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A Lexico-Semantics Analysis of Obasanjo's *Open Letter* to Buhari

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Abstract

This study examines a lexico-semantics analysis of Obasanjo's *Open Letter* to Buhari (2019). It identifies the distinctive lexical resources deployed in the letter and explores the semantic strategies therein. It evaluates how Obasanjo's linguistic choices in the letter reflect the broader socio-political concerns of Nigerians. As a qualitative study, it relies solely on library sources and employs insights from systemic functional linguistics by Michael Halliday (2014), Grice Theory of Implicature (1975) and Collocations for its theoretical orientation and focus. Among other things, this study reveals that the letter is characterised by lexical sets related to insecurity, ethnicity, culture, politics and urgency, which form the ideational component of the letter. The letter features meaning relations such as synonymy, antonymy, (hypernymy, meronymy, metonymy, and polysemy. In addition, cohesive devices such as pronouns, conjunctions and connectives, transitional phrases and repetition highlight both the interpersonal and textual components of the letter. Importantly, the use of allusion and certain idiomatic expressions like (a stitch in time saves nine) and (put our house in order) gives the letter a literary hue. This study concludes that Obasanjo's strategic linguistic choices reinforce the letter's persuasive intent, highlighting critical national issues through a blend of formal and informal expressions. The deployment of lexico-semantic resources enhances the letter's communicative effectiveness, making it a political critique and a rhetorical instrument aimed at urging immediate governmental action. Ultimately, the analysis underscores how language functions as a powerful tool for political engagement and societal transformation.

Keywords: Lexico-semantics, Open Letter, National Security, Implicature, Collocation, Meaning Relations, Idiomatic Expressions

Introduction

Lexico-semantics is the study of meaning of words, phrases and lexical units within a language. It deals on how individual words convey meaning, how those meanings relate to one another, and how they contribute to the overall meaning of sentences and discourse. (Allan Baniel Study.com). Letter-writing has long served as a medium for political engagement and historical documentation, offering insights into the personalities, ideologies, and socio-political contexts of their authors. In Nigeria, letters have played a crucial role in fostering dialogue and critiquing leadership, often addressing issues that formal governmental channels neglect. Particularly, Obasanjo's letters are characterised by both rhetorical devices and historical records, providing a unique lens through which to examine the dynamics of power, public accountability, and political philosophy in Nigeria. According to Chief Emeka Anyaoku, a former Secretary-General of the Commonwealth, Obasanjo's letters will find a prominent place in the chapters of Nigeria's contemporary history as informative insights into the national affairs of the country when they were written. The significance of the letters lies in their ability to bridge the gap between leadership and followership, providing candid assessments of Nigeria's trajectory while invoking a moral imperative for change. Scholars such as Ojebode (2005) and Ogunsanwo (2017) have noted that Obasanjo's letters blend personal conviction with rhetorical mastery, positioning them as essential texts for understanding Nigerian political thought and leadership challenges.

This study examines Obasanjo's "*Open Letter* to Buhari" (2019), which addressed national security and economic stagnation. This letter was penned during periods of national crisis, reflecting Obasanjo's role as a statesman who engages critically with contemporary governance issues. Through a lexico-semantic analysis, this study aims to uncover the lexical and rhetorical strategies that underpin the letter's effectiveness, shedding light on its enduring significance in Nigerian and African political thought.

Statement of the Problem

Considerable attempts have been made to explore and analyse Obasanjo's letters from the disciplinary standpoints of discourse analysis and rhetorical studies. However, little or no attention has been given to the lexical resources of these letters, thereby leaving a significant gap in the scholarship on open letters by the former President. This study seeks to fill this gap by focusing on the lexico-semantic features of Obasanjo's "*Open Letter* to Buhari," examining how his choice of words and semantic structures contribute to the persuasive and communicative efficacy of his messages.

Significance of the Study

This study is significant for several reasons. First, it contributes to the growing body of research on Nigerian political communication by providing a focused lexico-semantic analysis of Olusegun Obasanjo's letters, a subject often overshadowed by discourse and rhetorical studies. By doing so, it deepens our understanding of the linguistic techniques employed in political letters to convey complex ideas, inspire action, and critique governance. Second, this study bridges a critical gap in scholarship on epistolary texts by highlighting the role of lexical and semantic resources in shaping political discourse. It sheds light on how language can function as a tool for negotiation, persuasion, and resistance within the Nigerian socio-political context. Third, the findings of this research offer valuable insights for scholars, political analysts, and historians interested in the interplay between language and politics. It underscores the importance of word choice and semantic structures in framing political narratives and influencing public perception. Finally, this study provides a template for analysing the lexico-semantic features of other epistolary texts, contributing to broader

discussions in fields such as sociolinguistics, pragmatics, and African political thought.

