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A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF SELECTED TWEETS ON PETROL SUBSIDY REMOVAL IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

This work carries out a critical discourse analysis of selected tweets on petrol subsidy removal in Nigeria announced on inauguration day May 29, 2023 by Nigeria's new President, Bola Tinubu. It examines the various opinions, ideologies and social stances taken by Nigerians regarding petrol subsidy removal. The study also examined the social context to which petrol subsidy removal is in Nigeria situated and how such context helps in the interpretation and understanding of the discourse. It adopts a qualitative research methodology and the primary data were collected from selected tweets on petrol subsidy removal in Nigeria through a purposive sampling method. The study bases its analysis on Halliday's context of situation and Fairclough's Socio-functional approach to discourse analysis. Halliday's context of situation is employed to account for the context of petrol subsidy removal discourse in Nigeria while Fairclough's Socio-functional approach to discourse analysis is to account for the various stances and ideologies embedded in the discourse. Based on the analysis of the data collected, the study finds out that, petrol subsidy removal in Nigeria is an ongoing discourse that has attracted divergent views, opinions, ideologies and stances from Nigerian citizens. The work concludes that petrol subsidy removal is simply a strategy by the ruling class to accumulate wealth while leaving the poor masses or the lower class people to face the consequences of a dwindling economy. It recommends that petrol subsidy removal should be backed by a genuine agenda that will bring about rapid economic growth and transformation.

Keywords: Context of Situation, Revolution, Protest and Civil Unrest, Misapplication and Corruption.

1.0 Introduction

Humans are by nature social beings, and in the social cycle, language serves as the tool through which humans engage in interactions. It is, according to Udefot (1998, p.2), "the means by which people

from the same and related communities interact and express their thoughts and feelings to one another". Going by Udefot's notion of language, Edem (2015, p.226) opines that "language is one of the most important attributes of mankind because it is the medium of communication. There is no country

without a language and we all live in a world of many languages". This justifies the importance of language in human existence and gives the impression that language and human are inseparable (Awoniyi 1974; Edem 2005 and 2015).

As a means of communicating ideas, human language, which could be spoken or written, functions as the channel through which human beings as members of a social group, express themselves. Used in social discourse, language conveys a wide variety of information about human experiences in their respective fields of endeavours. However, the sense in this information can best be interpreted and understood if placed in its appropriate context, and that has to do with first, examining the language in use and locating the field of discourse with which it best fit. Leech (1981, p.61) supports this stance when he says that "meaning (human discourse) should be studied in terms of situation, context of use, outward and observable correlates of language behaviour". This is because, just as there are differences in human beings, languages used in respective human endeavours and/or domains of discipline differ remarkably. Each has its unique terminologies and context of discourse which sometimes, holds different ideologies, views and stances about social realities. It is therefore for this reason that Discourse Analysis (DA), as a field of discipline in linguistic, emerged to study and interpret human discourses with regards to their respective social contexts.

Discourse Analysis as the name implies, studies language use in interaction with respect to social and cultural context. It is derived from the latin prefix "dis" and the root word "currere" which means to roam or run off in different directions. Thus, discourse, which could be translated as to "run away, or run off in different directions" refers to the way that conversations flow. It is a "language in use or language used to communicate something felt to be coherent which may or may not correspond to a correct sentence or series of correct sentences" (Cook, 1989, pp.6-7). From Cook's standpoint, discourse analysis is the search for what gives discourse coherence. According to him, "discourse does not have to be grammatically correct, it can be anything from a grunt or simple expletive, through

short conversations and scribbled notes, a novel or a lengthy legal case. What matters is not its conformity to rules, but the fact that it communicates and is recognised by its users as coherent" (6-7). In achieving this coherence, a number of things such as context, background information and shared knowledge between the speaker and the hearer are taken into consideration (Bloor and Bloor 2013). Thus, the study of critical discourse analysis is to analyse the use of spoken or written language in a social context emerged from critical linguistics and the terms are now interchangeable (Edem, 2020, p.481).

Basically, discourse analysis is entirely context-dependent. This is because conversation involves situational knowledge beyond just the words spoken. It studies human discourses beyond its small grammatical units (morpheme and phoneme) and concerns largely with language use and the social context in which human discourse is placed. This means that language, according to Henry and Tator (2002, p. 60) is "never being neutral because it bridges our personal and social worlds". Thus, to study language used in discourse is to investigate some social and cultural factors that govern a particular subset of discourse and relate how values and opinions are communicated through language.

