

AFRREV IJAH

An International Journal of Arts and Humanities

Bahir Dar, Ethiopia

Vol. 2 (4), S/No 8, September, 2013: 262-282

ISSN: 2225-8590 (Print) ISSN 2227-5452 (Online)

**Discursive Features of Selected Political Song Texts
of the 2011 Electioneering Campaign Rallies in
South-western Nigeria**

Ademilokun, Mohammed

Department of English

Obafemi Awolowo University

Ile-Ife, Osun State, Nigeria

E-mail: mohmilokun@yahoo.com

Abstract

Political rallies are an integral component of political cultures in most participatory democracies. The political rally as a genre of political discourse is characterised by different signifying practices among which are talks, songs, costume and surrogate language. This study isolates songs as a system of signification in political rally discourse in South-western Nigeria with a view to describing their peculiarities. Data for the study were gathered from six political rally venues in South-western Nigeria prior to the 2011 general elections in Nigeria. Anchored on the theoretical guide of Systemic Functional Linguistics, songs are explicated in the study as vehicles of multiple

significations transcending territorial corridors of entertainment but ultimately devolving into a myriad of ideological, psychological, socio-cultural and idiosyncratic imperatives. The study concludes that songs are an effective mode of political communication in South-western Nigeria.

Key Words: Politics; political rallies; political discourse; song texts; South-western Nigeria

Introduction

Politics is an important aspect of human life through which human beings organise themselves for the collective prosecution of desires. Heywood (1997:4) captures this truth when he says that “politics in its broadest sense is the activity through which people make, preserve and amend the general rules under which they live”. The realisation of the need to sustain the political culture necessitated the evolution of specific political ideologies. Some of such ideologies gave rise to political systems and forms of government such as feudalism, monarchism, fascism, aristocracy, and democracy. In Nigeria, the political system has had its peculiar challenges occasioned by the involvement of the military in the governance of the country which destabilized the political structure of the country. However, ever since the 1999 return to democratic government in the country, institutional politics has continued to wax strong in the country as there are more participants in the political process just as there are more established political processes in the nation.

One of the areas in which the growth of politics is manifest in Nigeria is the area of political communication. There has consistently been tremendous development in political communication in Nigeria since 1999 up till the present moment. Of course, this reality cannot but be linked to the centrality of communication to politics. Deutsch (1966), cited in Philips, Roberts and Benjamin (1999:9), affirms the central place of communication in politics by stating that “in the realm of politics and government, communication can be described as the nerves of government”. Since politics involves moving people to

behave in certain ways, it then becomes important for the people to know why they have to behave in ways expected of them. This is why communication is really important in politics. There are different forms of political communication for different purposes, viz: political speeches, political adverts, political campaign rallies, political interviews, and political debates, among others. However, for the present purposes, we are concerned with political rallies which constitute an important part of political campaigns by politicians and political parties towards elections. Political campaigns are indeed important to political parties because through them, a lot of information is passed to the electorate and awareness is also created for the political party or parties campaigning.

Campaigns are however constructed through language (verbal and non-verbal). The importance of language in political campaigns can only be appreciated when one realises that it is through language that social worlds are constructed, including politics. Chilton (2004:6) captures this fact when he says: “the doing of politics is predominantly constituted in language”. In the context of political campaign rallies in South-western Nigeria, language refers to all the symbolic modes used to communicate political meanings, such as political talks, visual political codes and political song texts which constitute the focus of this paper. In the political campaign rallies for the 2011 elections in South-western Nigeria, song texts of different kinds were produced by politicians and their political followers for utilitarian and aesthetic purposes. This paper seeks to unveil the different uses of songs in the political rally culture in South-western Nigeria.

Music and Politics

The relationship between music and politics cannot actually be said to be new. Street, Hague and Savigny (2007:1) capture this fact by asserting that “music and politics have long been connected”. It has always been the case that at political fora, politicians and political followers use songs, among others, to convey their political ideologies

