

Schematic Structure of Manifesto Launch Speeches of Three Political Parties

Joseph Benjamin Archibald Afful

Department of English, Faculty of Arts, University of Cape Coast, Ghana

Rexford Boateng Gyasi

Department of English, Faculty of Arts, University of Cape Coast, Ghana

ABSTRACT

A key pre-election spoken genre in several modern democracies is unarguably the manifesto launch speech. Yet, it has surprisingly received either very little or no scholarly attention. Consequently, from a rhetorical perspective, this study examined the schematic structure of three keynote speeches delivered by presidential aspirants of three leading political parties in Ghana – New Patriotic Party (NPP), National Democratic Congress (NDC), and the Convention People's Party (CPP) – to launch their political parties' manifestos in 2016. The three speeches delivered by the presidential candidates of the three parties constituted the data set for the study. Applying the popular Swalesean rhetorical move analysis, originally meant for the academic setting, the study identified the use of a nine-move pattern as the schematic structure for the genre across the three speeches, with four ambiguous moves. These findings of the study have implication for the standardizing of the schematic structure of manifesto launch speeches worldwide and, thus, contributes to the scholarship on the political manifesto genre, political communication as well as further research on manifesto launch speeches in other democracies around the world.

Keywords: democracy, election, Ghana, manifesto launch speech, political discourse

INTRODUCTION

There is a growing interest in the discourse of political actors as several political discourse analysts continue to investigate the rhetoric of politicians, with the improvement and sustenance of governance and the practice of democracy in several countries. Politics involves a struggle for power between an incumbent and challenger [1]; hence, there is the dominant use of persuasive mechanisms: whereas incumbents seek to ensure retrospective voting, challengers mostly utilize negative campaigning to downgrade opponents in order to appear the more favourable in an election [2, 3].

In the face of keen competition among political parties, political candidates utilize slogans, posters and fliers, presidential debates, manifestos and launching of manifestos as means of persuading the electorates. The choice between parties or candidates is ideally a choice between ideals, philosophies, policies, and programmes. In order to communicate party ideals and programmes, to the electorate, and to provide yardsticks for performance and assessment, party manifestos are employed. In a few cases where parties do not publish electoral programmes, proxy documents, such as party leader speeches, general party platforms, etc., are coded as substitute documents [4].

There is no gainsaying the fact that manifestos play a key role in the campaigns of modern political parties. In growing democracies, especially in Africa, Latin America, and Asia, where insults can be so vitriolic, manifestos not only promote issue-based politicking during the electioneering period but also contribute to ensuring peaceful campaigns. Given that manifestos tend to encapsulate the key issues or problems that confront a nation and demonstrate the pathways to tackling them, they have become a veritable means of garnering group support for political parties and their candidates during elections. Some scholars acknowledge that a party that campaigns on a manifesto is likely to secure wider support among segments of the voting population [5-7]. Through manifestos, political parties 'set out set out their proposed responses to social needs and demands from the electorate' [8, p. 368]. Also, in several democracies, political office-seekers spend huge resources, energy, and time on their manifestos to promote issue-based campaigns, which represent an important factor in determining candidates' electoral fortunes [9].

The manifesto is obviously the first legitimate document that signals to the citizenry the preparedness of both the incumbent and the opposition parties to contest in an election. Manifestos are mostly scripted and, with the advent of technology, stored on party websites and other modern technological affordances; hence, it has become customary in Ghana for the presidential candidates of political parties to present highlights of the manifesto at an organized gathering and to officially launch it for formal campaigning to commence. The verbal articulation in the form of manifesto launch speech has scarcely received scholarly attention.

Aim of the Study

The field of political discourse continues to attract considerable attention among researchers, scholars, and students in recent times, given the acceptance of western democracies in several countries. Unsurprisingly, analyses of presidential political speeches like inaugural speeches, state of the nation's address, anniversary speeches, presidential debates [10], presidential rhetoric [11] as well as non-presidential political speeches [see 12-14] have received considerable attention. In comparison, election manifestos have not matched up to the interest in, for instance, presidential and non-presidential speeches. A few studies on political manifestos such as those in Africa [see 15-17], and those outside the continent Africa [18-20] have been undertaken. In spite of the growing interest in manifesto and its importance in multi-party states like Ghana, which continues to be touted as a sub-Saharan African country with great democratic credentials there is a dearth of literature on manifesto launch speeches. The present study aims to fill this gap in knowledge and contribute to the scholarship on the political manifestos launch speeches by focusing on the political parties in Ghana, a modern democracy. The main question that guides the study is: what is the schematic structure of manifesto launch speeches?

In what follows, we first present the theoretical framework of the study as well as delineation of some key concepts. This is followed by a critical review of previous studies on manifestos. Thereafter, we describe the method and analytical framework adopted in the study. We then report and discuss the findings related to the move structure of manifesto launch speech. Finally, we draw conclusions from our findings together with some implications and make some recommendations for further research.

RELATED LITERATURE

In this section, we first delineate Swales' [21] rhetorical theory, followed by a discussion of two key concepts namely 'political discourse' and 'campaign discourse' as both provide a clear conceptual and interpretive framework for the present study.

