

**Explorations in Digital Humanities,
Discourse and New Media Studies**

Essays in Honour of Professor Tunde Ope-Davies (Opeibi)

UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN LIBRARY

**Explorations in Digital Humanities,
Discourse and New Media Studies**
Essays in Honour of Professor ʼTunde Ope-Davies (Opeibi)

Volume 1

**Rotimi Taiwo
Kofu Adedeji
Oluwayemisi Adebomi
Anthony Anowu**

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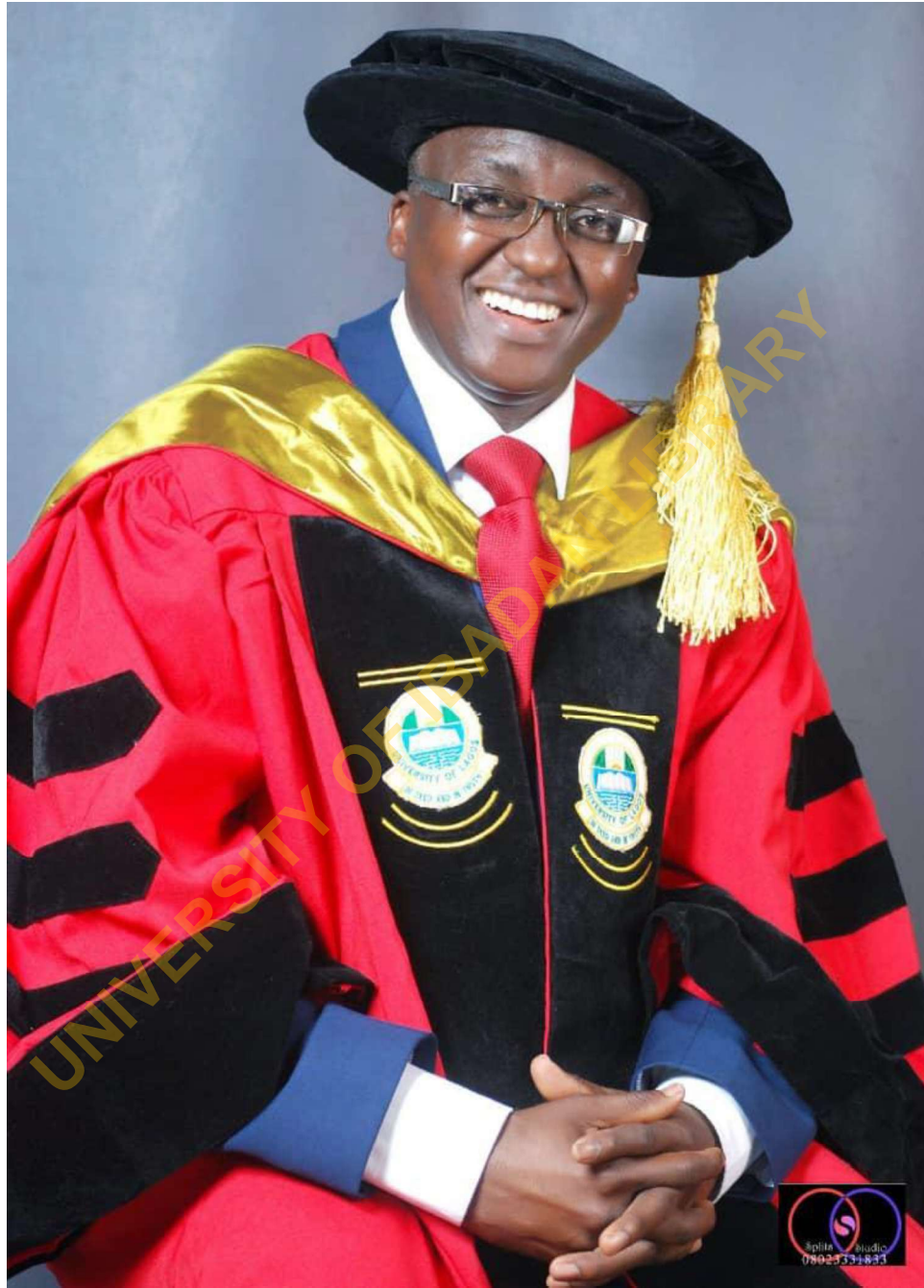


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Professor Babatunde Olusola Ope-Davies

Curriculum Vitae

Professor Babatunde Olusola Ope-Davies (formerly Opeibi)

B.A. (Hons.), M.A., PhD (Lagos)

Professor in Digital Humanities, Digital Cultures, English & Discourse Studies Founder & Director, Centre for Digital Humanities, University of Lagos

Name: Babatunde Olusola **OPE-DAVIES**
Home Address: 3, Masaba Close, Unilag Staff Qtrs. Akoka Lagos.
Present Postal Address: Centre for Digital Humanities/Department of English,
University of Lagos, Akoka, Lagos, Nigeria.
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<https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Tunde-Opeibi>
https://unilag.academia.edu/TundeOpeDavies?from_navbar=true
<https://scholar.google.co.uk/citations?hl=en&user=rXVsuz8AAAAJ>

ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

- 2022 Visiting Fellowship, University of Hamburg, Germany
2018/2019 Visiting Fellowship, Chemnitz University of Technology, Germany 2017
Postdoctoral/Visiting Fellowship at the Institute for Advanced
Studies in the Humanities (IASH), University of Edinburgh, Scotland, United
Kingdom
2014-2015 Postdoctoral Fellowship (New Media & Digital Humanities), Chemnitz
University of Technology, Germany.
2010 Postdoctoral Commonwealth Professional Fellowship, University of
Westminster, London
2004 Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in English Language (Discourse) University of
Lagos, Nigeria.
1995 Master of Arts in (English Language), University of Lagos, Nigeria.
1992 Bachelor of Arts (Hons.) English (Second Class Upper Division), University
of Lagos, Nigeria.

SECONDARY & POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

- 1994 Nigerian Institute of Journalism, Ogba, Ikeja, Lagos, Nigeria- Certificate in
Public Relations.
1984-1986 Ogun State Polytechnic, Abeokuta, Ogun State, Nigeria- HSC/WASC
Advanced Level Examinations.
1978-1982 Lagos Baptist Secondary School, Agege, Lagos, Nigeria-Ordinary Level
(WASC) Examinations

CURRENT ADMINISTRATIVE POSITION

Director, Centre for Digital Humanities, University of Lagos: 2019 till Date.

Founder, the Centre for Digital Humanities, University of Lagos

(the first full-fledged, stand-alone Digital Humanities Centre in Nigeria & Africa)

RECENT ADMINISTRATIVE POSITIONS

Dean, Faculty of Humanities, Anchor University, Lagos: August 2, 2021- January 2022

Head, Department of English, University of Lagos: August 1, 2019 to July 31, 2021

SPECIALISED PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

2024 Certificate Course in *ABC of Artificial Intelligence* organized by the Nigerian Universities Commission and National Open University of Nigeria **Virtual Institute for Capacity Building in Higher Education (VICBHE) Module 8** (February 26– April, 29 2024) – **Distinction**

2021 Certificate Course in the *Theory, Practice and Future Developments in Accreditation in Higher Education* by the Nigerian Universities Commission in partnership with the National Open University of Nigeria, Global University Network for Innovation (GUNI-Africa), African Quality Assurance Network (AfriQAN @ **Virtual Institute for Capacity Building in Higher Education (VICHBE)**) August 31 to October 11, 2021- **Certified Accreditor Distinction**

STATEMENTS OF EXPERIENCE

2016 **Full Professor** - **February 18, 2016 till Date**

2011 Associate Professor - From October 1, 2011 to February 18, 2016

2007 Senior Lecturer - From October 1, 2007 to September 30, 2011

2004 Lecturer Grade I - From October 1, 2004 to September 30, 2007

2001 Lecturer Grade II - From October 1, 2001 to September 30, 2004

1998 Assistant Lecturer - From January 25, 1998 to September 30, 2001

1996-1998 Associate Lecturer, University of Abuja, Lagos Centre.

1993-1996 Editorial and Public Relations Manager at Kaseg Nig. Ltd, Lagos.

1995-1998 Associate Lecturer, Department of Computer Science, University of Lagos, Extension Programmes.

1993 Teaching Assistant, Department of English, University of Lagos.

AREAS OF SPECIALISATION

Digital Humanities, Digital Cultures & Discourse Studies, New Media and Civic Engagement, Corpus Linguistics and Applied Linguistics.

CURRENT RESEARCH

A. Research Projects:

Topic: TECHNOLOGY, POLITICS, AND SOCIETY: A ‘BIG DATA’ APPROACH TO THE STUDY OF NEW MEDIA USAGE IN NIGERIA’S DEMOCRACY (TETFund- NRF 2019 Grant Scheme)

(Sponsored by the Nigeria’s Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) [**Completed**])

This study is situated within the field of Digital Humanities and it focuses on a critical and systematic investigation of the use of the internet, new media and digital technologies in Nigeria's democracy between 2015 and 2019.

Digital Health Humanities Project: The pilot project investigates the use of media technologies for public health communication. A paper has been published in this area. **Ope-Davies** (Opeibi), T. & Shodipe, M. (2023). A Multimodal Discourse Study of Selected COVID-19 Online Public Health Campaign Texts in Nigeria. *Discourse & Society, Vol 34 (1)*. 1-24.

Digital Literary Discourse Project: A pilot project on the use of technologies for teaching and research in literary studies. We have commenced one of the projects titled, **LitTech: Lagos**. A digital exploration of the depiction of Lagos city in literary texts.

The construction of the Corpus of Nigeria New Media Discourse in English (CONNMDE)/ Digital Political Discourse in Nigeria. This project was designed towards the construction of a virtual repository of online political conversation to be hosted on our website (www.cedhul.com.ng). It involves constructing a large data base/online repository of new media discourse texts in Nigeria between 2011 and 2015. The first phase of the project has been completed with two major publications and a number of conference presentations.

Research Experience

Visiting Research Fellow & Professor, Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, Institute for English & American Studies, University of Hamburg, Germany (May 1-July 31st 2022)

Visiting Research Fellow & Professor, Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, Institute for English & American Studies, Chemnitz University of Technology, Germany (December 2018- March 2019).

Visiting Research Fellow, Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities, University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom (August-October 2017).

Senior Research Fellow & Visiting Professor, sponsored by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation at Chemnitz University of Technology, Germany (2013-2015).

DAAD Visiting Scholar-7th European Summer School in Digital Humanities, University of Leipzig, Germany (July 2016).

Commonwealth Visiting Research Fellow, Westminster University, London, UK (October-December, 2010).

AvH-Supported Digital Humanities Research Project (Corpus of Nigeria New Media Discourse in English-CONNMDE) (from 2015 till date).

Building an online repository of digital political text in Nigeria (2011-2015)

Conducted research in the use of digital technologies and social media in democracy
Learned and used computer-based software and applications for research in digital
humanities at Chemnitz University of Technology, Germany

Commonwealth Fellowship-Examined principles and policies that enhance good
governance in the UK.

Publications (Details Below)

I have over fifty academic (50) publications in sole-authored and co-edited books,
monograph, refereed journal articles and book chapters, as well as, several unpublished
conference and research papers. Edited over 40 Journal Articles and Monographs as editor
of the Journal of the Faculty of Arts, University of Lagos (2015-2019). Well cited on
Researchgate, Google Scholars, Academia.edu, & Scopus.

Teaching Experience

For more than twenty-five years, I have been teaching a range of undergraduate and
graduate courses in English linguistics and literature at the University of Lagos and other
institutions in Nigeria.

