LANGUAGE AND STYLE IN POLITICAL INAUGURALS: A STUDY OF INAUGURAL SPEECHES OF GOVERNOR OLUSEGUN MIMIKO OF ONDO STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT: *Scholarly works abound on political speeches but very few are on political inaugurals in spite of its distinctive stylistic features and communicative import. This paper adopts a combination of stylistics and Michael Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar as approaches to examine the patterns of language use in the inaugural speeches of Governor Olusegun Mimiko of Ondo State with the view to uncovering the specific stylistic choices that characterise the speeches and their pragmatic import. The speeches are characterised by lexical items (adjectives, adverbs, pronouns) which the speaker creatively deploys to promote his political programmes, and to present himself as a committed, sincere and responsible leader. There is a preponderance of declarative sentences and declarative mood which Mimiko engages in promising, assuring and stating to persuade and mobilise listeners. Topicalisation and graphology; testimonial argument and promising; and rhetorical forms are creatively organised to convey pragmatic information such as humility, respect, unity, responsibility and commitment.*

KEYWORDS: Inaugural Speeches, Communicative Intentions, Stylistics, Mood, Political Discourse

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

An inaugural speech, like other types of political speeches, is an important opportunity for a politician to address the public. Unlike acceptance, campaign and protest speeches which may be delivered at party meetings, conventions, campaign rallies and press conferences, a political inaugural speech is a public speech usually delivered after an electoral victory at the swearing-in ceremony of an elected political office holder. It is often delivered in an atmosphere of celebration and it is usually geared towards motivating, mobilising, educating, informing and entertaining the audience. Such an occasion usually affords a speaker the opportunity to appreciate his/her supporters and the entire public for their support while presenting his/her programmes and stating how to realise them.

This study is motivated by the dearth of scholarly works on political inaugurals in spite of its potentials. As a record of programme outlines and promises made by a newly elected political office holder on assumption of office, an inaugural speech is a document by which a politician could be made accountable in future. More so, existing scholarly attempts have concentrated on the linguistic, non-linguistic features, (Ayeomoni, 2004; 2005; 2007' Adetunji, 2007) pragmatic functions of language use of political speeches of Presidents and Heads of Government (Oha 1994; Babatunde and Odepidan, 2009; Olaniyi, 2010; Akinwotu 2013) with little attention given to speeches of other political office holders such as State Governors and

Local Government Chairmen. This paper is a descriptive stylo-discursive study of the inaugural speeches of Dr. Olusegun Mimiko, the Governor of Ondo State. The data were the written mode of the governor's inaugural addresses of 2009 and 2013, copies of which were got on the spot during his swearing-in ceremonies. It identifies and describes the stylistic features that characterise the selected speeches and their pragmatic import.

Perspectives on Political Speeches

Although many scholars have written on political speeches, very few works have been done on political inaugurals. Such studies include Van Dijk (2000) which studies the text and context of the parliamentary debate on asylum seekers, held in the British House of Commons on March 5, 1997. The study which adopts cognitive contextual model, observes that Members of Parliament shared the knowledge and beliefs about the contexts through which they interpret the situation. Schoniecki and College (2004) investigate the speech of President Ronald Regan of the United States of America on the fight against communism. They identified the relevance of the context of the speech (Tear Down this Wall), delivered against the backdrop of the cultural history of the Americans which culminated in the opening of the Berlin wall.

Scholarly works on political speeches in Nigeria include Oha (1994) which is a stylistic study of the war speeches of Yakubu Gowon and Emeka Ojukwu –the two leaders of the warring sides in the Nigerian/Biafran Civil War (1967-70). The study, which focuses on the nature and the relationship of style to meaning, applies the Systemic Functional Theory (SFT) to investigate the actual circumstances of language use. The study observes that meanings are determined by contexts and stylistic choices, and that the conflict between the two sides is demonstrated in their use of language.

