

A Multimodal Discourse Analysis of Some Newspapers Campaign Advertisements for Nigeria's 2019 Elections and their Appeal Strategies

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the multimodal resources of some political campaign ads for the 2019 general elections in Nigeria with the purpose of analyzing their appeal strategies. The objectives were to: examine the several communicative elements of the 2019 elections campaign advertisements as pieces of discourse as well as apply the analytical tool of Discourse Analysis to establish the appeal strategies adopted to achieve some political objectives. Data for this study were drawn from newspaper advertisements in three national dailies: the Punch, the DailySun and the Vanguard. The newspapers were published between December 2018 and February 2019. Six advertisements were purposively selected for this study owing to the several rhetorical appeals in them. The analysis of data was based on discourse multimodal analysis approach. The analysis showed that the multimodal resources of the ads, which were socio-culturally grounded, were analyzed under the broad themes of appeal to performance, appeal to endorsement and appeal to freedom which were the major tropes in the ads. In conclusion, it was implied in the study that the multimodality study is an important part of political expression generally and in Nigeria specifically, mere looking at the fact that the semiotic resources deployed in political campaign ads on newspapers convey uncommon yet compelling and significant political meanings and messages about politicians and so on.

Key words: Multimodal discourse analysis, political campaigns, newspaper advertisements and appeal strategies

INTRODUCTION

Multimodal texts are used in different ways and in diverse contexts such as advertising, service delivery, classroom discourse, and sports among others. Over the years, multimodal texts have begun to gain ground in discourses of public engagements such as political discourse, protest discourse, and discourse of civic engagements, among many others (Kulikova & Detinko, 2014; Tehseem & Bokhari, 2015). In all of these instances of discourse, there are certain underlying rules, and each of these is in turn dependent on the social context in which the discourse takes place. A dialogue between a parent and a child is different from a political speech, in terms of ideology, power relations and usage of words. Election campaigns and other types of political discourses are all fields of ideological battles which can be subjected to Critical Discourse Analysis (Ike-Nwafor, 2015).

The growth in the use of multimodal resources in the latter contexts is linked with the public's awareness of the potentiality of multimodal texts to convey clearly important meanings of public relevance (Ademilokun & Olateju, 2015). For this study, the focus is on the use of multimodality in the political context, precisely campaigns.

Visuality is an important feature of political expression. All over the world, politicians utilize visual resources for their popularization in preparation to elections. Similarly, visual images are used in media representations of politicians, political parties, their attitudes to the public, or the effects of their actions and inactions on the public. In the opinion of Ademilokun and Olateju (2015), this politics of visualization is rooted in the thinking of text producers about the ability of visual images to provoke deeper feelings in people than spoken or written language. Therefore, there is the general belief that visual resources can stir more the people to certain required actions than verbal language. The Nigerian political environment exhibits the utilization of visuality for political purposes even though there has not been much scholarly engagement with the subject matter. In fact, one aspect of the political process in the country which witnesses tremendous use of visuality is political rally campaigns.

Just as already noted, to the best of the knowledge of the author not much has been done in the area. However, Ademilokun and Olateju in 2015 had worked on the area although their focus was on 2015 elections. It is on this platform that this study attempts to improve on the literature on the use of multimodality for the establishment of political goals and objectives by Nigerian politicians during the campaigns for the 2019 elections in Nigeria. Here, multimodality is examined in conjunction with other semiotic resources that politicians deploy for meaning-making. Hence, this study therefore seeks to analyze all the communicative elements used in selected newspaper campaign ads for the 2019 elections in Nigeria, paying attention to how all the features contribute to the dissemination of the messages in the ads. The specific objectives of the study shall be to: examine the several communicative elements of the 2019 elections campaign advertisements as pieces of discourse as well as apply the analytical tool of Discourse Analysis to establish the appeal strategies adopted to achieve some political objectives.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Ezegwu, Etukudo and Akpan (2015) traced the struggle to win public support for political goals in Nigeria started with the colonial administration. They revealed that the introduction of nationalists press was a contributory factor to the creating of political awareness among people, especially in the western region of Nigeria. Mohammed and Mohammed (2012) noted that "as a result of the intense agitation by the nationalists, the colonial government accepted some of the demands through some constitutional amendments that facilitated the introduction of general election in Nigeria" (p.45).

