

---

| RESEARCH ARTICLE

## A Multi-modal Critical Pragmatic (MCP) Analysis of Deji Ige's selected poem *Let there be Light*

Ordu, Stanley<sup>1</sup> ✉ and Francis Attah Egu<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Research department, Chaps multi- Concept Ltd, Nigeria

<sup>2</sup>Languages and Communication Unit, School of General studies, Federal Polytechnic of Oil and Gas, Bonny, Rivers state, Nigeria

**Corresponding Author:** Ordu, Stanley, **E-mail:** stanleyordu12@gmail.com

---

| ABSTRACT

This work examines the use of language in conveying a message to the public through spoken word poetry. It applies a descriptive method in its analysis. It uses the multi-modal critical pragmatics as the theory that guided it. The results of the study revealed that Nigeria is a critical mess position as corruption and evil vices have kept the country from developing. The poem also extols a presidential aspirant in the forthcoming 2023 election as a leader that is capable of redeeming the country from its predicament and restoring hope to its citizens. In conclusion, the poem is clamouring for a change of leadership.

| KEYWORDS

let there be light, pragmatics, language, communication, poetry

| ARTICLE INFORMATION

**ACCEPTED:** 01 December 2022

**PUBLISHED:** 05 December 2022

**DOI:** 10.32996/jpds.2022.1.1.2

---

### 1. Introduction

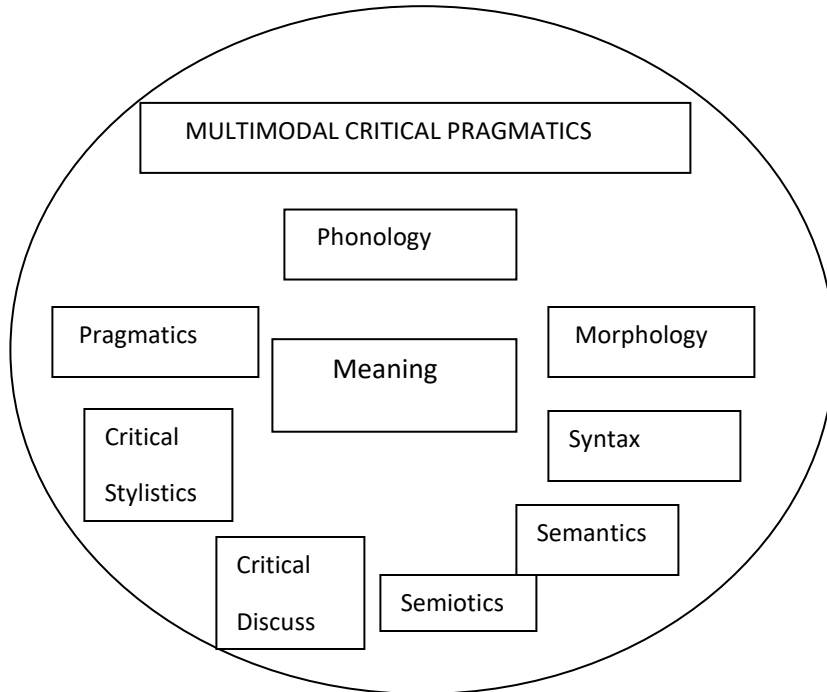
An essential part of human existence is language. It makes sense that it is described as the primary means human beings use to communicate with one another (Adegbija, 2010). Language is largely spoken, yet it can also be expressed through written, non-verbal, and other forms of communication. As a result, communication serves as the foundation for society. There are many other channels through which communication may take place, including engagement through conversation (discourse), the delivery of speech through the media (such as radio and television), sign language, spoken word poem, music, (regardless of the genre) and a great number of additional channels. It is a point that should not be overlooked here that, in each of these forms, individual pieces of information are essentially being endowed with different senses (meanings), and then passed across to various types of individuals who, in turn, deduce various meanings from the information passed, based on their own personal views and prejudices regarding such information. This is a point that should not be overlooked here. Therefore, Mr. Stanley's perception of "I love you" may be different from that of Miss Jane's, even if the person singing or saying the utterance is the same. This is true even if Mr Stanley and Miss Jane are listening to the same person. The whole process is called "encoding and decoding," which is short for the words "encode and decode." The capacity of individual perception of a work art makes it more beautiful. A work of art should be able to stand on its own. However, the more successful a work of art is, the more appreciative. Ordu, (2022).

One of the channels of communication is spoken word poetry. A spoken word poem is a kind of speech poem that carries aesthetics demonstration and body movement in an oral poetic art. It requires a careful performance, memorization, most cases application of aesthetic dance.

