

Contrasting Defeat: The Role of Adversative Conjunctions in Shaping Concession Speeches

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ABSTRACT: Speeches of concession are uncommon in political discourse. When they do, it is frequently the case that the losing candidates concede defeat subtly rather than outrightly. In light of the aforementioned, this study focuses on the use of adversative conjunctions by unsuccessful presidential candidates to infer defeat in their speeches. Twenty-one (21) passages with adversative conjuncts were taken from the concession speeches of five presidential candidates who lost in Africa to conduct a thorough and rigorous analysis. A qualitative descriptive method of data analysis was used, using conjunction as a linguistic framework. According to the study, the defeated presidential candidates employ contrasting sentences and adversative conjunctions to imply that they accept their loss and project an image of being good sportsmen in the process. It concludes that the losing candidates employ adversative conjunctions to change the story of their defeat and affect how the electorates interpret it.

Keywords: adversative conjunctions, concession speeches, conjunction, presidential candidates, political discourse

I. INTRODUCTION

In the moments following an electoral defeat, concession speeches present a unique opportunity for politicians to navigate the complexities of loss, graciousness, and plans. Some defeated presidential candidates acknowledge the reality of their loss while simultaneously contrasting it with alternative narratives. This unique and tactful use of language can be achieved through adversative conjunctions such as but, although, notwithstanding, however, etc. Adversative conjunctions are cohesive ties that relate contrasts in a discourse or text. This corroborates the view of Shirazi and Nadoushani (2017) that conjunctions have particular meanings.

The semantic indicators of losing a battle (election, war, or any contest) in discourse are usually identified through the linguistic forms of “lost”, “defeat”, and “concede”. This is the usual expectation that listeners/readers would naturally seek. However, most concession speeches lack these semantic indicators. From an intense study of concession speeches, one is tempted to ask if defeated presidential candidates concede defeat. If the answer is yes, it implies that other linguistic forms reveal the act of conceding defeat. Unfortunately, readers may have problems with how to deduce or infer these contrasting markers as semantic indicators of the absentia clause “I concede defeat”. This study offers insights into the linguistic strategies employed by politicians to transform defeat into a moment of dignified concession. It therefore embarks on a linguistic search of such concessive connectors to explicate the roles and underlying meanings in the selected concession speeches. It is aimed at examining the use of contrasting statements via adversative conjunctions and exploring the rationale and ideologies behind such usages.

Political Discourse

Political discourse is an interdisciplinary field that is of great intellectual curiosity to linguists, sociologists, and political scientists. It is a form of public communication for politicians who are desirous of retaining power and persuading listeners to achieve their set goals. Levenkova (2011, p.423) describes political discourse as “a linguistic expression of public practice in the sphere of political culture, which is the professional use of language, which is based on the nationally and socio-historically conditioned mentality of its speakers”. This denotes that politicians use language to influence the consciousness of their audience. It is historically and culturally determined to suit different political contexts. They resort to various discourse structures, strategies, and language used to present their ideologies for certain purposes. Political discourse can

also be seen as a speech that is designed to teach people about others' viewpoints and persuade them to change their minds.

Political discourse is different from other genres of discourse because it aims at the advocating of an individual and party interest. It is usually manipulative with a desired intention. It ranges from formal debates, manifestoes, rally speeches, hearings, and informal talks on politics among others. In politics, language is the primary and one of the most significant tools used to influence and persuade an audience to change positions, beliefs, and ideologies. Thus, Chilton (2004) posits that "language creates politics; political activities are nonexistent without the systematic manipulation of language to formulate and perpetrate a specific political agenda" (as cited in Moody & Eslami, 2020, p.325- 345). It is therefore advisable that political discourses should achieve the quality of clarity to avoid ambiguities for easy comprehension for all members of the audience so that the desired ideologies can be understood perfectly.

For this study, political discourse is classified into two broad categories: pre-electoral and post-electoral discourses. Pre-electoral discourses are speeches given by politicians before elections such as campaigns, manifestoes, and debates. On the other hand, post-electoral discourses include victory, inauguration, and concession speeches. Political discourses in a very general term, are ways of communication in any political speech by using insightful, manipulative, and persuasive utterances to communicate ideas and information to the electorate and the opposition. This is done with the ideologies of the party, the speaker, and the purpose of such a speech.

Political discourse according to Woods (2006, p.50) "leans heavily on devices frequently used in advertising discourse at the levels of sound, words, and syntax which are key elements in arranging political messages for maximum desired effects." These key elements are intricately woven to buttress the political ideology of politicians.

