

The Ideological Postures of the Academic Staff Union of Universities and the Federal Government of Nigeria in Industrial Dispute

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Abstract

This paper aims at identifying the ideological differences between the Academic Staff Union of Universities and the government of Nigeria, using critical discourse analytical tools, particularly the Van Dijk notion of ideological square. The correspondence between the two parties between 2001 and 2009 constitutes the data for this study, and the application of critical analysis tools to the data reveals that the two parties are ideologically polarised. Thus, the impasse from data analysis offers a critical discourse analysis to serve as an interventionists into the ideological postures of the parties involved, which can possibly lead to a resolution of the differences.

Key Words: Critical discourse analysis, ideology, language, discourse, labour dispute

Introduction

The attempt to unravel ideology in discourses is an age-long practice among scholars across disciplines. This is with the understanding that ideology is often obscured in discourse. Some of such ideological discourses emerge from political institutions and social groups. Different socio-political and cultural groups, institutions and organisations have certain underlying ideologies. The ideology of each group is the unifying and binding force, varying from group to group and defining them as well. The government of every nation and different unions have their ideological leanings to which they are ardently committed.

These ideologies usually manifest in the activities, values and norms of members of such groups and express in their conversation and general interactions with others. Besides, traces of such ideology could emerge from their discourses. The correspondence emanating from institutions and unions is a veritable source of such ideologically laden discourses since their beliefs, norms and values are expressed therein.

The study of ideology has attracted scholarly attention over time. The earliest use of the term ideology can be traced to the works of the French philosopher, Destutt de Tracy (1796) who employed the term in his memoir to depict what he called “science of ideas”, viewing ideology from scientific perspectives and suggesting that ideology as a system is embraced by political, religious, social groups or movements. Hence, ideology is found in the activities of various individuals in different fields of endeavour such as political science, sociology, literary criticisms, cultural studies and linguistics. Ideology could be individually or collectively held and can be seen as “complex, dogmatic belief systems, by which individuals interpret, rationalize and justify behaviour and instructions.” (Hinich and Munger, 1994:10). Some social scientists regard it as a set of shared ideas that order and direct group life (Barnett and Silverman, 1979), implying that it could be held collectively by a group of people, dictating their mode of operation. It is “what persuades men and women to mistake each other from time to time for gods or vermin” (Eagleton, 1991:xiii). Eagleton (1991) further argues that:

“meaning sustains domination”: by promoting the dominant group’s view of things, making it seem natural, treating as the universal case, denigrating other views, excluding anyone who holds them and obscuring all of the above operations (p. 5)

This implies that certain groups are not only powerful and dominant but they naturalise such hegemony, which could be reflected in their language. Socio-cognitively, ideologies are viewed as “basic frameworks that organise social representations in the minds of group members” (Van Dijk, 1994:1). Similarly, ideology could be the basis of socio-political cognitions of groups (Lan and Sear, 1986; Rosenberg, 1998). These views imply that various groups’ ideologies determine their value, opinion about social issues, general world views and attitude (Bloor and Bloor, 2007). Shojaei, Youssefi and Hosseini (2013) believe that ideology is representative of who we are, what we stand for, our values, our relationships with others (those who threaten our existence and interests). The centrality of ideologies to the existence of a group makes members to jealously guard against every threat to it such that every available medium is employed to sustain it. This explains why dominated groups relentlessly struggle to resist organised dominant groups’ ideologies.

Fairclough (2001:77) explains ideology as “ideas that arise from a given set of material interest”. Every group has a fundamental interest to protect which suggest why Van Dijk (1998) regards ideology as “the basis of the social representations shared by the members of a group” with existing “mental framework of views about society and the cognitive and social functions of such a framework for groups.” From the foregoing, individuals or groups can pay any price to protect the ideologies considered as foundational to their very existence.