Political advertising in Nigeria is executed through the various media of mass communication. It is also achieved through interpersonal channels of rallies and speech presentations at public places. Although, the majority of the political advertising messages are presented to the public through radio, television, newspapers, magazines, billboards, posters, banners, leaflets etc, it can be classified into two categories; *national* and *local* political advertising. National political advertising refers to the advertising executed by the political parties and aspirants contesting for a political post at the federal level. "National political advertising has similar features with

the advertising done by large companies on a nationwide basis or in most regions of the country,” (Belch & Belch, 2007).

Connected to this study also is political discourse in Nigeria. Nigerian political discourse has no doubt enjoyed significant scholarly attention from linguistic, sociological, cultural and psychological views. Owing to the linguistic orientation of this study, the focus is on previous linguistic analyses of political discourse in Nigeria. Broadly, linguistic studies on Nigerian political discourse fall under the categories: speeches, advertisements, cartoons, interviews and debates. However, political speeches represent the most researched aspect of Nigerian political discourse. Some of the earliest studies on Nigerian political speeches (Oladeji, 1991) focused on the political idiolect of foremost Nigerian politicians such as Chief Obafemi Awolowo and Chief Ladoke Akintola.

Going by the description of Awonuga (1988) as cited in Ademilokun (2015), Awolowo’s political language is described as political jargon, where he uses metaphors, vagueness and ambiguity, couplings and strings of words and statements with satirical undertones. Awonuga reports that the metaphors typical of Awolowo’s language are derived from war, sleep, music, game, slavery, nature and gambling. Akindele (1989) as cited in Ademilokun (2015.) corroborates Awonuga as his findings are basically similar to those of Awonuga.

Another review as it pertains to this study is on multimodal critical discourse analysis. El Falaky (2019) observed that Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis (MCDA) has been adopted by researchers as a multifaceted approach of analysis that focuses on ‘denotational’ and ‘connotational’ readings of discourse (O’Halloran et al., 2011; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001). For O’Halloran et al. (2011), denotative processes realize the literal message of what is being depicted while connotational processes refer to the socio-cultural ideological ideas and values. That is, connotation represents a “second layer of semiotic meaning construction” (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001, p. 96).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study will adopt the Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis Theory. Machin and Mayr’s (2012) expanded the analysis and made it a Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis theory after it was developed by Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996) and O’Toole (1994) in two major publications in the 1990s (Ledin & Machin, 2018). They are of the opinion that Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis (henceforth in the present study referred to as MCDA) explains the meaning relationship between words and semiotic resources like images, diagrams, photographs and colors. Machin and Mayr further posited that MCDA also pays close attention to linguistic features such as lexical choices, transitivity, modality and non linguistic features like iconography (poses, objects, settings), attributes, salience (potent cultural items, foregrounding, color tone focus), gaze, pose, light, shadow and color saturation (Akpati, 2019). Akpati added that multimodal discourse analysis examines artifacts composed of multiple modalities; and practitioners of multimodal discourse analysis have highlighted a lack of CDA research using Internet-based artifacts, a lacuna the present study aims to fill. Machin and Mayr (2012) also added that in using MCDA as an analytical framework for any discourse analysis, focus is usually on images, photographs, diagrams and graphics and explaining how they create meaning.

In furtherance to this thought, they buttress that the duty of a multimodal critical discourse analyst is to identify and analyse semiotic choices used by speakers or authors and explain how these choices depict certain ideas, identities and values. In the same vein, Machin (2012) added that the most significant thing in MCDA is the way different kinds of semiotic modes are used by speakers to express or communicate the scripts of discourses. It allows room for an extensive explanation of meanings in texts with both visuals and linguistic features.