Mentorship and Supervision Experience/Responsibilities

I have mentored and supervised hundreds of undergraduate and postgraduate students over
these years, and still mentoring many every year. **I have successfully supervised and
produced ten (10) doctoral degree holders with 1 PhD supervisee ABD.** I am currently
supervising about 4 doctoral students. **I have successfully mentored and produced Four (4)
Postdoctoral Humboldt Fellowship Awardees with 2 fresh awardees now in Germany.**
My Centre for Digital Humanities at the University of Lagos has mentored about Five (5)
postgraduate scholars who are pursuing advanced degrees in Digital Humanities- related
programmes in the United Kingdom (UK), United States of America (USA) and Canada.

M.A Supervision: Graduated over 50 candidates; currently supervising about 4

B. A. Supervision: Graduated Over 220 candidates; currently supervising about 4

Conferences & Workshops

Member, Scientific Committee, Alliance for Digital Humanities Organizations Conference
(ADHO2024) to be held in Washington DC, USA

Member, Scientific Committee, the International Conference on Digital English World-
Wide: Focus on Africa and Beyond, held at the University of Technology, Chemnitz
Germany, July 14-15, 2023

Member, Scientific Committee, "Building Digital Humanities Symposium/International
Conference" held @ Western Sydney University, Australia, November 8, 2022

Member, Scientific Committee South African Digital Humanities Association,
International Conferences, 2022, 2023

Member, Scientific Committee, Alliance of Digital Humanities Organisations International Conference and Workshop on African Perspective – DH-2019, July 1-5, 2019, @ Lorentz Centre, Leiden, Netherlands

I convened the 1st, 2nd & 3rd Lagos Summer School in Digital Humanities, July 10-15, 2017, September 30-October 6, 2018, and May 9-15, 2021 at the University of Lagos. I hosted the 1st Lagos Humboldt Kolleg in Digital Humanities (An International Conference in Digital Cultures & Digital Scholarship), Nov 14-18, 2017 at the University of Lagos, Nigeria. I have participated in several conferences, workshops and symposia in the USA, UK, Germany, Australia, France, Portugal, Qatar, Ghana and Nigeria

Public/Community Service Experience & Academic Leadership

Co-editor and chapters contributor, National Universities Commission's (NUC) CCMAS Course Text on Digital Humanities for Nigerian Universities-2023

2nd Term Member, Governing Council, Anchor University, Ayobo, Lagos

Chairman, Board of Trustees, Corpus Linguistics Association of Nigeria (CLAN)

President, Institute for Business Analysts & Process Management, Nigeria President, Digital Humanities Association of Nigeria (DHAN), (2017 till Date).

Elected Executive Board Member, Global Outlook for Digital Humanities (GODH) (2017-2020) Founding Member, Africa Network for Digital Humanities (2019)

Elected Member of University of Lagos Senate (2016-2018)

Editor, University of Lagos Faculty of Arts Journal & Monographs (from 2015 till Date)

Country Representative of *Clarity*, an international association promoting plain legal language (from 2005 till date)

Senior Special Assistant (on Speech & Communication) to the Governor of Lagos State (2007-2011).

Headed the Directorate for Speech Duties, Governor's Office, Lagos (2007-2011)

Nigeria's Representative, *Clarity* (www.clarity-international.net) – 2006 to Date

External Examiner/Resource Person: National Open University, Lagos - 2006

Consulting Editor, Journal, Faculty of Law, University of Lagos - 2006/2007 Consulting Editor, Heinemann Publishing Ltd, Ibadan, Nigeria - 2006/2008

Associate Lecturer/ Resource Person- Diploma in English for Professionals Unit, Department of English, University of Lagos 2002-2007.

Current National Assignments

Co-editor and Chapters contributor – the National Universities Commission's CCMAS Book Project on Digital Humanities Course Text for Undergraduates in Nigerian Universities (In Press).

Ranking Member, Governing Council, Anchor University, Ayobo, Lagos, Nigeria

Other Administrative Experience/Activities within the University

Member, Appointments & Promotions Board, 2021-2025

Member, Auditoria Management Committee 2020-2024 Chairman, University of Lagos Debate Committee - From 2018

Elected Member University of Lagos Senate – From 2016 to 2018
Secretary General Lagos Humboldt Alumni Association. From 2016 to Date
Member, Quality Assurance Committee. 2012-201
Member, Publication Committee, Faculty of Arts, University of Lagos. From 2015 to Date
Member, ICT Committee Faculty of Arts, University of Lagos. From 2015 to Date
Compilation & Computation of Students results/academic performance. 1999-2006
Member, Conferences Committee, Faculty of Arts. 2004-2007
Secretary, LOC, 21st NESA Conference, 2001
Member, LOC, Nigerian Academy of Letters' 7th Convocation, at the University of Lagos. 2004
Member, Assembly of Postgraduate Teachers, University of Lagos (2001 to Date) Member,
English Departmental Postgraduate Committee, University of Lagos (2001 to Date).
Member, Faculty of Arts, University of Lagos, Board of Studies & Examiners.

Other Responsibilities & Membership of Learned Societies

Chair, University of Lagos Research Group in Digital Humanities
Life Fellow, Alexander von Humboldt Foundation
Alumni Member, Canadian Society for Digital Humanities
Member, Association of Internet Researchers
Member, Global Outlook for Digital Humanities
Country (Nigeria's) Representative of CLARITY-an International Association Promoting
Plain Legal Language (www.clarity-international.net)
Committee Member, CLARITY-International
Member, International Language and Law Association (ILLA)
Member, Community of Science, USA
Member, International Pragmatics Association (IPrA)
Member, Australasian Language Technology Association
Member, International Linguistic Association (ILA)
Member, International Association of Forensic Linguists (IAFL).
Member, Critical Approaches to Discourse Analysis Across Disciplines (CADAAD)
Member, American Studies Association of Nigeria (ASAN).
Member, Modern Languages Association of Nigeria (MLAN)
Member, Nigeria English Studies Association (NESA).
Member, C-Tranet (Campus Transformation Network): A Non-Profit Organization
committed to the campaign against HIV/AIDS and other vices among youths in higher
institutions in Nigeria. Fellow, Ragan Communications, Chicago USA

Digital Humanities Initiatives

Pioneered Digital Humanities initiatives in Nigeria (from 2015 till Date). Founded the Centre
for Digital Humanities, University of Lagos (CEDHUL), Nigeria (2019 till Date); Inspired
and supported the establishment of Digital Humanities Centres at the University of Uyo, and
Anchor University, Ayobo, Lagos.

Established the 1st Full-fledged Stand-Alone Centre for Digital Humanities in Nigeria and
Africa Played a key role in the founding of the Network for Africa Digital Humanities
Scholars -2019.

Established & Headed Digital Humanities Research Unit, University of Lagos (November 2015-2019) Organised the first Digital Humanities Summer School in Nigeria and Sub-Saharan Africa (the 1st Lagos Summer School in Digital Humanities, July 10-15, 2017). Served on the Executive Board and played a major role in the Global Outlook for Digital Humanities (GODH) (2017-2020)

International Collaborations and Partnership

2023: Facilitated a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the University of Lagos and the University of Verona, Italy within the framework of a 5-year joint research projects on Digital and Inclusive Humanities supported with 6.5 million Euro grant awarded by the Ministry of Research, Italy.

2019: Facilitated a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the University of Lagos and the University of Cologne, Germany

International Research Fellowships

Alexander von Humboldt Renewed Research Fellowship, University of Hamburg, Germany (May – July, 2022),

IASH-SPSS Visiting Research Fellowship, Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities, University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom. (August-October, 2017)

DAAD Visiting Scholarship for 7th European Summer University in Digital Humanities, Culture & Technology, University of Leipzig, Germany (July 2016).

Georg Forster Research Fellowship for Experienced Researchers by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, Germany tenable at Chemnitz University of Technology, Chemnitz, Germany.

Conducting a research project and training in the application of ICT (social media Tools) to governance and civic engagement- *E-Governance* (2013- 2015).

Visiting Commonwealth Fellowship, Centre for the Study of Democracy, Department of Politics and International Relations, University of Westminster, London (October-December 2010)

Other Prizes, Honours & Awards:

1995: Awarded 3 Lever Brothers Nig. Plc. Prizes for the Overall Best Graduating M. A. (English) Student.

1994: Valedictorian, University Convocation Ceremonies for 1992 Graduating Students
1992: Best Graduating (B. A.) English Language Student

1991: University of Lagos Scholarship Award (“University Scholar”) for Best (B.A English) Student

Awards, Grants, Honours & Fellowships

Awardee, Volkswagen Foundation’s Grant to convene the 3rd Lagos Summer School in Digital Humanities (LSSDH-2021), May 9-15, 2021.

Awardee/Grantee, Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund)-NRF-Project (August 2020).

Co-Applicant/Awardee, University of Bayreuth's Africa Multiple Centre for Excellence, Lagos Cluster (2019). Awarded the Volkswagen Foundation's Grant to organise the 2nd Lagos Summer School in Digital Humanities (September 30- October 6, 2018).

Federal Ministry of Education's Letter of Commendation for Presenting High Quality Professorial Inaugural Lecture with National Relevance. February, 2018.

Awarded Humboldt Foundation Conference Grant to Convene the 1st International Conference in Digital Humanities in Nigeria (Nov 14-18, 2017).

Awarded Visiting Research Fellowship of the Institute of Advanced Studies in the Humanities, University of Edinburgh, UK, 2017.

Awarded DAAD Visiting Scholarship for European Summer University in Digital Humanities at University of Leipzig, Germany.

Awarded the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation Research Equipment Grant for the Establishment of the Digital Humanities Research Unit, University of Lagos.

Awarded the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation Georg Forster Fellowship for Experienced Researchers (17 months stay in Germany).

2nd Best Researcher in the Humanities, University of Lagos, 2015.

Awarded the Commonwealth Professional Fellowship, Westminster University, London (October – December 2010).

Research Experience

Senior Research Fellow Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, Germany (2013-2015)

DAAD Visiting Scholar-7th European Summer School in Digital Humanities, University of Leipzig, Germany (July 2016).

Visiting Research Fellow, Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities, University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom (August – October 2017)

Commonwealth Visiting Research Fellow, Westminster University, London, UK (October-December, 2010)

Some of my research activities include the following: Building an online repository of digital political text in Nigeria (2011-2015)

Conducted research in the use of digital technologies and social media in democracy. Learned and used computer-based software and applications for research in digital humanities at Chemnitz University of Technology, Germany.

Examined principles and policies that enhance good governance in the UK.