## 2. Theoretical framework

### 2.1 Multi-Modal Critical Pragmatic Analysis:

It is a model propounded by Ibiere ken Maduako (2022). It is a model that uses or applies all kinds of linguistic models and machinery in interpreting meaning. And the foundation of the model is pragmatics, which means its focus is on the context of speech. According to this model, attention is also given to the social aspects of language, power, and dominance, thus bringing out the critical aspects of communication.



## 3. Research methodology

This is a qualitative and descriptive work. Critical resources are evaluated, assessed, and interpreted using qualitative research criteria. To begin, a short summary of the chosen spoken word poem's analytical methodology is offered. Then, pertinent lexical items from the poem are picked using the applied theoretical framework. Grounded theory practice, ethnography, phenomenology, case study, and textual analysis are all data gathering methodologies used in qualitative research Melaknel, (2008).

## 4. Results and Findings

### 4.1 Short summary.

The poem is all about criticism of the present situation of a particular country(Nigeria). How the leadership of the country has made things difficult for the citizens of the country. The situation whereby the average citizen of the country seeks abroad for greener pastures and it can also be said that the speech is satirical in nature. On the other hand, the speech sings the praises of someone who is aspiring for a position in a particular country. The poet eulogizes the personality of the aspirant with regard to his capacity to rebuild the country by mentioning his antecedents.

### 4.2 Phonological Analysis

The most commonly used in speech are /e/, /a/, /ei/, /au/, /a:/, /ai/, /ia/, /v/, /l/, /i:/, which are repeated sounds. "Nigeria," "scarcity," "how," "which way" " country" "let" "Yadi" "Brass," "Calabar" The repetition of these words and the usage of the rhythmic words create an impression of a bad situation before and create a positive new situation. The poet uses some words to narrate and describe the suffering of the masses and asks them to enthrone a new person that is capable of alleviating their suffering and poverty. The poet did this to create a mind-set in the people, allowing a good and better person to handle the leadership position.

### 4.3 Morphological Analysis

The use of past and present morphemes describes how the poet views the country's situations and how the leaders have caused what the citizens have been going through for the past years, and he asks the citizens to vote for the leader who is with them in the general election ahead. He has been in leadership and has done some meaningful things as an individual for the nation.

Afflicted{+Past + affliction}

Annihilated{+past + annihilate}

Washed {+past + wash}

Tumbled {+past + tumble}

Buried {+past + Bury}

Crafted{+past+ Craft}

Unlocked{+past+ Unlock}

Flowed {+past +Flow}

Expressed {+past + Express}

Hatred {+ past + Hate}

Beclouds {+present+ becloud}

Holds {+ present+ hold}

Understands{+ present+ understand}

Bereaved {+ past + bereave}

Raised {+ past + Raise}

Mastered {+ past + master}

Demonstrated {+past + demonstrate}

Counted {+ past count}

There are so many of them in the speech. Other examples are "let your voice be heard", " who thinks", " men united" they are in past and present tenses.

**4.4 The placement of the verbs from the speech**

<b>Present form</b>	<b>Past form</b>	<b>Past Participle form</b>
Know	Thought	Have shed
Become	Began	
Bleed	Forgot	
Banish	Made	
Harness	Built	
Don loss	Sent	
Get	Flowed	
Serve	Blew	
Hold	Washed	
Build		

From the analysis above, the present and past forms of verbs were mostly used. This shows that most of the activities have been done sometime in the past. Some of the activities are still ongoing. From a semantic standpoint, the poet is expressing and exposing the evils and atrocities committed by the country's current and previous leadership. On the other hand, praising the aspirant who is declaring his interest in becoming the country's president as the right man who will right the wrongs that have been committed.

**4.5 Speech Acts.**

Illocutionary acts were employed by the poet to pass his message across. And this involves acts of informing, educating, and persuasion. The poet makes use of satire and mockery in his speech. And he applied these features by using different nomenclatures in his native language and catchy and indigenous language phrases like: Bashorun "tori a kiigbobuburulenuabore" Gaamonnammonnayaluigiorowoinullu, "tori a kiigbobuburulenuabore" Yanzuyanzu! Saurisauri, "Nwannem! "Ahamefuna and

Onyekwe chi yaekwe". The poet uses these catchy phrases to mock the current administration and praise and encourage the aspirant who is declaring his intention to rule. These catchy phrases in indigenous languages will be analysed by the use of speech acts.

**Datum 1.** *BashorunGaamonnayaluigiorowoinullu.* (...EmperorGaa, the town started experiencing hardship and instability)

**Illocutionary Act: assertive assertion of facts** The poet is telling the audience that since the enthronement of the president, people have been experiencing hardship and instability in everything. And his intention is to let the audience know that he is not happy. This presupposed that the poet was better off before his present condition or that Nigerians were doing well before the current administration took over. The use of the Yoruba language makes it easier for the Yoruba listeners to understand the speech more.

