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**| RESEARCH ARTICLE**

## **A Pragmatic Analysis Of Accommodation In Selected Political Discourses In Nigeria**

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**| ABSTRACT**

This paper examines accommodation in selected political discourses in the Nigerian political landscape. The study begins by looking at how the lack clear political ideology and/or the total disregard for it by some Nigerian politicians them to defect from one political party to another and how they employ the nuances of language to prove their allegiance to the new political parties/political associates on the one hand while on the other, using language to distance themselves from their former political parties/former political associates. The data utilized for this study was obtained from secondary sources comprising newspapers and social media handles such as twitter currently X. After the data analysis using Howard Giles's (1973), Communication Accommodation Theory as its framework, the study established that politicians who defect from one political party to another converge their speeches to show absolute allegiance and gain acceptance in their new party while also using language , to distance themselves from their former political parties. The findings also revealed that in the face of rampant defections, defectors are sometimes pressured into going the extra mile to prove their allegiance to their new political parties or associate by demonizing their former political parties and/or associates whom they once praised to high heavens. The paper concludes by condemning the exploitation of language to surreptitiously pursue personal interests under the guise of contributing to nation building and deepening of democracy.

**| KEYWORDS**

Pragmatics, Political Discourse, Communication Accommodation Theory

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### **1. Introduction**

The indispensability of language in human communication cannot be overemphasized. Humans have continuously employed language to meet their communicative needs from the seemingly genuine to questionable ones. While the use of language for either of these needs cuts across all spheres of the human life, its indispensability in the field of politics is quite remarkable. Language has been utilised as a powerful tool by political gladiators in the furtherance of their public and personal interests. These interests, especially the personal ones are veiled by the use of language to make them appear like serving the interests of the public. This practice is most noticeable when politicians defect from one political party to another.

Defection of politicians which has become a common feature among Nigerian politicians goes beyond simply dumping a political party for the one with higher prospects. These defections often come with the pressure by the defectors to prove their allegiance to their newly found political parties by both their conduct and speech. Consequently, these politicians employ the use of language in distancing themselves from their former political parties while strengthening bonds with those they have defected to. The assertion expressed above is captured more succinctly by Fape in Adesanya (2018: para 34) who boldly declared that:

Many politicians today are mere chameleons and fair-weather politicians. It is very sad for somebody to have been part of an administration or government for 16 years and because he has lost out to another political party in election, to now be describing his former political party as corrupt, reckless or irresponsible. How come that they have quickly forgotten that they were part of the

corruption, recklessness and irresponsibility of past administrations? "It is only in Nigeria this can happen, where people have no sense of shame and are only out for personal monetary gain and not to serve the overall good of their country.

Similarly, an excerpt from one of Nigeria's notable politicians named Femi Fani Kayode's (FFK) open letter to Dele Momodu who had left the All Progressive Congress for the People's Democratic Party while he FFK left the PDP for the APC corroborates the above assertion thus:

In 2015 you were with the APC and at the forefront of the campaign for a Buhari presidency whilst I was in PDP and proudly stood and spoke for President Goodluck Jonathan. Today you are with the same PDP you fought against in 2015 and are speaking for Vice President Atiku Abubakar whilst I am in the same APC I opposed in 2015, and I am speaking for Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu. He went on to add that, 'My choice to speak for APC and Tinubu had nothing to do with morals. It's a question of choice. It's my choice. When I was in the PDP, I fought against those that were against my party. Now I'm no longer in the PDP and I'm in the APC, I'll fight against those that are against my party,' Fani-Kayode said. (Daily Times Nigeria 18 August 2022).

In what he termed a lack of political ideology, Most Reverend Olusina Fape, the Archbishop of the Ecclesiastical Province of Lagos quoted by Adesanya (2018: 1) opined that: "Because of lack of clear political ideology, ...some politicians who are considered as rogues, corrupt and wanted for the evils they did in one party quickly run to another party." He further opined that, "I pity many of our politicians who have wasted the destiny of this nation, thinking that they are clever, jumping from one political party to another, claiming they are on a rescue mission; when in actual fact, they are only on a mission of self-survival and relevance...." It is against this background that this paper seeks to find out how these politicians use language to converge with their new political parties/associates and diverge from their former political parties/associates.