Explored the application of digital tools to elicit, describe and analyse online political conversation in Nigeria

PUBLICATIONS

Variations: **Tunde Ope-Davies, Tunde Opeibi, Tunde Olusola Opeibi, Babatunde Olusola Opeibi**

BOOKS

(Sole-authored)

- Ope-Davies, Tunde (2023/E-version). *A Discourse Study of the 1993 Presidential Election Campaigns in Nigeria, (New Edition)*. UAE/Ibadan: Al-Ghurair Printing & Publishing/Straight Gate Publishing.
- Opeibi, T. (2018). *Reconfiguring Our Worlds through Words: A Critical Mapping of Discourse in Human Socio-Cyberspace*. Lagos: University of Lagos Press. Pp 141
- Opeibi, Tunde (2011) *Redefining Governance in the New Lagos: The Quest for a Brighter, Rewarding Future, VOL 1* Dubai/Lagos: Alghurair Printing & Publishing LLC//Media Mark Lithographic Ltd 214 pp. **(United Arab Emirates)**
- Opeibi, Tunde (2011) *Redefining Governance in the New Lagos: The Quest for a Brighter, Rewarding Future, VOL 2* Dubai/Lagos: Alghurair Printing & Publishing LLC/ Media Mark Lithographic Ltd, 324 pp- **(United Arab Emirates)**
- Opeibi, Tunde (2011). *Discourse Strategies in Political Campaigns in Nigeria*. Saarbrucken: LAP. Pp. 379. **(Germany)**
- Opeibi, Tunde Olusola (2009) *Discourse, Politics and the 1993 Presidential Election Campaigns in Nigeria*, UAE/Ibadan: Al-Ghurair Printing & Publishing/Straight Gate Publishing, 422 pp. **(United Arab Emirates)**

CO-AUTHORED/EDITED BOOKS

- Ope-Davies, T.** and Nkemeleke, D. (2025/Press). *Language, Technology, and Society: Essays in Honour of Josef Schmied*. Gottingen: APC, Lagos
- Babatope, S. Izeze, E., Ojewale, B, Obidi, S. and **Ope-Davies, T.** and Momah, E (2023). *Deeper Life: The Pursuit of Heaven's Goal*. Ibadan: Kraft Books
- Ojewale, B, Babatope, S. Izeze, E., Obidi, S. **Ope-Davies, T.** and Momah, E. (2021). *Kumuyi: Defender of the Faith*. Manchester: Elite Academy Publishers Ltd. United Kingdom
- Opeibi, T.**, and Schmied, J. (Eds) (2018). *From Virtual Sphere to Physical Space: Exploring Language Use in Nigerian Democracy, REAL Studies Vol 13*. Gottingen: Cuvillier Verlag, 206pp
- Taiwo R., and **Opeibi, T.** (Eds.) (2016). *Discourse of Digital Civic Engagement: Perspectives from the Developing World*. New York: Nova Science Publishers Inc. 222 pp. (USA).
- Opeibi, T.**, Schmied, J., Omoniyi, T. & Adedeji, K. (Eds.) (2015). *Essays on Language in Societal Transformation: A Festschrift in Honour of Segun Awonusi*. Gottingen: Cuvillier, Germany

PAPERS IN LEARNED JOURNALS/ VOLUMES/CHAPTERS IN BOOKS

- Ope-Davies (Opeibi), T.** Anowu, A.E., Adedeji, K. (2025) Digital Public Health Advocacy in Nigeria: A Multimodal Study of WhatsApp-mediated COVID-19 Posts. In Crompton, C., Estill, L., Lane, R.J., Siemens, R. (Eds) *The Companion to Digital Humanities in Practice*. London: Routledge

- Oloyede, I., **Ope-Davies T.** and Adedimeji, M. (2024): The Humanities in the Age of Technology. In Oloyede, I, Egbokhare, F, Ope-Davies, T and Ibrahim, O. (In Press) *Foundation in Digital Humanities*, Abuja: National Universities Commission
- Egbokhare, F., **Ope-Davies, T.** and Ayodele, J.A (2024) Approaches to Digital Humanities. In Oloyede, I, Egbokhare, F, Ope-Davies, T and Ibrahim, O. (In Press) *Foundation in Digital Humanities* Abuja: National Universities Commission
- Ope-Davies, T.** Arokoyo, B.E., Onuh, F. (2024) Tools and Techniques in Digital Humanities. In Oloyede, I, Egbokhare, F, Ope-Davies, T and Ibrahim, O. (In Press) *Foundation in Digital Humanities*. Abuja: National Universities Commission
- Ope-Davies, T.** and Ogunleye, M. (2024) Computational Tools for Practical Projects in Digital Humanities. In Oloyede, I, Egbokhare, F, **Ope-Davies, T** and Ibrahim, O. (In Press) *Foundation in Digital Humanities* Abuja: National Universities Commission
- Ope-Davies, Tunde & Anowu, A.** (2024). Mediatizing the Challenges of Covid-19 Crisis in Nigeria: A Multimodal Digital Public Health Discourse Approach. In Kelen Ernesta Fonyuy & Lilian Lem Atanga (Eds). *COVID-19 Discourse in African Contexts: Perspectives, Challenges and Possibilities*. Cambridge Scholars
- Ope-Davies (Opeibi), T.,** Kofo Adedeji, & Olusola Aina. (2023). Humourising Covid-19 Pandemic Crisis in Nigeria: A Discourse Study of the Selected Online Memes and Posts. *University of Chitral Journal of Linguistics and Literature*, 7(II), 243-255. <https://jll.uoch.edu.pk/index.php/jll/article/view/308>
- Ope-Davies (Opeibi), T.,** Kofo Adedeji, & Eniayo Sobola. (2023). Vocalising Faith and Identity Construction in Gospel Marketing Text: A Pragma-Discursive Study of Christian Religious Stickers in Nigeria. *University of Chitral Journal of Linguistics and Literature*, 7(I), 164-181. <https://jll.uoch.edu.pk/index.php/jll/article/view/311>
- Ope-Davies, T.** Akinola, J. and Anowu, A. (2023). Initiating and Sustaining a Digital Humanities Laboratory in Nigeria. In Urszula Pawlicka-Deger and Christopher Thomson (Eds) *Digital Humanities and Laboratories: Perspectives on Knowledge, Infrastructure and Culture*. London: Routledge (United Kingdom)
- Ope-Davies/Opeibi, T (2023). Between Digital Humanities and Corpus Linguistics: Interrogating the Framework and Tools for Corpus Projects in Nigeria. In Unuabonah, F. Oladipupo, R.O., and Daniel, F.O. (Eds.). *Readings in Corpus Linguistics: A teaching and research guide for scholars in Nigeria and beyond*. Ibadan: Stirling-Horden Publishers Ltd. (Nigeria)
- Ope-Davies (Opeibi), T. & Shodipe, M.** (2023). A Multimodal Discourse Study of Selected COVID-19 Online Public Health Campaign Texts in Nigeria. *Discourse & Society, Vol 34 (1)*. 1-24. (The Netherlands)
- Ope-Davies/Opeibi, T. (2022c). Literature, Technology, Society: A digital reconstruction of cultural conflicts in Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* in Anne Schwan and Tara Thomson(eds) *The Palgrave Handbook of Digital and Public Humanities*, Basingstoke: Palgrave. pp 195-213. (United Kingdom)
- Ope-Davies, Tunde (2022b). The Digital Humanities as a Framework for Refining and Retooling the Humanities in Africa: A Case Study of the University of Lagos, Nigeria. *International Journal of Humanities Arts & Computing (IJHAC), Vol 16 (2), 116-137.* (United Kingdom)

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EDITORSHIP & REVIEWERSHIP

Edited 3 Issues of Lagos Notes & Records (A Journal of the Faculty of Arts, University of Lagos, Vols. 22, 23, & 24)

10 edited articles in *Vol. 22, Lagos Notes & Records (A Journal of the Faculty of Arts, University of Lagos, 2015*

8 edited articles in *Vol. 23, Lagos Notes & Records (A Journal of the Faculty of Arts, University of Lagos, 2016*

3 Monograph Series of the Faculty of Arts (Vols. 22, 23, 24), 2015, 2016, 2017)

Reviewer for several local and international journals

PARTICIPATION AT INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES/ PROFESSIONAL WORKSHOPS/SEMINARS

2024: Disruptive Innovation: Digital Humanities, Artificial Intelligence, and Christian Education Studies - Emergent Trends Caleb University's Disruptive Innovation Conference 2024 Theme: Leveraging Technological Innovation to Create the New Normal World @ Caleb University, Lagos 29-30th October, 2024

2024: Promoting Digital Humanities as Platform for Navigating Challenges and Exploring Possibilities in the Humanities @ @ 2024 International Conference of the Faculty of Arts, Lead City University, Nigeria Theme: Humanities in the Era of Techno-Science: Navigating Challenges and Embracing Opportunities 7th October, 2024

2024: Deterritorializing Digital Humanities Practices: Prospects, Problems, and Possibilities in Emerging Spaces: A keynote Address Delivered at the International Spring School themed: "Humanities Horizons: Navigating Modernity and Innovation" @ North-West University, South Africa 19th September, 2024

2024: Corpus Linguistics and Digital Humanities: A Revolutionary Synergy for Retooling the Humanities: A keynote Address Delivered at the 2nd Corpus Linguistics Association of Nigeria's International Conference @ Bowen University, Iwo, Oyo State, Nigeria

2024: Convening of the Lagos Digital Humanities Workshop & Conference at the Faculty of Arts, University of Lagos, 14-16 August, 2024

2024: Hosting of the Symposium on From Click to Progress- Youth Pathways for Sustainable Development to Mark the 2024 International Youth Day at the Centre for Digital Humanities, University of Lagos

2024: Tradition, Textuality and Transmediality: A Digital Scholarly Editing Approach to the Study of Selected Early Literary Texts in Nigeria @the Forum Editorik Göttingen Symposium 2024, June 13th, 2024 to June 15th, 2024 Göttingen University, Germany

- 2024:** Digital Humanities as Platform for Redefining and Retooling the Human Sciences: A Case Study 2024 Symposium On African Digital Humanities Theme: Digital Humanities, African Stories, and Agency @ the *School of Communication, University of Ghana, Accra, 15-16 February, 2024*
- 2023:** Reframing Online Civic Engagement through Digital Multilingual Political Discourse in Nigeria @ the International Conference on Digital English World-Wide: Focus on Africa and Beyond held at the University of Technology, Chemnitz Germany, July 14-15, 2023
- 2023:** Promoting The Principles and Practice of Digital Humanities in Nigeria/Africa: A Case Study of The Centre for Digital Humanities, University of Lagos, Nigeria @the International Conference on Digital English World-Wide: Focus on Africa and Beyond held at the University of Technology, Chemnitz Germany, July 14-15, 2023
- 2023:** Lagos-Verona Digital & Inclusive Humanities Projects: A Scientific Co- Operation Initiative @ The University of Verona, Italy, Project Set-Up Meeting on Wednesday, July 19, 2023
- 2023:** Digital Humanities As Tool For Refining And Remodelling Humanities Scholarship @ the Inauguration the digital Humanities Unit, Faculty of Arts, University of Uyo, South-South, Nigeria, 31st May, 2023
- 2023:** Digital Humanities As Tool For Refining And Remodelling Humanities Scholarship @ the Inauguration of the Institute for Digital Humanities, Anchor University, Ayobo, Lagos, Nigeria, 24th April, 2023
- 2022:** Building Digital Humanities Infrastructure in Emerging Spaces: Prospects, Possibilities and Challenges. Presented at the “Building Digital Humanities Symposium/ International Conference” held @ Western Sydney University, Australia, November 8, 2022
- 2022:** Digital Humanities as Platform for Reconfiguring and Retooling Humanities Research and Scholarship in Africa. Presented at the Institute of Africana Studies, Cornell University Special Seminar, NY, USA, Sept 2022
- 2021:** Creating a Viable and Sustainable Digital Research Environment For/In African Studies: The Digital Humanities Approach@ LACC Forum for Academic Coordinators of Bayreuth’s Africa Multiple Centre PROJECT Organised by Institute for African and Diaspora Studies, University of Lagos. Thursday 7th October, 2021
- 2021:** Corpus Building and Analysis Using Digital Tools: Webinar/ Conference on Digital Humanities at the Federal University, Oye-Ekiti Dept of English and Literary Studies, September 18, 2021 (Virtual)
- 2021:** Decolonising Research and Preserving African Linguistic Posterity through Digital Infrastructure @ WLOCAL: 10TH WORLD CONGRESS OF AFRICAN LINGUISTICS CONFERENCE, 9TH June, 2021 (Virtual)
- 2020:** The Digitalisation of the Academia in Africa: Interrogating the Role of Technology in Reconfiguring African Studies: Frontiers in African Digital Research, the Africa Multiple Cluster Digital Conference, University of Bayreuth, Germany. January 29-February 2, 2020
- 2020:** Digital Synergy For Data Management, Innovation And Development: Creating Digital Research Environment In Translational And Transdisciplinary Studies: International Conference, AFRICA MULTIPLE, Conversations and Building Networks, 30-31 October, 2019 @ University of Bayreuth, Germany

