

Language and Power: A Pragmatic Analysis of Inaugural Speeches of Presidents Bola Tinubu and Donald Trump

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Abstract

This study examined the inaugural speeches of Nigerian President Bola Tinubu and U.S. President Donald Trump, focusing on the pragmatic strategies they employ to achieve persuasion, solidarity, and legitimacy. Data for this paper, which were the speeches of both leaders, were obtained from officially verified government websites. Using pragmatic tools, the data were analysed to reveal how the use of direct address, inclusive pronouns, metaphors, and modality enable both leaders to construct shared identities, project confidence, and negotiate power. The study revealed that Tinubu's rhetoric emphasizes inclusiveness, healing, and dialogue, reflecting a conciliatory leadership style aimed at national unity. Conversely, Trump's discourse is characterized by emotive critiques of institutional failures, urgency, and assertive nationalism, positioning him as a corrective force. The findings also showed how pragmatic devices shape political communication by aligning language use with contextual demands and audience expectations. The study concluded that inaugural speeches provide ample data for one to understand how political leaders negotiate power through their speeches, mobilize support and reinforce authority.

Keywords: language, power, pragmatics, speech, inaugural.

Introduction

Language is not merely a tool for communication; it is a vehicle of power. Eka and Udofot (1996) assert that language serves as a means through which individuals living together interact and express their thoughts and feelings. Similarly, Udofot (1998) views language as an avenue which people of the same speech community and boundary communities interact and express their ideas to one another. In contrast, Ndimele (2001) defines that language is a system of communication that associates meaning (i.e., the message) with a set of signs (i.e., the sounds or symbols).

As a communicative medium, language performs several pragmatic roles. Ndimele (2001) identified these as informational, expressive, phatic, directive ideational, performative and ludic roles. The informational role enables the transfer of information while the expressive role allows individuals to communicate emotions and attitudes. When language fosters interpersonal connection, it performs the phatic role. Language used to obtain information exemplifies directive role, whereas the ideational role enables speakers to influence or align natural forces based on cultural or spiritual beliefs. The performative role brings about immediate changes in real world situations through specific utterances. Finally, the ludic role pertains to entertainment and amusement.

Recognizing the importance of language, Aboh and Uduk (2017) distinguish between transactional and interactional functions of language. According to them, philosophers, linguist and psychologist consider transactional language the fundamental form of communication where the primary goal is to convey a message accurately and ensure it is understood correctly, as seen in doctor-patient communication, customer-bank clerk and mother-daughter communication. Interactional language, by contrast, focuses on maintaining social connections and relationships, such as phoning a family member, visiting a friend at a hospital, a chat at the school cafeteria, Facebook chat, and many others.

Given these roles, language can be used to influence others or exert control. Adnyani and Suwastini (2023) argue that language is a culturally mediated instrument of power. Fairclough (1989) emphasizes that power manifests in discourse when powerful participants control and constrain the contributions of less powerful participants. These constraints may involve contents, (what is said); relationships (social roles in discourse); and subject positions (identities assigned or assumed in conversation). In political discourse, such power dynamics are especially pronounced. Differences in address forms such as Mr Ben, Dr Ben or Professor Ben often signal hierarchical relationships.

Power can be exercised in multiple ways. Adnyani and Suwastini (2023), it is evident when a speaker initiates a conversation or changes and controls topics, dominates the floor, issues commands, interrupts others or speaks for extended period of time. Power is also manifested through request, directives, persuasive language, arguments and other speech acts.

In political contexts, language serves as a potent tool for persuasion and manipulation. Politicians use language to shape public opinion and mobilize support for their agendas (Rahmani and Saeed, 2024). Rhetoric, speeches and propaganda illustrate political power is enacted linguistically. Thus, the pragmatics of political discourse offers a critical lens through which speeches can be analyzed not just in terms of meaning, but in terms of its use and effects.

Pragmatic analysis of inaugural speeches of presidents Bola Tinubu and Donald Trump will reveal how language is strategically used to construct and exercise power. Thus, this study is designed to fulfill this purpose. Through speech acts like promises, commands, and declarations, the speaker asserts authority and shapes the political agenda. Deictic expressions such as "we" and "our" create a collective identity, aligning the audience with the speaker's vision and reinforcing social cohesion under their leadership. Politeness strategies manage face needs, balancing respect and authority to maintain legitimacy and foster trust. Presuppositions and implicatures embed shared beliefs and values that legitimize the speaker's position, often reinforcing existing power structures by framing certain ideas as natural or unquestionable.