## **2. Literature Review**

The review of literature borders on the key concepts in this research comprising pragmatics, political discourses and Communication Accommodation Theory

### **2.1 Pragmatics**

Language has been known to differ according to the context within which it is being used. According to Taguchi and Kadar (2023:1), pragmatics is a field of linguistics concerning linguistic forms and the meaning they produce in a social context. Meaning therefore can be said to be largely context dependent. Pragmatics has also been defined by Kofi Agyekum (2021:1-2) as a way of investigating how sense can be made out of certain texts even when the text seems to be either incomplete or has a different meaning to what is really intended. To Huang (2007:2), pragmatics is the "systematic study of meaning by virtue of or dependent on, the use of language." The use of language is often influenced by factors such as context which happens to be at the core of the field of pragmatics. Consequently, Slotka (2022: 1602) opines that pragmatics is a branch of linguistics that investigates the way language is tied to the contexts in which it is used. Obitube (2014:14) summarises the tenets of pragmatics thus: In all, the interest of pragmatics is the study of the meaning a speaker projects with regard to his beliefs and intentions, the context upon which meaning is derived (as context influences the meaning of any message conveyed), the shared knowledge about the identity of the speaker, time and place of speech event, the study of the underlying meaning expressed (i.e., implicatures of statements), the determinants of a speaker's language choice, as well as, the demarcation between what a speaker says and the meaning(s) he intends to express or the meaning(s) which he does not intend to pass through to the listener(s). The use of language in politics which differs tremendously from that used in other fields exemplifies the definitions of pragmatics examined above. Politicians in general and those in Nigeria have mastered the art of manipulating language to either converge with or diverge from their interlocutors which in the scontext of this paper can be fellow politicians and/or political parties. Politicians use language to portray different meanings.

### **2.2 Communication Accommodation Theory**

Communication accommodation theory (CAT) is a theory of communication, developed by Howard Giles (1979) concerning the behavioural changes that people make to "attune their communication to their partners and the extent to which people perceive their partners as appropriately attuning to them" (Bates, James; Taylor, Alan (2016:1-7). It seeks to explain "... the motivations underlying certain shifts in people's speech styles during social encounters and some of the social consequences arising from them" (Gallois, Cyndy; Ogay, Tania; Giles, Howard 2005). It also seeks to explain and predict when, how, and why individuals engage in interactional adjustments with others, as well as recipients' inferences, attributions, and evaluations of, and responses to, them (Giles et al., 1991; Soliz et al., 2022). Particularly, it focuses on the cognitive and affective processes underlying individuals' convergence and divergence through speech. The communication accommodation theory has been broadened to include not only speech but also the "non-verbal and discursive dimensions of social interaction" (Giles, Coupland & Coupland 1991).

According to Hickey (2014:12), Accommodation as a concept was later applied to the field of sociolinguistics, in which linguistic accommodation or simply accommodation is the process of individuals adapting their style of speaking to become more like the style of their conversational partners."

"Communication accommodation theorists focus on the patterns of convergence and divergence of communication behaviors, particularly as they relate to people's goals for social approval, communication efficiency, and identity" (Gallois, Cindy; Giles, Howard 2015). "Convergence" refers to strategies through which individuals adapt to each other's communicative behaviors to reduce these social differences (Giles, Howard; Coupland, Joustine; Coupland, N. 1991). "Convergence" is more likely to occur when "...the perceived costs for doing so are proportionally lower than the anticipated rewards" (Gallois, Cyndy; Ogay, Tania; Giles, Howard 2005). These views explain why most politicians, through their utterances demonise their former political parties and political associates in a bid to remove as many differences that may exist between them and their newfound political associates and parties to better position them for appointments or contracts. "Divergence" on the other hand refers to the instances in which individuals accentuate the speech and non-verbal differences between themselves and their interlocutors (Giles, Coupland & Coupland 1991)

