Text 20: No Igbo man should attend any Church where the pastor is a Yoruba man, they are criminals and fools....."Igbos are God's children, others are children of the devil, that's why we bear names like Nwachukwu, Chidinma, Chinyere, Chibuzor, Ikechukwu. **Source:** @ibraheem_pkm

Text 21: To fight terrorism, you have to fight Islam. Your prophet and your god are both sick terrorists #Islam@hdmovieus

Text 22: Who is Deborah? Insult her, Forbid her! For anyone who speaks ill against the holy prophet and Islam is an infidel. By Sheik Malam Bello Yabo, TikTok, May 2022.

ANALYSIS OF BOLA AHMED TINUBU'S 2023 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION CAMPAIGN SPEECH

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Abstract

This study presents the Harrison et al. (2017) model of Speech Act analysis of Bola Ahmed Tinubu's 2023 campaign speech at Anambra. The study identified, categorised, and accounted for the speech acts performed by Bola Ahmed Tinubu (BAT). The speech was broken down into texts, and forty-five (45) tests were obtained for analysis. Using the qualitative and quantitative data analysis method, the data were coded as Text1 to Text 45. The study identified the five (5) key speech acts that were propounded by Harison et al (2017) -convention, intention, function, expression, and norm- and three (3) other peculiar speech acts -Norm/Intention, Function/Intention and Expression/Intention- which are products of the combination of two of Harison et al.'s (2017) speech acts to form a speech act. Two texts from each speech act found in the study were analysed, making a total of sixteen (16) texts analysed. Intention, with 44.4% frequencies of occurrence emerged the most frequently used speech act, followed by: Norm/Intention with 13.3% frequencies of occurrence, Norm with 11 %frequencies of occurrence, Convention with 8.9% frequencies of occurrence, Expression and Function with 6.7% frequencies of occurrence each, and finally, Function/Intention and Expression /Intention with 4.5% frequencies of occurrence respectively. The study revealed that Intention was the most frequently used speech act by BAT to convey his political aims and ambition so as to achieve his intention. The study concludes that this approach of inspiring and persuading the audience to get the audience's votes by politicians, and in turn, attain their political intents, is a common phenomenon found in political speeches.

Keywords: Election, Political Campaign Speech, Political language use, Speech Acts.

Introduction

Political campaign speeches are strategic communications that are carefully crafted to achieve specific goals. The purposeful use of political language plays a crucial role in shaping the success of politicians. Similarly, political language is deliberately employed to achieve one of two significant impacts: constructively, to praise/eulogise, or destructively, to demean/denigrate individuals- (Ahumaraeze, 2021). Political aspirants are not ignorant of this dualistic tendency of the use of political language in the society; which they effectively use during electioneering campaigns. Political language use is much more prevalent in campaign speeches, where politicians obfuscate their goals by using certain linguistic choices to perform certain speech acts while disguising their real purpose. Politicians, during electioneering campaigns, rely heavily on effective, convincing communication that would sway the opinions of the public in the vicinity of achieving their objectives. Political campaigns are strategic efforts towards influencing the decision-making of a specific group or circle. This is usually expressed in the manifestos of the politicians. Similarly, a political campaign is a channel through which individuals/organisations are mobilised towards attaining and sustaining a politician's desired political goal/ambition. Political campaigns also help to showcase a candidate's ability to connect with the community/country, raise awareness about key issues in the community/country, and give politicians a platform to demonstrate their potential as worthy representatives (Lynn, 2009). Each campaign is unique, with its ultimate goal of winning an election. This is so by virtue of the fact that there is no one-size-fits-all strategy. The right approach varies, depending on the candidates' language choice and use, and the acts they perform. This study is concerned with; identifying, categorising and accounting for the speech acts performed by Bola Ahmed Tinubu (BAT) in his campaign speech of the 31st day of January, 2023, at Anambra State, during the 2023 Nigerian presidential electioneering campaign rallies, using the Harris et al's (2017) model of the speech act theory as the linguistic tool for analysis.