**Datum 2.** , " *tori a kiigbobuburulenuabore*"(a message of doom must not be heard from the mouth of he makes sacrifices to the gods)

**Illocutionary Act:** assertive—informing the audience that statements of divisiveness should not be uttered by the leader. The intention of the poet is to let the audience know that the president's utterances are making him sad. This presupposed that there was a president who did not make statements that would anger the followers. The use of Yoruba shows the ethnic group of the poet and gives the Yoruba listeners a better understanding of the speech.

**Datum 3:** *Yanzuyanzu! Saurisauri,* (tell it in haste)

**Illocutionary Act:** assertive, stating the state of things in a speedy manner. The intention is to let the president know that ranging from Ado Ekiti to Awka, from BurninYadi to Brass, from Calabar to Chibok, from Daura to other parts of the country, people are dying of poverty. This assumed that not long ago, most of these areas were not impoverished. The use of the Hausa language makes it understandable for the Hausa listeners.

**Datum 4:***Nwannem! Ahamefuna*(my friend! May my name not be lost)

**Illocutionary Act:** stating the fact that opportunity should be given to aspirants to rewrite the wrongs from ashes to beauty and from misfortune to fortune. This presupposed a moment of bad to good leadership. The poet had had bad experiences. The use of Igbo language makes it easier for Igbo listeners to understand.

**Datum 5:** *Onyekwe chi yaekwe*( when a man says yes, his god will say yes)

**Illocutionary Act:** expressive—expressing what the poet feels. The poet intends to let the listeners know that he is confident of the aspirant winning the election coming ahead. This implies that the poet had no confidence in the aspirant before now. It was implied that following the declaration, he realized the aspirant would win the upcoming election.

#### 4.6 Lexical Analysis

Under this part, the words will be group according to different word classes.

NOUNS	VERBS	ADJECTIVES	ADVERBS	PRONOUNS
Nigeria(13x), Country(5x), Vultures, High Places, Flesh, Food, Economy, Priority, Choice, National anthem, Guns, Bullets, Ethnic group, Table, Kindred, heart(2x), God, Trust, Nation building, Brother's keeper, Small businesses, Letter, Raised, Pulse, Naija, SARS, Voice, Youths, Equity, Dead, Virtue, Mankind, Tribe,	Hear, Raised, Say, Becomes, Still, To Pull, Will Feel, Listen, Sealed, Has Raised, Has Masteres,	Narrow, Shameful, Grateful, Stronger, Countless, Fruitful, Poor	More, Endlessly, Never, Across, Firmly, Through, One more,	I(4x), My(4x), We(21x), Their(6x), Them(1), It(1x), He(1x), Himself(1x), His(5x), Who(16), Him(2x), Us(4x), Everybody(2x), Her(2x), Our(4x), Your(2x), You(2x), Whose(2x),

<p>Office, Privilege, Mouth, People(5x), Sacrifices, Goods, Language,Thorn, Successor, Hands, Darkness, Patriots.</p>				
<p>Fatherland, Hunger, Table, Oblivion, ,Lecturers, Compassion, Workers, Ambassador, Impunity, Grazing, Myopia, Heart, Ruler, Prayer, Vein, Hatred, Conscience, Across, God, Disease, Person, Beats, Men(4x), School, Key, Police station, Religion,Tongue, Message, Doom, Land, Bridge,</p>	<p>Built, Understands, Should, Lead, Will become, Carry, Serve, Hold, Thinks, Should be, Sitting, To Lead, Be heard, Gives,</p>			
<p>Sadness, Punishment, Breadwinner, Strike, Teachers, Ukrain, Emptiness, Field, Masses, Naira(4x), Leader(10x), Verse, Love, Foreign, Favour, Opportunities, Silent, Sister, President(6x), Groan, Women(4x), Passion, Development, Refuge, True, Compatriots, Power, Wisdom, King, Crown</p>	<p>Fly, Raise, Believe, Stand, Sit, Caught, Thinking, Cannot be, Build, May determine, Have been, Sent, To Return, Missing, Tell, Ripping</p>			
<p>Heart, Families, Health workers, Heaven(2x),Fathers, Prosperity, Cow, Gold, Faces, Casket, Enthronement, Masterkey, Blade, Currency, Clan, laziness, Captain of industries, Agitation, Dust, Brother, Dungeon, Lips, Equity, Slaughter- house, Encrypted, Bandits, Ado Ekiti, Burnin, Yadi, Brass, Calabar, Chibok, Daura, Unity, Waters,</p>	<p>Be told, Reading, Written, Has come, To Put, Tied, See, Will Make, Will hear, Be lost, Demonstrated, Beginning, Will say, Rewrite, Forget, Belongs, Remember, Counted, Make fade</p>			