According to Giles et al. (1991), accommodation can take three primary forms: Convergence, Divergence, and Maintenance. Considering the nature of this study, our focus shall be on convergence and divergence which have been briefly discussed below:

### **2.3 Convergence**

Convergence refers to the process through which an individual shifts speech patterns in interaction so that they more closely resemble the speech patterns of speech partners (Giles, Howard; Smith, Philip 1979). People can converge through many features of communication such as their use of language, their "pronunciation, pause and utterance lengths, vocal intensities, non-verbal behaviors, and intimacy of self-disclosures" (Giles and Smith, 1979, 46), but they do not necessarily have to converge simultaneously at all of these levels. In fact, people can both converge at some levels and diverge through others at the same time (Giles, Howard; Coupland, Joustine; Coupland, N. 1991).

The desire to make social interaction flow subsequently results in convergence. Many people tend to converge with one another because they want to feel a sense of fitting in and experience social approval to the people around them. Thus, when one individual shifts speech and non-verbal behaviors in order to assimilate to the other, it can result in a more favourable appraisal of him, that is: when convergence is perceived positively it is likely to enhance both the conversation and the attraction between the listener and the speaker. For this reason, it could be said that convergence reflects "an individual's desire for social approval (Giles, Howard; Coupland, Joustine; Coupland, N. 1991)" from his interlocutor, and that the greater the individual's need for social approval, the more likely he or she is to converge. This position is shared by Giles, Howard; Ogay, Tania (2007:296) who also believe that an important motive for convergence is the desire to gain approval from one another. Consequent upon the above submission, politicians do their possible best to converge with their new political associates and political parties through their conduct and discourses while also distancing themselves from their former political parties and political associates.

### **2.4 Divergence**

Divergence is a linguistic strategy whereby a member of a speech community accentuates the linguistic differences between themselves and their interlocutor (Giles, Howard; Coupland, Joustine; Coupland, N. 1991). Divergence can be accomplished in one of two ways: (1) purposefully not changing your communication behaviour because it is already different from that of your communication partner or (2) changing your communication behaviour so that it is different from that of your communication partner when it would naturally be similar (Infante, Dominic A.; Rancer, Andrew S.; Avtgis, Theodore A. 2009). In the case of the politicians under review, the latter is the case as they change their communication behaviour so that their former political parties know that they are no longer their member. The motive lying behind divergence is precisely the desire to emphasize distinctiveness from one's interlocutor, usually on the basis of group membership (Giles, Howard; Ogay, Tania 2007:296). The Communication Accommodation framework has been adopted because of how its two forms of convergence and divergence aptly explain the different positions taken and expressed by a single politician at different intervals using language to either converge or diverge with and from their current and former political parties/ political associates respectively.

### **2.5 Political Discourse**

The choice or use of language is often determined by the purpose it is meant to serve. In the field of politics which is often characterised by the struggle to gain the power to dominate, control and exercise authority over others, the choice of language is often that which meets the afore mentioned needs. Consequently, political discourse refers to discourse that centres on politics and governance. Political discourse is seen as discourse or speech that is "associated with either struggle for power or maintenance/control of it" (Sharndama, 2015, p.9). Dijk (1997) posits that political discourse is about "the text and talk of professional politicians or political institutions, such as presidents and prime ministers and other members of government, parliament or political parties, both at the local, national and international levels. According to Karasik (2016:p57) the discourse of politicians and statesmen, concentrates around the supporting concept of power and creates a context that describes the actors, their actions, the objects under discussion, circumstances, time, and the place of events. Political discourse combines both public and "backstage" political speech activity of people exercising power or fighting for state power, as well as discussing political problems in the media and in the society in general. In every political discourse, there are speakers who are known as "political

actors”, who produce the discourses of politics, and “political recipients”, the general masses. The discourses being examined in this study are those of politicians who walked the corridors of power in Nigeria before.