- 2019:** Digital Synergy for Data Management, Innovation and Development: Creating Digital Research Environment In Translational and Transdisciplinary Studies @ International Conference, Africa Multiple, Conversations and Building Networks, 30-31 October, 2019 @ University Of Bayreuth, Germany
- 2019:** The Complexity of Reframing Civic Engagement In L2 Public Sphere: A Study of New Media Multilingualism in Nigeria Democracy @ the Alliance of Digital Humanities Organisations (ADHO) Conference 2019, July 8-12, 2019, Utrecht, the Netherlands
- 2018:** International Conference of the Society for the Social Studies of Science (4s), Sydney, Australia, August 2018
- 2017:** Global Digital Humanities Symposium at Michigan State University, East Lansing, United States, March 16-17, 2017
- 2016:** 'Mapping'. The Discourse of Molecular Technology: A Digital Media Approach at Humboldt Kolleg-Lagos 2017, University of Lagos, 10-15 October, 2016.
- 2016:** Towards the Construction of a Corpus of New Media Discourse: Exploring Methods and Tools in Digital Humanities (Poster) @ 7th European Summer University in Digital Humanities, Leipzig University, Germany, July 19-29, 2016
- 2016:** 'Mapping' the Discourse of Molecular Technology: A Digital Media Approach at Humboldt Kolleg-Lagos 2017, University of Lagos, 10-15 October, 2016.
- 2016:** The Cybersphere as Political Engagement Space: A Study of the Use of Social Media in Nigeria Democracy at CSDH Digital Humanities Conference, University of Calgary, Canada, May 30-June 1 2016
- 2016:** 7th European Summer University in Digital Humanities, Leipzig University, Germany, July 19-29, 2016
- 2016:** CSDH Digital Humanities Conference, at University of Calgary, Canada, May 30-June 1 2016
- 2015:** A Special CASE- Digital Media in Political Discourse in Nigeria. TU- Chemnitz. 06.02.2015
- 2015:** 10th International Research Fair, University of Lagos, Nigeria, November 10-12, 2015
- 2015:** Chemnitz Africa Symposium in English, (CASE 3) at Chemnitz University of Technology, Germany, February 2, 2015
- 2014:** Network Meeting of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, 9-11 April, 2014
- 2014:** 1st Chemnitz Africa Symposium on English (CASE 1) at Institute for English and American Studies, Chemnitz University of Technology, Germany, 24th January, 2014
- 2014:** CASE 3: Breaking Barriers, Building Bridges: New Media and Civic Engagement in Nigeria. Humboldt Symposium, TU-Chemnitz, 06.06. 2014
- 2014:** CASE 1: Political Discourse in Nigeria: A Reappraisal. TU-Chemnitz, Jan 2014
- 2013:** 4th International Conference on Multidisciplinary Approaches to Language Policy and Planning at the University of Calgary, Alberta, Canada, August 5-7, 2013.
- 2013:** Language Choice in Democratic Governance: Revisiting Language Policy in Nigeria. A paper delivered at the 4th Multidisciplinary Approaches to Language Policy and Planning held at the University of Calgary, Alberta, Canada, 5-7, August, 2013

- 2013:** Redefining Civic Engagement and Empowerment Discourse: The Lagos Public Advocacy Model. A Paper delivered at the 4th International Conference on Rhetoric, Debate and Pedagogy of Empowerment at Doha Convention Centre, Qatar January 13-15, 2013
- 2011:** Language, Media and the Politics of Tolerance at DAAD/AGGN/CIDS workshop held in Lagos from 9-11th November, 2011
- 2010:** “*Good Governance and Civic Engagement in an Emerging Democracy: Prospects, Problems & Possibilities*” at Governance & Sustainability Seminar, Department of Politics & International Relations, University of Westminster, London, December 21, 2010
- 2010:** “*Language, Law and Governance: Clear Communication in Nigeria*”, A paper presented at the 4th International Conference (Clarity 2010) organized by Clarity International held from 12-14 October, 2010, Lisbon, Portugal.
- 2010:** Governance & Sustainability Seminar, Department of Politics & International Relations, University of Westminster, London, December 21, 2010
- 2010:** Clarity 2010- 4th International Conference organised by Clarity International held from 12-14 October, in Lisbon, Portugal 2010
- 2010:** Risks Management for Corporate/ Public Leaders at Oxford Brookes Business School, Oxford Brookes University, United Kingdom, October 26-27, 2010.
- 2010:** Corporate Communicators Conference 2010 organized by Ragan Communications and hosted by GM Motors, 5-7, May 2010, at GM Motors Headquarters, Detroit, USA
- 2009:** Speechwriters Master Class, 7-9 September, 2009 organized by Mark Eddo Media, UK at Renaissance Hotel, Ikeja, Lagos.
- 2009:** International Top Executive Training “Strategic Leadership in a Challenging Economy” held at Oxford Brookes University Business School, Oxford UK, May 26-30, 2009
- 2009:** (Tunde Opeibi & Oluwasola Aina): “A Discursive-Semiotic Study of SMS Text Messages in Nigeria”, A paper presented at the 11th International Pragmatics Conference at Melbourne, Australia, July 12-17, 2009
- 2009:** (Tunde Opeibi & Adedoyin Ogunfeyinmi), “*Investigating Aspects of Language Use in Nigerian Legal Discourse*”, A paper presented at the 2009 Annual Meeting of Law & Society Association (LSA) in Denver, USA, May 28-31
- 2008:** “*Internal Communication- A Case Study of Lagos*”, a presentation at Ragan Fellowship, 19-21 February, 2008 at The Catalyst ranch, Chicago, Illinois, USA
- 2008:** International Speechwriters Conference at the Renaissance Mayflower Hotel, Washington, DC February 13-15, 2008
- 2008:** Workshop on Internal Communication, The Ragan Fellowship, February 19- 22 at The Catalyst ranch, Chicago, Illinois, USA
- 2008:** US Presidential Election Observers’ Team from Lagos, Nigeria, November 1-7, 2008
- 2007:** Language and Technology: A Multimodal Discourse Approach to Communication, A Paper presented at the Euro-ICT Workshop in Accra, Ghana, July 20-22, 2007
- 2006:** A Discourse Study of Interrogatives in a Nigerian Courtroom Proceeding at the International Conference on Language and Law, Universitat Düsseldorf, Germany (May 17-19, 2006).
- 2006:** The International Conference on Language and Law, Universitat Düsseldorf, Germany (May 17-19, 2006).

- 2006:** International Academic Lecture Delivered at Universitat zu Köln, Germany (May 23, 2006)
- 2006:** The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Sprachwissenschaft (DGfS 2006) International Conference- (*Sprachdokumentation & Sprachbeschreibung*) 22-24 February, 2006 at Universität Bielefeld, Germany.
- 2006:** “A Discourse Study of Courtroom Proceeding in Nigeria” at the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Sprachwissenschaft (DGfS 2006) International Conference- (*Sprachdokumentation & Sprachbeschreibung*) 22-24 February, 2006 at Universität Bielefeld, Germany.
- 2006:** “Bilingualism and Second Language Learning in Nigeria: A Cross-linguistic and Cross-cultural Perspective” A Lecture Delivered at Universitat zu Köln, Germany (May 23, 2006)
- 2005:** The International Conference on *Clarity and Obscurity in Legal Language*, July 5-9, 2005 at Université du Littoral, Boulogne-sur-Mer, France.
- 2005:** “Between Clarity and Obscurity in Legal Language: A Study of Selected Legal Texts in Nigeria, at the International Conference on *Clarity and Obscurity in Legal Language*, July 5-9, 2005 at Université du Littoral, Boulogne-sur-Mer, France.
- 2004:** “Teaching English as a Second Language: A Written Discourse Analysis Approach” at the XXIst NESAC Conference, 8-11 September, 2004 at the University of Lagos.
- 2002:** “*Targeting the Target Language: A Discourse Approach to Language Teaching at the* -Conference in Honour of Prof. Biodun Adetugbo at 65, 9- 10, Oct., 2002
- 2001:** “Aspects of Language Use in Courtroom Discourse: An Analysis of a Selected Text from Court Proceedings” at the Millennium International Sociolinguistics Conference, 16-18, August 2001 at the University of Lagos, Nigeria
- 2001:** “Language, Ethnicity and National Development: Minority Languages Vs English” at the Faculty of Arts, Univ. of Lagos Conference, March 12-15, 2001.
- 2001:** “Nurturing the Growth of Nigeria’s Nascent Democracy Through Language, Political Communications and the Mass Media: Lessons from the USA” at the 7th Annual Conference of the American Studies Association of Nigeria (A.S.A.N.), Sept, 26-29, 2001 at Precious Palm Royal Hotel, Benin City, Nigeria.
- 2000:** “Language, Civic Education and Empowerment of the Civil Society: Democracy at Work in the USA and Nigeria” at the 6th Annual Conference of the American Studies Association of Nigeria (A.S.A.N.), Sept 21-24, 2000 at Whispering Palms Hotels, Badagry, Lagos, Nigeria.

HOBBIES/EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

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Foreword

ONE of my favorite academic buildings in the world is the Faculty of Arts at the University of Lagos, or Unilag. If you've not been there, it is worth looking up. I cannot find any architectural history for it, but it belongs to what is known as the Tropical Brutalist school — a style of architecture that was common in the second half of the last century and combines elements of Northern Brutalism with adaptation to tropical environmental conditions. It also occupies what is clearly a key position on the campus: across the plaza from and at right angles to Senate House, the university's main administrative building, and parallel to but at the end of University Road, the campus's main East-West artery. From the outside, the Faculty is nondescript. Or at least not much different from what you would expect to see on any university campus in a warm and humid climate. The building is much longer than it is tall: seven storeys, spread out along 60 or 70 metres. Its facade consists of a series of cement *brise-soleils*, forming recessed office and classroom windows. You enter at the southwest end, across the faculty parking lot, through a gate and past a porter's office.

It is only after you are past the gate, however, that you see what makes the faculty truly special. Because it turns out that you haven't "entered" the building at all: you've entered a space *between* two parallel office blocks — a breezeway that runs the length of the complex and is open at each end. Connecting the two sets of offices is a network of stairways and bridges. Along the ground level is a central garden with plants and palm trees. Seen from above — in the satellite view on Google Maps, for example — the stairwells look like large concrete blocks themselves. But when you are in the building itself, they form a delicate web, full of interesting angles and contrasts: concrete against greenery; blue sky and the red-painted interior walls and floors; breeze against stability. And at each end, it is possible to stand and look out across the rest of the campus and the city. A superb view of a campus in a superb location.

I hope readers will forgive this extended description of the Faculty of Arts, both because it is the institutional home of 'Tunde Ope-Davies, the honouree of this Festschrift, and because it is a not-very-forced metaphor for what makes Professor Ope-Davies such a valued member of the global academic community. I know what the inside of the Faculty of Arts building looks like because Professor Ope-Davies has organised numerous international conferences and workshops there and I have had the great pleasure of speaking and helping teach at several. The two office blocks, running in parallel, are a physical encapsulation of Professor Ope-Davies's two great, parallel-but-related, research and teaching interests, the digital humanities and discourse analysis/corpus linguistics — both of which are well-represented in this collection. The building as a whole — the offices, classrooms, hallways — represents the physical, digital, and human infrastructure Professor Ope-Davies has built over the course of his career: from CEDHUL, the Centre for Digital Humanities, University of Lagos; to CONNMDE, the Corpus of Nigeria New Media Discourse in English; the various Unilag Summer and Winter Schools in Digital Humanities; the close and enduring connections he has established with researchers in

Canada, the U.S., and Europe; and the former students, now active around the globe, who are a testament to his seminal role in West African Digital Humanities.

