

Rhetorical Strategies in Editorials on Kidnapping in Selected Nigerian Newspapers

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Certification

This is to certify that Kasali Sukurat Ayomide with matriculation number LCU/PG/005947 carried out this research work titled "**Rhetorical Strategies in Editorials on Kidnapping in Selected Nigerian Newspapers**" in the Department of Languages and Literature, Faculty of Arts, Lead City University, Ibadan, Oyo State, for the award of Master of Arts Degree (MA) in English Language and that this work has not been previously submitted for any other degree.

Prof Grace Olutayo
(Promoter)

Date

Dr Ufuoma Davies
(Head of the Department)

Date

Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to God Almighty, the Department of Languages and Literature, my parents and my siblings.

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Acknowledgement

I express my sincere gratitude to the great citadel of learning, Lead City University and several individuals for supporting me throughout my study. I express my sincere gratitude to my promoter, Professor Grace Olutayo, for her motherly love and support. I thank her for being meticulous, patient, and for her insightful comments, helpful information, practical advice and unceasing ideas that have helped me tremendously at all times in my research and thesis writing. Her immense knowledge, profound experience and professional expertise has enabled me to complete this research successfully. I could not have imagined having a better supervisor in my study. I express my sincere thanks to Dr. Jegede for his support and guidance, not just on this thesis but on all my academic journey from my undergraduate days, I am never going to take his mentorship for granted.

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Abstract

Kidnapping is now a common occurrence all over Nigeria and has become a serious problem that affects the daily lives of people across the country. This study examined the rhetorical strategies used in selected editorials on kidnapping. The aim was to identify and analyze the rhetorical strategies particularly the use of ethos, pathos, logos, imagery, hyperbole, anaphora and alliteration employed by editorial writers to influence public opinion. Utilizing discourse the study analysed editorials from *The Punch*, *Daily Trust*, and *Nigerian Tribune*, with a focus on how language is used to evoke emotion, establish credibility, and present logical arguments. The data consisted of four editorials published between November 2022 and February 2024, in Nigeria. The editorials were purposely selected because they were recent and they had not really been subjected to linguistic analysis. Through close textual analysis, the research identified recurring rhetorical patterns, including emotive language, appeals to national identity, and calls for governments accountability. The findings showed that editorials play significant roles in framing the kidnapping crisis, shaping public discourse, and calling on authorities to act. The findings also revealed that emotional appeals were used to create urgency and empathy and logical arguments provided evidence to support claims, and ethical appeals helped position the newspapers as credible voices on national issues. Other strategies like repetition and strong diction were used to emphasise key points. This study has contributed to media and discourse studies by highlighting how editorial writing functions not just to inform, but to shape public perception and encourage social and political change.

Keywords: Rhetorical strategies, Editorials, Kidnapping, Media discourse, Pathos, Ethos, Logos.

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