Swales (1990) Rhetorical Genre Theory

First articulated in 1981 and later revised in 1990, Swales' influential work recognized genre as a set of communicative events with a shared communicative purpose which is recognized by a discourse community. Swales' approach to genre analysis projects that the principal determinant of a genre is a set of communicative purposes that distinguish one text from another. The genre analysis doyen intimates that the communicative purpose(s) of a particular text constitutes the rationale of the genre, which in turn performs two functions; it shapes the schematic structure of the text and governs the selection of content and style [21]. Swales identifies sub-communicative intentions of parts of a text that come together to realize the main communicative purpose of the text as 'moves'. These *moves* may range from a single sentence to a series of sentences as Swales and other genre analysts like Bhatia [22] and Hyland [23] warn that the term 'move' is not coterminous with any grammatical category. Apart from *moves*, other rhetorical strategies such as 'steps' (or 'sub-moves') may be used to realize the communicative purpose of a genre.

Following from the above is the fact that the Move analysis model incorporates both a formal (structural) and substantial (content) analysis of text. The former involves a macro level approach to genre analysis, whereby the structure of the texts or the number of moves, the purposes of the moves (based on cognitive-semantics), and how the main communicative purpose realized by these sub-rhetorical sections (that is, 'moves') of the text are identified. The boundary of moves is determined by the cognitive-semantic structuring of parts of the text [24] which aims at realizing the main communicative purpose of the genre. Thus, "Whenever a linguistic unit indicates a communicative intention subservient to the general communicative purpose of the discourse a move can be identified." [12, p 2409]. The second phase of analysis in Swales' approach involves a micro level analysis of lexical and grammatical features in the texts and how they contribute to the communicative purpose(s) of the genre. The present study is devoted to the macro aspect rather than the micro aspect due to space constraint.

Another pertinent issue later enunciated by Swales [21] lies in the ways that genres relate to other genres, forming "constellations". Like human beings, genres exist in neighbourhoods, evoking terms such as 'genre sets' and 'genre chain'. The underlying assumption for both concepts is that we almost never find genres in isolation. In the case of "genre sets," we refer to the part of the entire genre constellation that a particular individual or group engages in, either productively or receptively [25]. Textbooks, lab reports, and lectures, for instance, may be key genres for many science students, while discussion postings and online tutorials are genres more familiar to distance-learning

students. On the other hand, approaching genre constellations through “genre chains,” refers to the way spoken and written texts cluster together in a given social activity. In this light, the documented manifestos and the manifesto launch speech can be seen as part of a ‘genre chain’. Thus, manifesto launch speech follows the documented manifesto in a predictable chronological order.

Political Discourse

To understand ‘political discourse’, we need to consider the word ‘discourse’. The word ‘discourse’ is commonly seen as the language above the level of a sentence that is used to reflect and constitute social institutions, structures, and processes. The area in Applied Linguistics that is concerned with the language used to reflect and constitute various social institutions, structures, and processes is generally known as ‘discourse studies’ or ‘discourse analysis’. No wonder, Jones [26, p. 321] explains discourse analysis as “the study of ways in which language is used in real life to perform tasks such as persuade, flirt and argue”. The distinctiveness of language use in institutions such as hospitality and tourism, social welfare, health or medicine, politics, religion, international relations, and academia for the purpose of understanding phenomena in our world cannot be downplayed.

In this paper, since our interest is in the institution of politics, we hone in on ‘political discourse’. Also referred to as the language of politics, political discourse brings to mind two independent fields: ‘politics’ and ‘discourse’. Chilton and Schaffner [27] define politics as “the use of language in the constitution of social groups” (p. 303) while Aduradola and Ojokwu [28] describe politics as “an attempt to reduce tensions between needs and social realities and language through communication becomes significant to achieve such purpose” (p. 110). Also, in agreement with Michira [29], it can be said that politics is essentially concerned with power and authority: all decisions and efforts made by politicians are, therefore, either to gain or maintain power and authority. Political discourse refers to all discourse produced by politicians, whether as full time or not, in different settings for different purposes. Political Discourse Analysis, a form of Critical Discourse Analysis, is a popular tool in analyzing political texts both in the field of linguistics as well as political sciences [1, 30].

Political discourse, therefore, needs to be analysed to bring to the fore the hidden and ambiguous meaning that may be communicated. Dylgjeri [31] argues that for any political phenomenon to become significant, it has to be expressed in words. Politics cannot be accomplished without words. Political discourse studies have been carried out to examine how politicians persuade the public to support them. Persuasion is, in most cases, achieved through ‘untruthful’ promises and other language strategies in political discourse, including stylistic features and rhetorical devices. Further, according to Chilton and Schaffner [27], political discourse analysis may be done at different levels, such as at the pragmatic level, semantic, and syntactic level.

Moving from the more general term, ‘political discourse’, we now explain the term ‘campaign discourse’. Agreeing with Adbullahi-Idiagbon [32], we consider campaign discourse as a vital tool which politicians use to convey their ideas and feelings to the prospective electorate with the aim of persuasion. Within campaign discourse, we can identify specific genres such as election manifestos, campaign speeches, and campaign advertisements that can be used in political discourse analysis. Adbullahi-Idiagbon [32] and Mensah, Sarfu-Adu, and Afful [3] remark that political campaign language may consist of propaganda, fallacies, attacks on opposition parties as well as exaggeration, vagueness and related strategies to persuade the electorate. It has been observed

that some rhetorical strategies used in political campaign discourse include religious allusions, repetitions, expressions, coinages and promises. All these techniques are used differently to appeal to the audience's emotions and logic, and to appeal to the audience using characters.