II. CONCESSION SPEECH

A concession speech is a post-electoral speech that is delivered by a defeated politician (candidate) after a winner has been declared or when it is evident that one has lost an election. It is an act of publicly acknowledging defeat after a political contest. Simons et al (1986, p. 111) describe concession speech as "a waiver speech in politics which is an act of a losing candidate publicly yielding to a winning candidate after an election when the outcome of the vote's overall result has become clear." Concession speeches, as a sub-genre of political discourse, are utterances that are characterized by coherence, proper organization, persuasiveness, and purposefulness directed at an audience (both supporters and opposition) after being defeated in an election. This is done with a mindset of reconciliation to enhance the political stability and growth of that territory. A good example of a concession speech in Nigeria is the speech made by former president Goodluck Ebele Jonathan after the 2015 general elections.

The act of losing an election is heartbreaking for many politicians considering the finances, time, and energy dedicated to such contests. Reacting to and accepting the outcome of the contest requires maturity of mind, individual philosophies/worldview, and sincerity of purpose which exemplifies sportsmanship. Though it is not obligatory to concede defeat after an election, however, it is an important political function through the use of productive language skills (speaking and writing). It signifies a democratic system of government. Its content is considered a professional courtesy and a distinguishing characteristic of modern elections.

The importance of concession speeches to the development of any nation is explicated by Corcoran (1994, p. 115) that "concession speeches have become institutionalized public speech acts integral to the democratic life and legitimacy of authority for every candidate vying for a position of high office. Concession speech is a ritual with little scope for complex or expansive rhetorical aims, perceived to be consistent and important for electoral processes; a violation of which is interpreted as a disruption in the transition processes of democracy." The delivery of a concession speech after an election is a manifestation of the end of the fierce battle between two or more contestants. It is a strategy employed to avoid unnecessary post-electoral violence that can lead to disruption of the peaceful coexistence of a people. This signifies that the delivery of a concession speech marks the end of any electoral process.

Concession speeches are novel in Nigeria and in most cases there is always a disparity between the lexical items employed in the speech and the intended meaning. The defeated candidates employ words tactically indicating the results were unexpected and even manipulated by the declared winner. Concession speeches to some extent possess some characteristics. The defeated candidate would sometimes start by congratulating the winner. Again, the defeated candidate presents himself/herself to work with the winner. Such speeches pay tribute to democracy. Lastly, the defeated candidate pledges to continue the struggle in the future.

Due to the characteristics and circumlocutions inherent in concession speeches, linguists are presently keen on how language functions in political discourse by scrutinizing language use to elicit meaningful interpretations. They are also concerned about how language is organized to suit different functions and situations. Such explorations by linguists have become imperative as there are diverse contexts that could

influence the meaning of an utterance (Maledo, 2020; Maledo & Ativie 2022). There are also hidden meanings within any political discourse especially concession speeches where the speeches of the defeated candidate do not necessarily reveal accepting defeat. Rather, the language used is designed to boost their egos. Widdowson (2007, p.7) emphatically states that “as we know from our experience, no matter how explicitly we think we have contextualized what we want to say, there is always the possibility that it will be interpreted otherwise.” This is in line with Opara’s (2012, p. viii) affirmation that “the meaning of utterances is not always clear.” To unmask such meanings embedded in concession speeches, a critical investigation using different approaches is needed. Thus, this study engages in analyzing the use of adversative conjunctions in conceding defeat in concession speeches.

III. CONJUNCTIONS

From a general perspective, conjunctions are linguistic devices for joining words, phrases, or clauses together in a discourse. It is therefore seen as a cohesive element hence it connects words in a text. Halliday and Hasan (1976), p. 227) see conjunction “as a specification of how what is to follow is systematically connected to what has gone before.” This affirms why Carter et al. (2005) briefly describe conjunction as “joining” (as cited in Al-Khalidy 2018, p. 207). Johnstone (2008, p.119) asserts that “conjunction explicitly ties the meaning of utterances together, making the meaning of one coordinate with or subordinate to the meaning of the other. Unubi (2016, p. 209) lends credence to this as he affirms that “conjunctions contribute to discourse structure by indicating the semantic meaning or relationship between what has been said and what is to come.” This corroborates the view of Shirazi and Nadoushani (2017, p. 1) that conjunctions have particular meanings. From the above, it can be deduced that conjunctions are not just linguistic connectors, they significantly contribute to meaning realization by clarifying meanings in discourse. They also facilitate the comprehension of intended meanings and help to emphasize certain ideas or relationships between or among clauses. Some even facilitate inference by making readers conclude the relationships between the ideas stated in a discourse. The proper application of conjunction usually reveals its cohesive function as a connector. It also facilitates proper comprehension of meaning through additive, contrast, and cause-effect, etc. These numerous uses of conjunctions have made Alshehri and Alaboud (2022, p. 127) describe conjunctions as “grammatical-lexical boundary indicators, signifying cross-sentential meaning linkages.” This corroborates Kamalu’s (2018, p. 175) description of conjunction as what is used to demonstrate a meaningful relationship between clauses or sections of a text.