Clarification of Terms

Election

According to Erunke (2012), as cited by Alikpi (2004), elections act as a tool for evaluating the political maturity, stability, legitimacy, and overall health of democratic governance. They are universally recognized as the key measure of the existence or absence of democratic governance. Furthermore, Erunke (2012) emphasizes that elections enable the electorate to choose their representatives for different government institutions. Ighodalo (2020) considers elections as a vital component of the democratic framework for governing contemporary political societies. He believes that elections function as a tool for political engagement, decision-making, convening of individuals/groups, and accountability. Iyayi (2005) argues that for elections to be meaningful in any democratic system, they must involve the active participation of the people in both electing their leaders and in governance. According to Iyayi (2005), elections should not be confined to election-day activities, even though they are primary. They should also encompass activities before, during, and after the election, focusing on liberating the political process in the country and ensuring the independence of election adjudicating bodies. He stresses that credible elections are essential to halt political decay in Nigeria, restore the country's credibility, place the right people in government, and effectively manage conflicts. Recurring political issues in the country year after year indicate that most citizens lack electioneering responsibilities, engagement, and knowledge. These include the awareness of civic duties such as registration, collecting permanent voter cards, voting, and participating as ad-hoc staff for the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC); as a

result, they possess limited understanding and act as such. The introduction of the Bimodal Voter Accreditation System (BVAS) by INEC for the 2023 elections reignited the interest and confidence of many Nigerians in the electoral process and their belief in a functional democracy. Nigerians believe that the BVAS would reduce instances of malpractice or manual manipulation of figures, as it is designed to transmit results electronically to the INEC portal. In Nigeria's history, the February 25, 2023, presidential election saw an unprecedented turnout of eligible voters eager to fulfil their civic duties. This shows that Nigerians are aware of their electioneering responsibilities but have previously been discouraged by the electoral system from fulfilling them (Onigiobi, Obadiora, & Oriowo, 2020).

Political Language Use

Three prominent scholars (VanDijk, 1997; Chilton, 2004; Fairclough, 2012) have contributed extensively to political discourse analysis. For VanDijk (1997), "political discourse simply means 'doing politics" (p.18). He notes that not all discourses that mention *politics* are qualified to be political discourse. Hence, he identifies certain factors (actors or authors; politicians' activities/practices and context) responsible for determining whether a discourse is political. Besides, VanDijk (1997) maintains that politicians who are both the actors and authors of political discourses, "… should also include the various recipients in political communicative events, such as the public, the people, citizens, the masses, and other groups or categories (p.13). He further identifies different structures of political discourses. These political discourse structures include: topics, superstructures or textual schemata, local semantics, lexicon, syntax, expression structures, rhetoric, speech acts, and interaction, with the latter being a major concern of this investigation. Chilton (2004), on the other hand, views politics as the struggle for power between those who seek to assert and maintain it and those who resist it. In all likelihood, the quest to control power explains why there seem to be a lot of contests and struggles between individuals who want to take over the mantle of leadership in various capacities. Political aspirants use language to drive their messages home to the intended audience, making language use in politics out-rightly necessary. Nevertheless, Omozuwa and Ezejideaku, (2007) describe the language of politics as, a "lexicon of conflict and drama, ridicule and reproach, pleading and persuasion, colour and bite permeated, it is a language designed to exult some men, destroy some, and change the mind of others" (p.41). Ultimately, political discourse is a deliberate and strategic use of language to shape public opinion, influence policy, and exert power. It is not just about making public statements, but also about using language to accomplish political goals and actions. Therefore, this study focuses on the goals achieved, as well as actions performed by politicians using political speeches, from the lens of Harrison et al's (2017) model of the Speech Act Theory (SAT).