Ayeomoni (2005) accounts for the linguistic stylistic devices in selected speeches of past Nigerian Military rulers. He observes that apart from comma and full stop, military officers make sparse use of punctuation marks in their speeches. The study reveals that the use of comma and full stop are stylistic devices identifiable with the administrative style of the military which relate to briskness and military fiat. It also shows their frankness, fearlessness and boldness. Opeibi (2006) examines the impact of negative campaign (advertising) on the Nigerian electorate. The study provides a structural and functional description of the significant features of language use in the political campaign texts of 2003 elections. He observes that rather than engaging in constructive advertisement, political aspirants in Nigeria concentrate on positive marketing of self while running down their opponents. He concludes that factors such as the level of education of voters, political literacy, the content and structure of the adverts and the personality of the sponsor (and/or the political candidate) are responsible for the disparity in the attitudes of voters towards negative adverts.

Adetunji (2009) examines speech acts and rhetoric in the second inaugural addresses of President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria and President George Bush of America. The paper affirms that two contextually contiguous speeches may not have similar illocutionary force and rhetorical elements even when they belong to the same discourse genre. Also, Babatunde and Odepidan (2009) examine the roles of pragmatics and rhetoric in effective communication in politics and governance. The paper explores the effects of context, intention and world knowledge on the choice of acts performed in selected speeches of President Olusegun Obasanjo. It concludes that language can be a tool for effective mobilisation of people towards a desired cause and it can also be used to restrain them from taking particular actions.

Okpanachi (2009) accounts for the structure of power struggle and the underlying ideologies in the socio-cultural context in President Obasanjo's national address of 8th October, 2003, on the dispute between the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) and the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN). He observes that the President used the resources of language to portray himself and his government as patriots, expressly championing the interest of the people while he framed and categorised the NLC as an enemy of the state. Abdullahi-Idiagbon (2010) investigates selected Nigerian Presidential election campaign speeches from the perspective of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). He observes that language is constructed to champion and promote individual interest and concludes that political speeches reflect many ideological differences in terms of party politics, policy formulation and individual views.

Olaniyi (2010) examines President Umar Yar' Adua's inaugural speech of 29th May, 2007 from the perspective of pragmatics. He observes that apart from making assertions, President Yar' Adua also uses language to perform acts. He avers that political inaugurals afford the elected political office holder the privilege of using language to make promises and assurances of good governance rather than making proclamations. Akinwotu (2010) investigates referential cohesion in the acceptance of nomination speech of Chief Obafemi Awolowo in 1978. The study reveals that referential items are used to achieve persuasion and meaning. Also, Akinwotu (2013) employs speech act theory to account for the communicative intentions in selected political speeches of Chief Obafemi Awolowo and Chief Moshood Kashimawo Abiola. The study reveals that the speeches are characterised by a preponderance of assertive, expressive, and commissive acts which are mostly used for mobilisation especially in political campaign where it is essential for candidates to persuade their listeners towards the desired goal of winning elections. The current study is, however, significant in that it investigates the inaugural speeches of Dr. Olusegun Mimiko with a view to accounting for language use and the stylistic features of the speeches and their influence on meaning.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Language is very essential in fulfilling communicative functions. As a medium for the propagation of ideas, beliefs, values and a tool for alliance and solidarity, language is the most important means by which the habits and thoughts of a people can be identified and interpreted. It is an essential tool in politics because it serves to help politicians in actualising their intentions. Like every domain of language use, the language of political discourse is unique. It is characterised by specific features that distinguish it from other domains of language use such as law and religion. Examining political activity involves studying the communicative strategies involved in it. Politicians employ a number of strategies in communicating their intentions to the electorate. While some are propagandistic in nature, others are purely stylistic and persuasive. Language presents its users with a wide variety of linguistic options from which they can make choices to effectively communicate their intentions. Such choices are distinct and describable from the style of a particular language user. This accounts for the adoption of stylistics to examine the various strategies employed by the speaker to persuade his audiences in this study.

Scholars have described variously the concept of style as vague, having no distinct meaning. Ordinarily, style refers to a peculiar way of doing things such as a person's style of eating, dressing, speaking, and so on. Style can also be used to refer to the effectiveness of a mode of

expression or to suggest appropriateness of usage (Lawal 2003: 25-47). Hence, Crystal and Davy (1969) describe style as saying the right thing in the most effective way.

