1. It is therefore very painful when that new collective commitment to democracy, peace and security is compromised, contaminated or mediated in any way or form.

In the data above, Obasanjo uses a set of words to express the effect of violence on the people. He speaks of compromise, contamination and mediation. The Webster Online Dictionary defines the noun compromise as a concession to something derogatory or prejudicial. Similarly, the adjective contamination suggests the introduction of unwholesome or undesirable elements into a thing. It also means soiling or corrupting. The adjective mediated means to intrude into something. All these words in their negative connotative forms express the impact of violence on Nigeria's national life. Violence brings about corruption and it brings about intrusion into ideal democratic governance. In the next data, other impacts of corruption are relayed through the use of nouns with strong negative connotations:

2. This has allowed discontent to fester into deep hatred manifesting in bitterness, rage and destruction.

Bitterness refers to the state of being bitter, unpleasant, acrid, a distressing or distasteful state or a situation arising from the state of being aggrieved. The noun rage, in its case, suggests violence or tumult. Destruction, according to the Oxford Dictionary of English, means a state of ruin, annihilation, extermination, devastation and extinction. In this data, Obasanjo graduates from the seemingly mildest impact of violence to its most extreme impact, extinction. This is to show that no level of violence is good and should be tolerated. It is also an attempt by Obasanjo to say that if the slightest act of violence is not contained, it could degenerate into the total annihilation of the people. In the next data, Obasanjo further disapproves of terrorism through the deployment of lexical collocations:

3. It is therefore clearly a great threat to the security and unity of Nigeria

In the above, violence is described as a grave threat. This means that it is extremely dangerous and could produce great harm or danger. Arguably, the word 'threat' shares a strong negative connotation like its companion 'grave' as deployed in this excerpt. A threat is an expression of the intention to cause damage or inflict injury. It means danger, peril or trouble. In essence, Obasanjo claims that violence would do no good to Plateau State and the entire Nigerian nation. Another collocation is used to describe the impact of violence in Plateau State:

4. Since 2001 when I first visited Plateau State as a result of the crisis, the situation has steadily deteriorated politically largely due to the failure of governance

Obasanjo is of the opinion that violence brings about steady deterioration. For him, if the menace is not curbed in time, it would bring about further losses which would be detrimental not only to the affected State but to the entire nation. Apart from lexical indices, a number

of assertions are deployed by Obasanjo to condemn violence. An assertion expresses the truth or falsity of the propositions that are stated in a sentence. The assertions are itemised subsequently:

5a. The situation in Plateau State, to say the least, constitutes a challenge to our democracy,

b. [it] negates the norms of rational human interaction,

c. [it] contradicts the tenets of civil society, and devalues opportunities for peace, stability, coexistence and social justice.

d. It constitutes a grave threat to law and order and a great danger to security in Plateau State and the neighbouring States

e. Violence brings no good to any people.

f. [it] contaminates social relations

g. Schooling for children has been disrupted and interrupted

h. Businesses have lost billions of naira and property worth much more destroyed.

i. It retards development, scares away investors, stultifies creativity

j. Christians and Muslims that used to live together have become arch-enemies

k. Among leaders and ordinary people, the language of hate, distrust, violence, intolerance has become the norm.

Like the other linguistic forms that have already been analysed, negative assertions are deployed by Obasanjo in his projection of violence. There are about eleven (11) assertions elicited from the text which express Obasanjo's reservations about violence. All of these assertions are negative and they appraise the undesirable effects of violence/terrorism on different aspects of Nigeria's national life. In data 5a, Obasanjo describes violence as a 'challenge' to the nation's democracy. This indicates that such a menace would inhibit the smooth operation of good governance and entrenchment of democratic principles. In examples 5b and c, violence is presented as a vice that negates and contradicts the spirit of peaceful co-existence. With a tone of finality in example 5e, Obasanjo argues that violence brings no good to any people. This is to show that violence has no benefit at all and should not be encouraged at any level; communal, national or global. Similarly, in data 5f, Obasanjo assesses the effect on human social relationships and concludes that all it brings is contamination.

In data 5g, Obasanjo measures the impact of violence on education and observes that it disrupts and interrupts schooling for the children, who are supposed to be the future of the nation. The implication is that violence does not merely affect its present victims, it has attendant effects on future generations, a tangible reason why it should be discouraged. In examples 5h and i, Obasanjo notes that the effect of violence on the nation's economy is not often palatable. Violence brings about huge losses to business people. According to Obasanjo, violence 'retards

development, scares away investors, stultifies creativity'. The qualifiers 'retards', 'scares' and 'stultifies' create a horrific impression of violence. As Obasanjo already noted, violence does no good to anyone. It defies religious boundaries. It turns Christians and Muslims to enemies (data 5j). It also sets the government and the governed against each other (data 5l). The import of this is that the effect of violence is usually ingrained and deeply felt in the various aspects of Nigeria's national life.