<p>Identity, Decision, Breathe, Children, History, Beauty, United, Misfortune, Fortune Willpower, Generation, Unborn</p>				
<p>Song, Fuel, Embassies, Dream, Graves, Land, Man, entrepreneurship, Table, Cold Man, Fetish,BashorunGaa, Doors, Tribalism, Gavel, Suffering Woman, 2015, Year, Milk, Poverty, Dignity, Ripping, Reading , Story, Hardship, Boundary, Glory, Shore, Justice, Pathway, Human right, Region(2x), Aso Rock, Nation(3x), Ideology,</p>				
<p>Poverty, Scarcity, Greener pasture, Nigerian(9x), Compatriots, Ethnicity, Justice(2x), Kindness, Narrow minded, Unity, Masses(2x) , Woman, Kitchen, Cold, shoulder people, Tears(2x), Uncertainty, Harness, Agony, DNA, Anguish, Small, Steering, Flowing, Mastered, Cosmic forces, Fortune, Peace, Prosperity, Voice(3), Fathers, Boko haram, Bigotry, Tribal, Rivalry, Knot, Brotherhood, Land, Sea,</p>				
<p>Stakeholder, Citizen, Salary, Ukrainian, Glory, embassy, Leadership, Humanity, Height, Wind, Faces, Prosperity,Employer of labour, Commerce, Industry, Hand,</p>				

Scale(2x). Potential, Bereaved, Sweat, Economics, Balance, Kindness, Job, Insecurity, Disunity, Existence, Gratitude, Bond, Politics, Choice, Fate, Mother, War, Room, Dreams Daughters, Vision, Life, Wives, Sons(2x), Roundtable, Leadership, Bitterness, Light				
--	--	--	--	--

From the above table, it is obvious that more verbs appeared in the speech than two hundred and seventy-nine (279) verbs, one hundred and twenty-eight (128) nouns, eight (8) adjectives, eight (8) adverbs, and eighteen (18) pronouns. It is obvious that the semantic interpretation of the poet is that he is after a particular leadership that is not leading well and an aspirant that wants to take over from the leadership that is performing well. The involvement of numerous verbs is an indication of activities that happened before and presently. The employment of different kinds of pronoun is to show referents of discourse that have happened earlier, present and in future discourse. With the help of these pronouns in the speech, the poet is able to manage them so that it seems to be a dialogue. The use of "I" and "we" pronouns seems as if there were dialogues going on. For instance, "compatriots," how did we get here? Despite it being a rhetorical question, it serves as a dialogue between the poet and others as a result of the "we."

However, other words like "shed" "bleed", "banish" signifies and described the manner at which the present leadership of the country has placed the citizens.

**Blew** {+ past action + Fly+ remove from its original place.

**Bleed** {+ habitual action + cause to flow out}

**Built** {+ past + erection + Housing}

**Banish** {+ present+ asking to leave a town entirely}

An analysis of the meaning components in the nouns used in the speech.

**Teachers** {+ human + imparting of knowledge + research}

**Cow** {+ animal+ eatable+ contains milk}

**Heaven**{+celestial +above+ housing the angels}

**Currency** {+commodity+ Medium of economic exchange+ principle measure of wealth}

**Message** {+ communication+ medium of interaction+ principle of transmission.}

**4.7 Syntactic Analysis**

The sentences employed in the speech are simple and compound sentences. He used these to be able to pass the message across to the listeners. And these sentences, most of them, are in rhetorical and dialogue forms. For instance, "compatriots, how did we get here?"

**4.8 Pragmatic Interpretation.**

The speech is all about bad leadership in Nigeria and the campaign for AlhajiAtikuAbubakar. The speech comes in the form of satire in the areas in which he talks about the ills of the current administration. For instance, "a leader who will not be blind to the suffering of the masses, the agony of the bereaved, who will hear the voice of the people as the voice of God".

#### 4.9 Stylistic Analysis

There are different kinds of styles employed in the work. For instance, the use of Nigerian Indigenous languages like "Nwannem! "Ahamefuna," "BashorunGaa", "monomonoyalu'giorowonuilu", "tori a kiigbobuburulenuabore." These languages have meanings to them and they make the listeners understand the speech. He equally employed Pidgin English. Crystal (2009) defines pidgin as:

A system of communication which has grown up among people who do not share a common language, but who want to talk to each other usually for reasons of trade. Such languages typically have a limited Vocabulary a reduced grammatical structure, and a Narrow range of functions, compared to the language From which they derive. They are used only when they Need to be, as a contact language in circumstances where Communication would not otherwise be possible. They are The native languages of no one.