### 3. Methodology

The data for this study was obtained from secondary sources comprising newspaper articles and tweets which were collected from the Twitter (currently X) handles of selected politicians.

#### 3.1 Data Presentation and Analyses

For ease of identification and reference, the data have been tabularized and also tagged data 1,2,3,4 and column 1,2,3,4

#### Datum 1/Table 1

Presentation of Datum/Table 1 on evidence of accommodation in Femi Fani -Kayode’s discourse while in the People’s Democratic Party (PDP) and divergence after defecting to the All Progressive Congress (APC)

<b>Discourse showing Convergence/ Accommodation to the People’s Democratic Party as a Member of the party</b>	<b>Discourse Showing Divergence from the People’s Democratic Party after Defecting from the PDP to the All People’s Congress</b>
<p><b>Column 1</b></p> <p>“I am committed to opposing APC and those that are in their ranks for the rest of my natural life and I will never join them no matter what! They are nothing but darkness whilst I stand for the light of God and the truth; there can be NO fellowship between light and darkness....With what I have witnessed, I would rather die than join a filthy, rat-infested sinking ship like the Almajiri People’s Party (APC).”</p> <p>“Those that claim that I have joined them &amp; that seek to link my good name to such a blood-letting, accursed political association of Boko Haramist, Fulani herdsmen, genocidal maniacs, ethnic cleansers, mass murders, ethnic supremacists, religious bigots, cow-lovers and corrupt looters that have brought nothing but death, division, misery, poverty, incompetence, shame and destruction to our nation and our people will burn in hell forever” (Data obtained from @real FFK, 11:14am 15 Dec 19 Twitter for Android)</p>	<p><b>Column 2</b></p> <p>“The point is that I felt it was time to do the right thing, to put Nigeria first and appreciate the efforts that have been made, particularly in the last couple of years in terms of security, fighting insurgency and terrorism.</p> <p>“It is not always negative and when the time is right, we change direction to join forces and join hands to move the country forward.</p> <p>“Doing this doesn’t mean we are enemies to anybody. Even if we are in another party, the PDP or any other party or group, we can still work together across party, regional, ethnic or religious lines.” (Fani-Kayode in Ayodele,2022 para 7)</p>

#### Analysis of Data/Table 1

While in the People’s Democratic Party (PDP), the politician in order to show complete convergence to the party vowed never to join the then major opposition party which he referred to as “ darkness, filthy, rat-infested sinking ship...blood-letting, accursed political association of Boko Haramist, Fulani herdsmen, genocidal maniacs, ethnic cleansers, mass murders, ethnic supremacists, religious bigots, cow-lovers and corrupt looters...” as captured in “column 1 in order to distance himself from the party. The story however changed when the same politician defected to the same political party that he had once vowed never to be a part of. In order to show his allegiance to the new party (APC), he still used speech to prove his allegiance to the party he had vowed never to join except “over his dead body.”

#### Data 2/Table 2

Data Presentation Showing both Divergence and Convergence against the All Progressive Congress as a Member of the People’s Democratic Party and After Defection from PDP to APC

<b>Discourse Showing Accommodation with the PDP and Divergence against the APC on its Intention to Field a Muslim/Muslim Presidential Tiket</b>	<b>Discourse showing Convergence with the APC on the Muslim/Muslim Presidential Ticket by the same politician as a Member of the APC</b>
<p><b>Column 1</b></p> <p>“The Muslim/Muslim ticket was their plan all along and I was the first to expose and oppose it when I was in the APC. That is why I left them.... Obj opposed it. Saraki did same behind the scenes. El-Rufai did NOT oppose a Muslim/Muslim ticket.</p>	<p><b>Column 2</b></p> <p>....“Secondly, we spoke about Islamisation. Since I joined APC, I realised that, like I said earlier, things have completely changed.</p>