Methodology

This research employs a qualitative methodology to investigates the lexico-semantic features of Obasanjo's letter titled "*Open Letter* to Buhari," written on July 15, 2019. The primary aim is to analyse how these features achieve meaning and intended interpretations within the context of Nigerian socio-political discourse. Context is central to this analysis, as linguistic expressions are inherently shaped by the situations and environments in which they are produced. This research identifies and interprets the lexico-semantic features in the letter. These features include the use of metaphor, analogy, repetition, and other rhetorical devices that enhance the persuasive and communicative power of the text. This study adopts the framework of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), which provides a robust theoretical basis for exploring the relationship between language, meaning, and social context. SFL is particularly suitable for examining how Obasanjo's lexical and semantic choices reflect his communicative objectives and socio-political stance

Theoretical Framework

Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), developed by Michael Halliday, provides a comprehensive framework for analysing language as a social semiotic system. This approach is particularly concerned with how linguistic choices are influenced by the context in which language is used, making it highly suitable for the analysis of political and epistolary texts. SFL views language as having three main metafunctions: the ideational, interpersonal, and textual, which interact to create meaning (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2014).

The ideational metafunction focuses on how language represents the world, capturing experiences, events, and concepts. In Obasanjo's letters, this is evident in his choice of lexical items and phrases that articulate socio-political realities, such as "state failure" or "national unity," which reflect his views on Nigeria's governance and development. The interpersonal metafunction examines the relationships between speaker and listener (or writer and reader). As you would see, Obasanjo's letters often employ a tone of authority and moral obligation, using modality and evaluative language to persuade and assert his stance.

The textual metafunction addresses how language elements are organized to produce coherent and effective communication. As you would see, Obasanjo's letters are characterized by their structured arguments and strategic use of rhetorical devices, such as repetition and parallelism, which enhance readability and impact. By applying SFL, this study explores how Obasanjo's lexical and semantic choices achieve specific communicative purposes within the socio-political context of his letters. It highlights how his language constructs meaning, builds relationships and organises discourse to achieve his objectives.

Review of Related Literature

Previous studies have explored the syntactic, rhetorical and pragmatic dimensions of Obasanjo's letters. However, they lack a comprehensive focus on the lexico-semantic strategies employed in the letters. For instance, Olaleye (2022) examines the functional linguistic elements in Obasanjo's July 15, 2019, letter to President Muhammadu Buhari, using a descriptive method within Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics framework. The study identifies syntactic features such as fronting, apposition and long-winding sentences, alongside lexico-semantic elements including binomials, loanwords and

coinages. However, the study's focus on syntactic elements leaves the broader implications of these lexical strategies underexplored.

Also, Adugbe and Adegoju (2020) analyse the rhetorical style of Obasanjo's January 2019 press statement to Muhammadu Buhari, positioning it as a discourse of 'speaking truth to power.' Applying Foucauldian theory, they characterise the text as confrontational and manipulative, demonstrating how Obasanjo uses bold rhetorical strategies to challenge authority. While providing valuable insights into rhetoric, the study overlooks the semantic aspect of his lexical choices. In almost the same pattern, Ekhareafo and Ambrose (2015) explore the role of language as a tool of power and interaction in Obasanjo's letter to Goodluck Jonathan, identifying metaphorical extensions, linguistic irony, and face-threatening acts. Although the study highlights pragmatic and stylistic elements, it does not adequately consider how lexical and semantic features contribute to the letter's overall tone and meaning.