Review of Related Literature

Many studies (Omojola, 2016; Okafor & Olanrewaju, 2017; Aboh & Agbedo, 2020; Emike et al., 2023; Onyema et al, 2023; Gyasi, 2023); Ella, 2023; Ayeni & Ibileye 2024) on political speech discourse have been carried out using either John Austin's (1962) SAT, John Searle's (1969) SAT, Austin's and Seale's SAT side-by-side, or an aspect of either Austin's or Seale's SAT, while others (Li & Zhay 2019; Isa, 2020; Tian, 2021; Rouabhia, 2023; Ajayi & Kilani, 2024) were examined using the Critical Discourse Analysis theory, and some other studies (Hassan, 2014; Ambuyo, 2018; Adegbite. 2023) were investigated using; either the Stylistics theory, the Politeness theory or the Pragmatics theory respectively. These studies are in one way or the other related to the present study. Mainly, the above-reviewed studies focused on

political campaign speeches and their implications, just like the current study. Some reviewed studies share a similar aim of accounting for the most dominant speech act in the speeches used, just as the current study. Although the theoretical frameworks through which the above studies were investigated differ from that of the present study. The reviews gave additional insights into how political speeches are analysed using other theories that view them from various perspectives. The current study utilises a more contemporary Speech Act Theory, which was propounded by Haris et al. in 2017.

Theoretical Framework

Harris et al's (2017) Model of the Speech Act Theory

Ayeni and Ibileye (2024)posit that the idea of the speech act theory was initiated by John Austin in his paper, '*How to do things with words*', which was published in 1962. This theory was improved on by other scholars such as Saeed (2004), Syal and Jindal (2016), and now, Harris et al. (2017), with the latter adopted for this investigation. The Harris et al's (2017) model of the Speech Acts Theory draws on the Austinian illocutionary act to categorize speech acts into five classes:

i. **Convection:** Harris et al's (2017) theory of convention improves on the Austinian conventionalism theory by considering non-ritualized actions that occur outside traditional customs, social institutions, or legal frameworks. According to Austin (1962), an illocutionary act refers to a *conventional procedure* that requires adherence to a set of *felicity conditions*, which are shaped by localised social norms. Failing to meet these conditions leads to a *misfire* -an unsuccessful attempt as the act is not properly performed. Nevertheless, Harison et al (2017) argue that, while conventionalism provides a coherent explanation for formalised and institutionalised acts like marriage, it encounters difficulties when applied to fundamental communicative acts like asserting, asking questions, or making requests. They posit that asserting, asking questions, and requesting appear to be universal elements of human interaction that form a core part of our social communicative skills, even though the methods of performing these acts differ across languages. Unlike marriage, these communicative acts do not rely on the "jurisdiction" of specific institutions or conventions. For instance, one can assert or inquire across international boundaries, whereas actions like marrying or giving testimony in court are confined by institutional or cultural frameworks.

ii. **Intention:** According to Harris et al. (2017), intentionalism is a communicative illocutionary act that involves producing an utterance with a specific type of intention, often referred to as a *communicative intention* or *meaning intention*. The essence of this claim lies in two key components:

   a. The speaker intends for their audience to have a particular response, and

   b. The audience recognizes that this response is intended by the speaker.

This view highlights a three-way distinction in the success conditions for speech acts. First, successfully performing an illocutionary act only requires the speaker to produce an utterance with a communicative intention, independent of the addressee. Second, successful communication depends on the addressee recognising the intended response. According to this view, communicative acts are categorised based on the type of response they are intended to elicit. Directing someone to act involves a communicative intention

for them to carry out the action or decide to do so. Intentionalists generally classify questions as a subset of directives, aiming to prompt the addressee to provide an intended answer. While these three categories are central to intentionalist discussions, other types of intended responses are possible. Intentionalism suggests that communicative acts (illocutionary acts) are not exclusively linguistic; they include any observable behaviour, whether linguistic or non-linguistic (e.g., gestures, facial expressions), that can convey meaning and serve as a vehicle for communication (Grice, 1969).

iii. **Function:** Haris et al. (2017) propose that functionalism, just like intentionalism, is an approach to understanding speech acts. They both agree that speech acts are defined by their purpose or effect, but they differ in how this purpose is determined. Being an act of expression that serves a function within a communicative event, Haris et al. (2017) believe that the purpose of a speech act can arise from other sources, like social/historical context, rather than solely from the speaker's intention. Millikan (1998), for example, argues that some speech acts derive their purpose from their *proper function*, shaped through a process akin to natural selection. For her, certain assertions function to cause belief, as past instances of such assertions successfully caused similar beliefs, contributing to their continued use and reproduction.