Style in language study refers to an actual way language is used in a particular context for achieving a particular purpose. It includes language use that typifies an era, age, epoch, setting or domain (law, politics, social, culture) and language use in literary genre among many others (Ademilokun 2011:262). Style may also be viewed from three dimensions as follows:

a.   Style in terms of context and form;

b.   Style as choice from alternative forms;

c.   Style as deviation from the norm.

In the first dimension, style is viewed as a possible form which is influenced by context. The second dimension conceived style as the choice of a specific form among other variables or possibilities at the levels of word, group, clause and sentence. For example, words *go, move, proceed, advance* are synonyms and they are options from which a speaker may choose one depending on the context and intention to be achieved. The third dimension considered style as a departure or deviation from accepted or an established way of doing something or from a given expectation. For example, there are norms of language use which include the rules of grammar, phonology, morphology etc, and sociolinguistic norms as may be prescribed in some domains of language use such as law, engineering, politics, religion etc. The breaking of any of these rules constitutes deviation.

Stylistics on the other hand can be described as the linguistic study of styles. This implies that style and stylistics are interconnected; hence, Ayeomoni (2006:549) observes that "studying stylistics entails studying style". As a field of linguistic enquiry, stylistics seeks to account for the recurrent pattern of linguistic features that characterise texts, literary or non-literary. A text must have identifiable linguistic patterns which will come to the surface under rigorous linguistic analysis using the appropriate linguistic model. This accounts for our choice of Michael Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG) as a grammatical model in this study to examine the influence of language choices on meaning.

SFG is a theory of language that places premium on the choices made by language users in their linguistic performance. It provides tools for the description of the choices which manifest in specific linguistic features in the language use of speakers in any given context. The choice of SFG is based on its social orientation which allows adequate description of the relationship of language to everyday social discourse. SFG, therefore, is concerned with how people use language to accomplish everyday social life (Olaosun 2006: 32). It is descriptively adequate to account for the influence of social context on language use by providing tools for analysing how meaning is produced and interpreted by participants in language events. Since the discourse under investigation takes place in a particular social context, it is believed that certain specific linguistic features will set it apart as a distinct discourse genre. This paper unveils the linguistic stylistic features that characterise inaugural speeches as a specific form of language use. It identifies and describes the specific choices made by Governor Olusegun Mimiko and the influence of these choices on meaning.

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The data analysis below covers the significant linguistic and stylistic features in the speeches.

Lexical Analysis

A close examination of the lexical pattern of the speeches reveals the speaker's intentions which include showing appreciation and exhortation, making promises, stating his commitment, setting of goals and how to achieve them. These are evident in the attitude of the speaker towards his audience (tone). The speaker deliberately selects words to effectively communicate his message. The lexical choices in the speeches reveal the intentions of the speaker such as appreciating, extolling, promising/pledging, assuring, testifying etc as shown in the examples below. (Italics mine).

> Word cannot *adequately express my gratitude* to you… (**appreciating**)
>
> We must *commend the leadership* of…   (**extolling**)
>
> It is with *great pleasure and delight* that I stand before you… (**appreciating**)
>
> I *solemnly pledge* before you here today… (**pledging**)
>
> I *will at all times ensure* that this government… (**assuring**)
>
> In the days ahead, Labour Party *will unravel* its programme…   (**promising**)
>
> I *will work* for you. (**promising**)
>
> We have *invested massively* in education… (**testifying**)
>
> We *remain steadfast* in our call for… (**assuring**)

Some words, especially adjectives and adverbs are carefully chosen as collocates of other words in the extracts above to convey the strength of the speaker's intentions in the speeches. For instance, the speaker skilfully combines words (collocation) in the examples below to appreciate his audience.

> *adequately* (adv) *express* (verb)
>
> *commend* (verb) *leadership* (noun)
>
> *great* (adj) *pleasure* (noun)

In the group of collocates above, elements such as *express, leadership* and *pleasure* are emphasised by their respective collocates. Thus, collocates such as adjective-noun, adverb-verb and verb-noun are used to convey the strength of the speaker's intentions (appreciation and exhortation).