Multimodal discourse analysis is related to social semiotics in that it involves examination of artifacts that consist of multiple modalities (such as images, sound, and music) in addition to linguistic and textual content (O'Halloran, Tan, Smith & Podlasov, 2011). Machin and Mayr (2012) stated that multimodal discourse analysis concerns "the way the communicator uses the semiotic resources available to them, either in language or in visual communication, to realize their interests" (p. 17).

METHODOLOGY

Data for this study are drawn from newspaper advertisements in three national newspapers in Nigeria: *The Punch*, *DailySun* and *Vanguard*. The newspapers were published between December 2018 and February 2019 which was the most eventful period of political campaigning for the February 2019 general elections in Nigeria. Six advertisements were purposively selected for this study owing to the several rhetorical appeals in them. The adverts were basically those of the two major political parties in Nigeria: *Peoples' Democratic Party* and *the All Progressives Congress*. The adverts were campaigns for Gubernatorial and Presidential elections. The decision to focus on the strongest parties was motivated by the fact that their political adverts cut across most Nigerian newspapers towards the elections due to their financial capacity and media influence. The adverts are subsequently scanned and converted to word document for data presentation. The analysis of data was based on multimodal discourse analysis approach.

Multimodal Discourse Analysis and Appeal Strategies of Newspaper Campaign adverts of 2019 General Elections

The following section deals with the presentation, analysis and discussion of findings. The analysis of the selected advertisements for the 2019 presidential and gubernatorial elections in Nigeria which constituted the data for this study is presented in this section. The data depicted the boiling point of the Nigerian political atmosphere in preparation for the elections, characterized by unusual lack of confidence and desperation of the ruling All Progressive Congress as opposed to the growing popularity of the People's Democratic Party. Both political parties therefore enacted power in their campaign adverts. The multimodal analysis of the select campaign adverts is built around the advertisers appeal to performance, appeal to freedom, appeal to endorsement, etc. which are major tropes in the adverts. These appeals are discussed in detail below.

Appeal to Performance

On a different perspective, performance appeal happens to be undoubtedly the most yearned-for appeal by the citizenry. It has a far more reaching effect than most other appeals in the political space. The most likely reason candidates tend to come back for second tenure is performance. When a contestant feels he has performed incredibly well in his previous tenure, he leverages on that platform to vie for second tenure. In this study, performance was a

indeed a useful tool in the hands of the candidate of the ruling People's Democratic Party, Udom Emmanuel against his opponent, Nsima Udo Ekere of the All Progressive Congress (APC), who has not served in the capacity hence, cannot appeal to performance. As earlier observed by Ademilokun and Olateju (2015), semiotic resources such as color, graphology, gaze, and posture among others to project politicians and their plans for the people in order to enlist the people's support for such politicians in preparation for elections. In this sense, buttressed that Nigerian political campaign discourse is characterized by the use of people described by van Dijk (1989) as cited in van Dijk (1997a) as 'symbolic elites' who are professional journalists, copywriters, or creative artists who are knowledgeable in public knowledge, ideologies, norms, and beliefs and use them in creating compelling adverts and images for the projection of certain politicians over and above others in electoral campaigns. See the campaign advert below.