iv. **Expression:** Harris et al. (2017) postulate that performing a speech act is essentially about expressing a state of mind and that different illocutionary acts represent different mental states. This idea aligns with Searle's (1969) theory that an expressive illocutionary act aims to convey an emotion related to the proposition's content. The term *expressionism* is used to describe a group of theories that offer a simpler alternative to intentionalism. These theories suggest that performing a speech act primarily involves expressing a mental state with various illocutionary acts that reflect different states. Expressionism is closely related to intentionalism because it bases the features of illocutionary acts on speakers' mental states. However, while intentionalists define speech acts by the psychological effects they aim to elicit in listeners, expressionists classify them based on the types of mental states expressed by the speaker. Expressionists classify speech acts according to the speaker's psychological and emotional expressions.

v. **Norm:** Harris et al. (2017) assert that speech acts are intrinsically normative. A prominent interpretation of this concept is that a norm is the act of making an assertion, inherently governed by a unique epistemic norm, which partly defines the nature of an assertion. They still acknowledged that fact that normative accounts of assertion have been around for decades (Dummett,1973; Unger,1975), the view has recently been revived and influentially defended by Williamson (2000), who argues that the knowledge of the norm is the constitutive norm of assertion. Harris et al. (2017) also acknowledged that normative implications stem from Searle's (1969) analysis of various speech acts, which he attributes to the conventions dictating their sincerity conditions.

1. Methodology

This pragmatics-based research examines the speech acts of Bola Ahmed Tinubu (BAT) during his 2023 presidential campaign in Anambra State. It employs Harris et al.'s 2017 speech act theory model to analyze, classify, and interpret the speech acts delivered by the APC presidential candidate during the campaign rally. The source of data for this investigation is Bola Ahmed Tinubu's presidential campaign speech delivered on the 31st day of January, 2023, at the Ekwueme Square, Akwa. The manuscript of the speech was downloaded from an online

source (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JjW9re8Shbw) from the TVC YouTube handle. The investigation utilised both qualitative and quantitative data analysis methods. Qualitatively, the analysis focused on thematic categorization, considering aspects like *Convention*, *Intention*, *Function*, *Expression*, and *Norms*, as outlined in Harison et al.'s (2017) speech act theory model. Quantitatively, the speech was segmented into sentences/complete ideas, and was coded as Tests, numbering from 1 to 45, for systematic analysis.

2. **Data Presentation and Analysis**

This study examined 45 texts from Bola Ahmed Tinubu's campaign speech in Anambra during the 2023 Nigerian presidential election. The analysis was based on Harrison et al.'s (2017) five speech act types: *Convention, Intention, Function, Expression,* and *Norm*. Additionally, three new speech act types -*Norm/Intention, Function/Intention,* and *Expression/Intention*- were identified, resulting from the fusion of two models from Harrison et al.'s framework. The findings are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1: A Summary of Speech Acts Performed by BAT in the Study

Speech Act Type	Frequency	Percentage %
Intention	20	44.4
Norm/Intention	6	13.3
Norm	5	11
Convection	4	8.9
Expression	3	6.7
Function	3	6.7
Function/Intention	2	4.5
Expression/Intention	2	4.5
Total	**45**	**100**

From the above table, *Intention* accounted for the highest concurring Speech Act Type with 44.4% frequency (n = 20), followed by; *Norm/Intention* with 13.3% (n = 6), *Norm*, with 11% (n = 5), *Convection* with 8.9% frequency (n = 4), *Expression and Function* with 6.7% frequencies (n = 3) each, and lastly, *Function/Intention* and *Expression/Intention* with 4.5% frequencies (n = 2) respectively.

