LANGUAGE AND POLITICAL IDEOLOGY IN THE NIGERIAN MILITARY COUP SPEECHES: A CASE STUDY OF GENERAL AGUIYI IRONSI'S, GENERAL YAKUBU GOWON'S AND GENERAL MURTALA MUHAMMED'S

Moses Omoniyi Ayeomoni
Obafemi Awolowo University
Osun State, Nigeria
ayestyle@yahoo.com

Abstract

The study investigated language functions in the maiden coup speeches of General Thomas Aguiyi Ironsi, General Yakubu Gowon and General Murtala Muhammed. The data were drawn from the coup political speeches of the three military political rules above. The speeches were analysed following Gutwinski's model of analysis of lexical connective items and Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar. In order to ensure accuracy and objectivity, there were statistical calculations expressed in Relative Frequency Percentages.

Based on item-by-item analysis in the speeches, the content lexical items in the speeches were extracted and classified into the sense relations of Collocation, Hyponymy, Antonymy, Synonymy and Repetition. Thereafter, the Overall Relative Frequency Percentages ORFPS (Overall Relative Frequency Percentages) of all the lexical items in the speeches were obtained. Equally, the Relative Frequency Percentages RFPS (Relative Frequency Percentages) of each of the meaning relations were calculated.

It was discovered from the study that the three military political leaders employed all the lexical relations, of synonym, hyponym repetition and collocation to enhance and achieve their political ideological orientations, while collocation was used to enhance directness, military authority and orientation. The study generally shows interconnecting relationships of lexemes and political ideology in military coup political discourse.

(Key Words: Language Functions, General Thomas Aguiyi Ironsi, General Yakubu Gowon and General Murtala Muhammed).

INTRODUCTION

Politics has a wide range of definitions depending on who is defining it and the angle at which it is viewed. Azikwe (1974:85), for instance, views it as "the growth of political consciousness". Mazrui (1975:91) sees it as "an activity, at the centre of which, is a distinct class of people called 'politicians'". To him, politicians are not mere practitioners of the art of politics, but its creators. Larswell (1965:8), on the other hand, describes it as the 'science of power'; in which case, politics is seen as power. Harris (1979:56) corroborates this claim when he says that in our age there is no need of keeping out of politics as all issues are political issues saying that politics is concerned with power: the power to make decisions, control resources, other people's behaviour and even their values. It is in this sense that politics is viewed and played in Nigeria.

So, politics is inevitably connected to power. The acquisition of power and the enforcement of political beliefs can be achieved through physical coercion and so on. Under dictatorial regimes like military rule, those in power often control people by using force. However, the phenomenon is generally viewed as a process by which groups make decisions. Politics is observed in all human group interactions, including corporate, academic and religious institutions.

Language and Politics

Language and politics are interconnected, as the quest for power is characterised by ingenious use of language. Besides, those that were involved in politics at different levels right from classical times had always resorted to dexterous use of language to achieve their aims. Since then, the language of politics has not ceased to be rhetorical. This ingenious use of language establishes a strong connection between politics and language and this interplay has made quite a large number of scholars interested in the study of politics and language. Mazrui (1975:48) views language as the vehicular expression of politics, and a major tool in man's political behaviour. He states that:

> "*Language is the most important point of entry into the habits of thought of a people. It embodies within itself cumulative association derived from the total experience of its people*".

People's perception of certain issues or concepts can be influenced by language. One of the goals of politicians is to persuade the audience of the validity of the politician's basic claims. This is possible through language, and the same language can be used to construct an ideology, which will affect and condition the way people think. Language can also be used to control the way people react.

In another context, Harris (1979) agrees with the submission that language and politics are inseparable, claiming that through the invaluable role of language in politicking, many states succeed in communicating their intentions such as transmitting encouragement, warning, approval or displeasure when required and negotiating understanding. He strongly believes that language is the means by which political ideas are transmitted to the community; hence, he finally submits that the strength of language in politicking is enormous and those who control the public media have enormous power. *Equally, language is the tool and means by which one's candid thoughts and feelings on issues are expressed.*

In a similar tone, Ranney (1983:126) submits that:

... communication plays a significant role in politics and in the process of forming political opinion, for it is the basic medium through which political groups are formed and seek to influence public policy.

The same Ranney (1983:130), while reviewing the issue of communication or language in relation to politics, opines that:

Four hostile newspapers were the equivalent of 10,000 enemy troops on the field of battle, underlining the extent to which political language is itself a weapon! Every political authority will lead to justify itself by an appeal to language in its symbolic and realistic sense.

So, it is obvious from the submissions above that language and politics are closely connected as language *either overtly or covertly expressed*, is seen as the vehicular expression of politics.

HISTORICAL SURVEY OF MILITARY RULE IN NIGERIA

The politics of the Federation of Nigeria is of several episodes, dating back to Lord Frederick Lugard's administration. For years, after the 1959 elections, the problems facing the country were numerous and disturbing. The politicians became very powerful; foreign

investors and capital lenders exercised their influence on the country through their economic projects that were designed for the benefit and interest of the politicians. As a result, there was general disenchantment and tension in the country from the Independence Day, October 1, 1960 to May 29, 1999, Nigeria had witnessed many revolutions, counter-revolutions and developments.