Murthy (2007, p. 211) classifies conjunctions into four kinds, namely: correlative, compound, coordinating, and subordinating conjunctions. Correlatives are used in pairs such as either or neither – nor, whether – or. Compound conjunctions are a group of words that are used as conjuncts such as ‘so that’, ‘as well as’, ‘so that’ etc. Coordinating conjunctions are used to join clauses of equal ranks together such as ‘and’, ‘but’, ‘for’, ‘or’, ‘so’ etc. These coordinating conjunctions are further divided into cumulative, adversative, disjunctive, and illative conjunctions. The last kind of conjunction is subordinating conjunctions which are used to join clauses of unequal rank such as; because”, after’, ‘if’, ‘through’, ‘as’, them’, etc. Furthermore, Halliday and Hasan (1976) classify conjunctions into four subcategories namely additive, adversative, causal, and temporal conjunctions. For this study, we focus on the use of adversative conjunctions to show how they are used to conceive defeat in concession speeches.

Adversative conjunction

Adversative conjunctions are words or phrases that connect two ideas or clauses while indicating a contrast, opposition, or surprise between them. This contrast or surprise is communicated as an unexpected twist. They are used to connect ideas that seem contradicting. Halliday and Hasan (1976) assert that the basic meaning of adversative relation is contrary to expectations and such expectations may be derived from the content of what is being said. Such expectations may be revealed through the contrast between the different statements. This aligns with Murthy’s (2007, p. 215) definition of adversative conjunction as that which is used to express a contrast between two statements. These two statements reveal the real situation at hand and the unyielded expectation.

From the above, there is a significant relationship between adversative conjunctions and pragmatics. This is because adversative conjunctions play a crucial role in conveying meanings and speakers/writer’s intentions in any given discourse. The relationship between the duo is usually revealed through implicature. Implicature, according to Mbah (2016, p. 221) (ed.) “is saying the meaning of something indirectly. From what is said one has already known the truth though it is not said directly”. They are meanings inferred beyond the literal interpretation. Again, the study of adversative conjunction is related to pragmatics through inferences. Adversative conjunctions facilitate inference by making listeners/writers conclude from the contrasting statements. Through adversative conjunctions, the speaker’s intention, attitude, or stance is usually

revealed. As pragmatic markers, they signify the speaker's tone, attitude, or relationship with other participants in the discourse and with the listener/readers.

IV. METHODOLOGY

This paper employs a descriptive method of data analysis. The primary data for the study are extracts of speeches from five defeated presidential candidates (former President Rupiah Banda of Zambia, former President Nana Akufo-Addo of Ghana, former President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan of Nigeria, former President John Dramani Mahama of Ghana, and Professor Venansius Banyamureeba Uganda) sourced from the internet. A total of twenty (21) excerpts containing adversative conjunctions were extracted from the five concession speeches and grouped into five groups according to the defeated candidates. For ease of reference, the extracts were coded in the following order:

PRB = President Rupiah Banda,
 NAA = President Nana Akufo-Addo,
 GEJ = President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan,
 JM = President John Dramani Mahama
 PVB = Professor Venansius Banyamureeba

V. DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

In the analysis that follows, the extracts named after the candidates are presented and named one after the other.

a) Rupiah Banda's Concession Speech

PRB 1: ... You have the right to celebrate *but* do so with a magnanimous heart. Enjoy the hour *but* remember that a term of government is four years.

PRB 2: ...I have not always been there for you. *Yet*, still you were there for me.

PRB 3: We may be a small country on the middle of Africa *but* we are a great nation.

PRB 4: Yes, we may have different ideas *but* we both want the same thing – a better Zambia.