Statement of the research problem

This study examines how power is demonstrated through language use, focusing on the inaugural speeches of Nigerian President Bola Tinubu and the U.S. President Donald Trump. An inaugural speech is delivered by a politician upon assuming office. Its purpose is to instill a sense of belonging and security among citizens while serving as a persuasive tool for the politician (Abuya, 2012 and Jegede, 2018 as cited in Okunade, Adewuyi and David, 2025). Additionally, several scholars (Okunade, Adewuyi and David, 2025; Ajayi and Kilani, 2024; Ogbuehi, 2024; Adnyani and Suwastini, 2023 and many others) have studied language and power, particularly, in the context of the inaugural speeches of past and current presidents of Nigeria and other countries. These scholars have employed critical discourse analytic, syntactic, and pragma-stylistic approaches to examine the inaugural speeches of these past and present leaders. This present study attempts to explain how presidents Bola Tinubu and Donald Trump exercise their powers through their inaugural speeches, using pragmatic tools to include speech acts, presupposition, implicature among many others.

Empirical review

Numerous studies have examined the interplay between language and power, particularly in political discourse. This section reviews relevant empirical studies on language use by political figures and its implications for power relations. Markus Allo, Asfah Rahmani, and Sultan (2020) investigated the exercise of language power by lecturers in EFL (English as a Foreign Language) classrooms. Their study revealed that lecturers employed directive, expressive, and assertive speech acts to assert authority and manage classroom interactions. Directive acts included commands and requests, expressive acts conveyed emotions such as pleasure, and assertive acts were used to make assertions.

Ni Luh Adnyani and Ni Komang Suwastini (2023) explored the enactment of power through language. Their findings highlighted that power is embedded in language use across various societal domains family, occupation, socio-economic class, politics, race, gender, mass media, and social media. Similarly, Catherine Musimbi, Atichi A., and Lucy Mandila (2023) examined how language constructs power and identity through caller discourse on Vuuka FM, a vernacular radio station. Their findings indicated the existence of power dynamics that divide speakers into two ideological groups: the subjugated ("them") and the dominant ("us"). These dynamics were manifested through discourse that reinforced social roles and ideologies.

Franck Amoussou, Ayodele Allagbe, and Coffi Martinien Toboula (2024) analyzed the pragmatic and stylistic elements in President Bola Tinubu's inaugural speech. The study revealed the strategic use of four out of the five illocutionary acts: representatives, expressives, commissives, and directives. It also showed the deliberate use of varied tenses such as simple present, present perfect, simple past, and imperative to enhance rhetorical impact. In the same year, Patricia Ogbuehi (2024) studied pronoun usage in Tinubu's speech. Her findings demonstrated that the president used singular pronouns (I, me, my) to promote a personal image of humility, tolerance, and patriotism. In contrast, plural pronouns like "we," "our," and "us" conveyed inclusiveness and collective effort, while "they," "them," and "their" were used to marginalize opponents by portraying them negatively. Owolabi Ajayi and Sakiru Kilani (2024) also analyzed Tinubu's inaugural address, focusing on ideological expression. Their findings suggested that the speech conveyed messages of optimism, unity, peace, and development, reflecting Tinubu's projected image as a dedicated and peace-loving leader with a vision of "Renewed Hope." Habiburrahman Rahmani and Abdul Saeed (2024) investigated the broader relationship between language and politics. Their research confirmed that language is a crucial political tool for shaping public opinion, constructing identities, and framing socio-political issues.

More recently, Gabriel Okunade, Sunday Adewuyi, and Roseline David (2025) conducted a syntactic analysis of President Tinubu's inaugural speech. The study identified a predominance of simple sentence structures to enhance clarity, along with the use of ellipses, appositions, and substitutions for emphasis and cohesion. Adverbial phrases and syntactic parallelism were also used to create rhythm and reinforce unity.

Earlier studies, such as Abuya (2012, cited in Okunade et al., 2025), analyzed the pragma-stylistic features in President Goodluck Jonathan's 2011 inaugural address. Likewise, Akinseye (2015, also cited in Okunade et al., 2025) focused on the interpersonal elements of President Muhammadu Buhari's 2015 inaugural speech, identifying how interpersonal choices shaped the president's image as a responsible leader. Despite these studies, there still remains a notable gap in the adoption of pragmatic strategies to examine the speeches of both leaders. Existing literature focuses on the study of language and power, adopting discourse analysis as its theoretical framework. This study fills this research gap by analyzing these speeches by deploying pragmatic strategies as its theoretical lens.