In Nigeria, Osisanwo and Oyeleye (2013) have worked on expression of ideology in *TELL* and *The News* media, focusing on the representation of the 2003 and 2007 general elections. The study reveals that the maxims shape the views expressed in them and determines the perspective from which the elective is conceived by readers. Taiwo (2007) investigates language, ideology and power relations in Nigerian newspaper headlines, aiming at unravelling the underlying ideology in the newspaper headlines' construction. His findings show that the headlines have implicit ideological meanings revealing the opinion of the people whose interest is being worked for and whose interests are being undermined. The study concludes that editors manipulate headlines to shape the views for the readers on national issues. Bayram (2010) on ideology and political discourse examines the discursive strategies in the speeches of the Turkish Prime Minister, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, during a debate in the world economic forum in Devos in January 2009, from the perspective of his ideological, cultural and language backgrounds. Bayram discovers that Erdogan has succeeded in attitudinal and identity construction through the use of language. The study concludes that ideological elements and linguistic backgrounds are reflected in the Prime Minister's speech during the debate. It proves that ideology is an inherent constituent of discourse as seen in Erdogan's political discourse. These observations synchronise with van Dijk's description of three ideological perspectives from which ideology can be viewed-syntactic, semantic, stylistic and rhetorical levels; interlocutors' processes of production, reception, understanding and the social dimension of scripts as a sequence of contextualised, controlled and purposeful acts, a form of social action situated in a context. Similarly, Herbermas (1977) and Hodge and Kress (1993) observe these as the relationship between ideology and language where language is a tool users employ to manifest, twist, express, manipulate and undermine others for some purposes. The present study, however, focuses on the ideological differences between the Academic Staff Union of University (henceforth ASUU) and the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN). To determine how these groups are different ideologically, there is need to investigate their ideological postures, hence the correspondence between the two parties will be critically analysed to unravel the differences in their ideologies. But first, a brief on ASUU and the FGN is necessary.

ASUU and the Government

The relationship between Academic Staff Union Universities and FGN has been fraught with conflict and a history of contending issues since 1978 when it was founded. Active in struggles against unfair treatment of its members, ASUU fought the military regime in the 1980s. The union organised a national strike in 1988 to obtain fair wages and university autonomy. For this reason, the union was banned on 7 August 1988 and all its property seized. In 1990, the ban was lifted and again banned in 1992 after another strike. However, in September 1992, most of its demands were met including the right of workers for collective bargaining. In 1994 and 1996 other strikes were organised against unlawful dismissal of lecturers by Abacha Regime. In 2002, Justice Mustapha Akanbi was petitioned to investigate the authorities of University of Ilorin (Unilorin) for corruption and misappropriation of funds. In 2008, ASUU went on strike twice for improvement in salary and reinstatement of lecturers dismissed in University of Ilorin and University of Nigeria Nsukka. In 2009, memoranda of understanding were signed and the industrial action called off. From these activities of ASUU, the main issue has always been the lackadaisical attitude the FGN has shown toward the union's demands.

The FGN has severally reneged on previous agreements and memoranda of understanding it had with the union coupled with negligence of the educational sector while spending billions of naira on unproductive ventures and supporting widespread corruption. This situation has led to a trail of ASUU strikes over the years. It is against this background that this study therefore attempts to examine the ideological differences associated with ASUU and FGN labour dispute which seems to be the cause of the incessant strikes of ASUU. The correspondence between them will be used as data for the study.

Methodology

The source of data for the study comprises six purposively selected correspondences between ASUU and the FGN between 2001 and 2009 which involve exchanges. The data was sourced from both parties' archives. The period is important because it marked the time when ASUU embarked on a series of strikes as a result of non-implementation of agreement reached with the FGN and the termination of appointment of some lecturers from the University of Ilorin and University of Nigeria, Nsukka, for playing prominent roles in the strike. These documents will be studied with the aim of investigating ideological differences between ASUU and the FGN within the specified period, particularly focusing on the FGN's failure to implement the agreement it had with ASUU and the union's reaction. The data will be descriptively analysed.

Theoretical Framework

Among many Critical Discourse Analysis approaches, this study adopts van Dijk's (1998:33) model of "ideological square" contained in his socio-cognitive approach, which emphasizes positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation. By this, the ideological square categorises the society or groups in polarized terms. By principle, the ideological square:

Emphasize positive things about *Us*
Emphasize negative things about *Them*
De-emphasize negative things about *Us*
De-emphasize positive things about *Them*.

The ideological square model contains some discursive strategies out of which lexicalization, implicature, presupposition, apparent empathy; number game, vagueness, positive self-presentation/negative other-presentation, example and hyperbole will be employed in this work. The views expressed earlier by Critical Discourse Analysis scholars reveal that ideology though inherent in discourses, is implicit; and that Critical Discourse Analysis aims at making such implicit ideology explicit. With the application of this framework, deciphering of the ideological standing of both ASUU and FGN embedded in their discourse in terms of the way they secure and manipulate power in their relationship (during the period of the industrial dispute) will be made explicit. This justifies the adoption of Critical Discourse Analysis as theoretical framework for analyzing the data collected for this study.