or sentiments in emotional ways, just as they also use music to praise some persons among themselves. Music in itself is never innocent as it helps its performer to either communicate some information or to assuage the feelings of the performer. In a large number of cases, music, being an agent of social change, is used to protest by people of different categories against their leaders or persons in higher positions in relation to them. In the African milieu, especially the Yoruba culture, there are songs that are called “*orin owe*” (proverbial songs) which can be politically deployed. These songs are protest songs used to reject the superiority of certain persons or to assert superiority by senior persons over the lesser ones and can be used for political purposes. Also, the hip-hop which is a significant musical trend in the contemporary world has been used in different ways to contribute to the socio-political discourse of inequality, oppression and other negative conditions in human living. In Nigeria, there have been cases of musicians who were arrested for producing political songs capable of sensitising the public to the ugly realities in the country. Fela Anikulapo comes to mind in this regard as he was arrested at different times by the military government ruling Nigeria when he sang his popular song titled “*Zombi*”. Edris Abdul-Karim, a popular hip-hop musician in Nigeria, was also criticised by the Former President of Nigeria, Olusegun Obasanjo, over his song titled “*Nigeria jagajaga*” (Nigeria in shambles). The above examples show that music can be used to make political statements, or can be used to stir political actions in listeners.

Apart from the fact that music can be used to make political statements, music is also used to edify politics. This quality of music in politics consists in its use to create festivity or aesthetics in politics or political discourse. Politicians and political parties hire musicians and cultural troupes to perform at political fora in order to add colour to such occasions and create some atmosphere of festivity. Specifically, with political rallies which are the focus of this study, music is produced by all manner of people in the discourse environment for the conveyance of political thought and action and

for merry-making. Political parties and politicians hire notable musicians and or cultural troupes to perform at political rallies.

Perspectives on Music and Politics in Nigeria

In Nigeria, there has been a visible relationship between politics and music even though one cannot categorically state that this relationship has been thoroughly and exhaustively subjected to academic research, especially from a linguistic perspective. One of the visible works in this area was done by Bateye (1997) titled “Music and Partisan Politics: An American and Nigerian Experience”. In the paper, Bateye recognized that there are mainly two kinds of political music in America and Nigeria which he called campaign music and non-campaign music. According to the scholar, the deployment of music in Nigerian politics can be traced back to the 1950s when Chief Obafemi Awolowo and Chief Adegoke Adelabu contested against each other. Noting that the songs used at that time were in chants, the scholar reveals that such songs were used to praise party leaders while political opponents were also humiliated through songs. Furthermore, the researcher reveals that non-campaign music such as music theatre and songs or albums from individual artists was also used to communicate political messages and meanings at that time. Individual musicians often compose songs that are meant to celebrate certain political leaders or groups just as some also dedicate their songs to the criticism of political leaders. This practice continues till this time in Nigeria where certain poet-singers such as Kunle Ologundu, Olanrewaju Adepoju among others sing to abuse governments or politicians that they perceive do not mean well for the people.

Olaniyan (1997) also contributes to the discourse on the role of music in politics in his paper titled “Music and the Electoral Process: A Comparative Analysis of the Nigerian and American Experiences”. In the paper, the author emphasizes that creative artists such as musicians have generally contributed in two ways to the electoral process. According to *ibid* (1997:421):

Some (musicians) are mere praise singers who applaud corrupt leaders for their own material gain. Others unfold the truth through their music by condemning acts of corruption within the government circle and the society as a whole (Word in parenthesis mine)

What can be clearly derived from the above quote is that music in Nigerian politics has both positive and negative effects on the polity. There are singers who praise corrupt politicians who have left untold hardship to the Nigeria people while there are some who sensitise the public to the negative activities of Nigerian politicians, thus making the people to make appropriate decisions. The researcher also states that “music is used in politics by aspirants to win more supporters; ... to advertise manifesto and even the personality of their candidate” (ibid, 1997:424). In general, the researcher shows that music is an active part of Nigerian politics that shapes and influences political realities in the country.

Adedeji and Olaniyan (2010) also research into the usefulness of music in socio-political mobilization. In the paper titled “The Traditional Hymnic Texts of the Yoruba of Africa as an Agent of Socio-political Mobilization”, the scholars reveal how the hymnic texts in the Ifa literary corpus can be deployed for socio-political mobilization. In the opinions of the scholars: “judging from the contents, the Ifa corpus is a vital reference point on the earliest traditional cultures, values and religious practices of the Yoruba of Africa”. All of the above works crystallise the fact that Nigerian scholars are aware of the usefulness of music in Nigerian politics even though there has not been much linguistic or discourse analysis of such music, thus justifying the need for the present study.