Research Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative descriptive approach. The data used--namely, the inaugural speeches of Nigerian President Bola Tinubu and U.S. President Donald Trump, were sourced from publicly available online platforms. The reliance on internet data is due to time constraints and financial limitations associated with obtaining primary or original sources of data. To achieve the objectives of the study, the speeches were analyzed in the form of excerpts using various pragmatic tools to include speech acts, presupposition, implicature and others. This qualitative and descriptive methodology allows for a detailed examination of how language is used to exercise power and its potential effects on audience in both Nigeria and the United States.

Theoretical Framework: *Pragmatics*

Pragmatics, as a subfield of linguistics, concerns itself with the study of language use in context and how meaning is constructed beyond the literal interpretation of words (Levinson, 1983). In the context of presidential inaugural speeches, pragmatic analysis offers valuable tools to understand how language functions not just as a means of communication but as a mechanism for exercising power. By focusing on how speakers use language to perform actions, manage relationships, and construct social realities, pragmatics reveals the subtle ways presidents assert authority, persuade audiences, and legitimize their leadership.

One fundamental pragmatic tool is Speech Act Theory, first developed by Austin (1962) and expanded by Searle (1969). Speech acts categorize utterances based on their function—for example, promising, commanding, asserting, or declaring. In inaugural speeches, presidents employ these acts to accomplish various political goals, such as making commitments to the nation, issuing calls to action, or symbolically inaugurating a new era. By performing these acts, the speaker wields power to shape public expectations and frame their administration's agenda, illustrating the link between language use and political authority.

Deixis, another important pragmatic concept, refers to expressions whose meaning depends on the contextual situation, such as pronouns ("we," "you," "I"), temporal adverbs ("now," "today"), and spatial references ("here," "there") (Fillmore, 1975). In inaugural speeches, deixis is strategically employed to construct an inclusive national identity or to position the speaker as both leader and representative of the people. This linguistic positioning serves to reinforce solidarity and allegiance, crucial elements in the exercise of power and influence within the speech's political context.

Politeness theory, as formulated by Brown and Levinson (1987), provides a framework for understanding how speakers navigate social hierarchies and interpersonal relationships through language. Presidents use politeness strategies to manage face needs positive face (the desire to be liked) and negative face (the desire not to be imposed upon) balancing authority with respect and approachability. Such strategies are essential in inaugural speeches, where the speaker must assert dominance without alienating the audience, thus maintaining legitimacy and control through subtle linguistic cues.

Another pragmatic tool relevant to power dynamics in political speech is presupposition, which involves background assumptions embedded in utterances that the audience is expected to accept (Stalnaker, 1974). In the rhetorical context of an inaugural address, presuppositions often frame political realities and ideologies as natural or unquestioned truths. By embedding these assumptions, presidents subtly reinforce existing power structures and ideologies, shaping public perception and limiting alternative interpretations.

Lastly, conversational implicature (Grice, 1975) helps reveal meanings that go beyond literal words, relying on shared knowledge and context. Implicatures in inaugural speeches enable presidents to convey complex messages such as hope, resolve, or criticism indirectly, allowing for diplomatic nuance and persuasive effect. Through these pragmatic tools, language becomes a powerful instrument not only for communication but for political influence, ideological reinforcement, and the consolidation of power.

Data analysis and discussion of findings

This section provides analysis and discussion of the research findings.

President Bola Tinubu's Speech Excerpts

Excerpt 1

My Fellow Citizens,

I stand before you honored to assume the sacred mandate you have given me. My love for this nation is abiding. My confidence in its people is unwavering. And my faith in God Almighty is absolute. I know that His hand shall provide the needed moral strength and clarity of purpose in those instances when we seem to have reached the limits of our human capacity.

The above excerpt employs several pragmatic tools that shape its communicative effect and social function. First, the president's use of direct address ("My Fellow Citizens") establishes a connection with his audience and creates a sense of shared identity. The phrase "I stand before you honoured" serves as a speech act of expressing gratitude and humility. The use of terms like "abiding," "unwavering," and "absolute", reinforces the speaker's sincerity and commitment. The invocation of "God Almighty" and references to divine support invoke a common cultural/religious presupposition. Moreover, the use of modal verbs like "shall" conveys certainty and determination, projecting confidence in future outcomes. Together, these pragmatic strategies effectively perform the acts of reassuring the audience, affirming leadership legitimacy, and fostering collective resilience in the face of challenges.