In discourse analysis, language becomes much more than just being a medium of communication. It is, according to Gee (2011) that which allows us to do things, engage in actions and activities, and in examining the role of language use in such actions and activities, a discourse analyst is saddled with not just the responsibility of dissecting the context of discourse, but also how the interlocutors operate with respect to social power and relations. For instance, the relationship that holds in a discourse between an employer and his employee would showcase a superior/inferior kind of relationship. This is because, the teacher will exert some level of authority over the student as well as the employer over his employee and for the discourse between them to run smoothly, the interlocutors (the employer and the employee) must acknowledge their social status. Their language use must also showcase not only their domain of

discourse but also their social standings. It is therefore against this backdrop that this work set to carry out a critical discourse analysis of selected tweets on petrol subsidy removal in Nigeria to locate its social context and nature of language used.

1.2 Theoretical Framework

M.A.K Halliday's Context of Situation and Fairclough's Approach to Discourse Analysis

This work adopts Halliday's Context of Situation and Fairclough's Socio-functional Approach to Discourse Analysis as its theoretical framework. Halliday's Context of Situation, sees human languages as being context-dependent, which means that human discourse does not exist in a vacuum. This depicts the interconnectedness between language, culture and social context.

The concept of Context as an analytical approach to human discourse, has been extensively studied by many linguists from different perspectives. Among such linguists are: Malinowski (1923), J.R Firth (1957) and M.A.K Halliday (1978). These scholars tend to have one thing in common which is the interpretation of human discourse with respect to context. For instance, J.R. Firth (1957) cited in Udofot's (1998, p. 68), sees context of situation as "a part of the grammar with the other aspects of grammatical analysis contributing their quota to the total meaning of an utterance". In Firth's ideology, "human discourse is defined not only in terms of the linguistic element and the sense it makes to the hearer, but also words or utterances are meaningful in terms of who said it, to whom, where, in whose presence, with what object around and what effect it has on the hearer(s) (69)". Thus to fully interpret human discourse, an analyst should consider not just the grammar, but everything that contributes to the meaning of the utterance among which is the context.

Basically, Halliday's concept of Context of Situation seems to be more explanatory and has been widely adopted in the analysis and interpretation of human discourses. He sees human language as a social activity which allows people to exchange meaning and then act socially. He points out that "the context of situation is a theoretical

construct for explaining how a text relates to the social processes within which it is located" (Halliday, 1978, p. 10). Thus, in interpreting human discourse, he proposes three major components, which according to him, are inherent in every human discourse and are the determinants of context of discourse. These are: field, tenor and mode of discourse. Field according to him refers to what is happening, to the nature of social action that is taking place. It answers such questions as "what it is that the participant is engaged in?". Tenor refers to who is taking part, to the nature of the participants, their status and roles: Mode refers to what part the language is playing, the nature of the language (spoken or written medium), what it is that the participants are expecting the language to do for them in that situation. The examination of these three components in a discourse will bring about appropriate social context to which a discourse belongs. Baker (2000, p.9) gives credence to Halliday's components of discourse when he says that:

context of situation is closely related to various texts. Certain situational context asks for certain text and in return, certain text creates certain context. In the process of communication, the meaning system is largely determined by the three aspects of situational context: ideational meaning by field, interpersonal meaning by tenor and textual meaning by mode.

This means that context is determined and constructed by the choice of language which could be best interpreted and understood when examined from Halliday's perspective of components of discourse which is significant in arriving at the meaning and context of human discourse.

Similarly, Fairclough's approach to discourse analysis tackles a number of social issues. However, unlike Halliday's context of situation, his approach is concerned with how discourse and power in society allow the integration of sociological concepts. He maintains that in "critical discourse analysis, language does not merely simply appeal to context to explain what is said or written or how it is interpreted", rather, it is a form of social practice

(Fairclough, 1992, p.47). From his ideology, analysis of discourse should not be tied only to context, rather, it should account for how language is used to express social practice, power, dominance and inequality in a social system. For this reason, Fairclough defines critical discourse analysis as "the study of often-opaque relationships of causality and discursive practices, events and texts, and wider social and cultural structures" (Fairclough, 1992, p. 65).