Between 1966 and 1993, Nigeria was ruled successively by the military with a brief period of civilian interregnum between 1979 and 1983. The usual excuse for taking over government was to sanitise the already bastardised political terrain and prepare the ground for democratic governance. In the process, the military usurped political power, which they held on to, tenaciously, for over 13 years.

SOCIO-POLITICAL BACKGROUND OF THE SPEECH

Aguiyi-Ironsi's government was instituted following the political crisis that engulfed the country – Nigeria in the early 60's, and which escalated and spread to some parts of the country with increasing loss of faith in political parties and the political leadership. This crisis of confidence reached a head during the election in the Western Region in October 1965 (Ojiako 1986:18). There were charges by the opposition of rigging of the election and general abuse of power by the regional government in the conduct of the elections. As a result, arson, murder and looting became widespread in Western Nigeria since October. The situation deteriorated that certain army officers attempted to effect a change in the nation's political leadership.

The Council of Ministers of the National Government met and appraised the problems confronting the Government. They appreciated the immediate need to control the serious situation, which threatened the Republic. On Sunday, January 16, the Council of Ministers, unanimously decided to hand over voluntarily, the administration of the country with immediate effect to the Nigerian Army. This was formally done on the same day by the Acting President of the Republic, Dr Nwafor Orizu. The Government of the Republic of Nigeria was then handed over to Major General Johnson Thomas Umunakwe Aguiyi-Ironsi. This speech thus marks the beginning of his administration and more importantly, the beginning of the military administration in Nigeria.

INTENTIONS/SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

It is expected that this study will immensely contribute to the understanding of the lexical usage of milito-political speeches and provide a clear basis for understanding the language of military politics in Nigeria and the world at large. It is also expected that it will throw further light on the interconnecting relationship between words and political ideologies.

THEORETICAL LINGUISTIC FRAMEWORKS

ON LEXIS AS A LEVEL OF LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS

The lexical level of analysis has been quite intricate, because lexical items, which are the basic unit in the structure of lexis are large in number. By lexical items, we sometimes mean only words, which are members of the open classes, while those that are members of the closed classes are referred to as grammatical items, (Aremo, 2004:50-58). Lexis as a concept is the main focus in many branches of linguistics like General Linguistics, Computational Linguistics, Literary Stylistics and so on, see Lyons (1977), Ferris (1993), Cruse (1986), Sinclair (1987), Carter and Burton (1982).

Besides, the inherent meaning of a sentence is carried by both the lexical items; that is, vocabulary words, and by the items that indicate arrangements that are normally considered part of the grammatical system of a language, Cruse (1990). It is on this premise that a distinction is made between lexical and grammatical items, which are referred to as an open set of items and a closed set of items respectively. An open set of items is a set with unrestricted membership, examples of which include classes of nouns, verbs, adjective and adverbs. On the other hand, the closed set has just few members that change so slowly for most purposes, hence it is regarded as fixed set. Examples of this include classes of pronouns, conjunctions, preposition and articles.

The distinction made between lexical and grammatical items is particularly emphasized in systemic Grammar. The focus on lexical studies in Systemic Grammar goes back to Firth's interest in collocational relations in texts, when he became interested in the distribution of words in a text, as some words occur more predictably together than

others. Halliday (1966:9). One notable scholar in the neo-Firthian school is Halliday, who has developed the Systemic Functional Linguistics Model. Halliday argues that lexical statements could operate independently of grammatical restrictions. He gives as examples items like *Strong*, *Strongly*, *Strength* and *Strengthen* that are considered as different words and assigned different classes. But in lexical matters, they are all regarded as one item. In her own submission, Berry (1977) stresses that a lexical item is identified by its collocates, that is, a lexical item is unique and different from all other lexical items because of the uniqueness of the list of lexical items with which it can be collocated. This means that no two lexical items will have the same list of possible collocates, though their lists may have some items in common.

METHODOLOGY

In this study, a tie is taken as any lexical feature, which functions as a cohesive relation between two elements with one of them presupposing the other. Each text is analysed for immediate tie relation which is got from two adjacent sentences containing a pair of items related to one another in meaning, and which connects the sentences involved.

Then to identify the ties between adjacent sentences (immediate ties), the sentences from the selected documents are written out and numbered serially. Every sentence in each data is examined for a tie with the preceding one, and the figure indicating the number of ties that the sentence has with the preceding one is indicated. The ties are then classified into different lexical relationships (e.g. repetition, synonymy, hyponymy, antonym and collocation). The study also involves the remote ties, which are ties that connect two non-adjacent sentences that have no immediate.

Furthermore, the term lexical item, is used in this study to refer to members of the major word-classes (noun, verbs, etc.) which collocates with other items. The item does not cover such high-frequency items from the major word-classes like, **come**, **put** etc. or items from the minor word-classes (e.g. pronouns, prepositions and auxiliaries). In this case, homonymy such as 'bark' (of a dog) and 'bark' (of a tree) is excluded from the list as these are not connected in meaning and cannot indicate any connection between the different sentences in which they are used.