He also makes promises with the following verbal elements.

> *will* (aux)… *ensure* (verb)
>
> *will* (aux) *unravel* (verb)

will (aux) *work* (verb)

In these examples, auxiliary verbs are used as modifiers of stative verbs to make promises. They convey the futurity and the intensity (emphasis) of the intended actions.

Also significant is the use of verbs which are post modified by adverbs (intensifiers) to assure the listeners of the speaker's commitment to their welfare. e.g

invested (verb) *massively* (adverb)

remain (verb) *steadfast* (adverb)

The adverbs in the examples above serve to emphasise the import of the utterance which is to state and assure the people of speaker's commitment to their welfare.

Further still, grammatical categories like pronouns are used to achieve stylistic and pragmatic effects in the speeches. To begin with, the personal pronouns *we*, *our* and *us* are extensively used in the speeches. Dr Mimiko employs the plural pronoun 'we', 'us' and 'our' to show collective destiny or responsibility and unity of purpose e.g. (Italics mine)

   vii.   *We* are a proud people with a proud heritage…   (**i.e collective possession**)

   viii. I must not fail to mention the extensive social, economic and attitudinal challenges imposed on *us* by….   (**i.e collective destiny**: **speaker and the listeners as victims**)

   ix.   *We* must not shy away from contributing *our* expertise…   (**i.e collective responsibility**)

   x.   … that emancipation has come to *our* state (**i.e collective possession**)

Also, the first person singular pronouns (*I, me*) are used to show commitment especially when making promises and giving assurances and to show sincerity and frankness when dealing with important issues. They are also used to accept responsibility e.g. (Italics mine)

   xi.   *I* have profound appreciation for … (**to show commitment and responsibility**)

   xii.   *I* will work for you. (**to show commitment and responsibility**)

   xiii. *I* wish to appreciate … (**to show commitment and responsibility**)

   xiv.   *I* must however not fail to mention… (**to show sincerity and frankness**)

   xv.   Let *me* emphasise … (**to show sincerity and frankness**)

In examples *xi-xiv* above, the pronoun *I* is used to convey the speaker's appreciation to the people, to show that he understands their problems and to prove that he is committed to his promises. Examples *xiv* and *xv* demonstrate his frankness and passion with regard to the value he attached to some issues of utmost importance.

The Mood of the Discourse and Syntactic Analysis

The mood system in Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG) helps to reveal how language is made to serve the purpose of establishing ties and maintaining social roles as well as seeking to influence the attitude and behaviour of others. Accordingly, a piece of discourse is seen as an exchange; an organised interactive event involving the speaker/writer and the audience (Halliday 1994: 68). The speeches are characterised essentially by declarative sentences which are mainly simple sentences except a few instances of complex sentences. Thus, the speeches contain mainly the declarative mode of the indicative sub-system. The predominance of declarative sentences and declarative mood reflect the nature of political inaugurals in which speakers often make promises, give thanks and state policy objectives in order to enlist the support of their audiences. Thus, imperatives and interrogatives are hardly ever used.

The simple sentences have the structures SPCA, SPAC, SPC and ASPC, while the complex ones have the *alpha* (**α**) and *beta* (**β**) clauses, where *S = Subject, P = Predicator, C = Complement,* and *A = Adjunct.* The examples below serve the purpose of illustration.

xvi.   /// I /offered /myself /for service /before the people of Ondo State /at different

    S   *P*   *C*   *A₁*   *A₂*

   periods of our most chequered history as a state.///   (*SPCA*)

      A₃

xvii.   ///I /must, /at this juncture, /acknowledge /our fallen compatriots./// (*SAPC*)

   S *aux*   *A*   *P*   *C*

xviii.   ///Our scholarship scheme /shall be /merit-driven./// (*SPC*)

      S   *P*   *C*

xix.   ///We /'ll ensure /the completion /of all outstanding projects.///   (*SPCA*)

   S   *P*   *C₁*   *A*

xx.   ///In the past four years, /the health sector /has witnessed /a new fillip.///   (*ASPC*)

