"*I am here... to serve you*": Pragmatic Acts and Strategies in the 2019 Inaugural Speeches of Governors in Southwest Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

Inaugural speeches are delivered by political officeholders to mark their transition to government and present their vision and goals for whatever office they occupy. This paper carries out a pragmatic investigation of the inaugural speeches of selected governors in southwest, Nigeria. The data for the study were the inaugural speeches of Governors Babajide Sanwo-Olu of Lagos State (GBS), Seyi Makinde of Oyo State (GSM), and Dapo Abiodun of Ogun State (GDA). The speeches were retrieved from two Nigerian newspapers: Dailypost and Premiumtimes which enjoy relatively wide coverage in the country. This paper adopts Jacob Mey's (2001) pragmatic acts theory as its tool for descriptive analysis and carries out statistical "procedures" for quantitative data analysis. . From the analysis of the inaugural speeches, it was discovered that thirty-five pragmatic acts were deployed by the governors to achieve six goals. The pragmatic acts performed in the speeches are predominantly negotiated through five pragmatic tools: relevance, reference, shared situational knowledge, voice and metaphor. The study reveals that the goals of the inaugural speeches are to present their vision for the state, win the favour of the people, appreciate others, present challenges in the state, influence attitude and stimulate the citizenry to action. This paper concludes that the overarching goal of gubernatorial inaugural speeches is to aid the comprehension of the vision and mission of the governor during their tenure in office.

Keywords: Babajide Sanwo-Olu, Dapo Abiodun, inauguration speech, political speeches, pragmeme, pragmatic acts, rhetoric, Seyi Makinde.

1. INTRODUCTION

The art of public speaking, also known as rhetoric, has been harnessed by people since the beginning of time, particularly political office holders. The formal study of public speaking began approximately 2,500 years ago in Greece and Rome to train citizens to participate in society. Aristotle (384-322 BCE) defines rhetoric as the "faculty of discovering the possible means of persuasion in reference to any subject whatsoever" (Corbett and Connors 1999). It is the art of using language to persuade. Through language, human beings are privileged to pass across the state of their minds, such as love, hatred, despair, and joy, among others. With language, actions, decisions and motives are influenced and probably modified among people who make use of it (Ogunsiji 2018). Thus, it becomes important to examine political speeches, particularly inaugural ones.

Language usage in political speeches therefore constitutes a very crucial aspect of politics. It is through language that politicians carry people along with the government programmes and process of governance. Political leaders appropriately use language to achieve their agenda (Osisanwo 2011, 200). The success or failure of any political officeholder depends on his ability to manipulate the resources of language

at his disposal to carry the people along with the government programmes and process of governance (Olaniyan 2015, 135). In essence, a speaker's success can depend largely on the way he picks his words and sticks them together in a sentence and on the acts, he performs with such words and sentences (Ozimede 1985). Hence, language is used by the politicians to achieve various aims in speeches which could be to inform, persuade, praise, acknowledge, appreciate, assert, motivate, among others.

The inaugural address is one of the different types of political speeches which include: acceptance speeches, farewell addresses, concession speeches, congressional speeches, campaign speeches, political interviews, and acceptance speeches, to mention a few. The practice of giving an inaugural address can be said to have commenced with George Washington as far back as 1789. Since that time, it has become a norm for political officeholders to deliver a speech to mark their transition to government. In Nigeria, such transition takes place at the federal and state levels, and an inaugural speech is given, in each case to mark the beginning of a new administration. The word 'inauguration' has its root in the Latin word 'augur' which describes the rituals of ancient Roman priests, seeking to interpret for a public official to be deemed worthy to assume office. An inaugural speech is delivered at an inauguration ceremony, which is the formal event that inducts a political office holder into a new office. The ceremony marks the beginning of tenure in office, while the speech serves to inform the people of their leader's intention.