Figure 1: *A Graphological Representation of the Speech Act Types Found in the Study*
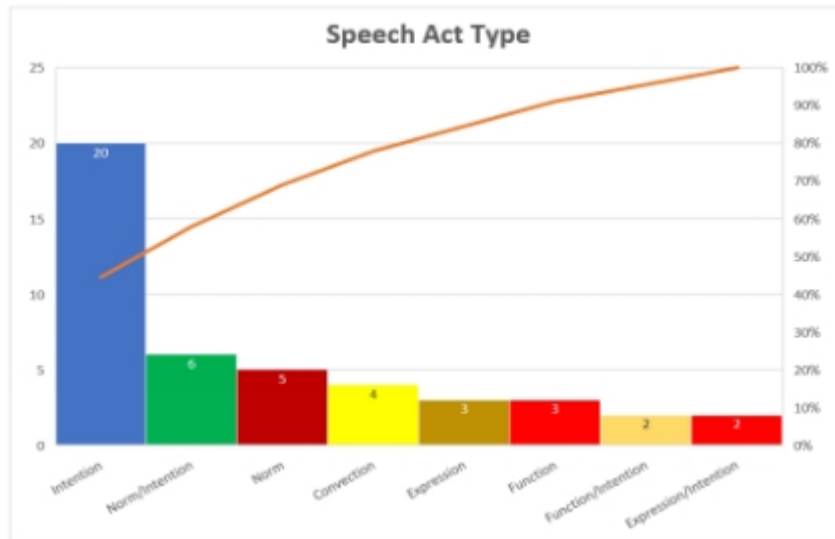
Above is a Histogram representation of the frequencies of the various types of the Harrison et al (2017) Speech Acts found in the study.

Table 2: Samples of the Speech Acts Performed by BAT as Identified in the Study

Speech Act Type	Utterance	Speech Act Performed
Intention	You have seen, whether you read the newspaper or not, whether you watch television or not, I brought your son, made him my friend, and put him in the government. I didn't say I am a Muslim and he is a Christian **(Text 26).**	A communicative illocutionary act that aims at convincing the audience that the speaker is not a religious bigot.
	When you hear Atiku use the word Muslim and say walahi talahi. You know what is in his heart? Na lie I dey lie **(Text 35).**	A communicative illocutionary act that intends to run down an opponent and make him look unfit for the position.
Norm	From our Governor General to all the big-name politicians. Igbo Kwanu! (6X) (crowd responds (Iye 6X) **(Text 2).**	A social norm, culturally embedded with the expectation of the Igbo-speaking community, which governs appropriate language use and behaviour.
	They share your asset among themselves and call it privatization. Privatization to	A value-laden normative assertion pointing at the ill-

	their own pockets. They privatize the industry to their pocket **(Text 15).**	doings and appropriate actions and decisions of the opposition.
Expression	Ah, we are not like PDP, they forget you are hardworking, you are brilliant, you can create fortresses, fabricate engines, and spare parts. You can turn the state into an industrial revolution state **(Text 33).**	The speaker is expressing his state of mind, what he feels about the people he is addressing.
	When I become the President, Soludo will be one of my advisors who will bring prosperity back to you **(Text 30).**	The speaker is expressing his state of mind about what he intends to do when he becomes the president.
Function	So, the way you vote for Soludo is the way you should vote for Tinubu **(Text 31).**	An open request for the audience to vote for the speaker, just as they voted for an indigenous son.
	I salute my second in command, Kashim Shettima. I salute all of you **(Text 5).**	An utterance of greeting to the audience and the speaker's running mate.
Convection	You hear me? Do you believe? **(Text 17).**	An enquiry is a universal element of human interaction that forms a core part of our social communicative skills
	Ben Akabueze. He is a pastor, he is in Lagos, he is the National Economic Planning and Budget Advisor to Buhari today **(Text 27).**	An assertion, a universal element of human interaction that forms a core part of our social communicative skills
Norm/Intention	The end has come. The city boy is here. Hope is here, joy is here, prosperity is here. Full employment is here **(Text 16).**	An assertive expression to win the votes of the audience.
Expression/ Intention	Charles Soludo, your son, is not contesting with me or against me; he is still my friend. I salute his vision. He is a brilliant man. He has the brain; he is a thinker.	A statement of expression with an embedded intention of winning the audience's minds

	He knows the way. We will work together inclusively **(Text 29).**	for them to cast their votes for him.
Function/Intention	When they bring their lies again, ask them how long it will take their lies to travel from Port-Harcourt to Onitsha, Onitsha to Aba **(Text 13).**	Requesting the audience to shun the opposition/the intention of gaining their votes.