The poet, knowing the language state of Nigeria, decided to apply pidgin to ensure that the listeners who do not understand the English language and some of the Indigenous languages used will be able to understand the meaning of the speech. For instance, "deywaka" means "walking. Pragmatically, it means the state of the country at the moment. "Na hin we carry steering, give person wey no sabi road, now nobody loses." This is Nigerian English. It means " a leadership is given to a leader who does not know how to lead."

There is also the use of repetition in work as a style. According to Leech (1969), style is the way in which something is spoken, written, or performed. The essence of the repetition is to create emphasis and meaning for the listeners. The manner in which the repetitions occur, they give meaning to work, and the meaning is about the bastardized nature of the country called Nigeria. For instance, "Which way Nigeria," "Nigeria," "Leaders," "economy," "President," "People," e and other words were repeated in the speech.

The use of acronyms, such as DNA, SARS, and others, is also a style that adds meaning to the speech.

The poet is very eloquent in his style. Deji knows how to use his style to captivate his listeners, and he does so by interpreting some indigenous languages. The work is symbolic and beautiful in nature because of how these phrases and sentences from the local language are interpreted.

#### 4.10 Semiotic Analysis

Deji explores signs and symbols in his speech. And these items carry meanings, and they are meanings themselves. Onwuegbuzie (2008) defines semiotics as a science that explores the relationship between signs, including talk and text, and their intended specific meanings. For example, let's look at the symbols and signs explored by Deji in his work, "Aso Rock." This means or represents where the president of the country lives. "Naira". This means the currency symbol of Nigeria. "Naija." This is a representation of the name Nigeria. There is no place such a word appears as a Nigerian that signifies Nigeria. Others are "Nwannem!" and "Ahamefuna." There is no other tribe that speaks this language other than the Igbo. "DNA" stands for (deoxyribonucleic acid). SARS etc.

#### 4.11 Critical Discuss Analysis

This comes to play when he campaigns for the political ideology of Abubakar to the listeners. And he (Deji) employs rhetoric, serving as a means for social change and political contestation. For instance, "Find me that man, to lead my country out of insecurity and disunity, into an era of nation-building, where we will become our brother's keeper and behold a police station a place of refuge rather than a slaughter house for human rights and justice Carry my voice to the heavens and the cosmic forces behind the existence of mankind, that I do not seek a president of tribe, of region or religion, but a true Nigerian who has Nigeria encrypted in their DNA with a sense of gratitude to see the office as a privilege to serve and a bond to hold in trust, not the one who thinks Nigerians should be grateful to him for sitting in Aso Rock."

#### 5. Conclusion

The idea behind the speech has been explored in this work. The speech satirizes the current administration and leadership in Nigeria. Range from lecturers' being on strike; scarcity of fuel; high cost of living; and people leaving the country for better countries for greener pastures. On the other hand, the speech also extols an aspirant and his political ideology. In the speech, Atiku is seen



as the messiah that will wipe away the people's tears. In achieving this, different levels of meaning were applied in interpreting the speech by using multi-modal critical pragmatics.

**Funding:** This research received no external funding.

**Conflicts of Interest:** The authors declare no conflict of interest.

**Publisher's Note:** All claims expressed in this article are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of their affiliated organizations, or those of the publisher, the editors and the reviewers.

## **References**

- [1] Ademilokun, M and Olateju, M. (2015). A multi-modal Discourse Analysis of some visual images in the political rally discourse of 2011 electioneering campaigns in South western: *International Journal of society culture and language* 1-19
- [2] Crystal, D. (2009). *The Cambridge encyclopedia of the English language*. Cambridge University Press
- [3] Ige, D. (2022) "Let there be light." unpublished
- [4] Leech, G.(1983). *Principles of pragmatics*. Longman
- [5] Maduako, I.K. (2022). *Meaning and the linguist*. An inaugural lecture. PEARL publishers
- [6] Melakneh, P.G. (2008). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods*. SAGE publications
- [7] Onwuegbuzie, A.J. (2008). Qualitative data analysis: A compendium of techniques and a frame Work for selected for school psychology research and beyond. *School Psychology Quarterly*,23 (4), 587-604
- [8] Ordu, S. (2022). Symbolic characters and class struggles in Ngugi wa Thiongo's petals of blood. *Journal of social, Humanity, and Education*, 2(2), 129-139