Van Dijk (1993, p.353) upholds Fairclough's notion that "critical discourse analysis is a type of discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance and inequality are enacted, reproduced and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context". Dijk's position here shows that, for critical discourse analysis to actually become realistic, society must be in place, since it is concerned with the social issues, especially political issues. His assertion also reveals that critical discourse analysis sets out to resist social inequality and expose the social ills, which are capable of affecting human psyche. Wodak (1995, p.204) gives credence to Fairclough's approach when she notes that "critical discourse analysis is a type of discourse analytical study that primarily focuses on opaque as well as transparent structural relationships of dominance, discrimination, power and control as manifested in language". This means that interpreting human discourse based on context alone, is not sufficient for accounting for all the social ideologies embedded in discourse.

Fairclough and Wodak (1997, pp.271-280) give a summary of the main tenets of critical discourse analysis thus: (i) Critical discourse analysis addresses social problems; (ii) Power relations are discursive; (iii) Discourse constitutes society and culture; (iv) Discourse works ideologically; (v) Discourse is historical; (vi) The link between text and society is mediated; (vii) Discourse analysis is interpretive and explanatory and (viii) Discourse is a form of social action. From the foregoing, it can be seen that critical discourse analysis, from Fairclough's perspective, takes into account how issues are manifested through language. It studies the way texts and talks are used in enacting, reproducing and resisting social power abuse,

dominance and inequality (Dijk, 1993). It is therefore for this reason that this theory (Fairclough's approach to discourse analysis) is adopted alongside Halliday's Context of Situation in the analysis and interpretation of the primary data collected for this work. Halliday's Context of Situation shall account for the context of petrol subsidy removal discourse in Nigeria while Fairclough's Approach to Discourse Analysis shall help in the examination of the ideologies embedded in the discourse.

1.2.1 Research Methodology/Research Design

This work adopts a qualitative research design. It is a research design that involves the use of non-numerical data such as text to explain social phenomenon. "It focuses on the interpretation of concepts in their natural settings to make sense in terms of the meanings people bring to these settings" (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994). Thus, a qualitative research method involves data collection of personal experiences, stories about life, interviews, observations, interactions and visual texts which are significant to people's life. (Peshkin, 1993).

1.2.2 Method of Data Collection

The primary data for this work were collected from selected tweets on petrol subsidy removal in Nigerian right from Goodluck Jonathan's regime to the present administration of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu. The data for this work were extracted from selected tweets on petrol subsidy removal which formed the analysis, conclusion and recommendation for this work.

1.2.3 Method of Data Selection

The data for this work were extracted from selected tweets on petrol subsidy removal in Nigeria through a purposive sampling method. The data extracted from the tweets selected were subjected to contents method of analysis.

1.2.4 Milieu of the Study

This work centers on petrol subsidy removal in Nigeria. The drive for the research was necessitated by the social unrest associated with the ongoing petrol subsidy removal discourse in Nigeria. The work examines the underlying reason(s) for the

unrest and account for the various views, opinions, ideologies and stances held by the general public against petrol subsidy removal in Nigeria

2.0 Method of Data Analysis

The data extracted from the tweets were subjected to contents method of analysis. Halliday's Components of Context of Situation (field, mode and tenor of discourse) will be taken into consideration in the analysis of the primary data. This is because, as observed by Halliday, these three components are the defining characteristics of every human discourse which help in the analysis and interpretation of meanings that are inherent in human discourses with respect to the social context with which they belong. Also, the analysis of the data will be based on Fairclough's Approach to Discourse Analysis. This will help in the investigation of the ideologies embedded in the discourse. These two approaches will enhance the analysis of the discourse and enable readers to decipher the meaning, ideologies and social context of the discourse.