     A   *S*   *P*   *C*

       α   **β**

xxi.   ///It /is /with great pleasure and delight //that /I /stand /before you the good people

         S P   **C**   **S P**   **A$_1$**

of Ondo State /today /as the fifth elected Governor of our Sunshine state.///

                A$_2$ **A$_3$**

The sentences above reveal information about the mood of the speaker especially his attitude towards what he says. The intention of the speaker is to influence the behaviour of his audience by encouraging them to support his government and to maintain their social relationship to further strengthen the ties between them. For instance, the mood of the speaker in example (xvi) is declarative as revealed by the clause, (**SPCA** = I offered myself for service…), supported by the adverbial group (**A$_3$** = at different periods of our most chequered history as a state). The verbal group (**aux, AP** = must…acknowledge) reveals the feeling of a deep sense of loss (**C**= of our falling compatriots) by the speaker in example (xvii). Also, the speaker makes a promise in example (xviii) expressed by the verbal group (**P**= shall be) that scholarship award shall be on merit. The verbal group (**P** = 'll ensure) reveals the mood (declarative) of the speaker in example (xix). His intention was to allay the fears of his audience by assuring them that he will complete all outstanding projects. Again, the mood (declarative) of the speaker is also revealed by the verbal group (**P** = has witnessed) in example (xx). Therefore, he encourages his listeners to continue to support his administration so that he can further consolidate on his achievements during his first term of office. Furthermore, the adverbial group, (**C** = with great pleasure and delight) reveals the mood (declarative) of the speaker in example (xxi). The speaker is happy for the fulfilment of his dream of becoming the Governor of Ondo State. He appreciates his listeners for their overwhelming support which culminated in his victory at the poll and the ensuing legal battle.

Deployment of Topicalisation, Graphology and Inter-textual Reference

The selected speeches are broken into smaller sections with sub-topics which reflect the direction of the discourse. The first inaugural speech is broken into six sub-topics namely, The beginning, Appreciation, A New Era Dawns, A New Paradigm of Governance, Our Expectation and Policy Outline while the second speech has four sub-topics: Appreciation and Exhortation, The Past Four Years, The Journey from Now and Prepare to Re-launch. This device makes it easy for listeners/readers to understand the train of thoughts of the speaker and to easily identify the essence or import of the speech. In other words, listeners/readers do not have to struggle to understand him and to identify the points being made.

The speaker also makes use of graphology as a device with pragmatic imports. As it is demonstrated below, Mimiko makes use of this device to achieve emphasis and to foreground some ideological thrusts. These include:

   a.   The use of initial capital and quotation marks for emphasis and foregrounding. E. g.

         …we declare our project the 'Divine Agenda'.

'Divine Agenda' which is an epithet of praise is emphasised in this example and it is an obvious reference to his mandate which he reclaimed after a legal battle. The victory is seen as an act

of God and the audience is therefore led into believing that he is sent by God as a divine intervention into the affairs of the state.

b. The use of capitalisation: This device is employed to emphasise some points and the inherent ideology. e.g.

> We urge Mr. President to continue to work assiduously to ensure that all
>
> subsequent elections in the country are FREE and FAIR.

There is emphasis on FREE and FAIR (i.e. open, honest, just, unbiased, properly done, not cloudy, acceptable, reasonable, true, not influenced, not manipulated). This is an indictment on previous elections (claimed to have been fraught with various forms of electoral malpractice) which is the basis of the speaker's appeal to Mr. President to ensure a permanent solution to the problem of electoral malpractice. Another example is:

> Unless the LORD builds the house, those who built it labour in vain.

This quotation, which is an inter-textual allusion, (Psalm 127verse 1) lays emphasis on the word LORD which refers to God. Again, as explained earlier, Mimiko used this to appeal to the religious inclination of the listeners/readers to accept him as God sent and to raise their hopes. He interprets his victory as an act of God (divine intervention/agenda). The preceding sentence (*Yes, we laboured, but not in vain because the Lord is on our side)* confirms this.

c. The use of bold prints and large fonts for emphasis e.g. The word 'work' in clause:

> The **Work** continues.