Each text was analyzed for the immediate ties and also for the remote ties classified into the different types of lexical relationships (e.g. repetition, synonymy, etc.) they represent. The occurrences of these different kinds of lexical relationships were added up in each speech and their relative frequencies obtained and discussed .At the end of the analyses, a table was prepared showing the total number of all the ties used (both immediate and remote), the different kinds of devices they represented and the relative frequencies of the devices. They were summarized in Relative Frequency Percentages and the Overall Relative Frequency Percentage. The RFP of a lexical device shows the percentage of all the occurrences of lexical devices represented by all the occurrences of the particular lexical device in the texts.

This is indicated with the formula:

Total No. of Occurrences of a Lexical Device   x   <u>100</u>

Sub-total No. of Occurrence of all the Lexical Devices   1

On the other hand, the ORFP of a device is the percentage of the grand total for the occurrences of all the devices represented by all occurrences of the particular device in the texts (all the speeches).

This was calculated with the formula:

Total No. of all occurrences of the devices   x   <u>100</u>

Grand-total No. of all occurrences in the text.   1

ANALYZING THE TEXT FOR IMMEDIATE LEXICAL TIES

As a result of limited space for this study, the analysis of the first five sentences was presented here. However, the tables showing the analysis of the entire text were presented after the sentences.

Sentence 1:   "*The government of the Federation of Nigeria having ceased to function, <u>t</u>he Nigerian Armed Forces have been invited to form an Interim Military Government for the*

purposes of maintaining law and order and of maintaining
essential services".

Sentence 2:   *"This invitation has been accepted, and I, General J.T.U*
Aguiyi-Ironsi, the General Officer Commanding the
Nigerian Army have been formally invested with authority
as Head of the Federation military Government, and
Supreme Commander of the Nigerian Armed Forces".

The connection between these two initial sentences of this speech was got through four cohesive ties of repetition and one synonym means of the lexical items 'invited' in sentence 1, which is in predicator form, but repeated in nominal form in sentence 2 as 'invitation'. Then the compound lexical item, "Nigerian Armed Forces" in sentence 1, is repeated in sentence 2 twice as 'Nigerian Army' and 'Nigerian Armed Forces' and the lexical item, "Military Government" is also repeated in sentence 2. There is one case of synonymy between sentences 1 and 2 derived from the use of the item "Interim Military Government" in 1, which is related synonymously with the item "Federation Military Government" in 2.

Sentence 3: The National Military Government hereby decrees:

(a)   *"the suspension of the provisions of the constitution of the*
Federation, relating to the office of President, the
establishment of Parliament and of the office or Prime
Minister".

(b)   *"the suspension of the provisions of the constitutions of the*
Regions relating to the establishment of the offices of regional
governors, Regional Premiers, and Executive Councils, and
Regional Legislature".

In this sentence 3, there are two distinct phrases, labelled (a) and (b), the clauses begin with "the Federation Military Government", which occurs twice, this item is also found in sentence 2. The lexical item '*decree*' collocates with the item Military Government in sentence 2. Also, the item "Constitution of the Federation" clause (a) of

sentence 3 is a synonym of the item 'authority'. This means there are two ties of repetition, one collocation and one synonym linking sentence 3 with 2.

Sentence 4: The National Military Government further decrees:

(a)   *"That there shall be appointed a Military Governor in each Region of the Federation, who shall be directly responsible to the Federal Military Government for the good government of the region".*

(b)   *"The appointment as Adviser to the Military Governor of the region, of the last person to hold the office of Governor of the Region under the suspended provisions of the constitution".*

There are 12 items connecting sentences 4 with 3, and they are all repetitions. This means that the connection between sentences 4 and 3 relies on repetition, the item "Federation military government" in 3, occurs twice in sentence 4, while the item "decree" also occurs twice. Equally, the item 'governor' in 3 is repeated thrice as 'Military Governor in 4, while the lexical item "Region" is equally repeated three times. Also, the item "federation" and the item "suspended provisions of the constitution" are repeated once in each case in sentence 4.

Sentence 5:   The Federation Military Government further decrees;

(a)   *"that the Chief justice and all other holders of judicial appointments within the federation shall continue in their appointments, and that the judiciary generally shall continue to function under their existing statues".*

(b)   *"that all holders of appointments in the Civil Service of the Federation and of the Regions shall continue to hold their appointments and to carry out their duties in the normal way; and that similarly the Nigeria Police Force and the Nigeria Special Constabulary shall continue to exercise their functions in the normal way".*

(c)   *"that the Local Government Police forces and native Authority*

Police Forces shall be placed under the overall Command of

the inspector General".

Between sentences 4 and 5, there are 8 instances of lexical ties, which are cases of repetition. They are as follows: the item, "National Military Government" that occurs in 4 is repeated once in 5, in the same note, the item, "further decrees" that we have in 4, is also repeated once in 5. Also, the lexical item 'appointments' in sentence 4, occurs four times in sentence 5, while the item "Federation" in 4, features twice in 5.