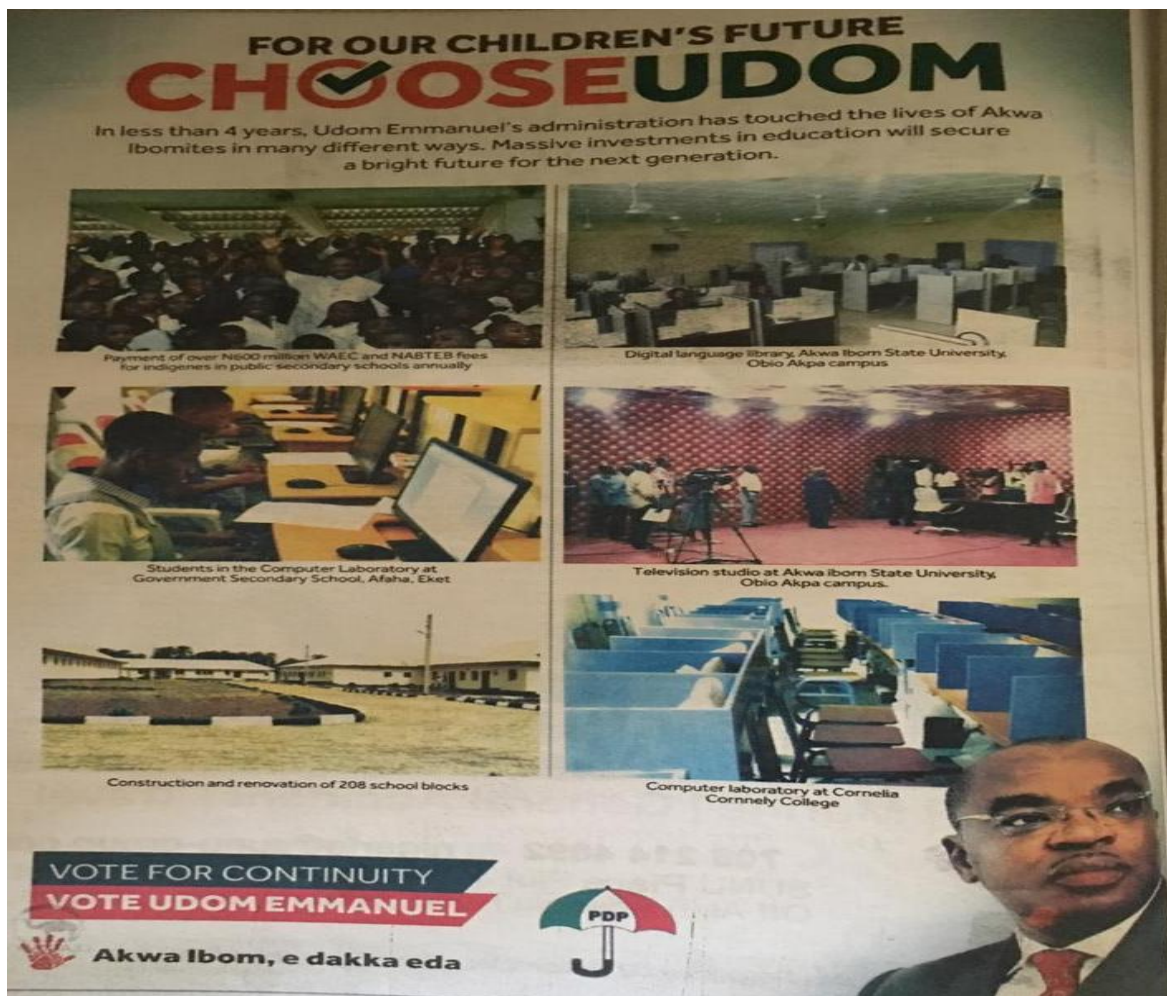


Figure. 4.1 (Punch, Monday, December 7, 2018)



Figure. 4.2 (DailySun, Friday, February 15, 2019)

The images above are clear representation of multimodal recreation of performance for some political purpose. Here, a number of semiotic resources are at play; beginning from the textual color selection to the image representations and even to the language which the advert producer uses in conveying his persuasive message down to the electorate.

Beginning with the textual color representation, as evident in *fig. 4.1* above, it is rather mind capturing the way “choose Udom” is foregrounded. “Choose” is purposively used for literate electorate. Interestingly, the advert producer does not undermine the relevance of illiterate electorate in guaranteeing the candidate of the PDP’s victory in the gubernatorial election. Therefore, he also introduces the Check Mark Correct symbol in green and red colors in *figs. 4.1* and *4.2* respectively to reemphasize “choose” and “vote” as contribute to the semiotic resources. Also relevant to MCDA is the varying font sizes used in the above. The advert producer makes the main message the advert which is “**Choose Udom**” bolder. This is so that the reader will get the central idea at a glance. Second to the former is the expression: “for our children’s future”. Just as Jewitt and Henriksen (2019) observed that social semiotics aims at understanding how representations are produced by and contribute to cultural settings, that is, to get at their social function and meaning potential in the communicative landscape. The textual features of the above campaign advert are analyzed in order to comment on social relations and power of the discourse participant, Udom Emmanuel as well as his signification and interests, the imagined electorate, and the sociopolitical purposes as intended by the discourse participant are realized by texts.