As evident from the foregoing sources, which approximate the open access existing scholarship on Obasanjo's letters, the lexico-semantic aspect of the letters is underexplored. This calls for an in-depth examination of lexical choices and semantic structures in the letters of Obasanjo, especially regarding their functional roles in conveying political messages and shaping public discourse. This study seeks to modestly address this gap by conducting a lexico-semantic analysis of Obasanjo's *"Open Letter* to Buhari.". By scrutinising the interplay of lexical choices and semantic structures, this study sheds light on how language functions as a tool for political expression and influence.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Obasanjo's "*Open Letter* to Buhari" presents a lexical set of insecurity-related, ethnic-related, culture-related, politics-related and urgency-related terms. Each category of terms serves a distinct functional role in constructing a narrative that engages, informs and galvanises the audience. The security-related terms include "insecurity," "problem," "threat," "violence," "disaster," "destruction" and "terrorism". They draw the attention of the letter's audience to the severity of the security issues at hand. As Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde (1998) assert that insecurity-related language often functions as a "securitisation tool," transforming issues into matters of urgent national concern. This research agrees with the assertion of Buzan *et al.* (1998), as the security-related terms in the letter performatively underscore the catastrophic consequences of inaction. Conversely, terms like "protection," "safety," "peace" and "unity" reflect aspirational goals that the writer mandates the addressee.

Ethnic and cultural terms such as "Nigerians," "Fulanis," "Boko Haram" and "ethnic groups" situate the discourse within Nigeria's socio-political landscape. As noted by Achebe (1983), ethnic diversity can either be a source of strength or division, depending on the narrative constructed around it. Terms like "tribe" and "diversity" reflect the multiplicity of identities, while "unity" and "disunity" point to the dichotomy of cohesion versus fragmentation. The metaphorical "Nigeria ship" evokes a shared national destiny, emphasising collective responsibility. Political terms such as "President," "General," "government," "Presidency" and "Congress" establish the formal context of governance and leadership. These terms ground the discussion in the structures of power, as described in Chilton and Schäffner (2002). Words like "opposition" and "stakeholders" show the interplay among various actors, illustrating the complexity of political decision-making.

Terms such as "concerns," "worries," "seriousness," "urgency" and "rapidly" convey the immediacy of the issues. Expressions like "precipice," "tipping point," "catastrophe" and "calamities" evoke a sense of impending crisis, a rhetorical strategy often employed to prompt action (Bitzer, 1968). The phrase "worst happening" further dramatizes the narrative, compelling the audience to consider the stakes involved. Words like "discussion," "debate," "dialogue," "deliberations" and "consultation" emphasize

the importance of participatory governance and inclusive decision-making even in the urgency of averting looming crisis. Terms such as "conference," "inputs," "strategy," "policy" and "roadmap" signal a structured approach to problem-solving, underlining the pragmatic tone of Obasanjo's letters.

Implicature

The term 'implicature' was introduced by Grice (1975) to describe implied meanings beyond what is explicitly stated. In this letter, terms such as "weighty," "worrisome" and "momentous" carry implicatures of urgency and significance, signalling the seriousness of the issues under discussion. These words set a tone that aligns with Obasanjo's persona as a right-thinking statesman, subtly positioning him as a rational and responsible voice amidst political and social unrest. His reference to insecurity implicates a critique of leadership failures in addressing this persistent issue, suggesting an urgent need for intervention to prevent further destabilisation.

In the second paragraph, the focus shifts to disinformation and its potency, with implicatures that highlight the pervasive and destructive impact of misinformation on national cohesion. Obasanjo's critique of nonchalance implicates an indictment of the leadership's indifference, while the imagery of a nation on the "precipice" suggests an impending crisis, if corrective measures are not taken. His use of the term "immodest" conveys disapproval of arrogance or overconfidence, further implicating a call for humility and responsibility among those in power. The third paragraph, which describes a ravaged nation, paints a stark picture of socio-political disarray. The term implicates devastation not just in physical terms but also in moral and institutional integrity, urging recognition of the depth of the challenges. By foregrounding the grievances of a fractured populace, Obasanjo implicates the neglect of citizen concerns as a factor exacerbating instability.

As the letter progresses, Obasanjo employs vivid imagery, with terms such as "cacophony" and "disaffection" implicating the fracturing of a unified national discourse. These lexical choices underscore the chaos resulting from divisive politics and the alienation of the populace, reinforcing his message of the need for unity. In the eleventh paragraph, Obasanjo's call for cohesion carries implicatures of a collective responsibility to rebuild harmony. His acknowledgement of adversaries suggests both internal and external challenges to national stability but also implicates a resilience that can emerge from unity and collective effort. Obasanjo's strategic use of lexis throughout the letter functions as a vehicle for implicatures that critique the current state of the nation while advocating for transformative action. As Gricean theory posits, these implicatures require an audience capable of inferring the implied meanings, suggesting that Obasanjo's letters are directed at an engaged and discerning readership. The interplay between explicit critique and implied solutions positions his discourse as a blend of admonition and hope.