<p>It is just that he did not want Tinubu. He wanted Fashola. I discussed this matter deeply with every single name I mentioned here when I was with them. The whole thing sickened <a href="#">me. (@real FFK. April 27, 2017)</a></p> <p><b>NOTE: In all fairness to FFK, he had maintained this position even while in the APC as shown in the excerpt below</b></p> <p>.....All the clever rationalisations and justifications in the world for presenting a Muslim/Muslim ticket will not enable us to escape this ugly tag. As a matter of fact, they will simply confirm it.... If it does not matter anymore then why not present a Christian/Christian ticket? If it does not matter anymore then why give the impression that you are interested in the Christian vote? If it does not matter anymore then why the resistance in some quarters against a Christian presidential candidate for the party?....One thing that I will never do, no matter what, is to allow anyone or any group of people to denigrate or insult my faith or the adherents of my faith and relegate us to the position of second-class citizens...Make no mistake about it; I speak the minds of millions of self-respecting and discerning Christians in this country when I say these things, and I have consulted very widely before saying them.</p> <p>I say them because I am a committed and loyal party member who wants the party to fare well in the 2015 elections and who wants them to win. I will not sit back and remain silent when I see such a precious vehicle heading for the rocks and when I see it courting self-destruction. Only the irresponsible, the sycophantic, and the opportunistic would do that together with those who have a hidden agenda, and who do not give a damn about the consequences of this reckless course of action on the fortunes and image of the party.</p> <p>If those that disagree with me wish to expel me from the party for saying so, please, go ahead.... ( APC and the strange dream of Muslim/Muslim Ticket (Part 2), By Femi Fani-Kayode April 9, 2014 Premium Times</p>	<p>"A situation whereby in this country today we have, no less than 20 Christian governors. The whole of the south-west has Christian governors, except for Osun state, which has now changed because we have a Christian governor who is coming in.</p> <p>"A situation like that tells you clearly that the country cannot be Islamised and neither is our party APC interested in that. What is happening as far as I'm concerned is this, we have reformed and moving forward.</p> <p>"Same faith ticket was a challenge, but we looked into it. I prayed about it, I consulted, I spoke to Kashim because all along my position has been – it all depends on who the vice-president is.</p> <p>"It is not about the faith. It is about the individual and if the individual is a Muslim that I can live with, I'm prepared to live with that. I spoke to this man and Tinubu.</p> <p>"The candidate himself returned schools to the missionaries in Lagos something that had not been done before. The candidate gave land to so many of these mega churches in Lagos when he was governor and since that time, they have been granted licences to build churches.</p> <p>,"The point is that I felt it was time to do the right thing, to put Nigeria first and appreciate the efforts that have been made, particularly in the last couple of years in terms of security, fighting insurgency and terrorism.</p> <p>"It is not always negative and when the time is right, we change direction to join forces and join hands to move the country forward...." (Fani-Kayode in Ayodele,2022 para 5-7)</p>
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**Analysis of Data 1/Table 1**

The data in the table above shows elements of both convergence and divergence on the same topic by the same politician who had initially strongly maintained his opposition to fielding a Muslim/Muslim ticket. This stance contributed to his defection from the All Progressive Congress (APC) to the Peoples’ Democratic Party (PDP). As soon as he defected from the PDP to the APC in 2022, he recanted and threw his weight behind the Muslim/Muslim ticket that his new party had fielded. Consequently, we see that the politician has used language to converge with his new political party by supporting the Muslim/Muslim ticket which he vehemently opposed while in the PDP and in fact, while with the APC in its early days.as shown in the data 1 with both political parties.