Previous Studies on Manifesto

Literature on election manifestos exists in and outside Africa. Further, it is worth noting that Manifesto Research on Political Representation (MARPOR) [33] from 2009 onwards has generated and distributed a data set based on the content analysis of electoral programmes of the major political parties in (mainly) Europe. A source of varied research over the last decade, MARPOR, in the hands of various institutions, civil organisation and non-profit organisations, and individuals have paid little attention to the linguistics and rhetoric of political election manifestos. In the rest of the section, therefore, we focus on those studies that have been undertaken from linguistic and rhetorical perspectives.

Some relevant studies that have been conducted in Africa include Afful [15], Cobbinah [34], Ehineni [16], Kyerewaa-Owusu [35], and Nartey and Yankson [17]. In particular, Afful's work on election manifestos examines how health policies are projected in the manifestos of two political parties in Ghana. Focussing on, but not limited to, the generic structure and the linguistic features of the 2012 election manifestos of the National Patriotic Party (NPP) and National Democratic Congress (NDC), the study identifies a two-move pattern. A point of divergence in the move structure of the two manifestos, as identified by Afful, is the absence of an introductory move in the NDC manifesto. The present study differs from Afful's, which focussed on the documented manifesto, since this paper is focused on manifesto launch speech. Cobbinah's study differs from Afful's in that, unlike the latter which focuses on health policies, the former is a genre analysis of the entire 2008 manifesto of the Convention People's Party (CPP), one of the three political parties featuring in the present study. Significantly, he identifies a seven-move structure of the entire documented manifesto. In another sense, Cobbinah's study, just like Afful's, differ from the current study since the two focus on the manifesto document.

Adopting a Critical Discourse Analysis approach, Kyerewaa-Owusu [35] investigates the 2016 manifestos of the NPP and NDC. Just like the current study and Afful's, Kyerewaa-Owusu's focus on the campaign messages of the two dominant political parties in Ghana. Her study, however, differs from the current study in that it limits itself to the documented manifesto. The analysis reveals that the two political parties deploy negative campaign strategies such as blaming and the frequent use of adjectives and pronouns. Emphasizing primarily the use of modal auxiliary verbs in the manifesto of a popular Ghanaian political party (New Patriotic Party), Nartey and Yankson [17] conclude that modal verbs carry such discourse functions as promise and necessity which are strategic enough to persuade electorate. The researchers found the modal *will* as the most frequent, an attestation of a political party's willingness and/or promise to offer a service or a product.

Turning to other parts of Africa, we find the following pertinent studies: Ehineni [16], Alo [36], Bartholomeus [37], and Netswera [38]. Alo focused on lexical choices and values in political manifestoes in Ibadan, Nigeria. Still in Nigeria, Ehineni's work involved the collection of data from the political manifestoes of two candidates, representing the Labour Party (LP) and the Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN), during their campaigns for the 2012 gubernatorial election in Ondo State. Using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), and as an antecedent to Kyerewaa-Owusu [35], the

study pinpoints the ideological underpinnings of the modals such as 'will', 'shall', 'must', and 'can' used by the politicians in both manifestoes for persuasion, obligation, to make promises, demonstrate political will/commitment, and solicit public support and manipulation. Just like Nartey and Yankson [17], Ehineni found that the modal *will* is the most frequent in Nigerian manifestos. Bartholomeus [37] explores the stylistic and rhetorical devices in the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO) and Democratic Turnhalle Alliance (DTA) election manifestos during the 2014 Namibian presidential elections. Both manifestos deployed multi-modal aspects, lexical, syntactic and semantic literary devices and deviations to persuade voters. The final study in this review, Netswera's [38] paper analyses four (1995, 2000, 2006 and 2011) local government election manifestos of a major South African political party – the African National Congress. The study showed that the repetitive use of a specific keyword constitutes message-reinforcement – a technique used in building successful political rhetoric.

Aside these studies on written manifestos in Africa, in general, and Ghana, in particular, there are some studies on manifestos in Euro-American and Asian contexts that have shown interest in either linguistics or rhetoric. Some of these studies include Amidon [39], Alonso, Volkens, Cabeza, and Gómez [40], Breeze [18], Chaney [41], Dobson, [19], Kaal [20], and Savola [42]. Amidon's study problematizes the meaning of 'manifesto', touching on a historical evolution of the manifesto as a genre to an uncertainty about its future. Even though the study is not purely linguistic, it provides insight into the recurrent features of the manifesto. Focusing on UK political manifestos, Breeze's comparative study of the discourse of manifestos presented by three political parties sought to determine the difference in rhetorical strategies. The study found that the discourses of the three political parties were influenced by their status on the UK political landscape. This is supported by Mensah *et al.* [3] who concluded that rhetorical strategies are status-determined in that incumbent's discourse varies significantly from challengers. This had been earlier indicated by Benoit [2] in his functional theory of political campaign discourse. Kareinen [43] uses the methods of corpus linguistics, namely keyness analysis, concordance, and collocation to analyse personal pronouns and modal expressions in two election manifestos in Canadian elections. The analysis showed statistically significant differences in the quantitative use of both personal pronouns and modal expressions. Crabtree *et al.* [44] provide a new perspective on the study of campaigns manifestos by focusing on the strategic use of emotive language. Using over 400 party manifestos across eight European countries, they argue that the level of positive sentiment parties adopt in their campaigns depends on their incumbency status, their policy position, and objective economic conditions. Further, they find that incumbent parties, particularly incumbent prime ministerial parties, use more positive sentiment than opposition parties. Bischof and Senninger [45] as yet introduce a novel link between the language applied during election campaigns and citizens' ability to position parties in the ideological space by exploring how complexity of campaign messages varies across parties in the language of manifestos in Austria and Germany in the period 1945–2013. The study shows that political parties, in general, use barely accessible language to communicate their policy positions.