Collocation

Collocations, defined as the habitual co-occurrence of words in language, are a powerful linguistic tool used to convey specific meanings and evoke particular associations (Sinclair, 1991). In the letter, the deliberate use of collocations such as *open letter*, weighty issue, and dialoguing solution demonstrates his strategic rhetorical approach to addressing national concerns. In the title and the first paragraph of the letter, the phrase *"open letter*" is a common collocation that carries implications of public accountability and transparency. As noted by Crystal (2003), such letters are intended to reach a wide audience, addressing not only the immediate recipient but also the public. Obasanjo's use of "weighty issue" further amplifies the seriousness of the subject matter, a collocation that underscores the gravity of the nation's challenges. The term "right-thinking Nigerians" evokes a sense of rationality and moral

responsibility, appealing to a segment of the populace expected to align with Obasanjo's perspective. According to Stubbs (2001), collocations often serve to reinforce shared values within a discourse community. Similarly, phrases such as "collective thinking" and "dialoguing solution" suggest a collaborative approach to problem-solving, reflecting Obasanjo's call for unity and inclusive deliberation.

In paragraph two, the collocation "misinformation and disinformation" highlights the dual threats posed by inaccurate information and deliberate falsehoods, an issue extensively discussed in the digital era (Wardle and Derakhshan, 2017). Obasanjo extends this critique with the use of "fake news," a collocation that has gained prominence in contemporary discourse. He highlights the ethical issues of misrepresentation, a strategy designed to add credence to false narratives. The phrase "attentive audience" implies a deliberate targeting of individuals who are receptive and critical, a rhetorical strategy to challenge the passive consumption of media. Obasanjo's use of collocations reflects a deliberate strategy to construct a persuasive and impactful narrative. As Hoey (2005) suggests, collocations are not arbitrary but serve to activate specific discourses and shape reader interpretation. By leveraging these habitual word pairings, Obasanjo aligns his rhetoric with shared cultural and political understandings, thereby enhancing the persuasive power of his letters.

Meaning Relations

The lexical and semantic relations in the letter reflect Chief Olusegun Obasanjo's deliberate use of language to create nuanced meaning and reinforce his arguments. By employing synonymy, antonym, hyponymy, metonymy, and polysemy, he ensures that his message connects with a broad audience, appeals to logic and emotions, and underscores the complexity of the issues at hand. Below is a discussion of these meaning relations.

Synonymy

Synonymy involves using different words with similar meanings to emphasise a point or avoid redundancy. For example: "Nonchalance" and "indifference" (Paragraph 2) convey a lack of concern or care. These terms highlight the complacency of individuals or institutions in addressing national issues. As Cruse (1986) observes, synonymy provides lexical variation, enhancing rhetorical impact while maintaining clarity. "Insecurity" and "issue of life and death" (Paragraphs 1, 2, & 4) intensify the urgency of the security discourse, with the latter phrase amplifying the existential nature of the threat. "Unity" and "cohesion" (Paragraph 12) suggest togetherness and solidarity, a recurring theme in Obasanjo's rhetoric aimed at fostering national harmony.

Antonym

Antonym involves pairing words with opposite meanings to establish contrast and clarify distinctions: "Confidence" and "distrust" (Paragraph 12) represent opposing states of belief. The juxtaposition underscores the fragile relationship between citizens and leadership. As Lyons (1977) notes, antonym helps delineate the spectrum of meaning within discourse. "Victory" and "non-victory" (Paragraph 4) frame success and failure in binary terms, simplifying complex political outcomes for rhetorical effect. "Inclusion" and "exclusion" (Paragraph 11) highlight opposing governance approaches, with inclusion symbolising participatory leadership and exclusion denoting marginalisation.

Hyponymy

Hyponymy establishes hierarchical relationships, linking general terms to their specific instances: "Terrorism" as a hyponym of "criminality" (Paragraph 12) identifies terrorism as a subset of broader

criminal acts. As Yule (2020) explains that these relationships organise lexical categories, aiding comprehension. “Violence,” “disaster,” and “disunity” as hyponyms of “calamities” (Paragraph 6) demonstrate how calamities encompass diverse adverse outcomes, painting a comprehensive picture of national challenges.