The inaugural speech is used to present a leader's vision and set forth their goals for whatever office they occupy. It expresses an electoral candidate's reaffirmation of the promises and goals made during his electioneering campaign. It equally helps the citizenry to create a first impression of their leader. In addition, the inaugural speech aims to influence the behaviour, attitudes or political opinions of the target audience. The purpose of an inaugural address also includes: winning the favour of the people, to emphasise political attitudes and opinions, and

manipulating public opinion or legitimising political power. As foregrounded earlier, the speaker achieves these purposes using language. The language of an inaugural speech is carefully constructed first, to meet the expectation of the citizenry, and next, to achieve the speakers' goals. Language, being the human capacity for expressing inner thoughts, influences thought; and if language is manipulated, so are the very processes of thought (Thorne 2008). Political leaders, therefore, use such inauguration occasions to express their inner aspirations for their people through appropriate language choice and manipulation. This means that on account of politicians' choice of words, they can influence the way the led think about their leaders as well as their government. Several scholars have studied the use of language to communicate the intentions of political officeholders, and these will serve as templates from which the researcher can examine the inaugural speeches. Hence, this paper examines the 2019 inaugural speeches of Southwest governors in Nigeria to reveal how pragmatic tools are used to achieve different pragmatic goals.

1.1 Studies on Political Speeches

The use of political speeches to express persuasive and pragmatic intentions has received a lot of scholarly attention. Researchers at different ends have investigated the pragmatic, stylistic, socio-stylistic, pragma- stylistic and semantic aspects of the political discourse. The political discourse is a multifaceted one, which includes many genres: inaugural addresses, victory speeches, historic speeches, campaign speeches, political interviews, etc. Scholars have worked on concession speeches (Corcoran 1994; Ademilokun 2016; Osisanwo & Chinaguh 2020; Osisanwo & Alugbin, 2019), victory speeches (Irimiea 2010; Shardama 2015), Independence Day broadcast (Olaniyan 2016), election postponement speeches (Osisanwo 2020), campaign speeches (Kalejaiye 2016) and rhetoric in non-fictional texts (Osisanwo & Adegbenro 2021).

In particular, Odebunmi & Oni (2012) examine the

inaugural speeches of Olusegun Obasanjo, using selected theoretical insights from van Dijk's socio-cognitive model, Paul Chilton's concept of political discourse and cognitive semantics. The study argues that Obasanjo's wording of the Nigerian gloom in the speeches is largely an expression of his bitterness against past Nigerian governments rather than a strictly objective assessment of the state of the country, thus projecting his messianic ideological tendencies. Similarly, Olaniyan (2016) extensively examines the pragmatics of General Ibrahim Babangida's Independence Day Broadcast (1985-1993), focusing on the speech acts in the broadcast with particular attention on the illocutionary acts the broadcasts are used to perform. The study reveals that the illocutionary acts performed by the speeches are dependent on the context of the speech event and the communicative intention of the speaker.

Studies on political speeches of political office holders at the global level reveal that scholars have concentrated on presidential inaugural addresses. Slagell (1991) carries out a closed textual analysis of Abraham Lincoln's second inaugural address, while Zhang (2009) examines metaphors in American presidents' inaugural addresses. Bringing it to the Nigerian context, which is the context of the current study, Sharndama (2015) carries out a critical discourse analysis of President Muhammadu Buhari's inaugural speech, Osisanwo (2017) examines pragmatic acts in President Muhammadu Buhari's inaugural speech, Odebode and Okunlola (2018) examine speech acts in Goodluck Jonathan's inaugural speech. The most related study to the current is perhaps Osisanwo (2017). Osisanwo applies aspects of Jacob Mey's (2001) pragmatic acts theory to investigate the use of words in the 2015 inaugural address by President Muhammadu Buhari from a pragmatic perspective. He identifies nineteen practs and four pragmatic tools which were deployed to achieve four goals in the speech. Osisanwo concludes that Buhari's speech was crafted to allay the anxiety of many Nigerians and promote peaceful atmosphere, following the propositions, promises, acknowledgements and appreciation of the immediate past president and

other political opponents.

Aside Ademilokun (2016), who examines concession speeches of some gubernatorial candidates in Southwestern Nigeria, scholars have not examined the speeches of Nigerian governors. Hence, it is observed that scholars seem to concentrate on the speeches of presidents both at the global and national levels, with very few discussing the linguistic implication of the speeches of other political office holders, particularly governors even though they also pass for political discourse. The perceived dearth of research into the linguistic representation of gubernatorial speeches serves as the motivating factor for this research, coupled with the fact that the data for this study; 2019 inaugural speeches have not been sufficiently examined by scholars. This study, therefore, examines the pragmatic acts and strategies in the 2019 inaugural speeches of selected governors in southwest, Nigeria, and discusses how pragmatic tools are used to achieve different goals.