Methodology

Data for this study were taken from six political rallies in South-western Nigeria. Since there are six states in South-western Nigeria, which can be grouped as Lagos/Ogun, Osun/Oyo and Ondo/Ekiti in

view of their nearness and histories, data was obtained from any part of the groups. Thus, two samples of song texts were taken from each of the three zones, making a total of six samples. The political rallies focused were those of the Peoples' Democratic Party, Action Congress of Nigeria and the Labour Party. The decision to focus these three parties was borne out of the fact that they were the strongest political parties in the South-western part of Nigeria. The researcher personally recorded political songs at some of the rallies he could attend while he visited television stations in the zone for the collection of more data. Since the discourse at each of the political rallies attended contained other signifying practices than songs, the researcher focused solely on songs in this study as he extracted the song texts in the records and transcribed them before eventually analysing them. The researcher also ensured that he recorded the entire spectrum of songs in the discourse environment as there are different types of music in the discourse. Extracts from the data are presented to illustrate the discursive strategies and styles employed in the rally song texts.

Theoretical Framework

Analysis of the meanings conveyed by the song texts in the political rally discourse for the 2011 elections in South-western Nigeria was carried out drawing on the analytical tools of Systemic Functional Linguistics. The choice of the theory for the analysis of the data gathered hinges on its social orientation, which allows for the description of the effects of the environment of language use on language use. Halliday (1973) captures this notion as follows: "What is common to every use of language is that it is meaningful, contextualized, and in the broadest sense social." According to Fairclough (2003:7), "Systemic Functional Linguistics is concerned with the relationship between language and other elements and aspects of social life, and its approach to the linguistic analysis of texts is always oriented to the social character of texts". Fairclough's observation about SFL convinces us that the theory is applicable to this study due to the social orientation of the data for the study.

Findings and Discussions

The songs constituting the discourse of the subjects exhibit certain political, cultural and social tendencies which shall be unveiled shortly.

CONTENT ANALYSIS

Cultural Allusion in Rally Songs

Many of the songs sung at the rallies are culturally grounded such that they show the depth of Yoruba orature, folklore, myths and archetypes. This can be seen as a way of indigenising the discourse with a view to making it peculiarly Yoruba. Consider the song below:

Extract 1:

C j1 kofiy3 win p3 zwa lani j=ba (2ce),
K=nk= 19 lod0, eja nl0 19 nib5.
C jc kofiy3 win p3 zwa lzni j=ba.

(Let us show them that power belongs to us; the stream belongs to frog while big fish owns the sea, let us make them know that power belongs to us)

PDP Rally in Osogbo in 2011

Through the above given song, the political party and its followers pride themselves as the ruling party among the pool of contending parties, and consequently the one to be voted for by the people. The imagery of frog and big fish dominating the stream and sea respectively was drawn upon to create the effect that the PDP was destined to dominate the political firmament in Nigeria. Oftentimes, this kind of songs can be said to be communal as nobody can lay claim to their ownership. Thus, they can well be described as cultural patrimony. Below is another song of cultural heritage in the discourse:

Extract 2:

zwa l=mo Ab10k5ta, 815 rere 815 o l-l0
Nibe na bi
E sa omo Lisabi

PDP Rally in Abeokuta in 2011

The above text is actually an anthem of the people of Abeokuta in Southwestern Nigeria. The song is considered the pride of the people. Therefore, anywhere distinguished indigenes of the town go to, they are always appreciative if the song is sung in their honour. In this particular instance, the song was sung to honour Mr. Dimeji Bankole, former Speaker of the Federal House of Assembly in Nigeria, who hails from Abeokuta and was about to speak at the rally. This is a typical feature of political rallies in Southwestern Nigeria which is characterised by a great deal of appreciation and praise of political leaders.

The extract below presents another instance of cultural nativism in the discourse. It is essentially an oral musical performance:

Extract 3:

Aremu Ade, ma a wole
Eboru Owu ma a wo le
Eeyan to moriki Sango lo moriki Obasanjo
Iku ti n ke mo ni, ko to pa ni
Aramoka ti n dun to jo terun

Translation:

Aremu, you are welcome
The spirit of Owu town
It is only the person who knows Sango's cognomen
that can tell Obasanjo's cognomen
The death that threatens one before killing one
The thunderbolt that strikes in rain and in harmattan
PDP Rally, Abeokuta, 2011