CASTIGATION OF PLATEAU STATE GOVERNOR AND LEADERS

In this section, focus is on how Obasanjo deploys negative assertions to castigate Plateau State leadership:

6. Opportunities for building networks and webs of dialogue across primordial lines have been recklessly squandered by a weak and incompetent political leadership.

In data 6, Obasanjo describes the political leadership as 'weak' and 'incompetent'. The adjective *weak* suggests deficiency while the adjective *incompetent* means to be inadequate or lacking the needed qualities for effective action. These qualities are debasing and for Obasanjo, the negative leadership attributes contribute to the outbreak of violence in Plateau State. For emphatic reasons, Obasanjo claims again in data 7 that incompetence characterise leadership in Plateau State:

7. The latest evidence of gross dereliction of duty, incompetence and insensitivity to the situation on ground in Plateau as well as disregard and disrespect for constituted authority was, when contrary to my advice ... the Governor of Plateau traveled out without notifying me.

The reason for repeating the word 'incompetence' is to achieve emphasis, to show his utmost conviction about his viewpoint on the governor and his aides. He uses other negative words such as 'insensitivity', 'disregard' and 'disrespect' to qualify Plateau State governor and the members of his team. To be insensitive means not to be responsive to the dictates of a situation or the yearnings of the people. More so, Obasanjo portrays the Plateau State government as one that that respect constituted authorities. A leader who does not respect the law cannot provide good leadership. A man cannot give what he does not have. In the data below, Obasanjo projects the governor's ineptitude by describing him as 'incapable':

8. What has become clear is that the constituted authority in Plateau State is incapable of maintaining law and order.

For Obasanjo, the governor of Plateau State is everything a leader should not be. There is no way one could expect any good from a leader who possesses all the attributes identified by Obasanjo above. In the next set of examples, Obasanjo further shows his disapproval of the

Plateau State leadership through the deployment of lexical collocations:

9. If anything, some of his utterances, his lackadaisical attitude and seeming uneven-handedness over the salient and contending issues present him as not just part of the problem...

10. Cognizant of the proven inability and incompetence of the Governor to maintain security of life and property...

11. The killings, looting, and wanton destruction of property in Kano are the direct result of the mismanaged affairs in Plateau State.

12. What has become clear is that the constituted authority in Plateau State is incapable of maintaining law and order ... or determinedly unwilling to do so.

13. His personal conduct and unguarded utterances have inflamed passions.

Obasanjo x-rays the disposition of the Plateau State governor to governance and argues that his attitude, which he considers 'lackadaisical', spiritless and limp contribute to leadership failure which inadvertently led to the breakdown of law and order in the State. He uses other lexical collocations such as 'seeming uneven-handedness' and proven inability to register his disappointment in the leadership style of the governor. Obasanjo notes that the inability of the said governor is proven, that is, there are records to buttress his disposition. He observes that the outbreak of violence in Plateau is as a result of mismanagement of affair, which further underscores Obasanjo's perception of the governor as inept. Obasanjo deploys other collocations suggesting that the Plateau State governor does not make any effort to resolve the violence rocking his State, and even frustrates the Federal Government's efforts at lending helping hands. The deployment of the collocation 'determinedly unwilling' (data 12) justifies this argument. He complains about the governor's 'personal conduct' and 'unguarded utterances' which further portray him as an incompetent leader. It is no gainsaying that a leader who lacks good character and cannot tame his tongue is not fit to be called so. Obasanjo deploys accurate words to rebuke the Plateau State governor and portray him as the major cause of the crisis in his State. A number of assertions are deployed by Obasanjo to express the effect of Plateau State governor's ineptitude and no commitment to good governance. These include:

14a. Tension and social differences have been exacerbated

b. Political errors have been magnified and politicised

c. Violence has reached unprecedented levels

d. The embers of hate have reached totally unacceptable levels.

Obasanjo notes that the socio-political crisis emanating from Plateau State due to incompetent leadership has heightened tension and social differences. By implication, there is no tolerance and peaceful co-existence among

the various communities in the State. He also speaks of the magnification and politicisation of political errors (data 14b). This also aligns with his earlier argument that violence brings about intolerance. In data 14c and d, Obasanjo describes the import of violence as 'unprecedented', a situation that is totally new strange and unheard of, and 'unacceptable', something that should not be welcome. All these declarative expressions register Obasanjo's disapproval of the Plateau State leadership and suggest the need for them to be removed from office.