2.   THEORETICAL ANCHORAGE

This study leans on Jacob Mey's (2001) Pragmatic Acts Theory. Mey (2001) projects the pragmatic acts theory as a theory of action which situates speech acts in their appropriate socio-cultural contexts so that the acts become instantiated pragmatic acts. The pragmatic acts theory (PAT) places a premium on socio-cultural and societal factors in the construction and interpretation of meaning. Also called pragmeme or pract, it is focused on the situated use of speech acts, rather than the necessary and sufficient conditions for performing individual acts. The overall pragmatic meaning of an act is jointly determined by a combination of features of the context or situation of utterance in agreement with the rules entailed by such a situation or context. Simply put, a pragmeme is a goal-directed utterance. It is a speech act which may be intended to produce a specific effect in a particular situation. In the real world, situations change and bring about varying effects as they change. The dynamic nature of the situation is a component of pragmeme

which allows for modifications such as the changing or retention of roles of participants to achieve other forms of the same act or an entirely different one. Mey (2001, 217) says "no conversational contribution can be understood properly unless it is situated within the environment in which it was meant to be understood." An utterance is rooted in a context of use and the rules of a language. Thus, what is said and meant are within the societal constraints in particular situations, subject to the rules of the language. The individual is situated in a social context, which determines their affordances. Context here is not limited to reference in terms of people, place, time, etc, but more importantly, context relates to action. Through context, we can understand what an utterance stands for in such a manner that the true pragmatic intentions are realized. For instance, in the law court, a judge can say "I hereby sentence you to life imprisonment". However, no ordinary person in the marketplace can sentence another to imprisonment of any sort. It would either be a joke or could lead to a quarrel. The model shows that there are two sides to a pragmeme; the activity part and the textual part. The activity part shows the possible contexts of communication in which the speaker could be. These could refer to the speaker's intonation, indirect speech acts, non-verbal elements of speech, etc. The textual part, on the other hand, refers to textual elements that are put together by the interactants to aid the comprehension of the text. Possible features within the textual part include Reference (REF), Inference (INF), Metaphor (M), Shared Situational Knowledge (SSK), Voice (VCE), and Metapragmatic Joker.

2.1 Data and Method

The data for this study were sourced from two Nigerian newspapers: *Dailypost* and *Premiumtimes*, which enjoy a relatively wide coverage in the country. The data consists of the 2019 inaugural speeches of three Southwest governors (one speech from each) in Nigeria: Seyi Makinde of Oyo State, Dapo Abiodun of Ogun State and Babajide Sanwo- Olu of Lagos State. The speeches were delivered on May 29, during

the swearing-in ceremony at each of the three states. The data were purposively chosen because of their contextual similarity and their social significance. The choice of the three states is informed by their political position, numerical strength and relevance among the six states in southwest Nigeria. The three states are the most populous in the southwest as of 2019: Lagos (with 12,772,884 inhabitants), Oyo (with 7,512,855 inhabitants) and Ogun (with 5,945,275 inhabitants) (The National Bureau of Statistics). In addition, the selected governors all assumed office in 2019 and delivered speeches as first-term governors. All these, coupled with the fact that there is a perceived dearth in the field of political discourse analysis as regards the analysis of gubernatorial speeches informed the choice of these data. The speeches are subjected to a pragmatic analysis, using aspects of Jacob Mey's pragmatic act theory as a tool for descriptive analysis. We employed statistical details for quantitative analysis. The practs used in the speeches are itemised and grouped in the order of their frequency. In addition, the practs are grouped according to the goal they are used to achieve. Also, pragmatic reference tools such as Reference (REF), Inference (INF), Metaphor, (M), Shared Situational Knowledge, (SSK), and Voice, (VCE) are identified through the analysis.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 and Figure 1 depict the frequency of the pragmatic acts and goals employed by the governors across the three speeches. As seen in the table, a close examination of the use of language in the inaugural speeches reveals that forty-five (45) acts, categorised into twenty-six (26) pragmatic functions were performed by Babajide Sanwo-Olu of Lagos State (henceforth GBS). In the speech of Dapo Abiodun of Ogun State (henceforth GDA), sixty-five (65) acts, categorised into nineteen (19) pragmatic functions were performed while the speech of Seyi Makinde of Oyo State (henceforth GSM) performs thirty acts categorised into seventeen pragmatic functions. Collectively, 136 acts, categorized into thirty (30) pragmatic functions were performed in