SUMMARY OF THE IMMEDIATE LEXCIAL TIES IN AGUIYI-IRONSI'S MAIDEN TEXT

Table 1.

	Repetition	Collocation	Synonymy	Hyponymy	Antonymy
1					
2	XXXX		X		
3	XX	X	X		
4	XXXXXXXXXXXX				
5	XXXXXXXX				
6	XXXXXXX		X		
7	XXX		X		X
8	XX		X		
	38	1	5	0	1
	45				

Table 3. RFP

	Repetition	Collocation	Synonym	Antonym	Hyponym	Total

Immediate Lexical Ties.	38	1	5	0	1	45
RFP	84.44%	2.22%	11.11%	0	2.22%	100%
Remote Lexical Ties.	9	7	8	0	1	25
Total RFP	47	8	13	0	2	70

Table 4. ORFP

	Repetition	Collocation	Synonym	Antonym	Hyponym
Total	47	8	13	0	2
Percentage	67.14%	11.43%	18.57%	0	2.86%
Immediate Ties	64.29%	Remote Ties	35.71%		

YAKUBU GOWON'S MAIDEN SPEECH

(THE SECOND MILITARY GOVERNMENT (COUP NO.2))

In this segment, we present the analysis of the data drawn from the maiden broadcast of Lt.Col Yakubu Gowon presented on 1st August, 1966. The same procedure adopted for the analyses of texts I was followed. Tables showing the summary of the immediate ties and of the remote ties were presented at the end of the segment.

4.3.1 Socio-Political background of the Second Military Government

The January 1967 coup, which ushered in this second Military Government, was given different interpretations. <u>On the other hand,</u> the coup was interpreted as a nationalist effort on the part of the nationalist army to end the instability of the country. On the other hand, the British Broadcasting Corporation interpreted the coup in ethnic terms. So, it did not see the coup as a bid for clean government rather as an Ibo power play to wipe off the Northern grip on the control of the nation (Ojiako, 1986:33).

The announcement made towards instituonalisation of unitary government was misinterpreted. As a result, there was violent protest throughout the nooks and crannies of the northern part of the country. Many Ibos were killed in the process and their valuable properties were destroyed. This was in the fourth month of General Aguiyi – Ironsi's rein. This hostility continued unabated. On July 28, 1966, General Aguiyi - Ironsi was at Ibadan to open the conference of the natural rulers. During this period, violent protest and riot broke out in Ibadan, Abeokuta and Ikeja units of the Nigerian Army. By 5.00 a.m. the following day, July 29th 1966, the dissident solders entered the Government Lodge and kidnapped General Ironsi and Lt.-Col. Fajuyi, and there was no confirmation of their whereabouts till Lt.Col Gowon assumed power on 1st August, 1966.

So, on assuming duty as the second Nigerian military head of State on August 1st 1966, he presented this speech to the nation – Nigeria.

43.2 Analysis of the Speech for Immediate Lexical Ties

As a result of space, we would limit the analysis of this text to the first five sentences, but the detailed result of the analysis will be given on the table provided. The analysis is as follows:

1. My fellow countrymen, the year 1966 has certainly been a fateful year for our beloved country, Nigeria. I have been brought to the position toady of having to shoulder the responsibilities of this country, with the consent of the majority of the Armed Forces and members of the Supreme Military Council, as a result of the unfortunate incident that occurred in the early morning of July 29, 1966.

2. However, before I dwell on the *sad issue* of July 29, *1966*, I would like to recall to you the *sad* and *unfortunate incident* of January 15, *1966*, which bears relevance.

There are five ties connecting these sentences 1 and 2. Out of these connective ties, there are three cases of repetition and two instances of synonymy. The repetitions involve the item – 'the year 1966' which occurs twice in sentence 1 and repeated twice in sentence 2. Then there is also the direct repetition of the nominal item – 'unfortunate incident' in 2, which features once in 1. In addition, there are two instances of synonymy involving the item 'sad', which occurs twice in 2 and functions semantically as a synonymy to the item 'fateful' in 1.

3. According to certain well knowing facts, which have so far not

been disclosed to the *nation* and the world, the *country* was plunged

into a *national* disaster by the grave and *unfortunate* action taken by

a section of the *Army* against the *republic*.

The two lexical ties between sentences 2and 3 are the repetitions of the nominal item – 'unfortunate incident' in 3, and repeated as -; unfortunate action' in 3. There is also a case of the item – 'national disaster' in 3 that functions as a synonymy of 'sad and unfortunate incident' in 2.
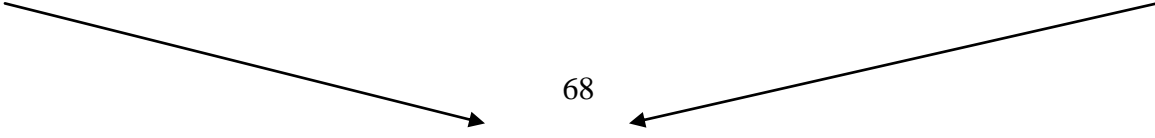
4. By this I men that a group of *officers* in conjunction with certain *civilians*, decided to overthrow the legal government of the day, but their efforts were thwarted by the incruptable discipline and loyalty of the great majority of the *Army* and the other members of the *Armed* Forces and the *Police*.