The dominating use of **green** and **red** in the advert and the symbol of the PDP constitute the relay of the visual text as they interact with the verbal language for meaning making. The color green which forms the background for “Vote for Continuity” re-emphasizes correctness or approval of the discourse participant. Also observable in the fig. above is the color red. The color is used to reinforce the love and preference of the above PDP candidate by the electorate. In other words, there is an obvious appeal to blood relationship with the electorate; subsequently making him the people’s best choice’. Apart from giving an aesthetic appeal worthy of beholding, the colors portray the party and the candidate.

On the other hand, green color as used in “Rejoice” by the Governorship candidate of the All Progressive Congress (APC) in Abia State, Uche Ogah conveys a higher meaning. It expresses hope for the people of the state, which implies that the people have been in darkness. It is used by the advert producer to communicate good things on the way. This is reinforced by the advert producer by making the lexical item, “Rejoice” bolder than “Abia” which is the state. Also, in fig. 4.2, the technique of making one of the photos larger than the other completely explains who the Governorship candidate is as well as his running mate. It is true that two persons are in above photo but their inequality is quickly understood following the photo representation. Another semiotic resource in fig. 4.2 above is the undetachability of the two image on the photo. It communicates the inseparability of the two unidentical individuals as running mate. In other words, its implicature is that of togetherness and oneness of purpose.

“In less than 4 years Udom Emmanuel administration has touched the lives of Akwa Ibomites in many different ways. Massive investment in education will secure a bright future for the next generation”.

The declarative statement above conveys the candidate’s sense of accomplishment and optimism. “Udom Emmanuel” as used in the statement personalizes the claimed achievements and goes further to present to them the future of the next generation; which he claims is worth securing through “massive investment in education”. Massive investment in education from the context of Nigerian educational system requires quite some time. The discourse participant practically hands over the future of the next generation to the electorate and persuades them to secure it through casting their vote for him. Also, the fact that the language appeals to the electorate’s children makes it more emotional and touching than imagined.

In figs. 4.1 and 4.2 above, the appeal to performance clearly dominates the campaign adverts pages. In fig. 4.2 it is evident in the discourse participant’s choice of words, which states thus: *“For good road network, infrastructure development and economic growth in Abia State”*. First of all, the discourse participant here is a candidate from the opposition party in the state – the All Progressive Congress – Dr Uche Ogah. From this point it should be taken that the discourse participant is not talking about continuity of good work in the state. Remember he said *For good road network, infrastructure development and economic growth in A Abia State*. The implicature in the above appeal is that there are not good roads in Abia State. There is no infrastructural development in the state and that the economic growth witnessed in the state leaves so much to be desired. The domination of images speaks volume of the almost non-performance ruling party, the People’s Democratic Party in the state. As spelt out in text, the discourse participants both in fig. 4.1 and 4.2 respectively use images that capture *“...development for the next generation”* and *“...good road network, infrastructure development and economic growth in Abia State”* respectively to reinforce their position of appeal. For Udom Emmanuel, the candidate of

the People's Democratic Party (PDP), quality free education is the major standpoint of his performance appeal. In the first picture on the page of *fig. 4.1* "*payment of over 6 million WAEC and NABTEB fees for indigenes in public secondary schools annually*" is his sub-performance appeal. He shows the picture of joy-field students who are celebrating their just concluded external examination. The second sub-performance appeal as seen on the newspaper page of the same *fig.* is "*students in the Computer Laboratory at Government Secondary School Afaha, Eket*". The image clearly shows students operating computers in the Computer Laboratory. Also, still on the same newspaper page, other sub-performance appeals are brought to light. They include: "*Construction and renovation of 208 school blocks*", "*Digital language library, Akwa Ibom State university Obio Akpa campus*", "*Television studio at Akwa Ibom State university Obio Akpa campus*" and "*Computer laboratory at Cornelia Cornnely College*". Following the MDA, it is rather clear that the discourse participant's performance appeal is on quality education.