the three speeches. The practs were marked with the following pragmatic tools: inference (INF), reference (Ref), shared situational knowledge (SSK), metaphor (MPH), voice (VCE) and relevance (REL). The different practs served six goals which are to win the favour of the people, to present the vision, to appreciate others, to present challenges or issues in the state, to stimulate citizenry to action and to influence behaviour or attitude.
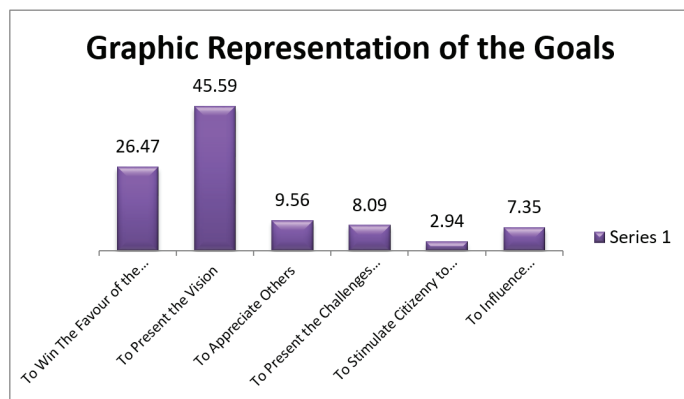

Figure1: Graphic representation of the pragmatic acts

TABLE 1. Summary of the Pragmatic Acts and Goals

Goal	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Practs	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Win The Favour of the people	36	26.47	Historising	1	0.74
			Identifying	7	5.15
			Assuring	11	8.09
			Asserting	8	5.88
			Motivating	1	0.74
			Foregrounding	4	2.94
			Extending	1	0.74
			Eulogising	1	0.74
			Pledging/vowing	2	1.47
To Present the Vision	62	45.59	Stating	11	8.09
			Informing	16	11.76
			Proposing	7	5.15
			Explicating	7	5.15
			Promising	13	9.56
			Defining	1	0.74
			Projecting	7	5.15
To Appreciate others	13	9.56	Praising	2	1.47
			Reminiscing	1	0.74
			Thanking	7	5.15
			Acknowledging	3	2.21
To Present the Challenges in the State	11	8.09	Describing	8	5.88
			Recounting	3	2.21
To Stimulate Citizenry to Action	4	2.94	Calling to Action	1	0.74
			Awakening/Stimulating	1	0.74
			Charging	1	0.74
			Instructing	1	0.74
To Influence Attitude/Behavior	10	7.35	Advising	1	0.74
			Warning	1	0.74
			Imploring	7	5.15
			Soliciting	1	0.74
Total	136	100.00	Total	136	100.00

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3.1 Pragmatic Investigation of the Inaugural Speeches/ Discussion

The six goals realized in the inaugural speech are winning the favour of the people, presenting the vision, appreciating others, presenting challenges or issues in the state, stimulating citizenry to action, and influencing behaviour or attitude.

3.1.1 Winning the Favour of the People

The goal of winning the favour of the people is realized by the governors, using eight practs- historicizing, eulogising, identifying, assuring, asserting, motivating, foregrounding and extending- to re-present themselves in a good light. Each of the governors had presented themselves to the people during the electioneering campaign, but it was amidst many other presentations by other aspirants. Now, after they had been elected to office, it was time to re-present themselves on a clean slate, especially to those who might have been their opposition before they came into power.

Excerpt 1:

"Ají ṣe bí Òyó làárí, Òyó ò kí ṣe bí baba ẹnìkan." (GSM)

Translation: *Oyo leads, others imitate but cannot measure up.*

Excerpt 2:

As your Governor, I know fully well who I am, because I know where I am from. More importantly, I know where I am headed. I have been a part of this progressive journey since its very inception. I know first-hand the concerted efforts that went into planning so many of the innovations we now see and enjoy. On this day, I speak to the young and old, Christian and Muslim, those who trace their earliest ancestry back to this land, and to those who came last week. I speak to the poor and to the rich. I speak to the Danfo driver as much as to the millionaire, to the fruit vendor and much as to the real estate titan. I speak to employer and employee, I speak to teacher and student, I speak

to mother and father. The civil service as well as the private sector – We are all Lagosians. Today, I stand before you as your governor, but also as your friend, brother; neighbor and your servant. I stand here to ask that you join me to script and fashion this greater Lagos with the creativity of our minds. (GBS)