Data Analysis and Discussion

Lexicalisation

Specific lexical items are used to express certain meanings, underlying concepts and beliefs in discourse. Similar meaning may be expressed in diverse ways depending on the goal, role position and point of view of the speaker. Rhetorical question is a form of ideological interaction.

- EXT 1: *Dismissal from, or termination of employment* without recourse to *due process* is not acceptable to the Union. (ASUU)
- EXT 2: Defense of *job security* of academic staff must be assured at all times. (ASUU)
- EXT 3: It is imperative to ensure the *preservation* of the Union at all times. (ASUU)
- EXT 4: *Breach* of the FGN-ASUU *agreement* should never be allowed. (ASUU)
- EXT 5: This *breaches the non-victimization provision* at the end of the agreement and is certainly not in the spirit expressed by the Government's Negotiating Team which also assured ASUU that it would ensure that no one would be victimized for participating in the strike. *Our union believes that important tenets of natural justice*, and certainly also the FGN-ASUU agreement have been breached and should be corrected, both at the University of Ilorin and the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. (ASUU)
- EXT 6: Soon after the FGN-ASUU agreement, on July 3, 2001, ASUU wrote to NUC Executive Secretary, NUC, asking that an implementation committee be set up "as soon as possible, almost immediately". *Up till this date, this has not been done*. And because there is no implementation Committee has been set up the agreement is not implemented as it should be. (ASUU)
- EXT 7: Attempt by the Federal Government of Nigeria to *criminalize* strike should never be allowed to succeed. (ASUU)
- EXT 8: The more we tried, the more the unions remain *insatiate*. (FGN)
- EXT 9: Government has *stretched itself* to the limit in acceding to the *endless demands* of these unions. (FGN)
- EXT 10: Even as this meeting is taking place, there is another *thick cloud of uncertainty* in the horizon as the Academic Staff Union Universities (ASUU) has given notice of its intention to go on strike over issues relating to *staff indiscipline* at the University of Ilorin. (FGN)
- EXT 11: I still believe that *dialogue*, along the lines of my suggestion to Dr. Fashiina or similar others that may emanate from your ranks after Exco/membership consultations, is a better option than the current of action. (FGN)
- EXT 12: Do you know, Mr. President, that the refusal by your agent to sign the Agreement in 2008 is a *unilateral abrogation* of the 2001 Agreement? (ASUU)

EXT13: Do you know, Mr. President, that, contrary to the principle of collective bargaining, on June 10, 2009, Deacon Onosode, speaking on behalf of your Government, announced that negotiations were “to be concluded by individual University Councils”? Mr. President, is it not clear that this is a *unilateral declaration* of change of the framework of *negotiation* after negotiation had ended? Mr. President, is it permissible in a game for a player to *change* the *rules* after the game is over and ask the other player to accept the *changed rules* whether they are legitimate or not? (ASUU)

In EXT 1, ASUU expresses its grievance over the arbitrary termination of the employment of its members for participating in National ASUU strike, thereby subjecting them to unjustifiable hardship. Although ASUU has often directly blamed the authorities of University of Ilorin (Unilorin) and University of Nigeria Nsukka (UNN) for this dastardly act, it still feels the FGN has a role to play in resolving the issues since the universities are accountable to the Government. This has indirectly been one of the causes of incessant rift between the FGN and the Union over time, leading to series of strike actions. ASUU considers this as an act of injustice against the union which is a portrayal of the Union’s ideological position.

The lexical terms *job security* in EXT 2 is foregrounded in ASUU’s document to show that, as a matter of principle, ASUU would not tolerate any infringement on its right to job security. In fact, it is the Union’s norm not to allow such. This suggests why ASUU never takes for granted the obnoxious manner in which members of the Union were sacked by the two universities authority because it is a threat to the members’ job as well as the existence of the Union itself. As similarly expressed in EXT 3, ASUU also believes that the *preservation* of the Union is nonnegotiable. Therefore, anything that tends to wipe out the Union from existence is often vehemently resisted by the Union members. These are ideological issues in that they deal with their identity and existence which is often threatened as evident in the case of the sacked members of the Union in Unilorin and UNN. The Government’s apparent indifference to some of these issues breeds conflict between the two parties.