This sentence 4 is connected to 3, through four connective ties of two repetitions, one collocation, one antonymy. For instance, the item – 'Army' in 3, was repeated twice: in 4, in the form of 'Army' and 'Armed Forces', while the item - 'Army' in 3, collocates with the item – "Officers" in 4, and 'civilians runs antonymously with the item – 'Army'.

5. The *Army* was called upon to take up, the reins of the *government* until such a time that *law and order* has been restored.

Table 5: **Summary of Immediate Lexical Ties in Text III**

S/N	Repetition	Collocation	Synonymy	Hyponymy	Antonymy
1					
2	XXX		XX		
3	X		X		
4	XX	X			X
5	XX				
6	XX				
7				X	
8			X		
9			X		
10			X		
11			XX		
12			X		X
13	XX		XX		
14	X		X		
15	X				
16					X
17			X		
18					X
19					X
20		X	X		
21				X	
22	XX				
23			X		
24	X		XX		X
25			X		
26			X		

27			XX		
28			X		
29					X
30					XX
31					
32			XX		
33			X		
34					X
35		X			X
36		X	X		
37			X		
38			X		X
39			X		
40		X			
41		X	X		
42			X		
43					
	17	6	31	2	12

68

EXPLANATION OF THE SUMMARY TABLE

In the above table, the five X's against sentence 2 shows that it has three ties of repetition and two ties of synonymy with the immediately preceding sentence (Sentence 1). Also, there are two X's against sentence 3, showing that there are two ties connecting sentence 3 to sentence two, of which one is an instance of repetition and the other an instance of synonymy. The figures at the end of the device columns represent the total instances of ties used in the speech. So, there are 17 instances of repetition, 6 of collocation, 31 of synonymy, 2 of hyponymy and 12 of antonymy. Thus, there are altogether 68 connective ties in the entire text.

Summary of Immediate Lexical Ties in Text IV

S/N	Repetition	Collocation	Synonymy	Hyponymy	Antonymy
1					
2	X		X		
3			X		
4			X		
5			X		
6			X		
7					X
8	X				
9					X
10	X				
11	X				
12			X		
13			X		X
14			X		
15	X			X	
16	X			X	
17			X		
18			X		
19			X		
20				X	
21			X		
22			X		
23	X				
24			X		
25	X				
26	XXX		X	X	
27	X				
28	XXX				

29	X				
30	X			X	
31				X	
32	X			X	
33			X		
34					
35			X		
36	X				
37		X			X
38	X				X
39	X				
40	X		X		
41	X		X		
42			X		
			X		
	23	01	21	07	05
			57		

4.4.3   Explanation of the Summary Table of the Immediate Ties of Text IV

In the table above, the three "X's" beside sentence 28, indicates three ties of repetition. Also, the five "X'S" against sentence 26 shows that there are three ties of repetition, one synonymy and one hyponymy linking sentence 26 with sentence 25.

The figure at the end of each of the device columns represents the total instances of each of the ties that feature in the entire speech. For instance, the summation shows that:

Repetition   -   23 which gives 40.4%

Collocation   -   01 which gives 1.75%

Synonym   -   21 which gives 36.8%

Hyponym   -   07 which gives 12.3%

Antonym   -   05 which gives 8.7%

In all, we have 57 lexical ties with the tie of repetition having the highest figure and collocation with the lowest figure.

It will be recalled that in this case, it is the sentences that have been written and numbered serially during the analysis for immediate ties that were examined here for the remote ties. Equally, it should be noted that only the first ten sentences of the speech that were presented here for no other reason than limited space. A table showing the overall ties got from the analysis was however given at the end of the analysis.

A table below indicating the types and locations of the remote ties between sentences in this Text III: General Yakubu Gowon's Maiden Speech.

General Gowon's Maiden Speech's Table

S/N	No of Ties	Connective Item	Type	Presupposed items and Sentence Number
3	4	Nation	S	Country – Nigeria (1)
		Country	R	Country (1)
		Army	H	Armed Forces (1)
		the republic	S	Country – Nigeria (1)
4	2	Civilians	A	Armed Forces (1)
		Armed Forces	R	Armed Forces (1)
5	2	Army	H	Armed Forces (1)
		Army	R	Army (3)

6		Country	R	Country (1) (3)
		Army Officer	R	Army (3)
		Nation	S	Country (3)
		Elimination of political leaders and high rank Army officers	S	National disaster (3)
			S	Grave and unfortunate action (3)
		Civilians	A	Army officers (4)
	7	Government	R	Government (4)
7	4	Uprising	S	Unfortunate incident (1) (2)
		Lost his life	S	Sad issue (2)
		Lost his life	S	Unfortunate incident (2)
		Uprising	S	National disaster (3)
8		Army	H	Armed Forces (1)(3)
		Armed Forces	C	Officers (4)
			H	Army (5)
		A civil war	S	Sad and unfortunate incident (2)
	9		S	National disaster (3)
			S	Grave and unfortunate action (3)
		The Police	C	Officers (4)
			A	Civilians (4)
		Discipline and loyalty	R	Discipline and loyalty (4)
9	4	Shouldered	R	Shouldered (1)
		Government	R	Government (4) (6)
		Government Reconstruction	A	Uprising (7)