Excerpt 2

For me, there is but one answer. We are too great a nation and too grounded as a people to rob ourselves of our finest destiny.

In this excerpt, pragmatic tools work to prove the president's confidence in his stance. The phrase "For me, there is but one answer" also signals a personal commitment, establishing his authority and clarity of purpose. The use of exclusive language ("but one answer") functions to limit alternative perspectives, guiding the audience toward agreement. The metaphorical expressions "too great a nation" and "too grounded as a people" employ positive presuppositions that assume shared values of national pride and stability, which work to build in-group solidarity. The verb phrase "to rob ourselves of our finest destiny" uses metaphorical implicature, suggesting that failure to act would be self-destructive, which implicitly urges the audience to embrace a hopeful and aspirational future.

Excerpt 3

My supporters, I thank you. To those who voted otherwise, I extend my hand across the political divide. I ask you to grasp it in national affinity and brotherhood. For me, political coloration has faded away. All I see are Nigerians.

In this excerpt, the president performs multiple illocutionary acts, notably *thanking* ("I thank you"), *inviting reconciliation* ("I extend my hand..."), and *asserting unity* ("All I see are Nigerians"). Through these acts, the speaker aims to reduce political tension and establish a shared national identity. The use of inclusive deixis like "my supporters" and "you" anchors the address to both allies and opponents, promoting unity. Additionally, the metaphor "grasp it in

national affinity and brotherhood" functions as a conversational implicature, suggesting that while political differences exist, they should be set aside for a higher national cause. The phrase "political coloration has faded away" pragmatically signals a shift in focus from partisanship to national cohesion, reinforcing the speaker's attempt to realign audience interpretation beyond the literal words.

Excerpt 4

As a nation, we have long ago decided to march beyond the dimness of night into the open day of renewed national hope.

This excerpt uses metaphorical language "march beyond the dimness of night into the open day" which functions as a figurative speech act symbolizing progress and hope, appealing to the audience's shared desire for renewal. The phrase "we have long ago decided" presupposes a collective past consensus, reinforcing social solidarity and portraying the nation as united and purposeful. The pragmatic effect is to inspire optimism and legitimize current efforts by anchoring them in a historical commitment to progress.

Excerpt 5

Yet, we have shouldered the heavy burden to arrive at this SUBLIME moment where the prospect of a better future merges with our improved capacity to create that future.

To the surprise of many but not to ourselves, we have more firmly established this land as a democracy in both word and deed.

Here, the president employs metaphorical intensifiers such as "heavy burden" and "SUBLIME moment" to elevate the significance of the present time, creating an emotional appeal that frames current achievements as both hard-won and extraordinary. The contrast between "prospect of a better future" and "improved capacity" implies a pragmatic progression from hope to actionable capability. The phrase "to the surprise of many but not to ourselves" subtly asserts the speaker's confidence and insider knowledge, while "in both word and deed" highlights the pragmatic commitment to integrity and tangible democracy, reinforcing ethos and trust.

Excerpt 6

Our administration shall govern on your behalf but never rule over you. We shall consult and dialogue but never dictate. We shall reach out to all but never put down a single person for holding views contrary to our own.

We are here to further mend and heal this nation, not tear and injure it.

This excerpt is structured with paired antitheses ("govern on your behalf but never rule over you," "consult and dialogue but never dictate"), which pragmatically serve to reassure the audience by delineating respectful leadership boundaries. The use of inclusive pronouns ("we," "your") fosters solidarity and shared purpose. The speech acts here include promises of respectful governance and appeals for unity through metaphors of healing rather than division, which pragmatically work to calm fears and build trust in the administration's intentions.

Excerpt 7

The outcome reflected the will of the people. However, my victory does not render me any more Nigerian than my opponents. Nor does it render them any less patriotic. They shall forever be my fellow compatriots. And I will treat them as such. They represent important constituencies and concerns that wisdom dare not ignore. They have taken their concerns to court. Seeking legal redress is their right and I fully defend their exercise of this right. This is the essence of the rule of law.

The speaker here performs acts of acknowledgment and inclusion by recognizing opponents as "fellow compatriots" and affirming their patriotism, which pragmatically functions to reduce political tension and promote reconciliation. The explicit defense of legal processes ("seeking legal redress is their right") appeals to shared values of justice and the rule of law, reinforcing legitimacy. The repeated use of modal verbs ("shall") signals commitment, while the pragmatic strategy overall promotes unity, respect for democratic norms, and social cohesion.