Meronymy

Metonymy describes part-whole relationships, linking components to a larger entity: “Citizens” and “government” (Paragraph 9) reflect the interconnectedness between the governed and governing bodies. Citizens, as part of the government, play a critical role in democratic systems. “Political, economic, social, psychological, and military” components (Paragraph 12) represent the multidimensional approach required to address national issues, emphasising holistic solutions.

Metonymy

Metonymy involves using a related concept to stand in for another: “The Presidency” (Paragraphs 6 & 12) refers to the President, focusing attention on leadership while invoking the broader office. “The House of Lords” (Paragraph 6) symbolises the UK parliamentary body, serving as a shorthand for governance structures, as Lakoff and Johnson (1980) point out.

Polysemy

Polysemy addresses words with multiple related meanings, allowing for layered interpretations: “Scar” (Paragraph 3) may denote a physical mark or the lingering impact of past events, connecting individual trauma to collective national experience. “Window of opportunity” (Paragraph 13) conveys a figurative meaning of a favourable moment for action, underscoring urgency and possibility.

Cohesive Devices

The cohesive devices employed in the selected letters by Chief Olusegun Obasanjo contribute significantly to their rhetorical effectiveness, creating coherence and clarity. These devices include pronouns, conjunctions and connectives, transitional phrases, and lexical repetition, which ensure the text is well-organised and engages the reader.

Pronouns

Pronouns establish the relationship between the writer and the audience: “I” and "me." These first-person pronouns assert the author’s personal involvement, authority, and perspective throughout the letter. According to Fairclough (2001), first-person pronouns in political discourse enhance credibility and foster a direct connection with the audience. “You” and “your,” the second-person pronouns, address President Muhammadu Buhari directly, fostering a conversational tone and drawing the reader into the dialogue. With this, this researcher agrees with Hyland (2005) that second-person pronouns help engage the reader and personalise the discourse.

Conjunctions and Connectives

Conjunctions and connectives play a crucial role in linking ideas and ensuring the logical flow of the letter. For instance, “because” explains reasoning and highlights the significance of making the letter public (Paragraph 1), aligning with the analysis of Halliday and Hasan (1976) where causative conjunctions are shown to establish clear cause-effect relationships. “And” is used throughout the letter to connect ideas and ensure continuity while “but” introduces contrast, as in the author’s assertion of

ownership of their words while disowning false attributions (Paragraphs 2, 5, & 9). This enhances the argumentative structure of the letter. “Therefore” indicates conclusions and consequences, reinforcing logical reasoning (Paragraph 1). “Also” adds information, enriching the narrative with additional examples and concerns (Paragraph 5).

Transitional Phrases

Transitional phrases create smooth shifts between topics and strengthen the narrative structure. “Since…” establishes cause-effect relationships, explaining why the letter is open (Paragraph 1). “Without being immodest…” introduces the author’s credentials (Paragraph 3). “For over ten years…” signals a temporal transition, providing context for the Boko Haram crisis (Paragraph 4). “Today…” shifts focus to the current state of the herdsmen/farmers crises, highlighting their urgency (Paragraph 5).

Lexical Repetition

Lexical repetition underscores key themes and enhances emphasis. The word “issue” is repeated 14 times to draw attention to the central problem of insecurity. Repetition in discourse, as explained by Tannen (2007) reinforces ideas and ensures they connect with the audience. “Nigeria” is mentioned 23 times to stress national identity and the importance of addressing security challenges. “Security” is used 8 times to focus on the core problem and the urgency of solutions.

Tropes of Meaning

The use of allusion and idiomatic expressions in this letter exemplifies how tropes of meaning contribute to the rhetorical and persuasive quality of political discourse. These elements establish connections to historical events, cultural wisdom, and vivid imagery, enhancing the impact of the message.