Excerpt 3:

We are aware that the workers in Ogun State have been confronted with a number of challenges that resulted in low morale and productivity. While we pass no judgment before knowing all the facts, we wish to repeat the promise made to our workers during electioneering campaigns. Our workers are the prime resource of the State and an economy is only as good as its managers. Within the limit of available resources, we shall endeavour to be fair, open, just and equitable to all our workers and pensioners. (GDA)

Excerpt 4:

We may make decisions that are sometimes uncomfortable but we will try our best to always be just, fair and act with the fear of God. I am here as your governor to serve you. I will work tirelessly and take responsibility for the workings of every sector. (GDA)

Excerpt 5:

To the good people of Ogun State, you have now provided me the mandate to serve our dear State. When I signed the Oath of Allegiance and Oath of Office a while ago, I solemnly did so beyond being a requirement for formal assumption of office.

It was much more than that. I hold it as a tripartite covenant between me and God, on one part, to serve Him and reciprocate His faithfulness through the journey so far by...(GDA)

In excerpt 1, GSM uses VCE to praise the people. He speaks to the people in their native tongue, thus invoking a sense of togetherness in the people. It is a psychological act, as the sound of a people's native tongue immediately makes them feel connected.

The speaker in return earns a favourable audience. In excerpt 2, GBS uses the pragmatic tools of VCE, REL and M to carry out his intention. He declares it with full assurance, such that the people can trust his leadership enough to follow him. It is an indirect speech act, having the intention of soliciting the followership of the people. GBS takes on the position of a suppliant, pleading earnestly that the people join him to build. It is very relevant, especially because the inaugural address is the opportunity the leader has to remind the people of the promises he made, and to create a good impression of himself. He takes on various identities to associate himself with the people so that no one feels left out. The VCE therefore explains the various positions he takes and from which he tries to connect with the people: age differentiation, ancestry, social status, etc. He lists the various diversities and unites them in one word "we are all Lagosians". This builds trust in him, as the people can rest assured that there will be no favouritism, or partiality in the running of the states affairs. In excerpt 3, GDA also employs the pragmatic tool of SSK, MPH and REL in identifying with his people. He starts by asserting his awareness of the challenges of the people. He uses the metaphor (MPH) of responsibility when he states that an economy is only as good as its managers. This statement serves to stress the importance of workers to the state. By doing this, he places workers on a high pedestal, while still keeping himself to the confines of the resources available to the state.

An instance of implicature is also observed in the second line of the extract: "While we pass no judgment before knowing all the facts, we wish to repeat the promise made to our workers during electioneering campaigns". The statement seems to point an accusing finger at someone or a set of people, especially the past administration. The speaker seems to imply that the former governor's attitude towards the people's challenges has resulted in the current low morale and productivity. By making this statement, he is perceived to be making a detour from the path of insensitivity to the people's needs, thus gaining the people's goodwill. In excerpts 4 and 5, GSM and GDA use the pragmatic tools of VCE, MPH, SSK and

REL. They lean on the assumption that many citizens are religious in assuring the people. GDA uses the MPH of covenant between 'me and God' on the one hand and 'with the good people of Ogun State' on the other hand, as GSM also makes his choice of words from the religious register e.g 'fear of God', 'glory'. In the Christian worldview, an individual needs to fulfill his promises as failure to do so attracts consequences.

Through these practs, it is evident that the governors emphasise democracy, as defined by Abraham Lincoln to emphasise that theirs is a people-centred government.   It is the practice in most political campaigns that many politicians bite off more than they can chew. They make many promises and create an agenda that they will not be able to follow thereafter. The result of this has been that citizens develop political apathy, and lose interest in the affairs of the state because their trust has been betrayed too many times. Hence, to win the favour of the people, it is utterly important to assure the citizens. The enormity of this need explains the reason why the pract occurs eleven times in the speeches. The governors assure the people through various means: religion, eulogy, and stating of facts.