The above studies on election manifestos in and outside Ghana evince an exciting terrain of varied research approaches, especially from different linguistic (such as modals, pronouns, key words, emotive words, and grammatical complexity) and methodological (corpus linguistics, critical discourse analysis, content analysis, etc.) perspectives. The dearth of literature on manifesto launch

speeches and the use of rhetorical approach is not in doubt as all the explorations have focused on the written articulations of manifestos as well as some linguistic approaches.

METHODOLOGY

Political History and Research Design

The journey of Ghana as a pillar of democratic governance [46] began in 1957 when Ghana gained independence from the British. Since then, Ghana had had a chequered political history with a number of coup d'états: 1966-69, 1972-79, 1981-92 [47]. It was governed under a democratic regime during the period of internal self-rule 1951-1957, during the early post-independence period 1957-1960 before succumbing to one-party rule, and during two brief renewals of civilian, constitutional rule in October 1969-January 1972 and September 1979-December 1981. Ghana then experienced a prolonged military rule under the National Liberation Council (NLC) in February 1966-October 1969, the National Redemption Council/Supreme Military Council (NRC/SMC) in January 1972-June 1979, the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) in June 1979-September 1979 and the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC), December 1981-January 1993. As at May 1992, when a ban on political parties was lifted, thirteen political parties had been formed to contest in elections: while some like the New Patriotic Party (NPP) and National Democratic Congress (NDC) had metamorphosed from the People's Party and the Provisional National Defence Council respectively, the likes of Every Ghanaian Living Everywhere Party and National Salvation Party were newly established and survived only for a short term before joining forces with the competitive parties like the Convention People's Party (CPP), NPP and NDC [46]. The CPP is the first party to have won a general election in Ghana. The National Patriotic Party (NPP) and the National Democratic Congress (NDC) are the only parties to have governed the country since the conception of the fourth republic in 1992, with NPP currently in its second time of ruling Ghana after taking over from NDC in 2016 in a hotly contested election.

As expected, elections and manifestos have been part of government and politics in Ghana just before and after independence and remain so. This is evidenced by the number of both national and local government elections, by-elections, plebiscite and referenda held and the manifestos that have been formulated [8]. The year 2020 represents an election year for Ghana, with already tempers rising high with the insistence of the National Electoral Commission's (NEC's) resolve to compile a new voters' register against the wish of some opposition parties who had gone to the apex court, Supreme Court, to preclude the NEC from proceeding to compile a new voters' register.

We adopted a qualitative research approach, specifically content analysis method. Qualitative research emphasizes the social meaning people assign to certain circumstances and experiences around them. Also, qualitative research focuses on texts, words and/or images. Qualitative content analysis is useful for coding and categorizing data into themes; it is also effective for examining trends and patterns in a particular data [48].

Sample Procedure and Data Set

This study employed purposive non-probability sampling method. In purposive sampling, the characteristics of the population serve as a basis of selection. The study examined the 2016 manifesto launch speeches of the NPP, NDC and CPP, the three current major political parties in the country. Thus, these three political parties have contributed enormously to the political history of Ghana. Data for the study were retrieved from the internet, specifically, YouTube.com. YouTube is

an American-based video-sharing company that serves as a repository of recorded events. No ethical breach was committed in, thus, the data collection.

Data Processing and Analysis

Swales' [21] approach to genre analysis and Hüttner's [49] model of classification served as the combined analytical framework for the study. While the Swalesean framework was used in identifying the move patterns of the genre, Hüttner's framework was used to enable statements to be made about the status of the moves.

After the data were retrieved, transcribed, and coded, the services of two Research Assistants were solicited to confirm the validity of the transcription and coding. The analysis was based on a macro level approach to analysing texts. As already indicated, we applied Swales' model of genre analysis to identify the schematic structure of the selected texts (macro level approach) as well as the distribution of specific linguistic features and how they combine in accomplishing the communicative purpose of the speech, though we report here on only the schematic structure. In this study, we analysed the frequency of moves in the sampled speeches, the textual space given to each move and the sequencing of moves as constituting the schematic structure of the manifesto launch speech. To ensure validity in the coding of moves, two independent coders analysed the texts and came to an agreement on the labels.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, we report and discuss the schematic structure of NPP, NDC and CPP'S 2016 manifesto launch speeches according to the analytical framework introduced earlier in the methodology section.

Schematic Structure

We identified nine (9) obligatory moves and four (4) ambiguous moves. The three manifestos differed in their move structures. A nine-move pattern was identified in the NPP as compared to the ten-move structure of the CPP and the eleven-move pattern in NDC manifesto launch. Certain moves were uniquely identified in each of the speeches. Tables 1 and 2 provide the schematic structure of Ghanaian manifesto launch speeches and the total number of moves in the selected data respectively.