The lexical elements, *breach of...agreement*, used in EXT 4 describes the Government’s unacceptable stance towards its agreement with ASUU. The Union has, on several occasions, accused the FGN of breach of agreement reached with ASUU without coercion. Correspondences between ASUU and the FGN reveal that the Government has defaulted in keeping to terms of agreement it reached with the Union on issues such as non-implementation of agreement on UASS in all federal and state universities, academic staff sacked in Unilorin and UNN and restoration of check-off dues. These, among others, are ideological issues generating conflict between ASUU and the FGN over the years. EXT 5 is a statement and a confirmation of the ideological stance of the union’s beliefs in justice. Despite the reminder sent to the FGN by ASUU, EXT 6 further indicates the FGN’s reluctance over the implementation of its agreement with ASUU. Ideologically, therefore, ASUU deems such Government’s actions unfair.

The term, *criminalise*, as employed by ASUU in EXT 7 signifies that the Government considers the strike action by the Union as a criminal offence. It implies that instead of addressing the cause of the strike action, the Government believes that the strike action is illegal and an offence for which the Union members must be punished, whereas the Union considers it a legitimate action for any aggrieved union. These two ideological points of view appear conflicting. In a related view, EXT 8 also reveals the opinion of the FGN concerning the demands of ASUU which tags the Union as being *insatiate*. This term suggests two different ideological viewpoints: whereas the FGN believes it has done enough to satisfy the ever increasing demands of ASUU, the Union, on the other hand, feels its members are being cheated of their entitlement.

The Government in EXT 9 makes it clearer by referring to ASUU as making *endless demands* causing the Government to have *stretched itself to the limit*. These divergent ideological views between ASUU and FGN have the likelihood of resulting in friction in the relationship between the two parties. This is evident in EXT 10 where there is looming danger posed by the proposed ASUU strike metaphorically depicted as *thick cloud of uncertainty*. It further describes the danger that often attends the strike action by the Union. The ideological differences between these parties are further reflected in Government's assertion that the Unilorin academic members of staff were sacked as a result of *staff indiscipline* whereas ASUU regards it as *injustice*. This seems to widen the ideological chasm between ASUU and the FGN, capable of breeding conflict between the two parties.

The term *dialogue* as used by Prof. Babalola, the Minister of Education, in EXT 11 is a recurring lexical element in the documents of FGN under study. The Government has often resorted to dialogue as a norm whenever disagreement ensues between the two parties. The Government's believe in dialogue is an indication of its ideological trait. In EXT 12, ASUU accuses the FGN of *unilateral abrogation* of the 2001 agreement. This accusation depicts the Government as being unfaithful to the use of dialogue. It would be recalled that the Government believes in *dialogue* which is synonymously termed *negotiation* in EXT 13. But what seems to border ASUU is the Government's unilateral retraction of *rules* of negotiation. Of course, it is commonsensical that it takes two parties to negotiate or dialogue, but it is arbitrary and hegemonic for one party to singlehandedly change the rules of same negotiation. This has often resulted in rancour between the Government and the Union because the Government claims to believe in dialogue but contradicts the very essence of dialogue. These lexical items portray the ideological differences between ASUU and the FGN, and their causes which often culminate in conflict.

Implication and Presupposition

In discourse, not all pieces of information may be supplied. As such, the recipient may have to infer such meanings from previous knowledge or from the socio-cultural knowledge (van Dijk 2004). They may not be generally shared but they are implied. Implication and presupposition are potent devices employed to unveil such meanings as exemplified in the extracts below.

- EXT 14: ...I wish to *warn* that, henceforth, *Government shall withdraw financial support from any university that does not offer academic services to students in the form of teaching.* The personnel cost of *all staff* in the university from the vice-chancellor to the messenger will be affected by this order. This is complementary to the well-known labour law of “*No work no pay*” which every vice-chancellor is hereby requested to obey. (FGN)
- EXT15: The National Universities’ Commission is hereby directed to begin the *immediate implementation* of this directive of Government. (FGN)
- EXT16: We are still actively *addressing* the issue of shortfall in recurrent expenses carried over from 2000 to 2001. (FGN)
- EXT17: In recognition of the key role of the library in university education, Government is *addressing* the poor state of our university libraries by putting in place the National Digital Library Project. (FGN)
- EXT18: We know that you are aware that neither side in a negotiation has the right, according to the principles of collective bargaining, to *unilaterally impose* an award on the other party? Did Govt. not break this principle of collective bargaining when the minister of Education announced a *40% take-it or leave-it award to ASUU?* (ASUU)
- EXT 19: It has come to our union’s notice that the Honorable Minister of Education asked Vice-Chancellors to stop check-off deduction on behalf of ASUU. First, we believe that this goes contrary to the autonomy of the Universities to which your government has so often declared its commitment. But very important, *there is no basis in the law for the stoppage of ASUU check-off.* (ASUU)
- EXT 20: It is our duty to call the Visitor’s attention to the above problems, *which are possible grounds of open conflict* (sic) *between ASUU and the FGN.* It is not ASUU’s wish to generate what could be needless and expensive crisis. Your intervention as visitor will go a very long way to ensure harmony and peace in the Universities. (ASUU)