3.1.2 Presenting the Vision
An inaugural speech is expected to perform some functions such as informing, agenda setting, interpretation and linkage, projection for the future, and stimulation of action (Biria et al. 2012). Therefore, presenting the vision is a vital aspect of the speech. This goal is explored by the governors using six pragmatic functions - stating, informing, proposing, explicating, promising and describing.

Excerpt 6:
My goal is to advance the social and economic progress of this state and its people; regardless of your faith, social class, or your origin of birth. Our vision summarises the kernel of our Agenda: "To give Ogun State focused and qualitative governance and to create the enabling environment for a public private sector partnership, which is fundamental to the

creation of an enduring economic development and individual prosperity of the people of Ogun." (GDA)

Excerpt 7:

As long as you adopt the spirit of Lagos, Lagos in turn shall adopt you. As I said in my acceptance speech, I am too focused on moving Lagos forward to give a second thought to where a person may have come from. As long as you are animated by the spirit of achievement, cooperation and tolerance, then you are Lagosian. This is my motto. **(GBS)**

Excerpt 8:

We will be a progressive administration; building on the programmes of past administrations that were structured properly and have been beneficial to the masses. When the need arises, we will consult our predecessors and draw on their experiences. We will put aside partisan politics for the good of our state... With good governance, we will more than confront poverty; we will usher in an era of progress and prosperity. **(GSM)**

In excerpt 6, GDA makes an external reference to the tribalistic tendencies characteristic of the Nigerian space. He assures the people that Lagos will be developed without respect to favouritism of any kind. From the two extracts, we can deduce and conclude that essentially, development matters to the people. Thus, they make use of relevance to achieve this end. GBS in excerpt 7 states his vision by making reference (REF) to an earlier information he had given about 'Lagos', and this marks out who can be a Lagosian. His use of 'as long as' explicitly foregrounds the terms and conditions to be regarded as a Lagosian. He uses an explicature, by not saying the negative part of his proposition, perhaps he expects his audience to be able to understand that "as long as you adopt the spirit of Lagos, Lagos, in turn, shall adopt you; *and as long as you do not accept the spirit of lagos, lagos in turn shall not adopt you*". Therefore, it is an indirect speech act. GSM in presenting his vision employs the modal auxiliary verbs 'will'. The word shows that GSM is committing himself to a future course of

action. He uses REF and SSK to draw from the past. By saying that his will be a progressive administration, he refers to the immediate past administration which he chose to regard as retarded or unprogressive. Also, GSM's choice of 'when' as in 'when the need arises...' is worthy of note. The choice here stipulates a probability that the need may arise and it may not. With this, he seems to say that not all the experiences and suggestions of his predecessors are useful to him. This is a good position because; a leader must be able to act with a substantial level of independence of thought.

3.1.3 Appreciating Others

The goal to appreciate others is explored in the inaugural speeches with four pragmatic functions: praising, reminiscing, thanking and acknowledging. This goal has to do with acknowledging the past deeds and achievements of those who had gone before the political office holder.

Excerpt 9:

It is with a heart full of gratitude to God that I rise to address the people of Ogun State this morning as the next elected Governor of Ogun State... Let me start this address by acknowledging my predecessors in this office, those who have held this exalted position since the state was created in 1976... **(GDA)**

Excerpt 10:

In this, we simply adhere to the tradition of enlightened government set by those who came before us. We owe a large debt of gratitude to Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu and to Babatunde Raji Fashola SAN. Asiwaju led the team that created the blueprint for development; ... Governor Akinwunmi Ambode pushed forward in a special manner. His efforts and actions shall be duly remembered. **(GBS)**

Excerpt 11:

I cannot end this address without expressing my gratitude to God and the good people of Oyo State, the leaders and members of our great party, the PDP

as well as the coalition of parties; ADC, SDP and ZLP who worked together to ensure we were successful. I also thank members of my campaign organization including volunteers all over Oyo State who believed in our vision and worked tirelessly to achieve success. My darling wife, Ominini has been a pillar of support, thank you so much. **(GSM)**