Excerpt 8

The principles that will guide our administration are simple:

1. *Nigeria will be impartially governed according to the constitution and the rule of law.*
2. *We shall defend the nation from terror and all forms of criminality that threaten the peace and stability of our country and our sub-region.*
3. *We shall remodel our economy to bring about growth and development through job creation, food security, and an end to extreme poverty.*
4. *In our administration, Women and youth will feature prominently.*

This excerpt is a clear example of directive speech acts outlining principles and commitments. The numbered format pragmatically signals clarity, order, and transparency, enhancing the speaker's credibility. The use of modal verbs ("will," "shall") indicates strong commitments and future-oriented promises. Each point appeals to shared values (rule of law, security, economic growth, inclusivity), pragmatically aimed at building consensus and managing expectations. The inclusion of "Women and youth" highlights attention to marginalized groups, pragmatically signaling inclusivity and progressive governance.

President Donald Trump's Speech Excerpts**Excerpt 1**

Vice President Vance, Speaker Johnson, Senator Thune, Chief Justice Roberts, justices of the United States Supreme Court, President Clinton, President Bush, President Obama, President Biden, Vice President Harris and my fellow citizens:

The speaker employs direct address and formal listing of prominent political figures, invoking institutional authority and respect. By naming leaders across party lines and branches of government, the pragmatic function is to create a sense of unity and solemnity at the outset, signaling inclusiveness and respect for democratic traditions. The phrase "my fellow citizens" then broadens the address to the general public, establishing a shared social identity.

Excerpt 2

The golden age of America begins right now. From this day forward, our country will flourish and be respected again all over the world. We will be the envy of every nation. And we will not allow ourselves to be taken advantage of any longer.

This excerpt uses grand, optimistic declarations such as "The golden age of America begins right now" functioning as a performative act of renewal and hope. The use of future-oriented modal verbs ("will flourish," "will be respected") conveys strong commitment and certainty. The phrase "We will be the envy of every nation" appeals to national pride and competitiveness. The pragmatic effect is motivational and persuasive, aimed at rallying collective confidence and aspiration.

Excerpt 3

During every single day of the Trump administration, I will, very simply, put America first. Our sovereignty will be reclaimed. Our safety will be restored. The scales of justice will be rebalanced. The vicious, violent and unfair weaponization of the Justice Department and our government will end. And our top priority will be to create a nation that is proud and prosperous and free.

Here, repetition of "will" followed by strong verbs (put, reclaimed, restored, end) emphasizes commitment and decisiveness, reinforcing a promise-oriented speech act. The phrase "very simply" pragmatically downplays complexity, making the speaker's agenda seem straightforward and accessible. The listing of grievances ("vicious, violent and unfair weaponization") employs emotive language to delegitimize opponents and justify reform. The appeal to sovereignty and prosperity strengthens nationalistic solidarity.

Excerpt 4

America will soon be greater, stronger, and far more exceptional than ever before. I return to the presidency confident and optimistic that we are at the start of a thrilling new era of national success. A tide of change is sweeping the country. Sunlight is pouring over the entire world, and America has the chance to seize this opportunity like never before.

This excerpt uses positive metaphorical imagery ("A tide of change," "Sunlight is pouring") to evoke a sense of dynamic transformation and opportunity. The speaker's confident tone ("I return... confident and optimistic") pragmatically serves to inspire trust and hope. Phrases like "thrilling new era" perform the act of inaugurating a hopeful future, inviting the audience to share in a collective vision of national exceptionalism.

Excerpt 5

But first, we must be honest about the challenges we face. While they are plentiful, they will be annihilated by this great momentum that the world is now witnessing and the United States of America. As we gather today, our government confronts a crisis of trust. For many years, the radical and corrupt establishment has extracted power and wealth from our citizens. While the pillars of our society lay broken and seemingly in complete disrepair, we now have a government that cannot manage even a simple crisis at home while at the same time stumbling into a continuing catalog of catastrophic events abroad.

The speaker performs a truth-telling speech act by admitting challenges ("we must be honest about the challenges we face"), which pragmatically can increase credibility by acknowledging problems upfront. The use of metaphors like "pillars of society lay broken" evokes a sense of urgency and crisis. The contrast between "radical and corrupt establishment" and "we now have a government" positions the speaker as an agent of change, appealing to shared frustration with the status quo.