The implication of the warning in EXT 14 is a threat issued to ASUU to coerce the Union into calling off the strike it earlier embarked upon. The Government even legitimised the threat by referring to available constitutional provision of *No work, no pay*, forgetting that the same Labour Law permits the Union to strike as the last resort to pressing home their demand(s). This act of threat is hegemonic. These different perspectives lead to unrest between the two parties because while the Government believes that ASUU members are not entitled to their pay while on strike for not working, ASUU believes that its members are not supposed to be victimised in any form for embarking on strike.

The implication of the term *immediate implementation* in EXT 15 is that there should be no iota of delay. The Government orders that the *No work, no pay* should take effect immediately, whereas the same Government in EXT 16 and 17 employs a delay strategy of continuously “*addressing* the issue of shortfall in recurrent expenses and the poor state of our university libraries”. The word *addressing* in its participial form implies that whatever action the Government is taking is still in progress, and no clue is given as to when such action will be completed. And judging from antecedent, the Government has often embarked on numerous projects which it never completed until a particular administration ends, which often marks the end of most projects being handled by such administration.

So it appears ideologically selfish, inconsiderate and domineering for such a Government to order immediate implementation of its directive while it employs delay strategy in discharging its responsibility towards the development of the university system. EXT 18 corroborates the hegemonic stance of the Government when it *unilaterally imposes* “a 40% take-it or leave-it award to ASUU”. Such imposition contravenes the principle of collective bargaining, hence, it is domineering. These discursive strategies have further clarified the ideological differences between ASUU and the FGN. In EXT 19, ASUU reveals that the FGN’s discontinuity of *ASUU check-off* is constitutionally baseless. The implication of this revelation is that the FGN’s action towards ASUU is unlawful and unconstitutional. Ideologically, this implies that the FGN has failed in its attitude of not abiding by the very law it made.

In EXT 20, ASUU issued a reminder to the FGN to promptly tackle the problems between them, so as to forestall *possible grounds of open conflict* (sic) *between ASUU and the FGN*. This presupposes that failure of the FGN to take any preventive measures could result in strike or any other kind of conflict between the two parties.

Apparent Empathy

This is a form of face keeping device which the speaker uses to portray the in-groups as being good or caring. It shows sympathy to the victims and redirects the negative feelings that the victims might be having towards the recipient/addressee.

EXT21: End strike in *sympathy* with your students. (FGN)

In EXT 21, the FGN entreats the Union to call-off the strike out of sympathy for the affected students. The Government employs this apparent appeal to empathy to convince the populace that it feels concerned about the students’ plight. It is meant to endear the Government to the heart of the people instead of being blamed for not taking necessary action that will end the strike. This has the ideological tendency of presenting the in-groups as identifying and sympathising with the predicament of the populace while the out-groups will be considered evil.

Number Game

Number and statistics are ways of displaying objectivity. This device presents fact for a more credible expression. Numbers in form of amount and raw statistical data are used to substantiate a speaker’s viewpoint as exemplified below. This strategy is employed to stake credibility.

EXT22: In 2001 alone, government released over N28.4 billion to federal universities for recurrent expenses. (FGN)

EXT23: Government released through the National Universities Commission, a total sum of N5.85 billion for the rehabilitation of facilities and the purchase of equipment. (FGN)

The FGN deploys the strategy of number game in EXT 22 and 23 to substantiate its claim of playing its own role in ensuring the university system in Nigeria is functional. Thus, the “Government released over N28.4 billion for recurrent expenses” and N5.85 for infrastructural facilities in the universities are meant to make the audience believe that the Government is spending much on the higher institutions without commensurate acknowledgement by the Union.

Vagueness

This device manifests when a speaker deliberately avoids being precise in supplying a piece of information. Instead of being specific, speakers go diplomatic in their use of certain terms that will obscure information.