The text above is a vivid example of the cultural coloration of the discourse through allusion to the Yoruba orature and folklore. The text is actually an indigenous oral performance used to praise the person the former President of Nigeria, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo. The text delves into the core of Yoruba orature with heightened images. The text producer consciously called the President *Aremu* because it is his cognomen. In the Yoruba cultural milieu, individuals' cognomens are

used to praise them. The description of the President as *Ebora Owu* is significant. In the Yoruba cultural milieu, *Ebora* is a spirit which is dreaded especially because of its potent powers, which it applies negatively in most cases. Therefore, through the description of the former President as the “spirit of *Owu*”, the speaker expresses the notion that Obasanjo is a feared man of *Owu*. The *Owu* is indeed a metaphor for the dominion of Obasanjo as the man is powerful and feared in many quarters in Nigeria and the world at large. Furthermore, by stating that it is only the person who knows the cognomen of Sango that can tell the cognomen of Obasanjo, the text producer informs one that Obasanjo is another Sango, as his powers compare with those of Sango, who is one of the most revered gods in the African pantheon of gods.

The former President is no doubt presented as a powerful person in the text, as he is referred to as death. When a man is referred to as death in the Yoruba cultural milieu, he is someone no one must dare. The metaphor in the representation of Chief Obasanjo is also significant, emphasising the powerfulness of the man, who is supposed to be feared by people. The text no doubt gives the discourse a cultural tone as such an oral performance is replete among the Yoruba people of Southwestern Nigeria, being focused in this study.

Social Allusion in Rally Songs

The political rally songs also serve as a vista into the society as certain issues and realities in the society are commented on through the songs. Such issues may be of past, present or in fact future significance. The song below which was sung at a Peoples’ Democratic Party rally offers a good example of making social allusion through songs:

Extract 1:

O ti m5 wa gbzgb3 o,
8bzn5j1 8gbz kan,
zs3 wlr1 nis1 ol5wa

iba t7 a p3 t9 nj1
zs3 w1r1 nis1 ol5wa
iba t7 a p3 t9 nj1

Translation

(You (Jonathan) have made us forget the sufferings of the past;

Indeed easy is the Lord's doing

The God whom we call and answers)

PDP Rally in Osogbo in 2011

The above song is an attestation to the supposed uplift of the welfare of Nigerian workers by President Goodluck Jonathan of Nigeria. Indeed, this can be said to be synchronous with the mood among workers in Nigeria at the time as they had been promised salary increase by the Jonathan-led government. It should be stated that the song text was also produced in other political rallies especially in the Labour Party rally in Ondo. The song is indicative of the hope and joy that the workers feel about their working and living conditions generally. Below is another song text with information about a social fact in the Southwest geo-political zone in Nigeria:

Extract 2:

Ta l9 s1 p3 a n7 baba
Kai, a n7 baba
Obosanj-, baba wa.

Translation

Who says we do not have a father

Kai, we have a father.

Obasanjo is our father.

PDP Rally in Ado-Ekiti in 2011

In the above song-text, it is made clear that Chief Olusegun Obasanjo is a father to the PDP rank in Southwestern Nigeria. Indeed, the former President enjoys a pride of place in the country and especially in the South-western part of the country as an elderstatesman whose support is needed in order for anyone to succeed in the political arena. As a matter of fact, the man himself enjoys to be reckoned with as the father of all Nigerians, so he was evidently happy when the song was being sung in the discourse environment.

Religious Allusion in Rally Songs

Religious allusion is another feature of political rally song texts in Southwestern Nigeria. Some of the songs sung by the discourse participants are rooted in the religious backgrounds of the singers. Many of the songs, whether generated from the audience or from the special bands commissioned to perform at the political rallies, were religious songs, especially Christian religious songs. Perhaps this can be attributed to the fact that very many of such songs are already forming part of the indigenous Yoruba songs or were indeed originally Yoruba songs. Also, the presence of such songs in the discourse shows the high level of religious involvement or belief in the need for religious worship among the people of Southwestern Nigeria. Below are examples of songs with taints of religious allusion in the discourse:

Extract 1:

9 ti s3 o, babq ti s3 o
9 ti s3 o, babq ti s3 o
Oun t9 n bq wa 11r6, babq ti s3 o

Translation

He has done it
He has done it
What seemed dreadful to us
He has done it

Extract 2:

He has done for me
He has done for me
What my mother cannot do
He has done for me
Oh oh Halleluyah
He has done for me.