Table 1: The Nine-move (Obligatory) Structure of Manifesto Launch Speech

Move	Label	Description
1	Acknowledging	Acknowledgement of dignitaries
2	Stating purpose	The relevance of a manifesto in election and multi-party democracy
3	Acclaiming	Achievements of party/person
4	Criticising	Allegations/attacks on a party/person
5	Promising	Future policies or intentions of party and/or aspirant
6	Encouraging followers	A call for party faithfuls to act in the interest of the party
7	Evoking the Divine	The reliance on a deity as a source of victory and/or strength
8	Thanking	A show of appreciation for members' efforts
9	Launching	An official confirmation of the launch of the manifesto

Table 2: Status of Moves

Move	NPP	NDC	CPP	%Total	Move status
Acknowledging	+	+	+	100	Obligatory
Stating purpose	+	+	+	100	Obligatory
Acclaiming	+	+	+	100	Obligatory
Criticising	+	+	+	100	Obligatory
Promising	+	+	+	100	Obligatory
Encouraging followers	+	+	+	100	Obligatory
Evoking the Divine	+	+	+	100	Obligatory
Thanking	+	+	+	100	Obligatory
Launching	+	+	+	100	Obligatory
Defending	+	-	-	33	Ambiguous
Revering departed souls	-	+	-	33	Ambiguous
Forming alliance	-	+	-	33	Ambiguous
Solidarizing	-	-	+	33	Ambiguous
Total	9	11	10		

As indicated in Tables 1 and 2, the analysis revealed a total of 13 moves in all three texts. However, nine of these moves appeared in all three speeches (see Table 1). Such moves are considered as obligatory [49] and define a particular genre. In other words, these obligatory moves evoke what genre analysts refer to as the 'generic integrity' of the genre in question. Thus, manifesto launch

speeches in Ghana are identified by nine moves: acknowledging, stating purpose, acclaiming, criticising, presenting campaign promises, encouraging followers, referring to religious power, thanking and launching. The other four moves are termed as 'ambiguous' and are not typical of manifesto launch speeches. It was realized that some of these ambiguous moves were conditioned by circumstances peculiar to a political party. The recurrent features of the three speeches are discussed below.

Acknowledging

All three speeches begins with an acknowledgement of some dignitaries such as government officials and party leaders. The occurrence of this move in the texts as well as the relatively larger textual space given indicates how important greetings and recognition is in the process of persuasion. This move carries the communicative intention of *recognition* which is an important means to persuade someone. Below are excerpts of the NPP Acknowledging audience move and the NDC Acknowledging audience moves in that order.

His Excellency John Agyekum Kuffour, chairman for the occasion. The Acting National Chairman of our Party, the honourable Freddie Blay, My good friend, Nyembele Blay...Representatives of Fellow Political Parties, and Identifiable Bodies, Members of the Media, Fellow NPP Members, Fellow Ghanaians, my beautiful Lady, Rebecca and my daughters, Nana Dokuwa Gyapomaa, Ladies and Gentlemen (NPP)

Your Excellency Kwesi Bekoe Amissah Arthur, my very worthy vice president, Your Excellency Mrs Lordina Dramani Mahama, wife, wife of the president of the republic of Ghana, My comrade, Kofi Portophy, national chairman of the NDC, General mosquito... Invited guests, our friends from the media, my brothers and sisters (NDC)

These two excerpts are very similar to the CPP's realization of the same move (see Appendix). The researchers observe that the three share a common communicative function of giving recognition to stake holders, a feature which renders this move 'obligatory' as it appears in all sampled texts. This finding is corroborated by Weber [13], as he identifies it as important as 'Greeting the audience move'. Weber emphasizes the essence of acknowledging the presence of one's audience in political campaigning. However, in NPP Acknowledging move, for instance, while the speaker gives equal recognition to representatives of other political parties (*fellow political parties*), this cannot be seen in NDC's Acknowledging move, though the latter includes a recognition of all invited guests. In this particular move, there is a particular pattern that is rooted in Ghanaian socio-cultural practice of addressing: not only is it important to address dignitaries but the order in which these dignitaries are addressed speaks volume about Ghanaians' respect for hierarchy. For instance, it is offensive for any Ghanaian to acknowledge the presence of a government appointee before acknowledging the President and First Gentleman of the Land, unless the former is the Chair of the programme in which case s/he assumes a higher authority at the function. Thus, from the two excerpts above, the candidates begin their salutation from the highest hierarchy: the NPP candidate starts by acknowledging a former president of the republic and elder of the party, His Excellency John Agyekum Kufuor; and the NDC candidate first addresses the Vice-president of the republic of Ghana. What appears to be a deviation is the decision by the NDC candidate to acknowledge the presence of his spouse before the National Executives of the party. Manifesto launch is a party initiative; hence, the national Chairman and his executives are important figures to be acknowledged. This is exemplified in the NPP excerpt as the candidate puts the National Chairman before family. Such a

'violation' in the case of NDC can have dire consequences and can also evoke the unpopular notion of 'a government of family and friends'.

Stating Purpose

The purpose of manifesto launch speech, stated earlier in the introductory portion of this study, is to launch a political manifesto; hence, the need for speakers to highlight the purpose and significance of manifestos. All three speakers spoke extensively on the importance of manifestos in election and democracy. The structure of the PP move is illustrated by this excerpt from the speech by the NDC and it shares similarity with that of the NPP and CPP. Hence, it is assumed that most PP move will share its structure and function.