3. Discussion of Findings

The discussion of the findings in this study is taken holistically under the five identified speech acts as propounded by Harrison et al (2017), which are: *convention, intention, function, expression,* and *norm.*

i. Intention

According to Harison et al. (2017), Intention is a communicative illocutionary act where an utterance is made with a distinct communicative purpose. This concept is illustrated in Texts 26 and 38, as elaborated below.

> **Text 26:** *You have seen, whether you read the newspaper or not, whether you watch television or not, I brought your son, made him my friend, and put him in the Government. I didn't say I am a Muslim and he is a Christian.*

> **Test 38:** *The man who left here calls himself Peter Obi. We read in the Bible that before the cock crows three times he will deny Jesus Christ. True? (crowd responds Yes).*

In Text 26, BAT sought to highlight to his audience that he had established a friendship with their prominent son, Soludo, and appointed him to a government position, prioritizing merit over religious bias. This statement carried an underlying intention of challenging the audience's religious sentiments, aiming to persuade them to vote for him regardless of his Muslim faith. In Text 38, BAT demonstrates dual intentionality. First, he refers to his political opponent, Peter Obi, potentially alluding to the biblical Peter who denied Jesus three times before the rooster crowed. By making this comparison, BAT aims to portray Peter Obi as a betrayer, suggesting he would betray the audience's trust if they voted for him. The second intentionality lies in the rhetorical question "True?" posed at the end of the text, which seeks to elicit a specific response, *yes,* from the audience. This aligns with Grice's (1975) theory of *Speaker's Meaning and Intention*, which emphasises that the meaning of an utterance is closely linked to the speaker's purpose in communicating a particular message.

ii. Norm/Intention

Norm and Intention are one of the peculiar speech acts found in the study. It is peculiar because it has attributes of two separately propounded speech acts by Harison et al (2017) as seen in Texts 12 and 16 below.

> **Text 12:** *Better paying jobs, no be like the other party weh dey come here dey lie lie to you.*

Text 16: *The end has come. The city boy is here. Hope is here, joy is here, prosperity is here. Full employment is here.*

Texts 12 and 16 exhibit characteristics of both Norm -the act of making an assertion- and Intention, which involves delivering an utterance with a specific communicative purpose. In Text 12, BAT confidently declares *better-paying jobs*, asserting that under his presidency, the people of Anambra would benefit from improved employment opportunities. This statement bears an embedded intention of securing the audience's votes. He further contrasts himself with *the other party we dey come here dey lie lie you,* referencing Nigeria's prevailing issues of unemployment and underpayment caused by unfulfilled political promises. BAT uses this assertion to inspire trust and encourage the audience to vote for him. In Text 16, BAT proclaims that, *The end has come. Hope is here, Joy is here, Prosperity is here. Full employment is here.* These categorical and assertive statements aim to dispel the audience's skepticism and fear of politicians, rooted in their history of broken promises. BAT positions himself as *the city boy* who stands apart from those unreliable politicians, reinforcing his singular intention of winning the audience's trust and votes.

iii. **Norm**

In this study, Norm ranks as the third most utilised speech act by BAT, comprising 11% with a total of five occurrences. According to Harison et al. (2017), speech acts are fundamentally governed by norms, and making an assertion is intrinsically linked to normative principles. A key characteristic of this is that such acts are regulated by specific epistemic standards. This is further explored in Texts 12 and 15 below.

Text 2: *From our Governor General to all the big-name politicians, Igbo Kwanu! (6X)* (Crowd responds) *Iye* (6X)

Text 15: *They share your assets among themselves and call it privatization. Privatization to their own pockets. They privatize the industry to their pocket.*

In Test 12, the phrase *Igbo Kwanu!* -a widely recognised greeting across Igbo communities serves as a symbolic call for agreement, endorsement, and unity towards a common goal. This expression is considered normative because, according to Harris et al. (2017), norms are actions grounded in what is deemed appropriate, suitable, or ideal within a given context. BAT regarded it as both appropriate and effective to repeat *Igbo Kwanu* six times, using this indigenous greeting to connect with his audience on a cultural level. This aligns with Harris et al.'s (2017) normative principles, which often incorporate ethical values or considerations. In Test 15, BAT criticizes the opposition by stating, *they share your assets among themselves and call it privatization. Privatization to their own pockets. They privatize the industry to their pocket.* This statement reflects Harris et al.'s (2017) concept of Epistemic Norms, which emphasises that assertions are typically backed by sufficient evidence or justification and convey the speaker's belief of their truthfulness. Through this claim, BAT demonstrates his firm conviction in the validity of his argument.

iv. **Convention**

Convention by Harison et al (2017) is a speech act that expands on the Austinian conventionalism by recognizing that linguistic conventions govern both ritualized and non-

ritualized actions, beyond traditional customs and institutions. Below are two texts that further illustrate *Convention* as a speech act.