Labour Party Rally, Ondo, 2011

The above songs are part of the corpus of the Christian religious songs. They were produced and chorused at the above highlighted political rally in a natural way which the politicians on the podium and the general audience danced to. In a secular society such as Nigeria, one wonders the appropriateness of such songs at the rally, but indeed they constitute an integral part of the discourse owing to the prevalence of religious involvement in the country. In fact, it should also be noted that such songs would continue to be part of Nigerian political rally discourse since there are more clergymen (Christians and Muslims) not only joining Nigerian politics but also seeking elective positions. For instance, Pastor Chris Okotie and Pastor Tunde Bakare are examples of leading pastors in Nigeria who are very active in the political sphere in the country. In fact, these men and some others have always insisted that God told them that they were to lead the country. Below is another song-text that in the discourse drawn from the corpus of Christian songs commonly sung in Southwest Nigeria.

Extract 3:

\$m8 bz l1 gb2r5n ah-n
Fun yin ol5gbalz, 0g0 ìl-hun oba mi
8s1gun ore r2
Zbi k0 sehun f5n c
A 9 mọ sehun f5nmi
@j2 j3s6 dọmilọre, 2j2 r1 s3un funmi.

Translation:

If I have one thousand tongues
For the glory of my God
Did he not make you to conquer?
Yes, he made me to conquer
He saved me; his blood saved me.

Labour Party Rally in Ondo, 2011

The above song is a typical Yoruba Christian song that is common in the Southwestern region. The text was produced by the Governor of Ondo State, Olusegun Mimiko while appreciating God and the people for the love and support he was enjoying from them. This kind of song is typical of the discourse.

Apart from the fact that the political song-texts of the 2011 political rally discourse in Southwestern Nigeria are drawn from the Yoruba culture, the religions practised in the region and social issues in the environment, there are also certain functions that the song-texts are used to perform. In what follows, we shall consider the functions of the song-texts.

FUNCTIONAL ANALYSIS

Provocative Songs

It is generally believed in political discourse that political adverts are the most effective tool for deriding and abusing opponents. However, from our observation of the series of campaigns for the 2011 general elections in Nigeria, it can be said that songs are also a potent means of insulting and deriding opponents by Nigerian politicians and political parties. Below is a sample offensive song in the discourse:

Extract 1:

In5 igb9 loyin ê gb3,
In5 igb9 loyin ê gb3,
en8kan 7k9 il3 ad3t4 s7gboro,
In5 igb9 loyin ê gb3,

Translation:

The bee lives in the forest (2ce),
the leper's house is never built in the city,
the bee lives in the forest.

ACN Rally in Ile-Ife, 2011

The above song is particularly interesting in the sense that it is targeted at ridiculing a particular politician in Southwestern Nigeria whose name starts with “Oyin”, the Yoruba word for “bee” and what is obtained from it, “honey”. By this song, the singers are saying that the bearer of the name who happens to be their opponent is not supposed to be in the city, let alone contest for a position of responsibility. There is also a shift of emphasis in the politician's name from the produce “honey” to the producer “bee” in the song. Whereas the former is delicious and therapeutic, the former is inedible and hurtful. The shift offers an insightful commentary on the performance of the Governor in office, that is, the opposition who sang the song considers his administration as an affliction that inflicted much pain and suffering on the masses. Of course, such songs are actually only meant to offend the persons to whom they are addressed as in the real sense, they often lack merit given the fact that the targets of the insults are usually successful men in the society. Below is another song-text used by a political group to abuse their opponents:

Extract 2:

C ya gba dzn6
*joba t7 0 w510
C ya gba dzn6

Translation:

Sweep it away
An irresponsible government
Sweep it away.

ACN Rally in Ibadan, 2011

The above text was produced at an ACN rally to slight members of the People's Democratic Party who were in power as at the time the elections were going to hold. The use of the word "gba" which means to "to sweep" is conscious given the fact that the logo of the ACN is broom which is traditionally used to sweep away dirt. Therefore, implicit in the song-text is the pejorative portrayal of PDP as a filthy entity or assemblage of people who are supposed to be swept away. It should be stated that political warfare enacted through political song-texts of this nature is usually potent especially among the Yoruba who believe that you do not have to use the sword to kill your enemies when there is power in one's tongue. This explains the popularity of *orin-owe* (domestic protest songs) popular mainly among co-wives in a household in a typical polygamous setting in Yoruba land. The point being made here is that such abusive songs as the one above are not usually taken kindly by the targets as there are always reprisal song-texts from the insulted political group.