The manifesto we launch today captures what we in NDC plan to do to move our country to the next level. It is a document that has content steeped in vision and pragmatism. It speaks to the aspirations of our people while confronting our reality as a nation.
(NDC, Mahama, 2016)

It is worth mentioning that the researchers identified differences in the sequencing of this move. This move in the NPP speech occurs as the second, the third in CPP and the seventh move in the NDC speech. In the NPP speech, the move follows the salutation move. The candidate establishes the importance of the manifesto in a developing democracy like Ghana. While this move is given an early focus in the NPP speech, it is discussed relatively late in the CPP and NDC manifesto speeches. As Bhatia [50, p 157] rightly puts it, "there can be a certain degree of flexibility in the sequencing of the moves..." In spite of the fixity that is associated with genres, even from the Graeco-Roman period, we can still see its dynamism in the way it is actually instantiated.

Acclaiming

Another obligatory move identified in the sampled speeches was one which had a communicative intention of projecting achievements and experiences of the party. As expected in any text which seeks to persuade, the three speeches contained some landmark achievements by the individual political parties.

As the party behind Ghana's struggle for independence and the political party of Kwame Nkrumah, the first president of the republic of Ghana, the CPP alluded to their role in Ghana's independence. Having also been in office from 2000 to 2008, the NPP made reference to past achievement in their manifesto launch, as seen in the excerpt below:

This country remembers how an NPP Administration, under President J.A. Kuffuor, took a country under HIPC conditions and within seven years had transformed it to a lower middle income status
(NPP, Akuffo Addo, 2016).

Similarly, the NDC, the party of the incumbent government prior to the 2016 manifesto launch and elections, made comparatively more references to their achievements. This move constituted close to half of the entire speech, as indicated by the large textual space of the move. The example below is a typical realization of the Acclaiming move.

Today, over three-quarters of our population has access to clean drinking water. Today, more than eighty-two percent of our population has access to electric power. Many of our road has gotten better following the most massive road construction programme in our nation's history. Our transport system continues to be modernised while our housing programme has delivered more public housing than previous governments.
(NDC)

The relatively higher textual space assigned to this move in the NDC speech (1016) as against the NPP's (320 words) and CPP's (116 words) is unsurprisingly expected of an incumbent political party as they are in office; hence, it will boast of some achievements [10]. Benoit [2] emphasized that incumbents tend to use positive campaigning, unlike challengers who are mostly negative. Analysing political television ads in the United States, Benoit found that while challengers attacked more, incumbents acclaimed more by primarily reminding the electorate of the past achievements. This form of campaigning encourages retrospective voting. This is corroborated by Isotalus [51] who found that, in Finnish political campaign, incumbents are more positive as they acclaim on what they have done.

Criticising

In all three speeches, the presidential candidates level criticisms against their opponents, a move which is very characteristic of political campaign discourse. Below are instances of criticism in the CPP and NPP manifesto launch speeches respectively:

The NDC and the NPP are mendacious. They are mendacious and they continue to break all their promises, torture us with all their lies and enslave us. And they have enslaved us because we continue to be subjected to all their lies. It is time to end their slavery. They are nothing short of being pirates just like the great song (CPP)

Benoit and Sheafer [10] conclude that one function of political campaign discourse is to discredit one's opponent and make a candidate stand distinguished and preferred among others. This significant feature of the sampled speeches corroborates the findings of Benoit, Brazeal and Airne, [52] that incumbents attack less and acclaim more while challengers attacked more. The logical explanation is that the challenger (in this case, NPP and CPP) will have more grounds to attack the policies of the incumbent (NDC) and the latter will have less to attack since the former were in opposition.

The NPP speech employs a similar structure:

I have heard the President of the Republic make the breath-taking claim that the economy is not in crisis, and he went further to suggest that those who say the economy is in crisis have bad eyesight. The President even says that those who say our economy is in crisis are unpatriotic! Let me state clearly and without any equivocation that John Dramani Mahama cannot teach me any lessons in patriotism (NPP, Akuffo Addo, 2016)

It was observed that the two opposition parties, CPP and NPP, tried to delegitimize the government and as Breeze [18] rightly asserts, there is the tendency for a party to delegitimize the other party while constructing electorates as 'betrayed' by such a party, just as the CPP constantly regarded NDC and CPP as 'mendacious'. In Ghana, Mensah *et al.* [3] also add that challengers tend to utilize bellicose rhetoric as they attack the character and/or policy of their opponents.

Promising

The three presidential candidates made known their future plans and policies for the country so as to convince the citizens. NDC and NPP made such promises in their speech:

We will make corruption continue to be a high risk activity. We will diligently continue implementation of the national anti-corruption action plan while applying ICT to remove as much human discretion in public financial management. We will work to introduce electronic payments for public goods and services (NDC).

We have drawn up a comprehensive programme to grow our economy and make sure no part of the country is left out (NPP).

This move in the CPP speech had a similar structure and communicative intention of offering the people of Ghana good governance. Following from Benoit's [2] functional theory of political campaign discourse, this study affirms earlier findings that declaration of plans by the candidates is at the heart of political discourse [10]. These promises made by candidates are mostly on policy interventions. Knowing very well that past achievements alone will not be enough to secure another term, these candidates encourage prospective voting by acclaiming on their campaign promises [2].