It is the Breezeway, however, that I want to celebrate in particular. Or non- metaphorically, Professor Ope-Davies's ability to connect people, disciplines, regions, approaches, and interests in a way that both seems effortless and creates its own beauty. Without being oppressive – there is no Brutalism here, Tropical or otherwise – Professor Ope-Davies has long mastered the skill of creating opportunities for the discovery of commonalities. For seeing how people with diverse interests and experiences can work together and become more than they were as individuals – while retaining their own distinct interests and, going back to my metaphor, enjoying an invigorating breeze as it blows in from the lagoon of our common disciplines and stirs the garden at our feet.

To see this aspect of Professor Ope-Davies's career – and it is my firm belief that for most of us, it is the institutions and communities we build that will become our most lasting academic legacies – you need to take the Festschrift as a whole. The celebration of Professor Ope-Davies's work as a connector – as a breezeway of Global Digital Humanities, if you will – is found in the combination of articles and authors and the many well-wishers who were unable to get a piece in this collection more than in any one chapter. Because it is only once you are through the gate that you see what is truly special about both the Unilag Faculty of Arts and, metaphorically, Professor Ope-Davies's career thus far.

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Preface

THIS first volume of *Explorations in Digital Humanities, Discourse and New Media Studies: Essays in Honour of 'Tunde Ope-Davies (Opeibi)* is a compilation in recognition of the ground-breaking contributions of Professor Tunde Ope-Davies (Opeibi) to the dual fields of Discourse and Digital Humanities. It presents recent research and contemporary disquisitions within the specializations of New Media Studies; Multimodality and Visual Communication; Corpus Linguistics and Digital Humanities; Critical Discourse Analysis; Pragmatics; Stylistics and Applied Linguistics. The authors employ divergent theoretical and analytical frameworks with a multiplicity of methodologies to interrogate the interconnections of discourse, new media and social practices. Each chapter represents the unique research of a vibrant academic, with affiliations to tertiary level institutions within and outside Nigeria who have over the years committed themselves to credible scholarship. Though the book presents a wide range of perspectives in linguistics, it does this without compromising prime academic standards. The focus of the three broad sections of this Festschrift volume are Digital Humanities and Corpus Linguistics, New Media & Multimodality Studies, and Rhetoric, Discourse Studies, Cognition and Society.

In the introductory chapter, Brian Rosenblum presents the history of Digital Humanities vis-à-vis the pioneering enterprise of Prof. Tunde Ope-Davies at establishing the first research institute for digital humanities in Africa, the Centre for Digital Humanities, University of Lagos (CEDHUL). The innovative contributions of the University of Kansas Institute for Digital Research in the Humanities (IDRH) to the field of digital humanities were also highlighted. Foluke Unuabonah illustrates how the pragmatic features of Nigerian English can be explored using corpus pragmatics and following a historical exegesis on this national variety of English. The closing chapter of the first section is another corpus-based study which is centered on online interactions involving children. Ezekiel Olajimbiti's contribution unpacks the linguistic resources that mark the attitudinal stance of X (Twitter) users in crime-related interactions about children, a research space that has received scant attention from scholars. The interpretation of the data involved a distinctive approach of both qualitative discourse analysis and quantitative digital humanities tools.

The second section of the volume presents three research outputs from the field of New media & multimodality, with an opening chapter by 'Rotimi Taiwo and Olajumoke Adebayo in which the discursive construction of attitudes in readers' comments on the four-year global pandemic of 2020 to 2023 is explored. The data was extracted from the comments sections of two major digital media sources and analysed within the framework of the Appraisal theory. The discourse of obituaries in Nigerian newspapers is the preoccupation of Oluwabunmi Oyeboade and Joy Akponorie's contribution in the second chapter of this section. The major inference from the investigation is that beyond merely notifying the public about the demise of an individual, this discourse form provides a uniquely Nigerian socio-cultural interpretation of dying and death. Representing a departure from the typical literature on the negative impact of Covid-19 in developing countries, this section ends with Oluwayemisi Adebomi and Kofo Adedeji's dissenting perspective of the global pandemic. Through the examination of humour

as a form of psychotherapeutic strategy in Covid-19 related internet memes, their view is a deviation from the typical morbid connotations of pandemic-related memes.

The third section of this volume presents contributions in the areas of Rhetoric, Discourse, Cognition & Society. Ayo Osisanwo and Oluwatosin Abidoye interrogate the persuasive techniques employed by Nigerian politicians based on the Aristotelian framework of logos, ethos and pathos within data drawn from selected COVID-19 political speeches between 2020 and 2021. Also dissecting aspects of Nigeria's political discourse, Anthony Anowu and Kofoworola Adedeji, undertake a framing analysis of Mr. Peter Obi in Sam Omatseye's definitive article *Obituary* in the next chapter of this section. Anchored on Critical Discourse Analysis as well as the media framework of Framing, the discourse of a major newspaper columnist on the entrance of a major political contender into the 2023 Nigerian presidential race is reviewed in this chapter. Samuel Ajibiye and Kayode Oluwagbenga undertake a critical study of pronominalisations in the speeches of Nigerian presidential candidates underpinned by van Dijk's Socio-cognitive model of Ideological Square, thereby foregrounding the significance of pronominal markers in swaying the minds of the Nigerian electorate. Aspects of Gender studies/Feminism discourse are the concerns of Oluwayemisi Adebomi, Abayomi Awelewa & Henry John in chapters 11 and 12. Employing discourse analytical methodology, the discourse strategies as well as ideologies in the rhetorics of Brigitte Dzogbenuku, a Ghanaian female presidential candidate are examined by Oluwayemi Adebomi, thus providing an international perspective of political discourse beyond Nigeria. Abayomi Awelewa and Henry John draw on Feminist Literary criticism and the concept of Digital Counterpublics within Digital Feminist theory to establish the rise of digital platforms in Lagos, while demonstrating their pivotal role in empowering women to voice their experiences through engagements in online feminist discussions. This perspective showcases the role of creativity within an emerging digital culture industry. Mohammed Ademilokun further expands the literature on written language with critical attention paid to the review of the landmark EndSARS protests of 2020 as presented by newspapers editors and writers of opinion articles. The research provides credence to the principle of protest being a tool for social transformation in Nigeria. With a similar preoccupation of discourses engendering national stability is Adebunkola Atolagbe and Rasheed Oyegbade's collaborative research on language orality and Nigeria's national cohesion. Grice's Cooperative Principle and Brown and Levinson's Politeness Principle are combined with aspects of CDA as theoretical framework in evaluating the discourse texts. In chapter 15, Tolulope Iredele carries out a linguistic study of campaign strategies in presidential town hall meetings. Employing Fairclough's socio-historical approach to Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), the research meticulously examines how the use of technology and social media reshape political campaigns while also uncovering the linguistic strategies and discursive practices employed by political candidates. Modupe Agunbiade's contribution involves the study of protest language informed by a three-pronged analytical perspective of Critical Discourse Analysis, the Socio-cognitive approach and a digital analytical tool. It focuses on the discursive representation of social actors in newspaper reportage of news concerning school fees-hike in Nigerian universities.

**'Rotimi Taiwo,
Kofu Adedeji,
Oluwayemisi Adebomi,
Anthony Anowu**

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SECTION

1

**Digital Scholarship in
the Humanities and
Corpus Linguistics**

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Chapter Seven

PERSUASIVE STRATEGIES IN SELECTED POLITICAL SPEECHES ON COVID-19 PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES IN NIGERIA

Ayo Osisanwo

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and

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Introduction

THE emergence of the Coronavirus disease in 2019, popularly known as COVID 19, has spurred diverse academic reactions among individuals all over the world (Singh, 2020; Trzebinski, Cabanski, & Zarnecka, 2020; Adebomi, 2023). The deadly virus (COVID-19) was caused by a novel Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 (SARS CoV-2) which was discovered in Wuhan City, Hubei Province in China (Harapan and Mudastir, 2019; Aasim et al 2020). In February 2020, as investigated by the World Health Organization (WHO), the global health crisis, began its spread to different parts of the world. In 2020, precisely on 30 January, the virus was declared a pandemic to emphasize its fatality, and this generated a series of actions towards combating the disease. As noted by Singh (2020), the virus without any jot of doubt has increased mortality globally. Nigeria is one of the countries widely affected by the virus. As noted by the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) in 2023, over 200,000 people tested positive for the disease and over 3000 deaths were recorded in Nigeria. The outbreak of the virus led to an increase in social problems in Nigeria. These problems as noted by Gomment (2022) increased crime rate, poverty level, unemployment rate, etc. all of which are recognized as potential threats to the attainment of sustainable development goals in Nigeria. As a result of the scathes associated with this virus, efforts have been made by the government, medical practitioners, organizations, institutions, and citizens of various countries, including Nigeria to prevent the disease. Strategies have been employed to sensitise Nigerian citizens on the need to duly observe COVID-19 precautionary measures by different governmental and non- governmental organizations. For instance, citizens are being sensitized on social media platforms, television, radio, schools, and religious institutions on the prevention of the virus. Since the first COVID-19 case in Nigeria, the Nigerian government adopted anti-mitigation and containment techniques to allay the widespread attack of the virus such as travel restrictions, lockdown policies, prohibition of large gatherings, issuance of compulsory stay-at-home policies, self-isolation/quarantine policies, training of medical and health professionals and so on (Jacobs and Okeke, 2022). In addition, the former Nigerian president, Muhammadu Buhari, on 9 March, established a Presidential Task Force on COVID-19 to take

active charge of the containment of the virus in Nigeria. Political actors also deploy speech delivery as a technique to unravel the mayhem of COVID-19, emphasizing its deadliness and possible preventive measures to the citizenry to curtail its spread.

The strength attached to political speeches in addressing the problems posed by Coronavirus and their awareness creation potentiality has informed academic interrogations within and outside Nigeria, explicitly from the linguistic areas (Khali, 2020; Setiawan et al, 2021; Sidra, 2021; Akano, 2022; Osisanwo, 2022; Emmanouli, 2022; Adebomi, 2023). However, these interrogations have not been amply extended to the COVID-19 speeches of Governor Babatunde Sanwo-olu (GBS) and Dr Osagie Ehanire (DOE) despite their significant contributions towards restraining the spread of the virus. GBS is the executive governor of Lagos state, Nigeria, the epicentre of the Coronavirus infection, while DOE is Nigeria's minister of health and one of the notable politicians who spearheaded the COVID19 prevention campaigns. To this end, this present study examines the linguistic choices deployed in the speeches of GBS and DOE towards persuading the masses to comply with stipulated COVID-19 rules and regulations. The study provides answers to the following questions: what are the identified persuasive strategies in the speeches of GBS and DOE? How are the persuasive devices employed in their political speeches to impel the masses towards strict adherence to COVID-19 precautionary measures? What are the functions of the persuasive strategies in their speeches?

Persuasion and COVID-19

The term persuasion, as revealed by Rapp (2010) is associated with the great philosopher, Aristotle. 'Persuasion is celebrated as a quintessential human activity...' (Perloff, 2003: 7), that is, an aspect of communication that is often employed by human beings in their day-to-day interaction and relationship with others. The word "persuasion" refers to the act of influencing attitudes, feelings or emotions of people and motivating or encouraging them to do things which they ordinarily would not do (Wodak, 1996). The goal of every form of persuasion is to have a positive effect on the listener(s). This simply means that when we persuade people, we want them to believe, think or act in ways that suit or please us for various reasons. The crux of persuasion is the changing of people's attitudes and behaviour (Perloff, 2003; Gardikiotis and Crano, 2015). In a similar vein, Miller (1980) opines that persuasive communication aims at three distinct persuasive effects: changing, reinforcing, and shaping responses. This simply means that persuasion has not occurred if the attitudes of people have not been either changed, reinforced, or shaped. Persuasion requires utmost wisdom and skill and must be done with great caution. This is why it is essential for anyone who would like to persuade others via speech or any other means to be conscious of their diction. The opinion of Zheng (2000) is that language serves as a potent tool that helps public speakers to successfully shape and control the thoughts of others. However, it is

apposite to state here that language is not the only tool of persuasion as many people often believe. Other forms of persuasion could be paralinguistic: the speaker's gestures, facial expressions, appearance, reputable character, dress and so forth. However, the speaker should use the right words at the right time to successfully shape the thoughts of the listeners too. The essence of this is that the appropriate deployment of persuasive techniques or devices will ensure the success of any political speech.