The specification of where the laudable developmental projects are situated is a clear indication that there exist such projects as claimed in the state. They are not proposed projects, which may likely be carried out after the discourse participant is reelected, rather, they are facts that are glaring for those who care to see. This is the real performance appeal that multimodal discourse analysis tries to reveal. On the contrary, the images on *fig. 4.2* cannot be traced to any location within Abia State, hence; cannot be considered as executed projects within the state. Therefore, the possibility of execution such projects is reliant on the discourse participant's election into office as the Governor of the state. Also, the picture of the candidate at the bottom right of the newspaper page speaks volume of the multimodal features of the discourse. It clearly yet simply implies that "**my good work all over the state should speak for me**". The above positioning explains better what Machin and Mayr (2012) had earlier noted, that MCDA also pays close attention to linguistic features such as lexical choices, transitivity, modality and non linguistic features like iconography (poses, objects, settings), attributes, salience (potent cultural items, foregrounding, color tone focus), gaze, pose, light, shadow and color saturation (Akpai, 2019). The good works all over the state are foregrounded and not the candidate for the election himself. This is similar to what is presented in *fig. 4.2* above. However, the difference between *figs. 4.1 and 4.2* is that whereas the former foregrounds projects that have been carried out in the state, the latter foregrounds proposed projects, which are conditioned by his victory in the election. In the advert, the PDP in Akwa Ibom presented an array of achievements of Governor Udom Emmanuel. In fact, the title given to the advert (For Continuity) which is foregrounded by its font size and color in the advertisement clearly shows the nature of the evidence-based campaign of discourse participant.

Appeal to Freedom

Freedom to man is as important as life itself. Since the creation of man, the struggle has always been geared towards being free from forces, influences, manipulations and oppression of all sorts. In the political context, it is because of the quest for freedom and self-governance that the motion for independence was moved by a southerner, Pa Anthony Enahoro, as earlier noted by Abdullahi – Idiagbon (2013); even though wasn't supported by Sir Ahmadu Bello, a northern fellow compatriot due to what he considered the imbalance in educational status between the South and the North. According to Abdullahi – Idiagbon (2013), the post-colonial political era in Nigeria further brought into limelight the multiple complexities among the inhabitants. Some political analysts observe that, perhaps, the country as a nation only exists only on paper (map) and on certain occasional circumstances. Others even paradoxically put it that no *English, no*

Nigeria. All these comments point to one thing – the fragile national cohesion among the component indigenes in addition to the corruption, ethnic alliances and cleavages that pervades the fabric of the society.

Also, these situations of power dominance, hegemony, ideology, class, political freedom, ethnicity and many other interests in the society are capitalized on by politicians in Nigeria to manipulate the people, win their votes, and consequently control them. The effect, among others, is the election of incompetent leaders into public offices. In preparation to the 2019 general elections in Lagos State, the opposition PDP's candidate, Jimi Agbaje cashes into the notion of the electorate's helplessness in the hands of Godfatherism – the tool of the APC to keep the state under the rulership of the APC. The perception that the electorate of Lagos State are tired and fed up with what the discourse participant considers political bondage is the inspiration behind the freedom campaign strategy of the PDP Governorship candidate. See the figure below.



Figure. 4.3 (Punch, Monday, December3, 2018)

In *fig. 4.3* above, certain verbal and visual signifiers are strikingly used in the advert above to discredit the candidate of the ruling All Progressive Congress and make the electorate reject him and his party. However, underlying the advert and its semiotic orchestration is the recourse to bondage of a very beautiful state. The dominating background of the campaign advert the color **red** is used. The essence is to portray Lagos State and it's indigenes to be in