From excerpts 9-11, we observe two forms of acknowledgement that are common to the governors: one to God and the other to the governor's predecessors in office. In excerpt 9, GDA shows appreciation through the use of VCE, thus showing that the speaker is religious. In another part, REF and SSK are used as GDA talks about those who have been Ogun State governor before him, without necessarily mentioning their names. This means that he expects his audience to know them. Such a statement can be said to be pragmatically appropriate if the intention is to avoid giving extraneous information; otherwise, it becomes pragmatically inappropriate if the intention is for the speaker to suppress or background their names due to political differences or disagreements. GBS employs shared situational knowledge (SSK) to praise the great deeds of past Lagos State governors. He also makes reference (REF) to the economic development carried out by Asiwaju Bola Tinubu and Babatunde Raji Fasola. In the same vein, GSM makes reference (REF) to the event of how ADC, SDP and ZLP formed a coalition to ensure success in the 2019 election. He is grateful for the efforts put in by various people to ensure that he became the governor of Oyo State. He also makes reference to the campaign usually had before any election.

3.1.4 Presenting Challenges or Issues in the State

The goal of presenting challenges has to do with giving a vivid representation of the challenges in the state, showing how grave or slight they are, and this is exemplified in excerpts 12-15.

Excerpt 12:
Unemployment has attained the status of an epidemic in the country and in our State too. The army of unemployed youth roaming the streets should be a matter of concern to all. Lack of gainful employment and lawful means of survival for these able-bodied young men and women make them prone to criminal activities and immoral behaviour. We have designed multi-pronged approach to address this unpleasant situation. (GDA)

Excerpt 13:
The state of Education in the State is worrisome. We have been regaled with stories of unpaid salaries, poor funding, unremitted deductions, moribund projects, controversial campus relocations, hasty appointments, strikes etc. Confidence has been eroded, unless we act quickly, education which is already in serious trouble will get worse. We cannot afford to have our education, which should be the bedrock of all our development activities, our topmost industry- be in such a state. (GDA)

Excerpt 14:
We will be a pacesetter state in education. We know that quality education is not possible without quality teachers...During my campaigns, I promised to donate my entire salary as governor to the Teacher's Pension Fund. I stand by that promise. (GSM)

Excerpt 15:
Here, we must act with urgency to execute a transport masterplan that will fully integrate road, rail and water transportation into a multi-modal transport system that makes commuting easy for Lagosians. We must also ensure compliance with all traffic rules and regulations on our roads. (GBS)

Excerpts 12-15 constitute different issues raised by the governors. GDA appears the most explicit about the challenges within the state. GDA uses VCE and REL to describe unemployment in the state. The issue of employment is dear to the hearts of Nigerians, because unfortunately, nine out of every ten Nigerians live in extreme poverty, according to the World Poverty Clock in 2019. Economic insecurity is an issue that pervades the heart of every Nigerian, so it would have been unheard of for GDA to treat

such a grave issue as flimsy. He assumes the posture (VCE) of a sympathizer and then begins to recount the consequences of unemployment which is crime. He does not stop there but goes further to state that a solution is being proffered to the problem. The governor here makes use of the metaphor of vox populi, as seen with the use of the words 'stories of unpaid salaries'. This suggests two things: first, that the people have a voice and second, that there is freedom of expression, Nigeria being a democratic state. It is an indirect speech act. GDA further describes the state of education as worrisome by mentioning the various ways the issue affects the citizens. He finally asserts that education is the foundation upon which all other developments will be built, and as such, cannot be taken with levity.

3.1.5 Stimulating Citizenry to Action

The inaugural speech is an opportunity a governor gets to create a first impression and set a tone for his governance; hence, Campbell et. al. (1990) posit that 'it is designed to set the tone for new beginnings when a new office holder assumes responsibilities... to unify the audience ... set forth the political principles that will govern the new administration.' (p. 21) The political officeholder usually has an anticipated kind of response, and he tries to achieve that goal through different practs: calling to action, awakening/ stimulating, charging and instructing.

Excerpt 16:

Therefore, on this day, on this precious land we call our home, let us stand together in the very face of history. Let us vow to ourselves, and to posterity that we shall not just dream of a Greater Lagos. Let us agree this day that we shall collectively rise up to build the Lagos of our dreams. (GBS)

In this extract, GBS uses the metaphor of 'home' to implore the people to right actions. Home here is used psychologically not necessarily to refer to where a person lives, but where one's heart is; where one feels committed to and obliged to develop. Furthermore, the use of the words "let us" is a kind of mild directive to communicate what the governor expects from the

people. He also employs the metaphor of 'vowing' which is an act of commitment to something. He invites the citizens to vow to commit themselves to the development of Lagos. A vow usually has consequences, when it is not kept, whether on the conscience or the integrity or even outlook of the one who breaches.