The increasing statistics of COVID-19 mortality rate across the globe has informed critical scholarly investigations about the virus from copious disciplines as explored by Dhawan; 2020, Goner, Hasanogiu and Aktas 2020; Adeyeye et al 2022, and so on from non-linguistic aspects. From the linguistic angle, while Asif, Zhiyong, Iram and Nisar (2021) explore the linguistic analysis of neologism related to COVID-19, revealing that the coinage of new words plays significant roles throughout the history of the COVID-19 pandemic, Obiorah (2021) investigates the use of the Nigerian indigenous languages in fighting authenticating this with Salawu's model for indigenous language developmental communication and finds out that the Nigerian indigenous languages are viable sensitization tools to publicise the COVID-19 precautionary measures. Furthermore, the representational strategies, discourse structures and discourse strategies deployed by selected newspapers in representing COVID-19 and associated participants were identified by Osisanwo (2022). Osisanwo acknowledges that the appalling representations of this virus in the newspapers are to inform the masses about the lethality of the virus and the need to urgently combat it as confirmed in the selected COVID-19 speeches of the two renowned Nigerians selected for this study. From the stylistic point of view, Ogunrinde et al (2021) focus on Halliday's functional stylistic theory to conduct graphological and syntactic analyses of COVID-19 newspaper headlines, while Ogbuehi and Agbara (2022) also from the same lens, attempt a stylistic analysis of some COVID-19 awareness banners emphasizing the relevance of stylistic markers in the effective persuasion of the masses. Hence, their studies complement this research since it unveils the role of linguistic tools in convincing the masses towards obeying COVID-19 protocols. The preceding studies have examined COVID-19 from different language perspectives, however, the linguistic investigation of COVID-19 speeches has been neglected by them.

Interestingly, studies on persuasion and COVID-19 speeches have also been underscored from heterogeneous linguistic viewpoints. While Khali, 2020; Sabah et al, 2020; Setiawan et al, 2021 and Sidra, 2021 focus on the discourse analysis of COVID-19 speeches, Emmanouli (2022) undertakes the syntactic and lexical evaluation of COVID-19 speeches without close attention to Nigerian-based COVID-19 speeches. Anyanwu (2021), Akano (2022) and Adebomi (2023) deviate from the above studies in that they delve into the analyses of the persuasive structures of Nigerian COVID-19 speeches, precisely President Muhammadu

Buhari (PMB). While Anyanwu analyses his speech from the stylistics standpoint and examines how he deployed certain stylistics and linguistic resources to create awareness about the virus, Akano (2022) and Adebomi (2023) in a similar vein discuss how PMB utilizes specific linguistic choices from the outlook of logos, ethos, and pathos to create awareness on the COVID-19 prevention procedures. Akano adds that contextual resources realized through Mey's pragmatic acts were employed by PMB to corroborate his argument while Adebomi discovers that certain tropes are incorporated in his speech to make his persuasive utterances strong as regards compliance with COVID-19 rules and regulations. Even though the foregoing verifies the linguistic consideration on persuasive strategies and Nigerian COVID-19 speeches, studies on the COVID-19 speeches of Babatunde Sanwo-Olu and Osagie Ehanire have been limitedly explored. The two of them played central and very crucial roles in gatekeeping COVID-19 during the pandemic. To this end, this current research fills the identified gap by explicating the persuasive strategies in the COVID-19 speeches of Babatunde Sanwo-olu, the executive governor of Lagos state, Nigeria and Dr Osagie Ehanire, the honourable minister of health of the Federal Republic of Nigeria towards ensuring the citizens' compliance with COVID-19 protocols.

Theoretical Orientation

Aristotle's rhetoric is adopted for the analysis of the selected data for this study. The choice of this theory is borne out of the fact that the model emphasizes persuasive communication by providing useful insights on how persuasion can be effectively achieved in a discourse through the logos, ethos and pathos devices. Since persuasion is an esteemed phenomenon in political discourse, this theory is therefore fit for this research as it expatiates how GBS and DOE engage their audiences through various persuasive strategies as depicted in their COVID-19 speeches. There are three major rhetorical devices as developed by Aristotle and they are: logos, ethos and pathos. Persuasion through logical argument and rational thoughts becomes reasonable through logos. Aristotle (2007) affirms that one can successfully persuade or be involved in persuasion through rational discussion. Furthermore, he believes that using reasoning is the most valid way of persuasion. In other words, when a speaker uses factual and logical expressions to buttress his or her points while communicating to others, the persuasive strategy of logos is being utilised by the speaker. Usually, listeners tend to believe and consider the expressions and statements of speakers as authentic and reliable when speakers provide logical arguments (deductive and inductive) and evidence during their speeches. Logos could be in the form of stating facts, identifying names, places, figures etc., referring to quotations of renowned persons, referring to widely known events, occurrences, histories etc. This aspect of the theory will help to expound how the political actors in question have used elements of logos in their COVID-19 political speeches to underscore the significance of complying with COVID-19 protocol. Here, the submission of Aziz (2022) that logical appeals are essential for

persuading readers since they provide facts and evidence to become credible. Verifiable proofs and evidence are often illustrated in the COVID-19 speeches of politicians to concretise and strengthen their arguments. Reference to dates, statistical analysis, names, and so forth pervades the content of their messages to promote the credibility of their given information.

Another commonly deployed strategy adopted by politicians in the presentation of arguments during speech delivery is referred to as ethos. Aristotle considers this as persuasion through character. Ethos is a Greek word for “character” and it relies heavily on the laudable moral compass of an individual. Furthermore, it pays close attention to the moral standing and dispositions of politicians (Kamuhabwa, 2021). Politicians who possess eminent moral qualities are more likely to have positive impacts on the listeners than those who do not. As identified by Aristotle, good sense, good character, and goodwill are elements of ethos that arouse the interest of listeners. GBS and DOE are renowned Nigerian political stakeholders whose character traits have positively influenced their choice of words (language use) in their COVID-19 speeches thus affirming their credibility and evoking persuasion thereby encouraging compliance of the citizens with the required COVID-19 protocols.

Pathos, which is known as persuasion through emotions is the next rhetorical appeal identified by Aristotle. It is connected to the emotions of men. It simply means using expressions that appeal to people's emotions. Usually, politicians are dexterous with their diction and employ language that best appeals to the emotions of their audiences in any political discourse. To achieve this, emphasis is often placed on descriptive, concrete and figurative languages that lead to the purgation of emotions by the audience. GBS and DOE demonstrate these in their speeches which are primarily tailored towards ensuring compliance with the COVID-19 precautions by Nigerians, as established in the choices of the linguistic elements deployed. In other words, appropriate expressions that index emotional appeals are used and reinforced to address issues related to COVID-19 protocols which are capable of exciting strict compliance by the Nigerian populace.

From the above, it is obvious that rhetorical appeals are cogent persuasive strategies characterized by elements of persuasion that influence the actions and attitudes of people. Since the language of politics centres on rhetoric and its purpose is to persuade and influence the thoughts of the audience (Chilton, 2004), this study investigates how these rhetorical appeals are deployed in the COVID19 speeches of GBS and DOE and explains the function of each appeal as a persuasive tool towards ensuring the compliance of the COVID- 19 precautionary measures by their listeners.

Methodology

Although 5 speeches were retrieved from the internet, two speeches that were more suitable for the study were selected. The speeches (one speech for each) of the Executive Governor of Lagos state, Governor Babatunde Sanwo-Olu (GBS) delivered on 11 July, 2021, and the Minister of Health of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Dr. Osagie Ehanire (DOE), delivered on 10 December, 2020, serve as the data for this study. While GBS' speech comprises 1387 words, DOE's speech contains 794 words and both speeches carefully outline the havoc caused by COVID-19 in Nigeria, including the fatality rates connected with the invasion of the virus in Nigeria and the possible preventive procedures to avert the global plague. Apart from the fact that their speeches were selected because there is a scarcity of academic studies on them, GBS and DOE are key political stakeholders whose significant interventions in the fight against the coronavirus infection in Nigeria are marked and impactful.

Moreover, the speeches are also suitable for this study because they are replete with information on the precautionary measures for preventing the heinous pandemic. The data which were purposively selected were sourced from YouTube and thereafter subjected to orthographic transcription to ensure a smooth analysis. The qualitative analytical method was adopted specifically to enhance an explanatory and objective linguistic description of the data. Guided by the theoretical framework of Aristotle's Rhetoric, the study identifies and underscores the features of logos, ethos, and pathos evident in the speeches of the politicians and how the three rhetorical appeals help to substantiate the relevance of compliance with the COVID-19 precautions in the minds of Nigerians.

Analyses and Discussion of Findings

The analysis is divided into three key sections, following the division of Aristotle's rhetorical devices of logos, ethos, and pathos. Findings revealed that the speakers employed all the rhetorical techniques in their speeches in the aspect of ratiocination, moral philosophy, and sentimental appeal respectively. Ratiocination is consolidated using figural and naming strategies to indicate the mortality of COVID-19 and to present the government in a good light. Furthermore, moral philosophy is expounded through speakers' deployment of ethics, in the forms of pronominals to strengthen connection and relationship with the audience, and to reel out the achievements of the Nigerian government. In addition, sentimental appeals, through the linguistic representations of COVID-19 as a pandemic, as an enemy, and as an infection were deployed by the speakers to unfold the heinous nature of the virus. The findings are discussed in subsequent subsections.

Ratiocination: Argument Through Rational Thoughts (Logos)

The term, ratiocination is closely connected to logical reasoning and rational thought and is equivalent to Aristotle's logos. The use of figural and naming

strategies, as deployed by the speakers were used to amplify their arguments and make them veritable and worthy.

Statistical Evidence to Indicate Virus-Induced Mortality Rate

GBS and DOE express their feelings and relay COVID-19-based information to their distinct audiences using figural and factual strategies like statistics, dates, months, percentages, days, and weeks, to concretize their claims and assertions. The essence of this is to make their speeches credible, reliable, believable and acceptable to their listeners. Hence, they use ratiocinations, and forms of logos to support their stances about the deadly virus and make their arguments veritable. The figural and factual strategies (see Excerpts 1 and 2) thus function to indicate the virus' mortality, present the government in a goodlight, and reveal the indifference of the masses towards vaccination. The political speakers use facts and figures to identify the danger associated with the virus to call the attention of the audience to the harmful virus and make them see the need to urgently take necessary precautionary measures.

Excerpt 1: From the beginning of July, we started to experience a steep increase in the number of daily confirmed cases, with the test positivity rate going from 1.1½ % to its current rate of **6.6% as at 8th of July 2021.** (GBS)

Excerpt 2: Last week, we recorded **1843** against **1,235** two weeks before that and **1,126** the week before that (DOE).

In excerpts 1 and 2, the speech is embedded with facts and figures, to intimate Lagosians and Nigerians about Coronavirus and its preventive measures. Using percentages and numbers, GBS identifies the rate at which Lagos inhabitants contract the Coronavirus. He further points out the day, month and year “8th of July, 2021” of the increase in the rate of COVID-19 positive cases, and the day, month and year (7th of July, 2021) that Lagos state recorded 60,202 confirmed cases of COVID-19. The essence of the above, as referenced by GBS, is to remind the audience about the mortality of the virus and the urgent need to adhere to the COVID-19 precautionary measures completely and strictly. In excerpt 2, DOE reports the high increase of COVID-19 recorded cases. He compares the previous week's COVID-19 cases with the other week by deliberately identifying the numbers to solidify the fact that the pandemic still spreads rapidly: a way of persuading the audience to be very careful and reminding them to take cognizance of COVID-19 safety measures to avoid contracting the disease.