> **Text 9:** *We will make the value of your property worth more than one thousand times of your investment.*

> **Text 17:** *You hear me? Do you believe me?*

Text 9 is identified as a conventional illocutionary act of promising, following Austin's (1962; 1963; 1970) framework, which defines such acts as being performed in accordance with specific *felicity conditions* shaped by social conventions within a given context. While conventionalism effectively addresses ritualised and institutionalised acts, it faces limitations with illocutionary acts integral to basic communication, such as asserting. Consequently, Harrison et al. (2017) interpret BAT's speech in Test 9 as an assertion governed by linguistic, rather than social, conventions. As a linguistic convention, BAT utilises Test 9 to critique the norms established by previous regimes for failing to increase the *value of* their *property worth more than one thousand times* their *investment*. Through this speech, BAT seeks to address the political situation with assuredness, thereby challenging existing norms. The questions, *you hear me? Do you believe me?* posed by BAT in Text 17 are classified as "a category of communicative illocutionary acts that function differently and less conventionally compared to Austin's essentially conventional illocutionary acts" (Harrison et al., 2017; p.3). Conversely, Harison et al. (2017) argue that question-asking should be considered a linguistic convention, as it is a universal element of human interaction and an integral aspect of everyday social communication. These conventional questions also serve to help BAT establish a connection and build social identities with his audience. After asking the questions in Text 17, BAT proceeded by providing answers to them and sharing more about himself. This approach serves as a strategy to enhance communication and strengthen relationships with his audience; hence, a property of linguistic convention.

v.   Expression

Performing a speech act fundamentally involves conveying a particular state of mind, with various illocutionary acts reflecting distinct mental states. Consequently, *expressionism* attributes the characteristics of illocutionary acts to the speaker's mental state at the time of the utterance (Harris et al., 2017). Based on this perspective, Texts 30 and 32 of this study can be classified as expressions, as demonstrated below.

> **Text 30:** *When I become the President, Soludo will be one of my advisors who will bring prosperity back to you.*

> **Text 32:** *Yeah. You will have industrial hubs.*

In the referenced texts, BAT conveys his mindset and plans as the prospective president, aiming to create a clear communicative impact. The speaker's mental state, at the time of delivering the speech, reflects his self-assurance as the incoming president. For example, Text 30 begins with a definitive futuristic illocutionary act,, *When I become the President...*, leaving no room for doubt or uncertainty. BAT confidently continues by announcing one of his intended cabinet members, stating, -*Soludo will be one of my advisors who will bring prosperity back to you.* Text 32 builds on the notion introduced in Text 30, where BAT elaborates on his plans for Anambra, declaring,, *You will have industrial hubs.* Throughout these statements, the speaker

maintains an optimistic and resolute tone, exuding confidence in his impending presidency by May 2023.

vi.   Function

Harrison et al. (2017) identify *Function* as any act of expression that serves a function within a communicative event, which could arise from other sources rather than from the speaker's intention. Based on this proposition, Test 22 and 31 can comfortably fit in there as is seen below.

> **Text 22:** *The party you will vote for is the APC.*

> **Text 31:** *So, the way you vote for Soludo is the way you should vote for Tinubu*

In Test 22, BAT declares, *the party you will vote for is APC. ... you will vote. It* is a statement that conveys a sense of certainty and prediction of a future action. While acknowledging the existence of other voting options, BAT expresses confidence that the audience's votes will go to him. The function of this expression is to instill a belief in the audience that their votes are destined for the APC. Similarly, in Text 31, BAT reinforces this function by urging the audience to vote for him collectively, drawing a parallel to their previous support for one of their prominent figures. He states, *So, the way you vote for Soludo is the way you should vote for Tinubu* further emphasizing his intent to secure unified support.

vii.   Function/Intention

Function/Intention, another peculiar speech act found in the study, accounted for 4.5% (n - 2) frequency of occurrence and was the least used speech act in this study. This may not be far from the fact that most utterances used in the study were captured under specific speech acts. Below is a justification of the peculiarity of this speech act, using the texts as found in the study.