**Data 2/Table 2**

<b>Data showing Divergence to the Former Governor of Borno State and the Current Vice President of Nigeria</b>	<b>Data showing Convergence the Former Governor of Borno State and Current Vice President of Nigeria by the same politician</b>
<b>Column 1</b>	<b>Column 2</b>

<p>"In Maiduguri the citizens know that Gov. Shettima is the Boko Haram boss and the keeper of Chibok girls"- Ali Modu Sheriff. Shettima is indeed the keeper of the Chibok girls whilst Sheriff himself is the founder and father of Boko Haram. Both men are murderous, evil scum @realFFK 10:13 AM · Dec 14, 2017</p> <p>... The Gov. of Borno wept about the plight of his people in the hands of Boko Haram during a meeting with Buhari. The truth is until he confesses about the role, he played in the abduction of the Chibok girls and tells us why he and friends started Boko Haram his tears will flow.(Femi Fani-Kayode (@realFFK) January 8, 2019</p>	<p>"Go to the north, the vice, that is Shettima himself, I met him for over three hours, we discussed. I looked into the man's eyes and raised a number of pertinent questions which I needed to be satisfied with, and I was satisfied with his answers.</p> <p>"He has built more churches in Borno state than any other before him and since that time and he won the confidence of many Christians. So, the issue of Islamisation no longer arises." (Fani-Kayode in Ayodele,2022 para 7)</p>
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**Analysis of Data 2/Table 2**

The data above shows elements of convergence and divergence to the former governor of Borno state and the current Vice president by the same politician. Under **column 1**, the former governor was called unprintable names by the politician who accused him of sponsoring a deadly terrorist organization which was mostly Christian school girls from a Christian dominated boarding school in a Christian town of Chibok. Some of these girls are still in captivity till date. The politician used discourse to diverge from the Vice President and align with the then ruling political party, the PDP. All this changed as soon as the politician defected to the APC where the same person he had once criticized and called unprintable names became the vice presidential candidate for the party. Thus, it can be seen that, through the data presented above, the politician was able to prove his allegiance to his new party the APC, and also distance himself from his former party.

**Data 3/Table 3**

<p><b>Data Showing Accommodation to the Former President of Nigeria</b></p>	<p><b>Data showing divergence to the Former President by the same Politician</b></p>
<p><b>Column 1</b></p> <p>Buhari is an upright, indomitable integrity-packaged Nigerian, trying to stain him is like boxing the wind.(Senator Dino Melaye (SDM) @_dinomelaye 02 Nov 12)</p> <p>...80% of the PDP hired crowd purchased to boo Buhari in London are not Nigerians. Change is unchangeable. Otuoke by road come May 29 2015. (Senator Dino Melaye (SDM) @_dinomelaye, 26 Feb 15)</p> <p>Those who want Buhari to fail will be disappointed bc God will rescue Nigeria (19 Jul 15)</p> <p>Only those who refuse to take their injections with psychotic doctors will accuse Buhari of despotism (Senator Dino Melaye (SDM) @_dinomelaye, 10 Sep 15)</p>	<p><b>Column 2</b></p> <p>.... President Buhari is not intellectually, emotionally, physically and mentally equipped to govern this country...(Senatore Dino Melaye, 23 November, 2018, Osasu Symposium in Abuja )</p> <p>"I apologise to God almighty who is the supreme controller of the universe and Nigerians for supporting Buhari....The Buhari agenda is the greatest scam that came out of Africa. The Buhari presidency in 2015 is the greatest scam that came out of Africa.... The subject Buhari is the greatest scam that came out of Africa. Once I was blind, now I can see. How can one remain in a political party and support the presidency with what is happening today in Nigeria? I regret seriously supporting that because we were scammed.... "We are in a very precarious situation that Nigeria is extremely sick; it is like a car being driven by a drunk driver...." (Dino Melaye, PM News Nigeria <a href="https://pmnewsnigeria.com">https://pmnewsnigeria.com</a> &gt; Headlines 20th March, 2021By Nimot Adetola Sulaimon)</p>

**Analysis of Data 3/Table 3**

The data presented above shows the same politician used speech to converge with Nigeria's former president when he was a member of the then president's political party-All People's Congress (APC). In fact, he served as the president's spokesperson during his campaign for president. During this period, the politician used speech to show his allegiance to the president and his party. Upon his defection, he used the same speech to distance himself from the president and the party as shown in "Column 2."