Encouraging Followers

The flag bearers sought to encourage the party members to act in the interest of the party since that is the only way their party could win power. We observed that this move marks a change in addresser-addressee relationship. Unlike all the other moves where the relationship was that of leader-followers, there is an indication that the candidates now see the audience as partners and colleagues in the campaign process. The Encouraging move is typically realized in the speeches as in the excerpt below:

Let us go to every part of the country and spread the story of our good news; tell the young people and the students about the skills training programmes, tell them there will be opportunities for all... tell them, it doesn't matter if they have never voted NPP or have regularly voted NDC. Tell them that this is a battle to save Ghana. (Akuffo Addo, 2016)

The CPP candidate deploys metaphor as members are encouraged to prepare for any challenge.

The whole entirety of the party will be leaving here with all the bullets you need for the final days of this campaign (cheers). Chooboi! Chooboi! Chooboi! I...I, Ivor Kwabena Greenstreet, can never send you into battle naked without any weapon (CPP)

The Encouraging move in the NPP speech is directed at encouraging the party members to convince others to share in the beliefs of the party, which is quite different from the CPP's as well as the NDC's which aims at getting just the vote of the party members present.

My colleague and the vice president have also provided further details on other sectors. It is our view that we have put out...what we have put out today is the best plan that can move this country forward. I encourage you all to study the manifesto and vote for the NDC in the presidential and parliamentary elections.

The importance of inculcating a partisan feeling in members is emphasized as all parties realize the essence of having the numbers on their side, especially as Ghana practices a simple majority system

of election and all Ghanaians who are 18 years and above and of sound mind can exercise their franchise unlike the electoral college system as practised in the USA. The importance of addressing the responsibilities of members in manifesto launch speeches and political speeches in general cannot be overemphasized [13].

Evoking the Divine

All the candidates referred to religious deities as their source of strength and victory. This move, undoubtedly, will not feature in some speeches due to different religious beliefs and disbeliefs. However, a careful analysis of campaign discourse in Ghana indicates that this is an obligatory move in Ghanaian Manifesto Launch Speeches. Since belief in God is a shared religious doctrine for most Ghanaians, most candidates refer to God in their speeches.

The NPP candidate quotes a verse from scripture:

So let me speak the words of David to our Goliath...and I quote, and I quote. You come to me with a sword, with a spear, and a javelin. But I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel (Ghana), whom you have defied. This day the Lord will deliver you into my hand, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel (in Ghana).
(NPP, Akuffo Addo, 2016)

In a similar fashion, the CPP candidate requests to sing a Methodist (an orthodox Christian denomination) hymn

There is a second verse of a famous Methodist Hymn which I will like to seek your permission to sing: By thy unerring spirit led, we shall not in the desert stray...

As the incumbent president, the NDC candidate asserts his belief that God supports his government:

Even this morning, just before the manifesto launch, He gave us a heavy shower of blessing. It shows that God's hand is on the NDC, God's hand is on Ghana and he will continue to preserve and protect us.
(NDC, Mahama, 2016).

This move is significant mainly because of the high population of religiously-inclined citizens and the claim that in Ghana, religion is a strong instrument which can pull the country together, if handled properly [53]. The presence of this obligatory move corroborates the findings of Liu [12] as American presidents constantly resorted to religious power in their inaugural addresses. Ghana is a secular state; hence, it is not exclusively aligned to any religious belief. However, Ghanaian politicians mostly appeal to the electorates' religious belief probably because most Ghanaians (88.8%) ascribe to Christianity and Islam: 71.2% are Christians and 17.6% are Muslims [54].

Thanking

The recurrence of this move in all three speeches emphasizes the importance of acknowledgement [23] not only in academic discourse but more so in political discourse, where persuasion is the main communicative purpose and a better way to persuade is to show appreciation for the least support. Taking a cue from Hyland, we label this move 'Thanking move'. Prototypical of this move, all the speakers ended by acknowledging the efforts of certain individuals. The structure of this move in manifesto launch speeches is explicated by the excerpt below from the NDC thanking move.

Let me thank our manifesto committee headed by its chairman Lee Ocran... I wish to express my appreciation to my friend and compatriot who is also my running mate and

my vice president...Eye zu eye zu and finally, I wish also to express my love and appreciation to my number one supporter, companion, comforter and friend....Lordina Dramani Mahama has been my companion on life's journey. I wish to thank my in-laws, the people of the Brong Ahafo region, for giving me such a beautiful and hardworking woman as my wife. And so finally, I want to thank the almighty God for keeping us and raining his blessings on us. (NDC, Mahama, 2016)

Constituting this move, mainly, are acknowledgement of some individuals' effort and God. The former, as made evident in the NDC speech, include acknowledging members of manifesto committee, running mate/vice presidential candidate, spouse of the candidate. However, and as expected, some steps such as thanking of 'in-laws' will not be integral to this move as it is missing in the NPP's and CPP's. The latter, acknowledging God, affirms the earlier claim that political actors resort to religion [12, 53].