serious danger. In that same segment of the advert with the color red, a very beautiful State is presented with high-rise buildings yet in danger of destruction by the ruling All Progressive Congress. The multimodal characteristics of the advert speaks volume of the Lagosians dying need for freedom from the ruling All Progressive Congress and Tinubu Ashiwaju's godfatherism leadership style in the richest state in the country, Nigeria. The expression "THE MANDATE TO FREE LAGOS STARTS NOW" depicts some sort of divine allusion. The discourse participant is portrayed by the advert producer as a savior who has been sent by God to save Lagos State from the forces, influences, manipulations and oppression of some dark powers. Also prominent is the cohesive blend of both visual and verbal modes in conveying the message of the advert producer. A verbal text which reads "THE MANDATE TO FREE LAGOS STARTS NOW" is placed very bold at the topmost part of the advert page, couched as the title of the campaign. The discourse participant's attire makes anyone not wonder where he should be from. It is a complete Yoruba attire which is worn purposefully to tell the electorates that he is a true Lagosian who has the interest of his people at heart. He does not want to be seen as a resident in the state but rather as a full-fledged indigene of the state. This to the electorates makes a lot of difference. It makes them believe that their own blood has come and he is coming to attend to their needs, which they believe he understands better than the ruling All Progressive Congress candidate who does not have a mind of his own but is controlled by the godfather Tinugbu who is not an indigene of the state. Also endowed with some multimodal element is the microphone in his right hand. The microphone communicates a lot of ideas about the candidates effort to reach out to all and sundry. The use of the microphone characterizes the discourse participant's effort to be heard by all loud and clear.

The focus on freedom is so important to the candidate of the All Progressive Congress, Jimi Agbaje that he has to ash tag it again at the close of the message using the verbal resource which reads: **"Vote Jimi Agbaje as Governor of Lagos State #SetLagosFree"**. The verbal resource conveys meaning which leaves the freedom of Lagos State in the hands of the PDP Governorship candidate. By extension, the discourse participant adopts this multimodal verbal feature to make the electorates understand that the freedom of Lagos State is dependent on their commitment to voting out ruling All Progressive Congress, who has done nothing other than deep the almighty Lagos State in perpetual bondage; and voting him in for freedom sake. Also worthy of analysis is the fact that the People's Democratic Party's Lagos State Governorship candidate, Jimi Agbaje is portrayed as a freedom fighter in the advert. In the same *fig. 4.3*, the umbrella, the PDP's logo is put in a circle that is completely sealed so that nothing can hurt or tamper with its safety. This speaks loud of the protection from all manner of forces and manipulations that the electorates will receive if the People's Democratic Party's candidate in voted into power in the capacity of the Governor of Lagos State. The advert producer portrays Lagos State as a richly endowed state in spite of her leadership challenges, as the high-rise buildings signify beauty and class, riches and wealthy life.

The optimistic and positive attitude of the advert producer to Lagos State is reinforced by the use of **"#SetLagosFree"**, showing that a richly endowed state such as Lagos deserves better governance and leadership. The expression is also used to show that the flourishes that had eluded Lagos State will start manifesting from the day that Lagosians vote in Jimi Agbaje. Talking about the color again in the campaign advert, the writing of "THE MANDATE TO FREE LAGOS STARTS NOW" in white on a red background is significant, as through it, the meaning is communicated that the government to be voted out is dangerous and evil while "THE

MANDATE TO FREE LAGOS STARTS NOW” is pure and innocent. The gaze of the discourse participant is also strategically used to communicate the joy and assurances that he carries with his coming into power. It expresses the excitement that springs from his full knowledge of his competence. The gaze of the candidate is purposefully presented to justify the need for his election into office as the Governor, as a major campaign point for the PDP Governorship candidate is his freedom objective for Lagos.

Appeal to Endorsement

In politics generally and particularly in Nigeria, endorsement is a political tool that is not taken for granted. It seems so important that it almost determines the electorates acceptance or rejection for a particular candidate. In connection with the endorsement culture inherent in Nigerian politics, Vanguard (February 15, 2019) reported that many are of the opinion that it was the politics of endorsement that brought the incumbent president, Muhammadu Buhari, to power in 2015, since he got the support of both international and national figures. The report buttressed that on New Year's Eve of 2015, a popular Catholic priest, Fr. Ejike Mbaka, in a sermon to his large followers, not only endorsed Muhammadu Buhari, but also predicted his victory in the March 28, 2015, poll.