10		Country – Nigeria	R	Country (1)
		Unpleasant experience	S	Bad issue (2)
	14		S	National disaster (3)
			S	Sand and unfortunate incident (2)
			S	Uprising (7)
		The country	R	Country (3)
			S	Nation (3)
		Military regime	A	Civilians (4)
		Agitate against	A	Legal Government (4)
			S	Thwarted (4)
			S	Uprising (7)
		Support	S	Loyalty (4)
		Countrywide support	A	Uprising (7)

THE COUP SPEECH OF MURTALA MUHAMMED (THIRD MILITARYGOVERNMENT IN NIGERIA)
The Speech is titled:

Text of First Broadcast to the Nation by His Excellency Brigadier Murtala Mohammed, Head of the Federal Military Government, Commander – in – Chief of the Armed Forces on Wednesday, July 30, 1975.

4.5.1   Introduction

In this section, an analysis of the data drawn from the maiden speech of Brigadier General Murtala Muhammed, delivered to the nation on assuming duty as Head – of – State, on July 28th 1975 was presented. In carrying out the analysis, we applied the same linguistic framework and procedure adopted in analysing texts I – IV. Based on this, readers are referred to chapter III where a detailed discussion was given on these linguistic procedures.

4.5.2   Socio-Political Background of the Speech.

This speech marked the beginning of the third Military rule in the political history of Nigeria. The regime was headed by Brigadier General Murtala Muhammed, ably assisted by Brigadier-General Olusegun Obasanjo. It was instituted following the inadequacies of the

General Gowon's administration as contained in this speech. Among the notable allegations levied against him was his refusal to honour the promise and agreement reached with the people on assuming office by not relinquishing power to a democratically elected people in 1976. Ojiako (1986:77) says:

> The army could not honour its pledge to return the nation to barracks in 1976 without plunging the nation into chaos.

In addition, General Gowon was accused of indecision, indiscipline and neglect to the extent that the generality of the populace became disillusioned and disappointed. The trend was so grievous that a change in the country's leadership became inevitable. This then prompted Brigadier Murtala Muhammed to stage a coup against Gowon's administration on July 28, 1975. This coup then necessitated this speech.

4.5.3 Analysis of the Text

Equally, for the reason given above, the analysis here is also restricted to the first five sentences as follows:

The analytical framework and procedures are as given in Chapter III under Methodology. The analysis follows the same procedures with texts (I – IV).

> 1 *Events of the past few years* have indicated that despite our great human and material resources, the Government has not been able to fulfil the legitimate expectations of our people. Nigeria has been left to drift.
>
> 2 This situation, if not arrested, would inevitably have resulted in chaos and even bloodshed.

These initial sentences of this speech are connected through the tie of hyponymy as the lexical item – 'situation' in 2, is used functionally here as superordinate item to the nominal item – 'Events of the past few years'.

> 3. In the endeavour to build a strong, united and virile nation, Nigerians have shed much blood the thought of further bloodshed, for whatever reasons, must, I am sure, be revolting to our people.

This sentence 3 is linked with sentence 2 through three ties, which are two repetitions and one synonymy. For the repetition, the item – 'bloodshed' and the item –

'shed much blood' in 3, are repetitions of the item – bloodshed' in 2. In addition, the item – 'revolting' in 3, is a synonymy of the item – 'chaos' in 2.

> 4   The Armed Forces, having examined the situation, came to the conclusion that certain changes were inevitable.

The only tie between sentences 3 and 4 is the tie of hyponymy. This is realised from the use of the item – "the thought of further bloodshed" in 3, as the hyponymy of the item – 'situation' in 4.

> 5.   After the civil war, the affairs of state, hitherto a collective responsibility became *characterised by lack of consultation, indecision, indiscipline and even neglect*.

There is just only a tie between sentences 4 and 5. And this is a tie of synonymy realised from the item – 'became' in 5, being used as a synonymy of the item – "changes" in 5.

Table 9: Summary of Immediate Lexical Ties in Text V

S/N	Repetition	Collocation	Synonymy	Hyponymy	Antonymy
1					
2				X	
3	XX		X		
4				X	
5			X		
6				X	
7			X		
8			X		
9	X				
10	XX		X		

11			XXXX		
12			X		
13	X				X
14	XX		XXXX		
15	X		X		
16					X
17	XX				
18	X				
19			X		
20	X				
21	XX				
22	X				
23					X
24	X				
25	X		X		
26					X
27	XXXX				
28				X	
29	X		X		
30			X		
31			X		
32			X		
33			X		

34	XX				
35			X		
36			X		
37			X		
38			X		
39					X
40	X		XX		
41	X				
42	X				
43					
	28	0	28	4	5
TOTAL 65					

4.5.4 Explanation of the Summary Table of the Immediate Ties Above

The three 'X's against sentence 3, show that there are two ties of repetition and one tie of synonymy connecting sentence 3 with 2. Beside sentence 40, we have one 'X' in the repetition column and two 'X's in the column labelled synonymy, this indicates that there are three ties linking sentence 40 with 39, of which one is repetition and two synonymys.