Statistical Evidence to Give the Government Positive Self-Representation

GBS and DOE delivered their speeches to present the Nigerian government in a good light and give them positive self-representation. The speeches thus clear the doubt and distrust of many Nigerians who strongly believe that the government is

making little or no efforts towards combating and defeating the COVID-19 disease, as the speeches overtly outline the efforts of the Nigerian government towards curtailing and containing the spread of the virus.

Excerpt 3: So far, we have successfully isolated **2,386** passengers in Lagos state. (GBS)

Excerpt 4: We have crossed 70,000 mark with a total of 70,669 confirmed cases of which **65,242** have been treated and discharged. (DOE)

In excerpt 3, GBS presents the Lagos State Government in a good light by revealing to the audience how they have isolated 2,386, who are living in Lagos state. This is sure a great achievement for the government. The total number of isolated persons mentioned shows the audience that the government is not relenting in ensuring the safety of its people and presents the governor and leaders/administrators under him as responsible, dutiful and patriotic. In excerpt 4, DOE identifies the current number of COVID-19 cases (70,669) in the speech to convince the audience that the virus is dangerous, and swift in spreading, and most importantly, mentions the total number of treated and discharged COVID-19 victims to present the Nigerian government as responsible and caring: only a responsible government can address the welfare of its citizens. This is another strategy deployed to sustain the reputation of the Nigerian government.

Statistical Evidence to Depict the Masses as Indifferent to Vaccination

To prove to the masses that they have been unenthusiastic about getting vaccinated, the politicians identify and reveal statistical evidence to buttress their claims, and most especially to encourage them to get the COVID-19 vaccines as one of the reliable precautionary measures against the disease.

Excerpt 5: As of today, however, the percentage of residents of Lagos who have received two (2) doses of the vaccine stands at a mere **1%**. GBS

Excerpt 6: We are seeing the increase in the number of confirmed covid-19 cases in the last few days... Last week, we recorded **1843** against **1,235** two weeks before... DOE

In excerpt 5, GBS expresses his displeasure to Lagos state residents in respect of their lackadaisical attitudes towards receiving the two doses of the COVID-19 vaccines. As reported by him, the percentage of Lagos' residents that have received the vaccines is merely 1%, a significantly low and discouraging turnout. This therefore suggests that the people are at a higher risk of contracting the virus, except they do the needful. Furthermore, the statistical evidence is an implication that Lagosians have not taken their safety from the virus seriously. It is also an implication that they are expected to receive the doses of the vaccines without hesitation to have immunity against the

virus. In excerpt 6, DOE confirms the increase in the number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in the last few days through statistical evidence, an indication that the masses have not been taking the COVID19 vaccines. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), getting vaccinated helps to prevent the virus. In other words, the increase in the number of COVID-19 cases from 1235 to 1843, as identified by DOE, suggests that Nigerians have not been observing the COVID-19 protocols, one of which is getting vaccinated.

Naming as an Identification Strategy for Believability

Names are noteworthy examples of logos. The political actors under study refer to specific names to make their speeches credible. Names are evidence that speakers' speeches are authentic and also make the addressed issues logical and thought provoking. The naming strategy is employed to gain the attention of their audiences, increase believability, and persuade them to fully embrace and diligently comply with the COVID-19 protocols, as seen in excerpts 7 and 8.

Excerpt 7: The **Lagos State Health Facility Monitoring and Accreditation Agency (HEFAMAA)** is providing monitoring and surveillance and has been mandated to apply heavy fines and other punitive measures on all facilities found to be in violation of this. (GBS)

Excerpt 8: The first set of candidate's vaccines are ready to be rolled out in Europe and the USA, and Technical Working Group led by the National Primary Health Development Agency is working on evaluation of prospective vaccines and Nigeria's vaccine needs. (DOE)

In excerpt 7, GBS refers to “the Lagos State Health Facility Monitoring and Accreditation Agency (HEFAMAA) “to make his instruction authentic, convincing and relevant to the audience. It is proof that severe punishment would be meted out to those who violate the COVID-19 precautionary measures by the appropriate council or agency. The fact that a sanction committee exists for violation of COVID-19 rules as unveiled by GBS is enough to convince the audience to observe strict COVID-19 rules, as nobody would like to be the government's 'scapegoat'. Getting vaccinated is a potent antidote to COVID-19. In excerpt 8, DOE expressly expounds how efforts have been made to evaluate “prospective vaccines and Nigeria's vaccine needs”. The identification of places like “Europe” and “USA” and agencies like 'Nigeria Primary Health Development Agency' is to make his information appear plausible to Nigerians. The standards in Europe and the USA have attracted global recognition and veneration. The fact that DOE informs Nigerians that vaccines to be evaluated for use in Nigeria are rolled out from these reputable places is enough to build their trust in the vaccines and to further encourage them to appreciate and get vaccinated. Furthermore, the inclusion of the “Technical Working Group led by the National Primary Health Development

Agency ...” by DOE in excerpt 8 as part of the evaluation activities is to further strengthen the interest and belief of Nigerians in the vaccines.

Moral Philosophy: Argument Through Ethical Character (Ethos)

The rhetoric of ethos is deployed by the speakers to depict their moral philosophies. This is referred to as a persuasive technique that demonstrates the credibility of a speaker. Moral philosophy, otherwise known as moral conduct, is the quality of right and wrong. It is often exhibited by speakers through traits like competence, sound knowledge, and virtuousness, which could be reflected through the presentation of a suitable, non-coercive and non-violent argument, emotive language, demonstrating simple courtesy, politeness strategies, using appropriate grammar, maintaining a healthy relationship with people, and so on. In this study, certain linguistic devices (the use of pronominals and modal auxiliary verbs) are employed by GBS and DOE as representations of ethical conduct to compel the masses to comply with COVID-19 regulations.

Pronominalising for Bonding

As noted by Brown and Gilman (1960), pronouns, which could either be singular or plural, are selected based on the kind of relationship that exists between the speaker and the audience. The choice of any of these types of pronouns depends on the intention of the speaker and the goals he or she has in mind. In the selected speeches, there is the predominant use of singular and plural personal pronouns, and this has been observed by the researcher as a strong persuasive strategy employed by the political actors to present their message to the Nigerian citizens. The political speakers, in their speeches, often use pronouns, especially plural personal pronouns to maintain pleasant and cordial relationships with the listeners. The pronouns are used to maintain good rapport with the listeners, and the listeners as a result, have good impressions about them, and thus find it easy to listen to them. Using languages or expressions that show ethos helps the speakers to have a good rapport and pleasant connection or association with the listeners.

Excerpt 9: Also, within the last two weeks the occupancy rate at **our** 2 isolation centres increased from an average of 1% to 6%. This is the new and disturbing reality that now confronts us. But **we** must not be demoralized by this. **We** must instead resolve that **we** will not leave any stone unturned in **our** bid to effectively migrate the third wave of this pandemic in Lagos state. (GBS)

Excerpt 10: Until vaccines are available, **our** best bet is still the appropriate use of face masks, physical distancing, hand sanitizers and observance of respiratory hygiene, for prevention and control. **We** must avoid unnecessary travels and crowded places. (DOE)

The reference to “our 2 isolation centres” in excerpt 9 is an indication that GBS sees the citizens as part of the government and uses the opportunity to present the Lagos state government in a good light, that is, as one who is interested in the welfare and safety of the citizens. Furthermore, the use of plural personal pronouns by GBS in the excerpts depicts collective responsibility and unity, as against disunity. In excerpt 10, DOE reveals that it is important for everyone to obey relevant COVID-19 precautionary measures, which he mentions in the excerpt.

Furthermore, he uses “we” and “our” to reveal that the COVID-19 issue concerns all and sundry in society and uses the opportunity to identify everyone's responsibilities. When the audience sees the similarity between the speaker and themselves, it fuels their confidence in the speaker and their self-esteem, thus making it easy for the speaker to influence their thoughts.

Pronominalising to Reel Out Achievements

The political actors carefully use the first-person plural pronoun – the collective “we” to reveal some of their past, present and future actions, plans for the people, activities and achievements, portraying the government as responsible and alive to responsibilities. When the citizens observe that their leaders are responsive to their needs, they naturally place a high premium on their claims, assertions, instructions, reports, counsel, advice and so on. Most citizens have a passion for a selfless and diligent government but ignore and undermine the power of such a government if the reverse is the case. The pronoun “we” has been diligently used by the political actors to capture the attention of their listeners and make them see themselves as part of the decision, especially on the urgent need to fight COVID-19 by obeying the precautionary measures since these are the main reasons for delivering the speeches.

Excerpt 11: We will also focus on sequencing the samples we are collecting to ensure we are detecting and keeping track of the different variants in circulation. (GBS)

Excerpt 12: We are working with the WHO and GAVI led covax facility and other stakeholders, to ensure that Nigeria will access quality vaccines, when they are deployed. (DOE)

As identified in excerpt 11, GBS uses the first-person plural pronoun “we” to reel out the plans and efforts of the Lagos state government towards curbing the COVID-19 pandemic. GBS also unfolds the intention of the government whom he also refers to as “we” to identify diverse variants of the virus after getting different samples. This suggests that the government is undoubtedly intentional and keen about the virus and most importantly planning to work assiduously towards preventing the virus in the country. 'We' as used in excerpt 10, refers to the “Nigerian government” of which DOE is not exempted. In excerpt 12, DOE reveals

how the Nigerian government whom he refers to as 'we', tries to ensure that Nigerian citizens have access to reliable and quality vaccines that would protect them from the virus. DOE's reference to the government's affiliation with reputable organizations such as 'WHO' and 'GAVI' portrays the government as one who is sincerely passionate about the needs of the masses, thus persuading the listeners to get the vaccines when they are available since they are going to be from reliable sources. This correlates with the findings of Sabah et al (2022) that the use of pronouns by political heads in their COVID-19 speeches is a declaration that holds them responsible for the welfare and protection of the masses during the pandemic.

Pronominalising to Unfold Speakers' Virtues

Apart from using pronouns to reel out the achievements of the Nigerian government as used by the speakers, singular personal pronouns are also employed by them to unfold their virtues in public. The political actors are politicians with some remarkable qualities and high social standing. The testimonies and past remarkable qualities of the speakers enhance the trust their listeners have for them. When such politicians specifically refer to themselves while delivering their speeches, it helps to preserve their authority, reputations and integrity and most importantly, strengthen the belief of their listeners about whatever issue they discuss. Listeners are often persuaded by the speeches of virtuous speakers, and this can be observed in GBS' and DOE's expressions.

Excerpt 13: Let **me** assure us that victory over COVID-19 is much closer than at any point in our recent history. (GBS)

Excerpt 14: To prepare ourselves, **I** have directed that all isolation and treatment centers, which were hitherto closed due to reduced patient load, to be prepared for reopening and the staff complement put on alert. (DOE)

In excerpt 13, GBS assures his listeners that COVID-19 will soon be surmountable as the victory over the virus is nearer than the audience could ever imagine. The reference to 'me' in the excerpt helps to sustain the good reputation of GBS and makes his authority more authentic and respected. There is a tendency that the listeners will positively be influenced by GBS's speech since they have known him to be a man of great reputation. In addition, the fact that the assurance comes from GBS himself is enough to take away fear and anxiety in the minds of the listening audience. This thus tends to propel the listeners to do the needful and take their obligations seriously as regards the protection against COVID-19. In excerpt 14, DOE, referring to himself, politely informs his listeners how he has ordered the reopening of all isolation centres and all centres that are concerned with COVID19-related issues. The use of 'I' in the excerpt makes the expression potent and authentic since it is released from the horse's mouth. The expression portrays DOE as a concerned and passionate political leader who is interested in the welfare and safety

of the masses. He uses the pronoun “I” to make his statement valid and believable before the audience.