> **Text 1:** *Anambra, I salute all of you.*

> **Text 13:** *When they bring their lies again, ask them how long it will take their lies to travel from Port-Harcourt to Onitsha, Onitsha to Aba.*

Harison et al. (2017) suggest that functionalism, similar to intentionalism, provides a framework for interpreting speech acts. Both approaches agree that speech acts are characterised by their purpose or effect, but they diverge in how this purpose or effect is identified. The two texts referenced above are both purpose/effect-driven. The primary aim of the utterance in Text 1 is to engage the audience's attention, ensuring the speech is delivered effectively, while its effect serves the function of a polite exchange of pleasantries. Test 13, on the other hand, is framed as a request with a specific intention: w*hen they bring their lies again, ask them how long it will take their lies to travel from Port-Harcourt to Onitsha, Onitsha to Aba.* The effect of this statement is to highlight the recurring deceit from the opposition -when they bring their lies again…- while its purpose or intention is to persuade the audience that the opposition is not suitable for them, ultimately encouraging them to cast their votes in favour of BAT.

viii. Expression/Intention

Expression/Intention is another unique speech act found in the study. Just like Function/Intention, Expression/Intention accounted for 4.5% (n-2) frequency of occurrence and was the least used speech act in this study. This may be attributed to the unique nature of the speech act.

> **Text 8:** *You know I have tamed the Atlantic, tamed the Atlantic in Lagos. Now what do we do? We will tame the erosion around the entire Eastern region.*

> **Text 29:** *Charles Soludo, your son is not contesting with me or against me; he is still my friend. I salute his vision. He is a brilliant man. He has the brain; he is a thinker. He knows the way. We will work together inclusively.*

Text 8, You *know I have tamed the Atlantic, tamed the Atlantic in Lagos*, is a clear statement of expression through which BAT conveys his values as a leader, a warlord, and an emperor who has conquered and continues to have dominion over Lagos State. He then subtly introduces his intention behind this expression, stating that *we will tame the erosion around the entire Eastern region.* The underlying intentionalism speech act in Text 8 is evident as BAT aims to instill confidence in the audience by portraying himself as a capable leader who, as president, can address more serious issues than taming *the Atlantic* in the Eastern region. This vision, he implies, is achievable only if the audience votes for him. Text 29, another example of Expression/Intention, begins with an effort to further build the audience's trust. BAT highlights Charles Soludo, a prominent figure from the Eastern region, expressing admiration for Soludo's decision not to contest against him. He showers encomium on him, saying, *I salute his vision. He is a brilliant man. He has the brain; he is a thinker. He knows the way*, with the intent of aligning Soludo's people with his perspective. BAT concludes with, *We will work together inclusively*, suggesting that the audience's votes are already secured and that collaboration is merely a matter of time.

Conclusion

This study examines the speech acts performed by BAT during his presidential campaign speech in Anambra, utilising Harison et al.'s (2017) speech act theory model. It identifies five primary speech acts -C*onvention, Intention, Function, Expression*, and *Norm-* as outlined by Harison et al. (2017), along with three unique speech acts -*Norm/Intention, Function/Intention*, and *Expression/Intention-* resulting from the combination of two speech act types, as detailed in Table 2. According to Table 1, BAT's most frequently used speech act is *Intention,* accounting for 44.4% of occurrences, while *Function/Intention* and *Expression/Intention* are the least utilised. The study concludes that BAT predominantly employed *Intention* to articulate his plans, goals, and ambitions, aiming to secure the audience's support and votes. His communicative strategy focused on expressing his intentions and aspirations while fostering trust and rapport with his listeners -a common tactic in political speeches designed to inspire and persuade audiences to gain their backing.

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