Allusion

Allusion is a figure of speech that references historical, cultural, or literary elements to add depth to a narrative or argument. In the letter: “For over ten years, for four of which you have been the captain of the ship, Boko Haram has menacingly ravaged the land..." (Paragraph 4). The phrase “captain of the ship” metaphorically alludes to Buhari’s leadership role, likening his presidency to steering a ship through tumultuous waters. As noted by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), such metaphors evoke shared experiences, making abstract concepts more relatable. This reference underscores Buhari’s accountability in managing national security, framing his tenure within the broader narrative of Nigeria’s challenges with Boko Haram. Another allusion is “It happened to Yugoslavia not too long ago.” (Paragraph 10) This historical allusion invokes the disintegration of Yugoslavia, marked by ethnic conflicts and political collapse. It serves as a cautionary parallel, warning against the consequences of unresolved tensions. Allusions to history often function as implicit arguments, as they draw on widely known events to strengthen the writer’s position (Levinson, 1983).

Idiomatic Expressions

Idiomatic expressions convey ideas in culturally resonant ways, making the message both accessible and memorable: “A stitch in time saves nine” in paragraph 7 implies the value of addressing problems early to prevent escalation. As a widely recognised idiom, it appeals to common wisdom, connecting with a diverse audience. Proverbs in political discourse often enhance credibility by aligning with communal values (Mieder, 2004). “Put our house in order” in paragraph 6 suggests resolving internal

conflicts or improving organisation. It evokes imagery of domestic responsibility, making the message relatable to citizens who value orderliness and accountability. “Whims and caprices of any government” in paragraph 11 highlights the arbitrary or erratic governmental decisions. Its idiomatic nature intensifies criticism of perceived governance failures, leveraging cultural familiarity to emphasise the need for stability.

Discussion of Findings

In this *open letter*, former President Olusegun Obasanjo employs a range of lexico-semantic strategies to construct a coherent representation of Nigeria’s security challenges. The letter is characterised by lexical sets related to insecurity, ethnicity, culture, politics, and urgency, which form the ideational component of the text. References to historical events, such as the Nigerian Civil War and Boko Haram insurgency, serve as contextual anchors that reinforce the gravity of the issues addressed. The use of evaluative adjectives like “weighty” and “very serious” amplifies the severity of the concerns raised, while personal anecdotes create vivid mental images that highlight the dire consequences of insecurity. Obasanjo’s linguistic choices reflect both interpersonal and textual cohesion. Meaning relations such as synonymy, antonymy, hypernymy, meronymy, metonymy, and polysemy contribute to the text’s coherence, while cohesive devices– pronouns, conjunctions and connectives, transitional phrases, and repetition–enhance its logical flow. Additionally, the strategic use of allusions and idiomatic expressions, such as “a stitch in time saves nine” and “put our house in order,” lends the letter a literary hue, reinforcing its rhetorical appeal. The formal tone of the letter, coupled with its use of standard English and grammatically structured sentences, conveys both respect and assertiveness. Emotional appeals, rhetorical devices like repetition and parallelism, and the deliberate blending of formal and informal expressions enhance the letter’s persuasive intent. Structurally, the letter begins with a clear articulation of concerns, supports its claims with historical references and personal experiences, and concludes with a compelling call to action. Ultimately, Obasanjo’s linguistic and rhetorical strategies ensure that the letter functions as both a political critique and a persuasive instrument for urging immediate governmental action.

Conclusion

The study of the lexical, semantic, and rhetorical features of this letter reveals a masterful use of language to engage with the political realities of Nigeria. Through his strategic choice of lexis and discourse structures, Obasanjo crafts a message that not only critiques the state of the nation but also calls for immediate action and national unity. The use of implicature and cohesive devices strengthens the urgency of the message, ensuring that the reader understands the gravity of the issues presented. By employing allusions, idiomatic expressions, and various tropes of meaning, Obasanjo connects abstract political issues to tangible, culturally resonant ideas, making his argument more accessible and persuasive. Moreover, the study highlights the interplay between synonymy, antonymy, and semantic relations such as hyponymy and meronymy in his discourse. These linguistic tools enable the author to present complex ideas succinctly and with greater emotional impact. The careful employment of pronouns and transitional phrases adds to the fluidity of the argument, guiding the reader through the different facets of the issues at hand.

Ultimately, the study underscores the importance of language as both a tool for political critique and a means of rallying citizens towards collective action. Obasanjo’s letters serve not only as vehicles for political expression but as a call for national introspection and change. The findings suggest that

understanding the linguistic choices in such political texts can offer valuable insights into how language shapes political discourse, influences public opinion, and, perhaps, even drives national policy changes.

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