2.1 Data Analysis/Discussion

When petrol subsidy is removed, it often leads to an increase in petrol prices, meaning that people have to pay more for petrol. It can help the

government save money and allocate it to other important areas such as education, healthcare etcetera. However, petrol subsidy removal, especially in Nigerian environment, usually attracts divergent views, ideologies and stances from the general public. One of such is the ongoing petrol subsidy removal by President Bola Tinubu's government. Each social group reacted differently to the removal of petrol subsidy. Their views, ideologies and stances are examined as follows:

Linguistic Indices of Opposing Stances on Petrol Subsidy Removal in Nigeria

Petrol subsidy removal in Nigeria has been opposed by most Nigerians right from the era of President Goodluck Jonathan to the present administration of President Bola Tinubu, with the ideology that, the Nigerian government petrol subsidy removal is a strategy for the ruling class to accumulate wealth and leave the lower class people in the face of a dwindling economy. The project is often not backed by genuine agenda that will enhance economic development. This opposing stance and ideology can be seen in the following tweets:

Plate 1



Plate 2



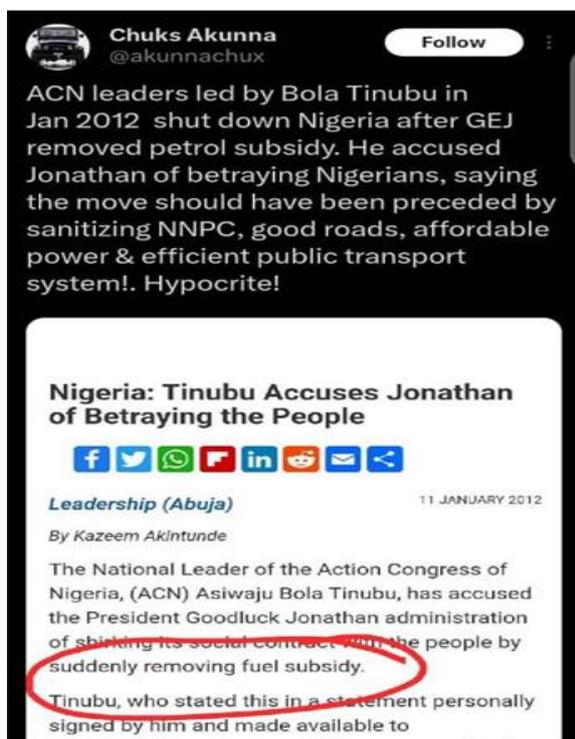
Plate 3



Plate 4



Plate 5



Analysis of Plates 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5

The linguistic indices of the above plates (tweets) denotes a frown and a disagreement of the idea of petrol subsidy removal in Nigeria. Although the tweets are made through discursive strategies like announcing and informing, they embody the ideological actions of protest. For instance, the action taken by the Oil and Gas Union in plate 1 against petrol subsidy removal proposed by the current President Bola Tinubu's government denotes a protest. They take an opposing stance

towards petrol subsidy removal through embarking on strike. They know that halting their services, which are quite essential to the state, may force the president to have a rethink and reverse his decision. Their decision to embark on strike is seen as a protest against petrol subsidy removal. It is worth mentioning here that their opposing stance may also awaken some spirit of protest in other economic sectors of Nigeria's life and in the general public. This is because petrol subsidy removal is seen as a policy that causes severe economic hardship which calls for a revolution. The social actor uses this tweet to sensitive the general public on the ongoing petrol subsidy removal in Nigeria and the possible reactions it has attracted from Nigerians.

This same opposing stance and strategic means of protest can be seen in plate 2 and 3 where the social actors, @itumomartins and @MDahiru express their disappointments at the aftermaths of petrol subsidy removal in Nigeria which has triggered increment of petrol price otherwise called PMS has caused more hardship among Nigerians. Generally, the idea behind the removal of petrol subsidy was intended to that it will bring about stable economy and create good living conditions for Nigerians. But as seen in the tweets above (plates 2 and 3), it is apparent that the removal of petrol subsidy has not achieved the intended purpose. For instance, the social actor in plate 2 laments over scarcity of petrol while the social actor in plate 3 cries out to those in power for a change of decision stating that the poor "Nigerians are becoming more poorer day by day" and "families are dying". The social actor sees the removal of petrol subsidy as

being "illogical" and this suggests an ill motif. It implies that the underlying purpose for petrol subsidy removal is not for the overall improvement of Nigerian economy used this tweet to awaken the consciousness of Nigerians to the deceit in petrol subsidy removal which is very unfortunate.