LEGITIMISATION OF OBASANJO'S DECLARATION OF STATE OF EMERGENCY

The way Obasanjo delegitimises violence and condemns the poor leadership qualities of the Plateau State government have been explained. In this section, an explanation is offered on how linguistic categories are deployed to legitimise Obasanjo's decision on Plateau State. The following data are available:

15. It has become imperative that the bloodshed in Plateau State ...should and must be stopped.

Obasanjo justifies the declaration of state of emergency in Plateau State by arguing that taking such a decision is an 'imperative', an action that is necessary, something that cannot be avoided, a step that must be taken. Obasanjo seems to say that the only option he is left with to redeem the crisis-torn State is by declaring a state of emergency. He further justifies his action through the deployment of these lexical collocations:

16. Considering my constitutional responsibility as President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria

17. I have painfully come to the point that I have to resort to the last constitutional option available to ensure security of life and property

18. The decision to impose a State of Emergency in Plateau State was based on the collective desire to strengthen our democratic practice.

Obasanjo notes that it is his 'constitutional responsibility' to ensure that there is peace and orderliness in every part of the country, as president, and where there is a breach of peace, it is also his duty to take the necessary measures. He suggests that rather than been seen as autocratic, declaring a state of emergency in Plateau is not out of his jurisdiction. He also justifies the act of declaring a state of emergency by stating that it is the only 'constitutional option' he has. This means that if he fails to do this, the crisis in Plateau would keep worsening and it could even extend beyond the State and escalate to a national crisis. He describes his decision to declare a state of emergency as a 'collective desire'. He uses this collocation to allay people's fear that he has probably metamorphosed into a dictator. He wants to people to have a sense of belonging in that decision

making process, especially since democracy is believed to thrive through the active participation of the masses.

The following assertions are deployed by Obasanjo to assert his authority and justify his actions:

19a. No excuse will be tenable for such breaches.

b. Henceforth, Governors will be held accountable

c. The Federal Government and the neighboring states to Plateau State are incurring huge expenses in managing the socio-political and economic consequences of the near collapse of state authority

d. On Thursday the 13th of May, I took it upon myself to visit the major centres of violence

e. I also took the opportunity to visit displaced persons in Bauchi State.

f. Even in my company, the Governor's car was stoned and he did not escape abuse and insults from his own people.

g. From what I saw and heard, we need to take very serious action to stem the tide of what has now become a near mutual genocide in the affected areas of Plateau State and the stream of displaced persons to the adjoining states.

h. By virtue of Section 305 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999), I hereby declare a State of Emergency in Plateau State.

In data 19a, Obasanjo states without equivocation that he would tolerate no nonsense from under-performing governors. This point is reiterated in data 19b where he claims that governors would be held accountable. Apparently, Obasanjo decided to remove the Plateau State governor from office because he did not perform well and because he could not give a proper account of his stewardship. In example 19c, Obasanjo stresses the need for declaring a state of emergency by pointing out that it has led to unnecessary waste of government resources. He believes that imposing a state of emergency would help preserve government resources, so much that monies that could be used for other developmental efforts would not be spent on crisis management. In data d and e, Obasanjo talks about how he visited the 'centres of violence' as well as 'displaced persons' in the crisis torn Plateau State. This way, he identifies the personal, non radical approach he has taken to assess the situation so as to portray him as a calm, committed and democratic leader who does not take rash decisions. He, however, observed in data 19f and h, his personal visit to Plateau and first hand assessment of the crisis situation left him with no option that to declare a state of emergency. Mentioning the efforts he made before taking a decision is an attempt by Obasanjo to portray himself as a leader who is not brash. In data 19h, while imposing the state of emergency, Obasanjo tries to be as legal and civil as possible. He cited the necessary authority to back up his claim that he is actually carrying out a constitutional duty. He declares: 'by virtue of Section 305 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999, to authenticate his declaration.

CONCLUSION

This study has examined a critical discourse analysis of the state of emergency declaration of Olusegun Obasanjo in Plateau State in 2004. Various linguistic categories such as nouns, verbs, adjectives and assertions used to perform a number of functions in the text. The analysis reveals that Obasanjo carefully uses his linguistic choices to serve three intentions: to delegitimise violence, to rebuke the leadership of Plateau State and to legitimise his (Obasanjo's) actions. Importantly, the dominant ideology in the text is legitimization of the right and the delegitimation of the wrong. Through his lexical choices Obasanjo describes himself as the law keeper and justifies his action, whereas he delegitimises violence as well as condemn, in clear terms, Plateau State governor and his leadership train. The study shows that Olusegun Obasanjo could use his linguistic choices to justify his actions, regardless of public perceptions.

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