- EXT24: This is aside from the intervention of the Education Tax Fund totaling *several* billions of naira for capital projects. (FGN)
- EXT25: A draft bill on the matter *will be considered* by the Federal Executive Council *a little moment from now*. (FGN)

The FGN is being vague in EXT 24 and 25. The Government uses the indefinite pronoun, *several*, instead of being specific about the exact amount spent on capital project. The same strategy is employed when the Government simply refers to an uncertain futuristic time of *a little moment from now* when a draft bill *will be considered*. Not only is it uncertain whether the bill in favour of ASUU will be passed or not, but even the time to consider the bill is indeterminate. The Government is simply being economical with words in a situation where urgency of action is needed. It needs to be stressed that the activities of a group, to an extent, define its ideology. And this is another delay strategy employed by the Government which ASUU is not always comfortable with. Such delays have often culminated in abandonment of what should have been done in the past, or at best, re-negotiation. Earlier extracts reveal that agreements have several times been breached by the Government which may call for re-negotiation. These are differences that have caused rift between the FGN and ASUU over the years.

Positive Self-presentation and Negative Other-presentation

These are forms of categorization where the in-groups are described positively while out-groups may attract negative description. The in-group is portrayed as being good while the out-group is bad.

- EXT26: What we are getting in return for these efforts is a system that is made unstable by incessant strikes by staff unions. (FGN)
- EXT27: It is morally *wrong* (out-group action is always wrong) for universities to remain closed and expect Government to continue to fund them. (FGN)

- EXT28: You will recall that since the beginning of this administration, no effort has been spared to *rejuvenate* university education and ensure a *rapid restoration* of the system to its *old glory*. (FGN)
- EXT29: We were resolutely determined to *wipe out the decay* in the system and aim for the attainment of the *highest international standard* in university education. (FGN)

In EX 26, the FGN negatively labels ASUU as being responsible for the unstable system through constant strike action. This accusation seems to exonerate the Government as if the Union embarks on strike without a cause. Similarly, in EXT 27, the action of the out-groups is often considered wrong, which is why the Government refers to the strike as being morally *wrong*. The in-group members always tend to point out the defects of the out-group members while concealing theirs which is ideological.

While the Government emphasises what it considers the negativities of the Union, it here emphasises its good things. Therefore, the Government depicts itself as making concerted effort to restore the lost glory of the university system in EXT 28. Moreover, EXT 29 reveals the Government's effort to stamp out the decay in the system. The Government thus portrays itself as having positive plans for the nation's highest educational system with the tendency of ASUU being looked upon as the enemy of Nigerian university education system. Ideologically, therefore, FGN presents itself as being good while ASUU is bad.

Example

Examples are provided in form of story to support a claim and make it more credible to the recipient. It usually comes in form of *Our* good deeds and their bad behavior.

- EXT30: For instance, when Government did not increase salaries in the public sector, a 22% increase over HATISS IV (Harmonised Tertiary Institution Salary Scale) was granted to all staff in federal tertiary institutions in Nigeria across the board in 2001. (FGN)

Following the accusations that the Government is not meeting the demands of academic staff of universities, the FGN in EXT 30, particularly cites an example of exceptional consideration it gave to all staff in federal tertiary institutions by a 22% increase over HATISS IV, even when the salaries of other workers were not increased. This practical example is meant to justify the fact that the Government does own up to its responsibilities. This is another ideological strategy of positive self-presentation.

Hyperbole

This is a discursive device of apparent exaggeration for the purpose of creating a particular effect, usually to emphasise a point.

EXT31: Do you know that the Ministers of Education, Information and Labour told the country that *ASUU demanded 109% increase in salary?* (ASUU)

In EXT 31, ASUU makes bold to refute the erroneous exaggerated information that it demanded 109% increase from the Government. This exaggeration paints the Union black before the Nigerian populace, making people to believe that ASUU has actually gone excessive in its demands. ASUU's attempt in this extract is to rescue its tarnished image before the public. It is also instructive to note that this exaggeration emanates from the negative view the Government has about ASUU. This further clarifies their ideological differences and the resultant conflict.

Conclusion

With the application of Critical Discourse Analysis tools, the texts were interpreted and explained based on the context of available data to enhance understanding and clarify ideology embedded in the discourse of both ASUU and FGN. The study reveals the ideological postures of the two parties in the topical issues raised as well as the discourse strategies and the linguistic features used by both to gain the sympathy from the stakeholders affected by the industrial action/dispute. The ideological differences mark the adversarial relationship between them leading to both parties trying by all means to give favourable images of themselves, portraying themselves as good and the other as bad. This situation offers the critical discourse analysts the opportunity to serve as interventionists in such political environment through their ability to explicate nuance ideologies in such discourse and try to converge such ideologies for the parties and enable them see where to let go in order to bring an end to the conflict raised by their differing ideologies.

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