Again, a close observation of the linguistic indices in plate 4 and 5 reveals an opposing stance towards petrol subsidy removal in Nigeria. The tweets which are posted by the social actors @MoraOgo and @akunnachux expose the ills and corruptions that has ravaged Nigerian political system over the years. It is obvious that, though the projected idea of petrol subsidy removal by the Nigerian government aimed at benefitting the masses, its execution undoubtedly has often been to the interest of the ruling class. Its administration has unfortunately been seriously plagued with fraud and mismanagement of resources. This ideology of unfair system makes the lower class citizens to take an opposing stance towards petrol subsidy removal in Nigeria. This stance is seen in plate 4 and 5 above. The social actor in plate 4 for instance, is not in support of subsidy removal as he agrees with the view of Ngozi Iwela and Mohammed Sanusi that "subsidy removal favours a cartel not the masses". This "cartel", which comprises members of the ruling class, usually reacts biasedly to the issue of petrol subsidy removal in Nigeria as the process is believed to be in their benefits.

Similarly, the social actor in plate 5 frowns at the corruption and personal interest behind the removal of petrol subsidy in Nigeria. He uses his tweet to show how the incumbent president, Bola Tinubu, the then National Leader of the Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN) protested against petrol subsidy removal during President Goodluck Jonathan's regime in 2012 or thereabout. Perhaps, the regulation of the subsidy removal was not of much benefit to him. In the words of the social actor, "he accused Jonathan of betraying Nigerians, saying the move should have been preceded by sanitizing NNPC, good roads, affordable power & efficient public transport system!" Conversely, he proposed petrol subsidy removal in his own administration without making provision for the things he

suggested during President Jonathan's regime. The social actor uses this tweet to satirise the system and unfold the corruption in it. The social stance taken by him is that of opposition. Although this is not clearly stated, from the linguistic indices of the tweet, it can be deduced that the social actor is not in support of petrol subsidy removal. His anger and objection of the policy is further seen in him referring to President Bola Tinubu as a "hypocrite". This means that he exhibited a false appearance of good virtue, of a good leader and advocate during Jonathan's administration, while concealing the corruption and selfishness in him. The social actor also uses this tweet to tell the masses that Nigerian political leaders are self-centred and urged them not to yield to President Bola Tinubu's petrol subsidy removal proposal. This aligns with Fairclough's Socio-functional approach to discourse analysis that language is used to tackle a number of issues such as power abuse and to resist social inequality and expose the social ills, which are capable of affecting human psyche. The linguistic indices inherent in the above tweets also help to unfold the context of the discourse. The deployment of words such as government, administration, president, leaders etc showcases that the context of petrol subsidy removal discourse is that of politics. This context helps in the understanding of the discourse and the ideologies it has so far generated. For instance, through it, one is able to understand that petrol subsidy removal is political, and with the perceived corruption in the political system, subsidy removal tends to favour the ruling class to a large extent.

Linguistic Indices of Palliative Stances on Petrol Subsidy Removal in Nigeria

The petrol subsidy removal attracts different views and opinions from Nigerian citizens. Some Nigerians, though frown at the idea of petrol subsidy removal, do not take an opposing stance towards it, rather, they opt for palliatives as a measure towards curbing the increased hardship and suffering associated with petrol subsidy removal. This stance may be seen in the following tweets:

Plate 6



Plate 7

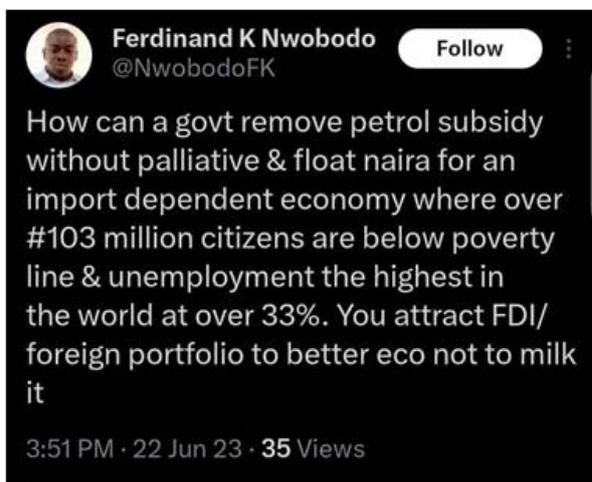
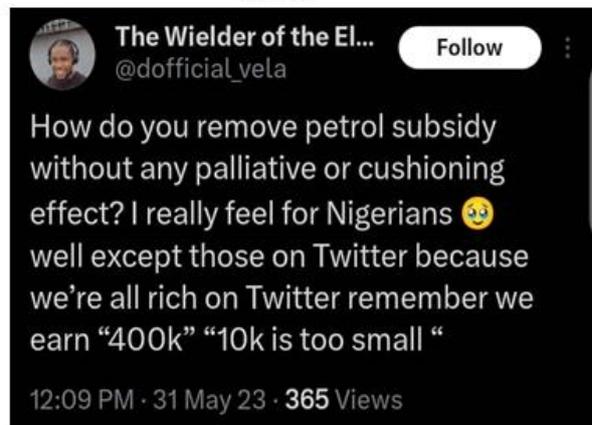