Deployment of Modal Auxiliaries to Connote Willingness, Certainty and Intention as affirmed by Huddleson (1988:78), modal operators are often used to “convey a considerable range and variety of meaning”. Rhetors employ modal auxiliaries to express a variety of thoughts, by the context of discourse. They could be employed to present certainty, obligation, necessity, willingness, logical necessity etc. The modal verbs include: can, could, will, must, shall, might, ought to, and should, amongst others. Public speakers use some of these modal operators as persuasive strategies to influence the thoughts, intentions, and actions of their listeners. The modal auxiliary verbs “will, shall and would”, as deployed by the speakers are employed to show willingness, certainty and intention. Usually, the verbs in most cases indicate that the speaker is interested in doing or willing to perform an activity. Certainty, as the name implies, reveals the certainness of an action that will happen or take place, while intention explains the use of the modal auxiliary verbs to reveal the goal and purpose of a speaker's action.

Excerpt 15: We **will** also focus on sequencing the samples we are collecting to ensure we are detecting and keeping track of the different variants in circulation. **Willingness and intention.** GBS

Excerpt 16: We are confident that we **will** be getting a second batch of vaccines very soon to kick-start the second phase of vaccination. **Certainty.** GBS

Excerpt 17: We must not forget that COVID **will** not take a holiday. **Certainty.** GBS

In the above, excerpt 15 reflects the willingness and the intention of the Lagos state government to completely work on blood samples to identify the different variants of COVID-19. The use of the modal auxiliary “will” indicates the seriousness of the Lagos state government with respect to intentions or plans towards preventing the virus. The use of 'will' in excerpt 16, is to allay the fear of the listening audience and to enhance their confidence that the second batch of the COVID-19 vaccines would soon be available. 'Will' as used in the excerpt depicts certainty, an assurance that the government will ensure the availability of the vaccines in no time. The use of 'will' by GBS removes disbelief in the minds of the audience. In excerpt 17, DOE deems it fit to expressly remind the audience that the fatality and danger of COVID-19 as a virus 'will' (that is, it is certain for it) not be lessened nor will it take a French leave during holidays. DOE specifically gives that soft, yet powerful reminder to make the audience see the need to continuously maintain all necessary COVID-19 precautionary measures regardless of the holidays or moments of festivities that may likely fill the atmosphere then. This gentle reminder portrays DOE as a conscious and cautious political leader. DOE is not ignorant of the fact that

Nigerians are likely to be carried away and lost in the euphoria of celebration, holidays, and festivities, hence the need for a soft and well-timed reminder.

Deployment of modal auxiliaries to connote logical necessity and obligation

Modal auxiliary verbs also depict logical necessity and obligation, especially 'must' and 'should' as employed by the speakers in their speeches. By obligation, we mean that the above modal operators reveal social, legal or moral requirements, duties or activities that is necessary and must be done. Like it is a logical necessity, which simply shows how the above modal auxiliary verbs depict the necessity or indispensability of an action or activity.

Excerpt 18: But we **must** not be demoralized by this. We **must** instead resolve that we will not leave any stone unturned in our bid to effectively migrate the third wave of this pandemic in Lagos state. (GBS)

Excerpt 19: Lagosians **should** desist from patronizing non- accredited COVID-19 treatment centers, and proprietors should also ensure that all suspected and confirmed cases are referred appropriately. (GBS)

Excerpt 20: We **must** prepare for a possible second wave which we must ensure, does not get to be worse than what we have seen so far, judging from what we observe in other countries. (DOE)

In excerpt 18, GBS encourages the listeners not to be perturbed and disheartened by the invasion of COVID-19, but rather see it as a “must” to do the needful and unanimously fight the virus such as gathering more strength to unrelentingly combat the virus, before it becomes abruptly and completely uncontrollable. The listeners are advised to strive to overcome the third wave of the virus, and in excerpt 19, GBS, out of great concern, politely warns the inhabitants of Lagos to stop patronizing non-accredited healthcare centres, and that people should make it a point of duty to report all suspected COVID-19 cases to enhance their protection against the virus. In excerpt 20, DOE encourages the listening Nigerians to be fully prepared for the second wave of COVID-19. As a mark of necessity and urgency, DOE further informs them that it is a MUST to engage in adequate preparation against the virus to avoid worse consequences than observed in other countries. DOE understands that people often respond positively and promptly to urgent calls and instructions.

This explains the need for his use of the modal auxiliary verb 'must' which indicates the urgent call for action (observing the laid down COVID-19 precautionary measures).

Sentimental appeals: argument through emotions (Pathos)

Sentimental appeals are otherwise known as emotional appeals and reflect Aristotle's pathos. Sentimental appeal deals with a speaker's ability to appeal to the emotions of the audience to evoke positive responses from them. To achieve

this, speakers make use of languages or expressions that appeal to the emotions of their listeners. Usually, an empathetic speaker, one who has respect for the feelings and emotions of his or her audience, tends to influence their thoughts and attitudes. Certain vocabulary and expressions are often employed by GBS and DOE to influence the emotions of the audience, thus changing or reinforcing their actions and attitudes. The findings reveal that the speakers use linguistic devices to identify and represent COVID-19 in their discourses solely to appeal to the emotions of the audience.

The speakers identify COVID-19 with some names to emphasize its lethality. While revealing the heinous attributes of COVID-19, the speakers tend to pass across a strong message to the listeners and thus create a negative impression about the virus in the minds of the listeners. The essence of revealing the unpleasant characteristics of this virus by giving it diverse names is to persuade the audience to always see the need to place a high premium on COVID-19 precautionary measures. Words and expressions that enhance the purgation of emotions by their audiences are deliberately and skilfully deployed by the audiences to reveal the fatality of the virus to trigger the audience to see the urgent need to avoid getting affected at all costs and by all means by the virus. In short, the speakers appeal to the emotions of their listeners by giving COVID-19 different dreadful names, which are not just to invoke fear in the audience but to make them see it as a terrible and violent virus which must be removed urgently before it wipes away the entire human race.

Representation of COVID-19 as a Pandemic

COVID-19 is referred to as a pandemic by the speakers in their various speeches. The word 'pandemic' simply refers to a disease that spreads over a wide geographical area and affects a large proportion of the entire population.

Excerpt 21: Regrettably, inspite of the hardwork and dedicated efforts towards sustaining the return to normalcy over the last three months, we are now finding ourselves at what appears to be the start of a potential 3rd wave of the COVID-19 **pandemic** in Lagos state. GBS

Excerpt 22: This rightly suggests that we may just be on the verge of a second wave of this **pandemic**. (DOE)

In excerpts 21-22, GBS and DOE refer to COVID-19 as a pandemic. It is referred to as a pandemic due to the ugly experiences people have had and still having with the virus. The virus can spread across wide geographical areas and it is capable of ruining countless lives in no time. The constant repetition of the word “pandemic” as used by the political speakers is to evoke the feeling of compassion, that is, deep awareness of the brutality of COVID-19 on the innocent humans affected plus the intense desire to relieve or perhaps get rid of it. In excerpt 22, DOE reminds the

audience about the second wave of the virus, which he also refers to as “pandemic” and assures them of the support of the president towards preventing its spread in the country. The word, “pandemic” is employed by the speakers here to reveal the toxic and “unmerciful” nature of the virus, a subtle way of making the masses see the need to prevent the virus.

Representation of COVID-19 as an Enemy

COVID-19 is referred to as 'an enemy' by Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu. This is to inform his audience that the virus is not just a disease but an enemy to the entire world. As defined by Osisanwo (2022), an enemy is an antagonist to another and also seeks the other's injury. An enemy is someone or any living thing who is hostile and who aggressively opposes the interest of the other.

Excerpt 23: Instead, we must be re-energized to battle this invisible and seemingly relentless **enemy**. (GBS)

Excerpt 24: The **enemy** is formidable and optimistic. (GBS)

In excerpt 23, GBS calls the attention of his listeners to renew their energies and be ready to fight against COVID-19, whom he refers to as an enemy that is invisible yet powerful and unrelenting. He refers to the virus as an enemy because it is capable of devouring humans without remedy. Since enemies are always cruel and extremely baneful, GBS wants the listening audience to have an indefinite and complete feeling of dislike for it and fight against it with all their strength and might. In excerpt 24, GBS reiterates the fact that COVID-19 is an enemy, and this time around, he uses more dreadful and sorrowful adjectives ('formidable and optimistic') to describe it. This is to create fearful and doleful feelings in the minds of the audience, who are expected to be backed up with positive responses and actions.

COVID-19 As An Infection

Dr. Osagie Ehanire refers to COVID-19 as an infection, that is, the virus is completely capable of infecting and causing harm to whoever it encounters. It is the invasion of an organism's body tissues by disease-causing agents, their multiplication, and the reaction of the host tissues to the infectious agents and the toxins they produce. Infections can damage the entire body system of humans, thereby leading to their untimely death if not properly managed.

Excerpt 25: Everyone of us has a role to play in the effort to prevent explosive spread of this **infection** in Nigeria. (DOE)

DOE, in excerpt 25 states the fact that the prevention of COVID-19 which he refers to as an infection does not exempt anybody, as everyone is expected to play their roles. The term 'infection' as used by DOE is used to represent COVID19 because of its medical features. As a medical practitioner, DOE identifies COVID-19 as an

infectious disease perhaps because of its dreadful signs and symptoms in COVID-19 victims. It is an infectious disease caused by SARS-CoV-2 virus and infected persons are capable of showing some unpleasant medical symptoms. The fact that COVID-19 is referred to as an 'infection' by DOE, a respected and professional physician makes this reference credible before the audience. Again, the name 'infection' is to elicit fear and present COVID-19 as a dangerous medical condition to the masses.

Conclusion

This paper investigates the persuasive structures and functions of the selected lexical choices of GBS and DOE, in consonance with the principles of Aristotle's rhetoric, in their COVID-19 political speeches towards persuading Nigerian citizens to comply with the stipulated COVID-19 precautionary measures by the World Health Organisation (WHO). This is achieved with a particular concentration on three pivotal aspects of their persuasive messages: ratiocination, moral philosophy, and sentimental appeal. Ratiocination indexed statistical evidence to indicate virus-induced mortality rate, give the government positive self-presentation, depict the masses as indifferent to vaccination, and use naming as identification strategy for believability. Moral philosophy indexed pronominalising for bonding, pronominalising to reel out achievements, pronominalising to unfold speakers' virtues, deployment of modal auxiliaries to connote willingness, certainty and intention, and deployment of modal auxiliaries to connote logical necessity and obligation. In agreement with Osisanwo (2022), sentimental appeals indexed representation of COVID-19 as a pandemic, enemy and infection. Also, in agreement with Alkhaldeh (2021), Aziz (2022) and Osisanwo (2022), the speeches have deployed linguistic devices to emphasize the vicious characteristics of the COVID-19 virus. This paper is thus essential because it will enlighten readers, especially those in positions of authority and other stakeholders in society to understand how language can be effectively manipulated to influence the decisions of people when the need arises for the betterment and growth of society as observed in the lexical items chosen by GBS and DOE to identify the dangerous nature of COVID-19 to stimulate the masses to take the issue of compliance with COVID-19 preventive measures seriously. Further, the persuasive techniques employed by the politicians in the analyses above are meant to project their ethical values, sustain the reputation of the government, strengthen healthy bonds/relationships among the Nigerian citizens, reel out the government's achievements and unveil the energetic efforts of the Nigerian government towards getting rid of the virus are also subtle means of persuading the Nigerian citizenry towards compliance with the COVID-19 protocols, as identified and explicated in the findings of this study. This study, therefore, concludes that lexical items with strong persuasive power, are potent weapons deliberately employed to influence the thoughts and attitudes of the masses towards obeying the relevant COVID-19 precautionary measures to mitigate its spread.

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