Figure. 4.4 (Punch, Monday, February 4, 2019)



Figure. 4.5 (Vanguard, Monday, February 11, 2019)

The *figs. 4.4* and *4.5* practically explain the endorsement appeal following certain multimodal characteristics present in them. *Fig 4.4* reveals the Presidential candidate of the opposition People's Democratic Party, Atiku Abubakar completely on his knees before some elders. For clearer understanding, it is important to note that Atiku Abubakar is from the northern region of the country, Nigeria, whose cultural attire is unique in its own style. Interestingly, one of the key areas of culture generally is dress. It is very instrumental in ethnic tracing. For instance, it can be used to identify a Hausa, Igbo or Yoruba person. On the contrary, Atiku is seen putting on a typical complete Igbo attire; an attire mainly associated with people from the eastern part of the country.

Also relevant to the multimodal discourse analysis of endorsement appeal is the conferment of "AHAEJIAGAMBA" by Abia monarch is another semiotic resource that depicts acceptance cum endorsement by the Igbo ethnic nationality. Ordinarily, the Igbo nationality in recent times had been known for their Igbo President Agenda, and so one would have expected that Atiku would be been rejected out rightly by the Abia Monarch. Therefore, the endorsement of the Presidential candidate of the People's Democratic Party, Atiku in Abia State, the heart of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) self-determination struggle speaks volume. The advert producer presents the picture and the verbal text to portray the discourse participant as not only the endorsed presidential aspirant in the 2019 general elections but also as an adopted son of the Igbo people.

In *fig. 4.5* of this study, the semiotic artifact showing the PDP Presidential aspirant, Atiku Abubakar with other top ranked members of the party dressed in *Agbada*, a northern attire that is associated with class, and then the discourse participant shaking hands with the Emir of

Gwandu, Maj. Gen. Mohammad Ilysu Bashar is not devoid of some semiosis. The handshake by the discourse participant with the Emir is an iconicity for acceptance. Considering to the traditional status of the Emir, his shaking hands with the discourse participant goes a long way to tell his people that “Atiku Abubakar is the candidate I want you to vote for in the Presidential elections”.

CONCLUSIONS

This study had been focused on the analysis of some political campaign advertisements for the 2019 general elections in Nigeria. The study reveals that the political campaign adverts on newspapers reflect the tense nature of the Nigerian political landscape in preparations for the elections as the adverts were used by the political parties and politicians to fiercely pursue and promote their political agenda without any conscious recourse to modesty. The multimodal resources of the adverts, which were socio-culturally grounded, were analyzed under the broad themes of appeal to performance, appeal to endorsement and appeal to freedom which were the major tropes in the adverts. Also, the appeal to performance is not taken lightly in the study. The specification of where the laudable developmental projects are situated is a clear indication that there exist such projects as claimed in the state. The pictorial campaign advert on newspapers is a convincing multimodal mechanism because they are facts that are glaring and profitable for reference.

The study further reveals that theme of credibility emanating from performance, qualifications, experience, continuity as well as personality; featured prominently in the discourse for the purpose of promoting the self and degrading others as a way to condition the perception and reception of parties' candidates by the electorates. The findings of the study reinforce the commitment in earlier studies on the place of multimodality in political discourse, as the paper clearly shows that semiotic resources effectively communicate various political meanings directly and indirectly. However, while some of the previous studies focused on political cartoons as multimodal elements, the present study was committed to the investigation of meanings projected by semiotic artifacts at political rallies which is no doubt an under-studied area in political discourse research in Nigeria.

Implicitly, the multimodality study is an important aspect of political expression generally and in Nigeria specifically, looking at the fact that the semiotic resources deployed in political campaign ads on newspapers convey uncommon yet compelling and significant political meanings and messages about politicians, political candidates, political parties as well as the attitudes of the electorate or some segments of the general public to their political leaders and parties. The impression as common in the campaign advert messages to be the BEST CHOICE by all the political candidates studied in this work makes it more interesting.

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