**Data 4/Table 4**

Data showing Accommodation to the All Progressive Congress (APC) while defecting from People’s Democratic Party (PDP) 2014	Speech Showing Accommodation to the People’s Democratic Party while dumping the All Progressive Congress (APC) by the Same Politician
<p>“It is sad that all the sectors in the country are dangerously drifting and not working as expected. We need to act urgently to rescue the nation. What is it that is right in Nigeria at the moment? Is it education, security, aviation or health? The onus is on me as a statesman to offer my services for our country and salvage it.</p> <p>“If we all agreed that things are not right, what is next to do is how to remedy the situation. APC is ready to offer leadership and direction to move Nigeria forward. We are ready to rescue Nigeria from collapse. This is achievable with the support of Nigerians”, (Atiku, 2018)</p>	<p>“I think the people of Nigeria need to sit down and evaluate APC and PDP. There is nothing about APC,”</p> <p>“...injustice and failure to abide by its own constitution, which had dogged the then PDP, have now been replicated in the APC. A party that does not take the youth into account is a dying party. The future belongs to young people. I admit that I and others who accepted the invitation to join the APC were eager to make positive changes for our country that we fell for a mirage. Can you blame us for wanting to put a speedy end to the sufferings of the masses of our people?”</p> <p>“You can definitely acknowledge that since the return of democracy, we have not had a worst period than now, whether in terms of economy, whether in terms of unity, whether in terms of security, this is the worst time since 1999.”</p> <p>“The misadministration of the APC government is very evident. We have the highest record of unemployment since 1999, we have the highest inflation, we have multiple exchange rates that discourage foreign investment. We have the highest level of insecurity since 1999.”</p> <p>“People are angrier, people are poorer more than at any time. Nigeria is rated as the headquarters of poverty in the world,”</p> <p>“This is unthinkable for a country that is endowed with human and natural resources like ours, just because of lack of clear headed leadership and direction, this is where we find ourselves</p> <p>“So, it is obvious that we just have to change the leadership of this country.(Atiku, 2014)</p>

**Analysis of Data 4/Table 4**

The data above shows the same politician using political discourse as shown in column 1 to converge and diverge (Column 2) to show converge with the People’s Democratic Party (PDP) and by the use of the same political discourse to show divergence from the PDP after defecting to the All Progressive Congress (APC) .

**4. Discussion of Findings**

The data presented above proves that there are indeed elements of convergence and Divergence in political discourses of politicians.

The work through it data and analysis has established that politicians jump ship when the conditions in their current political parties are not favourable to them.

Also, the data has shown that politicians use speech to prove their complete allegiance to their current political parties but as soon as they defect to another political party, they immediately, distance themselves from their former political parties using the same speech.

There is pressure for politicians to prove their allegiance to their new political parties and the members (even if they were antagonistic to them before) while demonizing their former political parties which they had once praised to high heavens.

Moreso, this work has shown that there are no clear-cut party ideologies which politicians stick to thereby making it very easy for them to change parties effortlessly.

There is no care whatsoever about personal integrity hence politicians in Nigeria, including the ones under review speak from both sides of their mouths.

## 5. Conclusion

One feature that runs through all the data examined in this study is the use of language to diverge from former political parties and converge with new political parties and associates after defection. National interests and deepening of democracy which most defectors cite as the reasons behind their defections to new political parties are not usually the case but instead, strategic positioning to further advance their interests which range from the securing of political appointments/ contracts to dropping of corruption charges as aptly captured by Senator Adams Oshiomole, one of the APC's stalwarts who openly declared that "your sins are forgiven once you join the APC." The position of Oshiomole is re-echoed by Ajayi quoted by Adesanya (2018: 1) who posits that, "Nigerian politicians lack the interest of the nation at heart, thereby taking decisions based on personal interests ... irrespective of what it will cost them or the country....Most of the politicians in Nigeria are selfish.... That is why you see them here today, another place tomorrow." For democracy to thrive and national development enhanced, key players in the political arena must be guided by ideologies which are beneficial to the populace instead of their personal interests.

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