Analysis:

In PRB 1, the lexical item *but* is used twice. As an adversative conjunction, it is used to convey a contrast between the conjoined clauses in the two sentences. The speaker as an incumbent President of Zambia lost out in the 2011 Presidential elections to Michael Sata. This tragic loss is a dishonor to the speaker. Thus he uses *but* to convey a sense of celebration with caution to the winner. In this sense, he tactfully and silently conveys defeat without a mention of "congratulations" to the winner. Though the speaker believes he has done his best as the President of Zambia and envisaged total victory at the polls, the people voted against him. The winner, Michael Sata like any other victor would celebrate widely especially defeating an incumbent with all the political might. The speaker advises the winner to be considerate and courteous in his celebration. This contrast is used by the speaker to reframe the narrative of defeat. The use of *but* in the second sentence downplays the contrast between "an hour celebration" and "four years as president". With this, the speaker infers that the winner can be happy but the joy has a limited duration. This implies that the joy may not exceed four years after which another election will take place which may displace the winner then. The speaker uses this contrast to position himself for the future (subsequent election). In PRB 2, the word *yet* is employed by President Banda as a face-saving technique. He tactically reveals one of his weaknesses of not being accessible to the Zambian people. However, despite this, some people voted for him.

In PRB 4, the word *but* is a semantic indication of contrast and conflict between the two opposition parties – the winners and the losers. The losers and the winners have different ideologies concerning their party and political affiliations. However, these different ideologies are centered on the progress and interests of Zambians in general. The contrast in PRB 4 is to promote unity and healing after a divisive campaign.

b) Nana Akufo-Addo's Concession Speech

NAA 1: As I said earlier, *whilst* I disagree with the court's decision, I accept it.

NAA 2: ... I accept a decision made by the highest court of the land, *however* much I dislike or disagree with it.

NAA 3: I am saddened by the verdict and I know that many of our supporters are saddened too. *However*, for the sake and love of our country, we must embark on a path that builds, rather than destroys...

NAA 4: ...we might not have been given the ruling we sought, *but*
 thanks to our efforts, we can ...

Analysis:

In NAA 1, the word *whilst* foregrounds the contrast between “I disagree” and “I accept”. The speaker employs this adversative conjunction to showcase his disapproval and contrary expectation of the Supreme Court’s verdict while conceding defeat by accepting the court’s decision at the same time. The speaker Nana Akufo-Addo, contested the election against his close rival, John Dramani Mahama, in 2012. Not satisfied with the declaration of President John Mahama as the winner of the election by the Electoral Commission of Ghana, he filed a petition. The Supreme Court finally passed a verdict upholding the already-sworn president, John Dramani Mahama as the winner of the 2012 presidential election. The speaker’s choice of conjunction, *whilst*, indicates his contrary opinion and unexpectedness of the Supreme Court’s verdict while accepting the same at the same time. He is very optimistic that he won the election which made him not concede defeat previously. The Supreme Court judgment finally brought to an end the tension as the speaker formerly conceded defeat in 2013. The use of the two contrasting statements is to shape the narrative around the defeat and also to influence how the defeat should be perceived by the public.

Also, in NAA 2, the speaker further indicates his contrary expectation by using the adversative conjunction *however* to portray the contrast between the two clauses “accept” and “dislike or disagree”. The speaker tends not to be satisfied with the judgment as delivered by the Supreme Court but he has to accept it. Thus, he concedes defeat. This is what can be inferred in the use of these conjunctions in line with the antonymic relation between lexical items so contrasted.

In NAA 3, the lexical item *however* and the expression *rather than* are both adversative conjunctions. The word *however* is used as a cohesive tie to link the semantic implication of the first sentence to that of the second sentence. What can be inferred from this is that the speaker and his people are not happy with the result but he has to concede defeat because of the love of his country. To “embark on a path that builds” in this to concede defeat and this triggered by the adversative conjunct, *however*. The contrast is further foregrounded with the use of the contrasting pair “saddened” and “love” with love overweighing to concede defeat. The use of the adversative conjunction, *however*, implies that even though the speaker is not happy with the long-awaited Supreme Court ruling, his strong love and affection for his country cannot allow him to further disagree with the verdict. The implication of this is acceptance of defeat. Furthermore, the use of *rather than* as a conjunctive link between “build” and “destroy” implies an acceptance of defeat. Here, the speaker demonstrates the ideology of nationalism and super-patriotism. He feels it is better to sacrifice any personal ambition at the altar of nation-building and accept the Supreme Court’s verdict. Through the use of these contrasting statements, the speaker exhibits graciousness and respect for the democratic process in conceding defeat. The use of *but* in NAA 4 indicates that though the speaker has lost the election, he is not a pushover as he has made great efforts with his supporters. Thus, in conceding defeat, he still encourages himself as he is not lazy in defeat.

c) President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan’s Concession Speech

GEJ 3 ‘I have promised the country a free and fair elections. I have kept my word’

GEJ 4: ...*Although* some people have expressed mixed feelings

about the results announced by the Independent Electoral Commission.