Excerpt 6

It fails to protect our magnificent, law-abiding American citizens but provides sanctuary and protection for dangerous criminals, many from prisons and mental institutions that have illegally entered our country from all over the world. We have a government that has given unlimited funding to the defense of foreign borders but refuses to defend American borders, or more importantly, its own people.

This excerpt uses contrasts and emotive language ("magnificent, law-abiding citizens" vs. "dangerous criminals") to frame a moral and security dilemma. The pragmatic function is to delegitimize opponents and heighten perceived threats to national safety. Phrases like "illegally entered" and "unlimited funding" appeal to concerns about government priorities and border security, reinforcing a narrative of protecting the "own people" first.

Excerpt 7

Our country can no longer deliver basic services in times of emergency, as recently shown by the wonderful people of North Carolina, who've been treated so badly. And other states who are still suffering from a hurricane that took place many months ago. Or more recently, Los Angeles, where we are watching fires still tragically burn from weeks ago without even a token of defense. They're raging through the houses and communities, even affecting some of the wealthiest and most powerful individuals in our country, some of whom are sitting here right now. They don't have a home any longer. That's interesting.

The speaker uses specific examples and vivid descriptions of recent disasters ("North Carolina," "Los Angeles fires") to illustrate government failure, performing an accountability speech act. The mention of "wealthiest and most powerful individuals" losing homes pragmatically highlights the indiscriminate impact of crises, eliciting empathy and urgency. The phrase "That's interesting" serves as a rhetorical device to draw attention and provoke reflection, adding an informal tone.

Excerpt 8

But we can't let this happen. Everyone is unable to do anything about it. That's going to change. We have a public health system that does not deliver in times of disaster, yet more money is spent on it than any country anywhere in the world. And we have an education system that teaches our children to be ashamed of themselves, in many cases to hate our country despite the love that we try so desperately to provide to them. All of this will change starting today and will change very quickly.

This excerpt continues with critique and promise, emphasizing systemic failures ("public health system that does not deliver," "education system that teaches... to hate our country"). The use of hyperbole ("more money is spent than any country anywhere") stresses inefficiency and injustice.

The pragmatic effect is to arouse dissatisfaction and a desire for rapid reform, reinforced by the closing commitment speech acts ("All of this will change starting today"). The inclusion of "we" signals collective effort and responsibility.

Summary of findings and conclusion

The pragmatic analysis of both Tinubu's and Trump's speeches reveals strategic use of language to achieve key communicative goals such as persuasion, solidarity-building, and legitimacy reinforcement. Both speakers utilize direct address and inclusive pronouns to foster a sense of unity and shared identity with their audiences. Metaphorical language is prevalent in both, serving to evoke optimism, national pride, and collective aspirations Tinubu's "march beyond the dimness of night" and Trump's "golden age of America" illustrate this vividly. Repetition and modality (use of "shall," "will") appear consistently as tools to signal commitment and certainty about future actions. Both employ contrastive structures (e.g., "govern but never rule," "protect citizens but harbor criminals") to reassure their audiences by clearly delineating intended leadership styles or problems to be addressed.

Notably, Tinubu's speeches emphasize inclusiveness and healing, often acknowledging opposition and advocating for dialogue and unity, reflecting a pragmatic strategy to reduce division and encourage reconciliation. Conversely, Trump's excerpts lean heavily on critique and urgency, using emotive language to highlight crises and institutional failures, thus framing his leadership as a corrective force. This difference reflects distinct rhetorical styles: Tinubu's approach is more conciliatory and inclusive, while Trump's is more confrontational and assertive. Both leaders appeal to shared cultural and political values faith and rule of law for Tinubu; sovereignty, safety, and national greatness for Trump to build ethos and motivate their constituencies toward collective action.

The pragmatic tools employed by both Tinubu and Trump reveal how political leaders tailor their rhetoric to meet contextual needs and audience expectations. Tinubu's use of inclusive language and calls for unity aim to heal and build cohesion in a diverse society. In contrast, Trump's emphasis on crisis, blame, and bold promises serves to mobilize supporters through urgency and assertive nationalism. These findings highlight the central role of pragmatics in political communication: the strategic deployment of language to manage identities, project legitimacy, and influence public attitudes. Ultimately, the speeches exemplify how leaders construct narratives that resonate with their audiences' values and emotions to advance political agendas.

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