The figure at the end of each of the devices stands for the total number of each ties that feature in the entire speech, of which breakdown is this:

Repetition   =   28 which gives 43.1%

Collocation   =   0 which gives 0%

Synonymy   =   28 which gives 43.1%

Hyponymy   =   4 which gives 6.2%

Antonymy   =   5 which gives 7.%

This breakdown gives a total of 65 Immediate Lexical Ties in the entire text.

FINDINGS

We have attempted to find out, in this study, the inherent lexical features in the coup speeches of General Aguiyi Ironsi, General Yakubu Gowon and General Murtala Muhammed. We also attempted to find out the contextual functions of these lexical features in the speeches. In the process, we identified the various lexical devices used in the texts and grouped them into five classes: repetition, synonymy, hyponymy, collocation and antonymy. We also calculated their RFP and ORFP. The analysis showed that there was heavy reliance on the lexical device of synonym and repetition in the speeches. This indicates that all the sentences in the speech were more connected together through these lexical device. The reason for this might not be far from the basic fact that the military political rulers in Nigeria preferred to run their governments with people from their immediate constituency (the military) irrespective of their political, religious and social inclinations and backgrounds. This made it a pure military rulership. It was also revealed in the various tables provided that the device of repetition was most frequently used in Ironsi's for instance, it had the highest ORFP of 67.14% in Aguiyi Ironsi's speech. This was in tune with military decisive ideology of clarity and precision and to avoid ambiguity, which repetition enhances. Therefore, the lexical device of repetition, which offers opportunity for the use of the right and appropriate register or lexemes of military political orientation was widely explored in the speeches for passing unmistaken instructions, coersiveness to the governed.

In addition, this device: repetition in the speeches which had the highest frequency of occurrence in Aguiyi's and Murtala's enhanced compactness cohesion - espirit de corps which reflected the political ideology of the speaker. It was meant to enhance a political ideology of avoidance of ambiguity and impression of instruction and address.

It was also revealed that other lexical devices were equally found in the speeches. For instance, devices like hyponym, collocation and synonym had some relatively high ORFPS. This enabled the speeches to be fully cohesive and coherent just like the coherency and compactness of the military institution. The devices in order of their overall relative frequency percentages are as follows in Aguiyi Ironsi's speech:

Repetition (ORFP)   = 67.14%

Synonymy (ORFP)   =   18.57%

Collocation   (ORFP) =   11.43%

Hyponymy (ORFP)   =   2.86%

Antonymy (ORFP)   =   0%

While in General Gowon's speech, the breakdown is as follows:

Repetition (ORFP)   = 56 which gives 7.95%

Collocation   (ORFP) =   64 which give 9.09%

Antonymy (ORFP)   =   161 which give 22.87%

Hyponymy (ORFP)   =   129 which give 18.32%

Synonymy (ORFP)   =   294 which give 41.76%

That of General Murtala Muhammed is as follows:

Repetition   =   28 which gives 43.1%

Collocation   =   0 which gives 0%

Synonymy   =   28 which gives 43.1%

Hyponymy   =   4 which gives 6.2%

Antonymy   =   5 which gives 7.%

As reflected in the tables above, synonym was next to repetition in the speech of Aguiyi's, while it enjoyed the highest in Gowon's and Murtala's speeches. This is a clear manifestation of the fact that within the speeches, this device of synonym functioned like repetition as an instrument of emphasis and reiteration; *it was thus a linguistic resource used by the military rulers to propagate their programmes, hence,* this device in these speeches accounted for its relatively high ORFP.

It should be noted as well that other lexical devices, which had low ORFP also featured for some other reasons in these speeches. In this regard, a mention should be made of hyponymy. This device was rated low as it had low frequency percentage in the tables especially in Aguiyi's. Its low ORFP could be due to the peculiar style of military

administration. The military did not believe in operating at all the levels of government. They concentrated on few selected issues at the state and federal levels, leaving the civilians to manage the grassroot and other minor political affairs; and the three military leaders kept to these policies and ideologies. This, perhaps, informed the reason for the scanty use of the device of hyponym that deals with the specific. Besides, the military rulers, including General Aguiyi Ironsi, did not believe in putting the military in all political offices even while in power. This was, perhaps, meant to enable them have a firm and coercive grip on the specific issues at the centre. This again, is in tune with the coercive nature of the military rulers in Nigeria.