GEJ 5 – The unity, stability and progress of our dear country is more important *than* anything else.

GEJ 8 – Today, the PDP should be celebrating *rather than* mourning.

Analysis:

“Although” is a subordinating conjunction used to bind a subordinating clause to a main clause. It means “despite” and it is often used to introduce clauses that express concession. The word *although* as used in GEJ 4 indicates a contrast from what the speaker earlier expressed in GEJ 3. The speaker, former President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan, believes the election was free and fair as seen in GEJ 3. This use of the adversative conjunction, *although*, implies that the speaker accepts the result of the election and tactfully concedes defeat without saying so. The speaker’s ideology of using this adversative conjunction is that of exclusion from any contrary view from what INEC has announced. This goes to show his uncommon patriotic ideology. The speaker employs this contrast to highlight his accomplishments and legacy despite the election loss.

In GEJ 5, the adversative conjunction, *then*, helps to express the opposition of meanings. It also serves as a basis for comparison. It is used to strengthen the speaker’s belief in the unity of the country rather than contesting the result of the election. This is a subtle way of conceding defeat. “Anything else” here could include rejecting the result of the election and throwing the country into chaos. Also, in GEJ 8, *rather than* is an adversative subordinating conjunction that introduces a contrasting idea, indicating a preference or an alternative. In this case, it contrasts “celebrating” and “mourning”, suggesting that celebrating is the preferred action for the speaker’s political party, PDP in the face of defeat. This is another tactful way of conceding defeat: to be honorable in defeat. The speaker believes that despite his party (PDP) losing the presidential seat to another political party (APC), which depicts sadness/mourning, the party should instead celebrate its achievements and progress thus far recorded within the sixteen years of its leadership. The speaker displays the

ideology of contentment and satisfaction. As a former Deputy Governor, former Governor, former Vice President, and now President, he believes he has attained the peak of national growth and has been discontented because being defeated for a second term of presidency was not challenging to him.

d) John Mahama's Concession Speech

JM 5: It is precisely on account of my belief in Ghana and its future that *notwithstanding* the irregularities associated with this election, I have decided at this stage to congratulate the President-elect.

JM 9: I would have cherished an opportunity to do even more *but* I respect the will of the Ghanaian people.

JM 21: We have been a leader on so many fronts, not just on this continent *but* also in the world from our attainment of independence....

JM 23: *Notwithstanding*, our diversity, religious faiths... we have always recognized that we are all ultimately on the same side- the side of Ghana and its progress.

JM 28: ... I know this is not the outcome that we wanted and hoped for *but* I say to you that this day should not mark the defeat of your role....

Analysis:

In JM 5, the adversative conjunction, *notwithstanding*, is a subordinating conjunction that introduces a contrasting idea, indicating a concession. It acknowledges the irregularities associated with the election (a potential reason to not congratulate the winner) while introducing the contrasting idea that the speaker has decided to congratulate the winner anyway due to his belief in Ghana and its future. It is a semantic indication of the speaker's disapproval of the outcome of the 2016 presidential election and the unexpectedness. By acknowledging the winner, while contrasting his stance, the speaker demonstrates love and respect for his country. It also reveals the ideology of patriotism and sacrifice of the speaker for his country. The speaker's action of conceding defeat as an incumbent is a rare philosophy in African politics. This is because an incumbent has all the political might to manipulate any result at any time. Therefore, conceding defeat as an incumbent is the most patriotic task accomplished by such a figure.

In JM 9, *but* reflects the contrast between the two main clauses in the sentence. It indicates the speaker's respect for the will of the people which should take precedence over his desire to do more, highlighting a sense of acceptance and surrender. The speaker, President John Mahama, desires to contribute more to the development of Ghana as the President if only he had emerged as the winner of the just concluded election. As an incumbent, he probably envisaged an easy victory just as in 2012. His expectation is nailed to the bud as Ghanaians refused to vote for him as the President rather they voted for his opponent, Nana Akufo-Addo. The unexpected outcome of the result erodes the dream of the speaker.