Launching

This particular move is the climax of the manifesto launch. After the candidates had presented key issues from the documented manifesto, they officially unveiled their manifesto to be used for the election period. Below is how the NDC launched their manifesto and this shares similarity with the CPP manifesto launch:

On this note, my brothers and sisters, I declare the 2016 manifesto of the NDC entitled 'Changing Lives and Transforming Ghana' duly launched. (NDC Mahama, 2016).

The prototypical declaration expressed performatively 'I declare...launched' was present in all but the NPP speeches even though the NPP presidential candidate indicated that the purpose of the gathering was to launch their manifesto (in the Purpose of manifesto move). The NPP speech rather ended with the candidate professing God's blessing on all those present amidst shouts of jubilation from the crowd. Thus, there was an indirect launch of the NPP manifesto unlike the other CPP and NDC's.

Other (Ambiguous) Moves

Such moves as defending (in NPP), solidarity (in CPP), revering of departed souls and forming alliance (in NDC) which occur in only one of the three speeches are classified as ambiguous, thus, their status can only be determined with further expert information [49]. The NPP candidate sought to react to a supposedly false claim that the NPP and the NDC are the same. Defense/image repair is one important function in political campaign discourse [55]. This move is illustrated with the excerpts below:

There is a dangerous lie, poisoning our politics that must be quashed decisively. That is, the notion that the two major political parties, the NDC and the NPP, are the same. We, in the NPP, know from whence we came. We have never had any identity crisis. Right from our UGCC roots through the various incarnations to the present day NPP, we have held firm in our belief in multi-party democracy and free market economics (NPP, Akuffo Addo, 2016).

The occurrence of the defending move in none save one speech affirms the finding of Benoit's functional theory of political campaign discourse that defending is less likely to be used since

defenses have three drawbacks: they normally take a candidate off-message, a candidate may appear more reactive rather than being proactive and finally, since attacks are normally on a person's flaws, a defending candidate may remind voters of a potential weakness [10]. Revering of departed souls move which was identified in the speech of the NDC was mainly because they had lost their former presidential candidate and president of the republic of Ghana, John Evans Atta Mills, who had died while serving as president of Ghana. A textual space of 151 words is allocated this move, 27 words more than their acknowledging audience move. Its occurrence right after the acknowledging audience move is indicative of the importance the NDC and Ghanaians attach to paying homage to the dead. In a very similar move, save this was solidarity for a sick member, the CPP candidate called on members to say a prayer for a comrade who had fallen sick. A textual space of 22 words was allocated this move. Yet another ambiguous move is the 'Forming alliance move' of the NDC. The communicative intention of this move is to form a long lasting alliance with the people of Brong Ahafo region, the region of the first lady-Lordina Mahama. In Ghana's political history, most political parties are organised along ethnic and regional lines thus the NPP and NDC have strong holds: regions which decide the outcome of elections. Since the first lady is a native of Brong Ahafo region, the president and NDC presidential candidate utilises this advantage by drawing support from his 'in-laws'. The candidate explicates this in the extract below;

This is the region that gave the NDC the likes of the late ambassador Munifie, the late Kwadwo Mahama Adam and several others. My in-laws, to continue to work hard for one touch victory in the 2016 elections, I urge my in-laws Brong Ahafo lets work together to ensure a one touch victory in the 2016 elections. Eye zu...(NDALm, Mahama, 2016).

These ambiguous moves, to some extent, contribute to the realization of the main communicative function of the manifesto speech launch since by defence, solidarity, alliance and paying homage to the dead, the candidate persuades the electorates and portrays a distinguished personality, then only can a candidate be preferable to others [10].

CONCLUSION

This study sought to analyze the generic structure of manifesto launch speeches. Using Swales' [21] model as an analytical framework, the study identified the schematic structure of the NPP, CPP and NDC 2016 Manifesto launch speeches. With Hüttner's [49] framework for classifying moves, the study identified nine obligatory moves in the speeches such as acknowledging, stating purpose, acclaiming, and criticising; and four ambiguous moves such as defending, revering departed souls, forming alliance, and solidarizing. It can be said that the nine obligatory moves contribute to the generic integrity of the manifesto launch speech as a genre in modern governance. Further, and interestingly, the three sub-corpora shared similarities in both the obligatory and ambiguous moves, with varying amount of textual space depending the happenings in the party as well as the individual.

The findings of this study have some implications. The first is that this study contributes to the scholarship on a political genre rarely investigated, manifesto launch speech, arguing that typically from the context of an emerging democracy in the world, this is characterised by nine obligatory moves and four ambiguous moves. These findings have implication for the standardizing of the schematic structure of manifesto launch speeches worldwide. This study contributes to the literature on political discourse in general. Also, this study will help the political discourse

community in identifying the obligatory and ambiguous moves of the fast-developing manifesto launch genre. Based on the findings of this study, a number of studies can be made as a follow-up to this study. First, the study was conducted on Ghanaian manifesto launch speeches. Other genre analysts could replicate the study in other countries to determine how widespread these findings related to the manifesto launch speech are by expanding sample size of the data. This study used Swales' model of Move analysis originally meant for the academic discourse community with a pedagogical motivation. The study has nonetheless provided the usefulness of such a model in a political domain. Other approaches to genre analysis such as the Australian School and the American School in combination with Kaplan's [6] contrastive rhetoric, now known as 'intercultural rhetoric' [56], could be used to analyse the generic structure of this particular genre with the view to finding out the extent to which this genre can be said to be influenced by its cultural setting.

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