3.1.6 Influencing Behaviour or Attitude

The goal to influence attitude or behaviour is realised with four practs: advising, warning, imploring and soliciting. The pract of soliciting is quite like that of imploring. It involves a persistent endeavour to obtain a response.

Excerpt 17:

I implore us all as Lagosians to rededicate ourselves to contribute our individual quotas positively and responsibly in this new drive to reform our society and to take it to a higher pedestal. We must imbibe the spirit of being our brothers' keeper in our daily lives at home, work, recreational places and worship centres, and most especially on our roads. (GBS)

Excerpt 18:

We cannot do this without your support. I am taking this opportunity to solicit your support. We are going to be taking decisions that may be tough in the immediate but have long term benefits. We want you to look at the big picture. We want you to focus on the goal. (GSM)

Excerpts 17 and 18 are crafted to appeal to the citizens to cooperate with the governors in the governance of the state. GBS and GSM recognise and admit the need for collectivity on the journey to success. They use the words 'ask, want and implore' to drive home their point. GBS addresses the audience as 'Lagosians' regardless of his being sure of whether they all are Lagosians and this is by the statement he made earlier about who qualifies to be a Lagosian. The pract is an appeal to the audience's emotions and is therefore a psychological act. Also, he introduces the metaphor (MPH) of 'being one's brother's keeper' to further

foreground the idea of collectivity. The pract of soliciting as used by GSM is important in the speech. He assumes the position (VCE) of a suppliant and begs intently for the people's support. He refers (REF) to the goal his administration will pursue in the long run as mentioned earlier in the speech. He also makes an external reference to Ben Carson's book "Think big" where he mentioned the significance of looking at the big picture. He is realistic as he informs the people that his administration will make uncommon decisions. The information is a face-saving technique, to prevent unwholesome comments, later in the future.

4.   CONCLUSION

This paper set out to examine the pragmatic acts and strategies in the 2019 inaugural speeches of selected governors in southwest, Nigeria. From the analysis of the inaugural speeches delivered by Governors Dapo Abiodun of Ogun State, Seyi Makinde of Oyo State, and Babajide Sanwo- Olu of Lagos State on 29th May, 2019, several pragmatic acts were discovered and grouped into six goals: winning favour of the people, presenting the vision, appreciating others, presenting challenges or issues in the state, stimulating citizenry to action, and influencing behaviour or attitude. Aside the fact that the speeches highlight the intention and goals of the three governors as mentioned during their electioneering campaigns, a total of thirty pragmatic acts were identified from 136 acts found in the speeches. The practs were marked with six pragmatic tools: inference (INF), reference (Ref), shared situational knowledge (SSK), metaphor (MPH), voice (VCE) and relevance (REL). The study reveals that the most important goal emphasised by the political officeholders is to present their vision for the state, followed by the attempt to win the favour of the people. Next to these is the goal to appreciate others,

present challenges in the state, influence attitude/behaviour and then stimulate citizenry to action. Significantly, the three governors implied "I am here as your governor to serve you" to state their intention and pract serving the people, thus projecting a heart of service.

This paper aligns with Osisanwo (2017) which identifies four pragmatic tools, four goals, and nineteen pragmatic acts in the president's inaugural speech. The current study, however, has identified six pragmatic tools, six goals, and thirty-five pragmatic acts. The increase in number is not necessarily due to the number of governors and speeches covered, but because areas of focus in national addresses often differ from state addresses. This paper agrees with both Odebunmi and Oni (2012) and Odebode and Okunola (2018) that inaugural speeches are deliberately worded. The paper also agrees with Nedashkivska's (2006, 41) assertion on the view that the presidential/governorship speech and those of other political officeholders evoke "a linguistic activity that establishes the relationship between the president, the society and its members." The speeches are deliberately crafted to convince the electorate that the governors are there to serve them, saying "I am here as your governor to serve you." This paper, therefore, has added to the existing body of knowledge on rhetoric, particularly, gubernatorial speech analysis. It has also aided the understanding of the vision and mission of GSM, GDA and GBS, during their tenure in office, and the laid-out plans through which they intend to realize their goals. Through this study, the power relationship between leaders and followers is further understood.

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