Furthermore, in JM 21 *but* indicates the difference (contrast) and comparison between two elements in the sentence. From the excerpt, the two elements being compared are "continent" and "world". The speaker uses the contrasting conjunction *but* to reveal the differences between Africa and the world. This implies that Ghana's politics transcends the local level to a global circle. The speaker employs this contrasting statement to emphasize shared values and goals, promoting unity and healing after the fierce battle. Also, in JM 23 *notwithstanding* is a semantic indicator of contradiction between the two clauses. While the first clause centers on the social-political, religious, and ethnic divisions among Ghanaians, the second clause focuses on what unites them together as a people (Ghana's progress) despite their differences. The speaker believes that though Ghanaians are highly diversified concerning religious beliefs, political inclinations, and ethnicity, there is one specific area that binds them together which is the progress of the country. Every Ghanaian, irrespective of differences desires the progress of the country. To him, this is indisputable. In JM 28, *but* is used to contrast two different ideas: "This is not the outcome we hoped for" is a negative statement while "this day should not mark the defeat of your role in this nation's political process" is a positive and encouraging statement. The use of 'but' indicates a shift in tone and emphasis from acknowledging disappointment to offering encouragement and hope and by implication, conceding defeat. It highlights the contrast between the undesired outcome and the speaker's message of resilience and continued encouragement. He however advises his supporters to still contribute their quota to the progress and development of the nation. This contrasting statement helps to rally supporters and maintain their enthusiasm even in the face of defeat. The speaker exemplifies the ideology of perseverance and intense determination to contribute to nation-building.

e) Professor Venansius Baryamureeba's Concession Speech

PVB 1: *While*, I don't fully agree with the manner in which the electoral commission conducted these elections and the apparent shortfalls in the process, let there be no doubt, I accept the outcome of the Presidential election.

PVB 3: It should never be about us the politicians *but* about the people of Uganda and our country.

PVB 5: To my wife and our two beautiful daughters, I must say you brought love, passion and high purpose to our cause and opened new doors not just for our campaigns *but* for our country.

PVB 5: ... now is the time to recognize that that which unites us is greater *than* that which divides us.

Analysis:

The adversative conjunction *while* in PVB 1 is used to introduce a clause that expresses the speaker's unexpectedness of the outcome of the Presidential election held in Uganda in 2016. It acts as a link between a contrasting subordinate clause and a main clause. While the first clause is a subordinate clause that signifies disapproval as seen in the excerpts, the last clause is an affirmation of the outcome of the election by the speaker. The speaker uses the word *while* as a semantic signifier of his disapproval of the results as announced by the electoral commission. He however concedes defeat in the last (main) clause. The speaker, Prof. Baryamureeba contested the presidential election against the incumbent President, Gen. Yoweri Museveni of the National Resistance Movement (NRM), and other candidates. The speaker argues that the election was highly fraudulent, and marred with voting irregularities, though he was not the major contender against the incumbent as he took the 5th position on the list based on the total votes cast. He however concedes defeat to showcase an exemplary character or trait.

Likewise in PVB 3, *but* indicates a contrast between two different ideologies. While the first ideology depicts selfishness, the second ideology promotes selflessness. The speaker advises that personal interest (selfishness) should not be encouraged rather it should be about the general masses (the Ugandans). To a large extent, this underscores an acceptance of being defeated.

VI. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

This study has shown how defeated presidential politicians employ contrasting statements via adversative conjunctions to reshape the narrative around the loss and influence how it is perceived by the public. Again, such contrasting statements are used to indicate the defeated candidate's stance and also demonstrate graciousness and respect for the democratic process. The study also discovers that defeated presidential candidates apply contrasting statements through adversative conjunctions to highlight their accomplishments and legacy. Similarly, many of the contrasting statements are used to emphasize shared values, and goals and promote unity within the country. It is also discovered that these statements are used to maintain supporters' morale and to reposition for the future.

In addition, the study infers from the contrasting statements that almost all of the defeated presidential candidates often alleged that the elections were marked with irregularities or else they would have won the elections. This is to arrogate to themselves the image of a good sportsman in conceding defeat. To them, they have a reason not to concede defeat, but for the love of their country and for their selflessness as most of the contrasting statements reveal the ideologies of patriotism, nationalism, and sportsmanship.

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