Plate 8

Plate 9

Plate 10



Analysis of Plates 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10

The above plates (tweets) provide cues on palliative stances regarding petrol subsidy removal by president Tinubu's government. As seen in the tweets, the social actors (@stevolo, @dofficial_vela, NwobodoFK, @omoelerinjare, @imranmuhammed) do not object the idea of petrol subsidy removal by president Tinubu's government; their point exactly is that government should have put palliative measures in place to cushion the effects of subsidy removal on the common masses. They also request for a fair administration of the policy of petrol subsidy removal. That is, the corruption in it should be expunged and there should be some sort of transparency in its regulation. This stance is clearly shown in plates 6, 7 and 8 above. The social actors in these tweets believe that through a fair system and the provision of palliatives, the masses will be able to wait on the government till the refinery project is

executed. They are also of the belief that, through the refinery, petrol price will be affordable for Nigerians and the Nigerian economy will take a new positive dimension from what is obtainable now. This ideology has been upheld by many lower class Nigerians who are almost always at the receiving end of the effect of petrol subsidy removal. Thus, rather than taking opposing stance, they opt for palliative measures.

Consequently, with the high cost of living and incessant outcry by the poor masses, the Nigerian Federal Government often turns a listening ear to the palliative measures put in place to cushion the effect of the petroleum subsidy removal. The linguistic indices in tweets 9 and 10 above justify this claim. The federal government eventually yielded to the masses' plea and appeal for palliative measures. They announced a N5 billion naira palliative for each state of the federation. However, the problem surrounding the palliative is how it will be distributed and how fair the distribution will be. The ideology behind this is that of mistrust and it is

believed that the palliatives will be distributed biasedly, that is, a certain social group will be favoured over the other, or worse still, and the palliatives may not get to the poor masses. This again, showcases the corruption and self-centeredness that ravage Nigerian political system. Disappointingly, the palliative stance on petrol subsidy removal did not achieve the expected aim as it did not go around each state as proposed by the government. The masses are still suffering as a result of petrol subsidy removal.

Linguistic Indices of Supporting Stances on Petrol Subsidy Removal

President Tinubu's petrol subsidy removal has actually been supported by some Nigerians on the basis that such subsidy removal savings can be better invested in refineries, roads and other infrastructure projects which in the long term will ensure sustainable business development and wealth generation for Nigerians. This supporting stance can be seen in the following tweets:

Plate 11



Plate 13



Plate 12

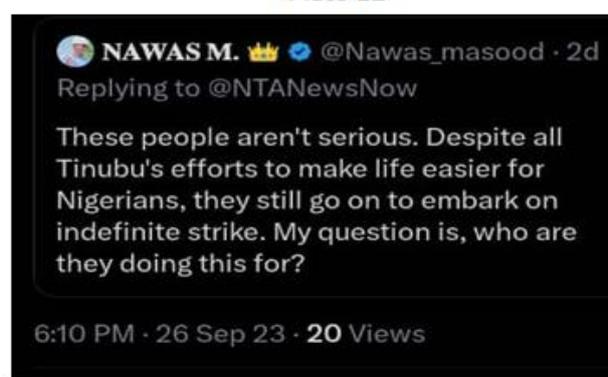


Plate 14



Analysis of Plates 11, 12, 13 and 14:

The linguistic indices of the above plates (tweets) show support for petrol subsidy removal by President Bola Tinubu's administration. For instance, in plate 11, the social actor @afolas4real is quite pleased with the subsidy removal project. Although he is of the poor masses, bricklayer by career, he states categorically that he supports the removal of petrol subsidy. Similarly, the social actor @ Nwas_masood expresses her displeasure at the NLC for embarking on an indefinite strike, an action whom she sees as a hurdle to the execution of government project regarding subsidy removal. She sees petrol subsidy removal as a means to making life easier for Nigerians, hence its execution should not be impeded by Nigerians.