In the same vein, the military administrators, as revealed in the study, did not so much admire the use of the device of antonym. For instance, it has the least ORFP in the entire speeches. In Murtala's for instance, it has zero percentage. This device of antonym often considered to make them clumsy and indefinite to understand. Because antonym by its nature, as a lexical device, could lead to confusion and inhibition of information if not carefully handled. The military rulers by their political ideological orientation abhorred clumsiness and deception, instead they preferred to operate simple, straightforward and less bureaucratic government, hence, this device enjoyed zero ORFP, that is, it was totally avoided by General Murtala. On the other hand, collocation, though reflected in the speeches, it only provided us with lexical items of milito-political collocations such as "Military Government Authority" thus reflecting the milito-political ideology of the rulers as it helped to further project the coerciveness and forcefulness of the military rulers.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, the following are the conclusions: firstly, the military political rulers in Nigeria, relied more on the use of lexical devices of repetition and synonym in their political speeches *to express their thoughts, opinions, ideologies and their political programmes* . This is because they know the strength, potency and efficacy of the use of these linguistic devices in political discourse. Besides, they know that constant repetition and reiteration of words and certain expressions is a means of forcing their programmes on the governed, as the military administration is rooted in forcefulness and coercion. Thus the devices as contextually used in these data are meant to subjugate the

citizenry, this paper basically showed the strength and power of language, especially words or vocabulary as used by the military political junta in <u>Nigeria to manipulate, manoeuvre, cajole, subjugate,</u> the people. Equally, other devices like hyponym and collocation were also adequately explored for similar purposes associated with milito-political ideology and orientation. Besides, all the devices enhanced the cohesion and coherence of the speeches; this is no doubt unconnected with the compactness and unifying nature and oneness (espirit de corps) of the Military Institution in Nigeria.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Adegboyega, A. (2001). *The Military and the Nigerian States, 1966-1993: A study of the strategies of Political Control,* Ibadan, Ph.D.

Aremo, B. (2004). *An Introduction to English Sentences. Vol 1 and 2*, Ibadan: Scribo Publications Ltd.

Azikwe, N. (1974). *Democracy with Military Vigilance,* Nsukka: Africa Book Company.

Babajide, A.O. "Of style and Stylistics" in Babajide A.O. (ed) *Studies in English*, Ibadan: Inc, Publisher, 2000, 123-136.

Bart, M.G. (2000). *Post Colonial Theory: Contexts, Practices, Polotics,* London: New York; Verso Ltd.

Berry, M. (1975, 1977). *Introduction to Systemic Linguistics*, London: Longman.

_____ (1975, 1977).*Introduction to Systemic Linguistics* (2 Vols) Batsford.

_____ (1977). *Systemic Linguistics 2, Levels Link*, London: Batsford.

Carter, R. and Burton, D. (ed) (1982). *Literary Text and Language Study*, London: Edward Arnold,

Cruse, D.A. (1986). *Lexical Semantics*, Cambridge University Press.

_____ (1990)."Language Meaning and Sense: Semantics" in Collinge, N.E (ed) *An Encyclopaedia of Language,* London: Routledge.

Ferris, C. (1993). *The meaning of Syntax: A study in the Adjectives of English,* London: Longman.

Gutwinski,W. (1974). *Cohesion in Literary Tests: A Study of Some Grammatical and Lexical Features of English Discourse*, The Hague: Monton.

Halliday, M.A.K. (1975). *Learning How to Mean: Exploration in the Development of Language*, London: Edward Arnold.

_____ and Fawcett, R.P. (ed) (1987). *New Development in Systemic Linguistics*, vol. 1, London: Frances Printer.

_____ (1990).*Some Grammatical Problems in Scientific English*, ARAL Series, No. 6, 13-17

_____ (1978). *Language and Social Semiotic: The Social Interpretation of Language and Meaning*, London: Edward Arnold.

_____ (1966a).“Lexis as a Linguistics Level” in Bazzed (ed) *In Memory of J.R.Firth.* London: longman.

Halliday and Hassan, R. (1989). *Language, Context and Text: Aspects of Language in a Social Perspective,* Oxford: O.U.P.

_____ (1976). *Cohesion in English*, London: Longman.

Harris, P.B. *Foundation of Political Science*, Melbourne Sidney: Auckland, Auckland Johannesbourg, 1979

Herman, D. (2001). “Sciences of the text,” in *Postmodern Culture 113 Jefferson Village. Virginia EDU 80,* Current Issue 11.3 Herman.

Hill, A. (2001).“Collocation” in *Language Teaching Professional, Issue 11*.

Larswell. H. (1965). *Language of Politics*, London: Harper and Row.

Lyons, J. (1977). *Noam Chomsky*, New York: Penguin.

Mazrui, A. (1975).*The Political Sociology of the English Language*, The Netherlands: Monton and Q.

Ojiako, J. (1986). *13 years of Military Rule, Lagos:* A Daily Times publication, 19-24

Opeibi, O.B. (2005). *Sense and meaning in Campaign texts: A study of Cohesion in Nigerian Political discourse in Gege, Ogun Studies in English.*

Opeibi, O.B. (2004). *A discourse Analysis in the use of English in the 1993 Presidential Election Campaign in Nigeria.* An unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, University of Lagos, Nigeria.

Ranney, A. (1983). *The Governing of Man*. 4th Edition, Madison: Wisconsin.

Sinclair, J. (1968). "A Technique of Stylistics Description" in *Language and Style*, No.1, 215-242