The emphasis here serves a referential ideological purpose to link the second speech with the first, titled; "I Will Work for You". This strategy foregrounds the ideological thrust of the administration which is 'hard work'. The speaker supports this further by quoting, inter-textually from II Thessalonians 3 verse 10 (He who does not work does not deserve to eat) and Surah 53 verse 39, (there shall be nothing due to a man except what he works for).

In a nutshell, topicality, graphology and inter-textual references are used to achieve emphasis, clarity of points and to foreground the ideological thrust of Mimiko's government in the selected speeches to achieve

The Use of Repetition and Parallelism

Some expressions (italicised) are repeated to attract the attention of the audience to its import. These include:

i. *This is what* you voted for…*this is what* you fought for, *this is what* you stood for… (repeated 5 times)

ii. *I want to know* all of you by name. *I want to know* where you live... (repeated 6 times)

iii. *It is the story of* school children who used to trek 4 kilometres a day now riding in cosy comfort… *It is the story* of market women who used to trade under inclement weather…now trading in cosy stalls… (repeated 6 times)

iv. *It is not finished until* there is food security... *It is not finished until* every youth is usefully engaged… *It is not finished until* our cities, sub-urban, and villages are well organized… (repeated 10 times)

The repeated phrases in the excerpts above are not only for emphasis, but they are engaged to communicate very important information that are intended to boost the status of the speaker and his administration so as to influence the audience.

Another device (rhetorical) employed in the speeches is structural parallelism is. (Italics mine)

From the way we dispose of our pure water sachet *to how we* dress, *from how we* celebrate *to how we* handle government money, *from how much* attention we payto our children *to how committed we* are to…

In the excerpts above, the following repeated elements enter into structural relationships that enhanced the pragmatic meaning of the speech.

Opening	Complement
From the way we	*...to how we...*
from how we	*...to how we...*
from how much attention	*…to how committed...*

The repeated elements above have the structure of an opening segment and a complement. Structural parallelism is a stylistic device employed for emphasis and for catching the attention of the audience.

Direct Address and Alliteration.

Sometimes, a politician may engage his listeners by addressing them directly (vocatives) either as a group or as individuals to establish rapport or to strengthen the ties with his listeners. It may also be used to demonstrate humility and respect. Some examples from our data are presented below (italics mine).

My *good* people of Ondo State….

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen…

Distinguished citizens of Ondo State…

Dear *compatriots* and *friends*…

Fellow citizens…

In the examples above, some linguistic elements (italicised) are deployed to play specific pragmatic role of unity or communality in the expressions. While 'good' and 'distinguished' are used for recognition and to praise the addressees, 'compatriots*',* 'friends' and 'fellow'are used to create rapport and to portray the speaker as a humble person.

Again, a politician may choose to address an individual among his audience or elsewhere by mentioning his or her name or the title of such an individual. This is a way of showing appreciation to such a fellow as in the examples below.

1. *Mr. President*, Ondo State looks ahead to working closely with you.

2. *My Lords*, I and indeed the entire people of Ondo State and democrats across this great nation cannot thank you enough.

The examples above are direct addresses to specific individuals. The first example was addressed to *Mr. President* (President Goodluck Jonathan)while the addressees in the second example (My Lords) are the judges who delivered the judgment on the legal battle of the speaker to reclaim his mandate in the 2007 governorship election in Ondo State.

Persuasion and emphasis are also achieved in the selected speeches through the arrangement of words or expressions in a specific pattern to achieve beautiful echoes (rhythm) as in the examples below. (Bold prints mine)

> …the **f**irmness of the **f**armers, the **p**rincipled stand of **p**ublic servants, the **l**oyalty of **l**abour **l**eaders, … the **r**esolve of our **r**oyal fathers, the **r**eassurances of our **r**eligious leaders, the **r**esilience of our **r**etirees…

Some words in the excerpt above are arranged to achieve the sound patterns called alliteration. They include:

The repetition of /f/ sound as in *firmness of the farmers*

The repetition of /p/ sound as in *principled stand of public*

The repetition of /l/ sound as in *loyalty of labour leaders*

The repetition of /r/ sound as in *resolve…royal fathers, the reassurances* and *religious*

leaders, the resilience of our retirees

The above excerpts which are used to achieve emphasis draw attention to qualities of categories of the people mentioned in the extract. Through a specially patterned sound elements, the speakers celebrates the farmers for their *firmness*, public servants for being *principled*, labour leaders for their *loyalty*, the *resolve* of the royal fathers and the religious leaders and retirees for their *reassurances* and *resilience* respectively. This confirms the view of Scholes (1974: 26) that "the most important kind of emphasis in utterance is what we find when the message emphasises itself, drawing attention to its own pattern, diction, syntax…" The people mentioned here are indispensable in the development of a nation. Farmers, public servants, labour leaders, religious leaders and retirees are important in the society for their social, political and economic values. Thus, the speaker used this device as a way of appreciating them for their contributions to the development of the state and to further enlist their support in moving the state forward.

The Use of Testimonial Argument and Promising

Mimiko also deploys the testimonial argument as a strategy to impress his listeners and enlist their support. Through this technique, he provides his audience with evidence of his achievements during his first term of office. Also of note is the import of the titles of the two speeches -"I will work for you" and "The work Continues" -which reveal the policy thrust of

the administration (hard work). The following are some of the expressions deployed as testimonial argument in the speeches.

… we have invested massively in education…

… the health sector has witnessed a fillip.

… we have also created modern Agricultural villages…

… we have constructed neighbourhood markets all over the state.

… we have improved the lot of civil servants through upward review of their remuneration.

… we have declared that pregnancy will no longer be death sentence in our state.

The excerpts above are some of the achievements of the speaker which he reveals in the selected speeches. His achievements cover the critical areas of the economy (education, health, agriculture, etc) that are of utmost interest to the citizens. The choice of 'we' at the expense of 'I' by the speaker in the excerpts above is strategic and very deliberate. This is to show humility and communality and to show him as a responsible leader.

Mimiko also employs promising as a strategy to further enlist the confidence and support of his audience e.g.

I will work for you.

I will ensure this government which you laboured for… remains your government.

I pledge before you again today that I will provide appropriate leadership.

In the excerpts above, 'I' is used to claim responsibility and commitment. This serves to further boost his image and the confidence of the listeners to trust him and support his government.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

This study has examined the language resources drawn upon as stylistic strategies with pragmatic import in political inaugural addresses. The analysis spanned the lexical, syntactic and rhetorical elements (strategies) that reveal the speaker's meaning in the discourses. The analysis has revealed the following observations.

On a general note, good leadership is an essential ingredient of democracy hence, the high demand for it all over the world. This is even essential in Nigeria where the political landscape has been overtaken by selfish and corrupt individuals. Dr. Mimiko is aware of the apathy and lack of trust generated by this and the need to mobilise the citizens to trust and support him. To achieve his aim, he creatively deploys lexical items (e.g. pronominals) to promote his political programmes, present himself as a committed, sincere and responsible leader. These are virtues which citizens expect of their leaders. His attitude towards his audience as well as what he says is a confirmation of his resolve to deploy all available linguistic medium to mobilise the citizens to support his government. Some words, especially adjectives and adverbs are carefully deployed as collocates of other words in the speeches to reveal the force of the speaker's

intentions. Again, the syntactic features of the data reveal the predominance of declarative sentences and declarative mood which Mimiko engages in making promises, giving assurances and stating his positions. This is with the view to strengthening his social relationship with his audience in order to gain their support.

Also, some non-linguistic devices such as topicalisation and graphology are employed as stylistic strategies with specific semantic and pragmatic import. Mimiko deploys some persuasive tools such as direct address, repetition, parallelism, testimonial argument and promising to attract and sustain listeners' attention and to emphasise some important points or issues. He employs the technique of testimonial argument and promising to provide evidence of his track record while promising to do better. These have also helped him to boost his image and the confidence of the listeners to trust him and support his government. Thus, Dr. Mimiko deploys language resources not just to achieve style but as strategies to persuade and mobilise his listeners.

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