The petrol subsidy removal has also been overtly supported by most government officials on the same ideology that the removal of petrol subsidy will improve Nigerian economy, help in the setting up of standard refineries where more petroleum products will be produced at a cheap rate for Nigerians; reduce Nigeria's dependence on imported fuel, increase employment, channel funds to the development of critical public infrastructure, while curbing corruption associated with petrol subsidy payments in Nigeria. The linguistic indices of plate 13 and 14 above justify this claim. As seen in plate 13, uploaded by the social actor @abdullahayofel, the attorney general of the federation Lateef Fagbemi is in full support of the removal of petrol subsidy by President Bola Tinubu's government. His approval of the subsidy removal is seen in his caution of the Labour Unions against the indefinite strike they prepare to embark on. He sees the strike as being "in...clear violation of the pending interim injunctive order..." This statement denotes power and control. It aligns with Fairclough's Socio-functional approach to discourse analysis that "language is used not only to express ideas, but also to express power and ideologies" (Fairclough, 1992, p.66).

Similarly, the linguistic indices of plate 14, posted by the social actor @Tiamiyu2023, denotes approval of petrol subsidy removal on the part of the CBN Chief, Cardoso, who expressed a relief that the

removal of petrol subsidy has ended the "bleeding of natural resources". Like the social actor in plate 13, CBN Chief, Cardoso sees subsidy removal as a means of improving the Nigerian economy. He seems to have said that petrol subsidy removal has achieved the intended purposes one of which is the ending of the "bleeding of natural resources". It is worth mentioning here however that these supporting stances, especially those from government officials may spring from a biased perspective, usually because, it is someone from their ethnic group or someone the support that is in power. Also, it is noted that these support is, among other issues, motivated by political affiliation. For example, Lateef Fagbemi is of All Progressive Congress political party same as President Bola Tinubu. He is a member of President Tinubu's administration and the Attorney General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, a mandate conferred on him by the incumbent president. Thus, as a member and a beneficiary of President Tinubu's government, he supports the idea of petrol subsidy removal with much alacrity.

In the same vein, Chief Cardoso's approval of President Tinubu's petrol subsidy removal is motivated by ethnic and political affiliation. He hails from Lagos State and is of Yoruba tribe as President Tinubu. Politically, he has just been appointed the Governor of Central Bank of Nigeria by President Tinubu's government. This motivates his support of President Tinubu's petrol subsidy removal. The linguistic indices of this stance also provide cues on the context of the discourse of Subsidy removal in Nigeria which is more political than economic. Most terminologies used in this stance come from the register of politics. This is seen in the use of such words as "Attorney-general", "federation", "CBN" (Central Bank of Nigeria). More so, the three basic components of Halliday's context of situation (field, tenor and mode) are prevalent in the above three stances of the discourse. The field being the subject matter of the discourse which is petrol subsidy removal in Nigeria whose social context is politics, the tenor being the participants of the discourse. It is assumed that, though the discourse is done through a social media platform (tweeter), it consists of the addressers and the addressees. The

addressers being the social actors and the addressees being the general public. However, there is no face to face interaction and as a discourse done in a social media platform, the social actors use basically written language to convey their messages. They used basically to inform the general public on the matters of petrol subsidy removal in Nigeria and the reactions it has attracted from Nigerians.

Conclusion

Petrol subsidy removal is an ongoing discourse in Nigeria. Its impact is felt both at the social, political and economic sectors of Nigeria's life. A critical analysis of the discourse reveals differing views, opinions and stances taken by the Nigerian citizens. These different stances are built upon various ideologies. Some take opposing stance towards subsidy removal on the basis that it favours those in power than the common citizens while others partly support the removal of petrol subsidy, but then, opt for palliative measures to cushion the harsh effect on the masses. Some out-rightly support subsidy removal project, believing that its execution will help improve the Nigerian economy and make the cost of living affordable for the common people in the future. These differing views, stances and ideologies cut across various social groups in Nigeria. However, it is worth noting that the success of Petrol Subsidy removal amidst these confusion or controversies depends on effective communication, transparent policies, and the implementation of clear cut measures by the government to achieve the intended goal by making social amenities affordable for all Nigerians irrespective of social class or status as well as bring about drastic turn around in the deplorable economy.

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