Praise Songs

It is interesting to note that political song texts in political rally discourse in South-western Nigeria are not only used to insult opponents, as they are also used for adulation of important personalities or political aspirants at rally venues. The "big man" phenomenon in the Yoruba culture which makes a lot of wealthy Yoruba people desire being excessively praised at social events finds representation in the discourse. Below are instances of such in the discourse:

Extract 1:

G9m8nz daadaa n7 S1gun)n7
G9m8nz daadaa n7 S1gun)n7
(se wq daadaa; 9 t5n w6wz daadaa s7 wa.
G9m8nz daadaa n7 S1gun)n7

Translation:

Segun Oni is a good Governor

He treated us well; he was good to us.
Segun Oni is a good Governor.

PDP Rally in Ado-Ekiti in 2011

Extract 2:

Op1lip1 Rz5f6, ay3 I bọ bo s4l5 mi j1
Op1lip1 Rz5f6, ay3 I bọ bo s4l5 mi j1

Translation:

If not for Rauf, my politics would have been
destroyed (2 times)

ACN Rally in Ile-Ife in 2011

Extract 3:

Cn7 t9 m=nz la ma di f5n , lailailalala
Wajadina, wajadina, Ibikunle Amosun lo yc
kọ d8b0 f5n Lailailala

Translation:

We are supposed to vote for the person who
knows what is right

Praise to Allah; praise to Allah

We should vote for Ibikunle Amosun

Praise to Allah; praise to Allah

ACN Rally in Abeokuta in 2011

The first extract is evidently a song text of praise of the former Governor of Ekiti State, Segun Oni. Even though the man was no longer the Governor as at the time of the political rally, since he was still an important person in the PDP hierarchy, especially in the state, his political supporters would always want to praise him through their songs. In fact, the way praise songs are sung for certain personalities in the discourse might make one assume that there is a lot of hero-worshipping in the discourse. There is the tendency for an onlooker to assume that the populace are contented with the superior status of their leaders and willfully worship and adore them.

The second extract is particularly interesting because it was generated by one of the political leaders. It was actually produced by the Deputy-Governor of Osun State to appreciate her boss, the Governor. Extract three is also a praise song. In this case, the governorship candidate of Oyo State was praised by the singers as the man who knows the way. The metaphoric representation of the quality or ability of the aspiring governor was no doubt eulogistic as to know “the way” among the Yoruba means a lot of positive things, since knowing “the way” implies a great deal of competence. Furthermore, the height of praise implicit in the song can only be appreciated when one considers the fact that among the Muslims from whom the song emanated, only Allah knows the way. But now, Amosun is being given an attribute of Allah cherished and revered by Muslims all over the world.

Songs as a Tool for Assurance

Songs are also used to assure political aspirants and political chieftains of the people’s support and victory in forthcoming elections. Since the ultimate aim of political campaigns, political rallies inclusive is to ensure that the public enlist support for the political party or group campaigning, participants in the discourse, especially political followers often assure their leaders of victory in forthcoming elections through songs. Consider the following:

Extract 1:

As7wqj5 mi mq mikzn
A ti pagbo y7 c ka
Tinubu mq mikzn
A ti pagbo y7 c ka
Biola mi mq mikzn
A ti pagbo y7 c ka
{p[eni l9 n bc lly8n r1
Ajimobi mi mq mikzn, ati pagbo y7 c ka.

Translation:

Asiwaju, don’t be scared
We are behind you

Tinubu, don't be scared
We are behind you
There are so many people behind you
Ajimobi, don't be scared.
ACN Rally in Ibadan in 2011

Extract 2:

Ma gesin li Arlgb1 2ce
ta o ko Arlgb1le ro l9y4
Arlgb1 ta o le slgun ni
8joba re d6n m- wa y3 ye o
Mọ a gcsin li Arlgb1.

Translation:

Ride on Aregbe
You that cannot be removed from office
You that cannot be defeated
We are enjoying your governance
Continue to ride on Aregbe.
ACN Rally in Ile-Ife in 2011

From the above song texts, it could be seen that the producers of the text were giving infinite support to the persons that the songs were addressed to. In the first text, the leader of ACN, Chief Bola Tinubu and aspirant for the post of Governor of Oyo as at that time, Abiola Ajimobi were emphatically told that they should be relaxed and confident that they were going to be successful in their political endeavours. The use of the expression “a ti pagbo yi e ka” is conscious as it fully conveys the sense of assurance which the song text is meant to show. In Yoruba land, what it means really is that the person has been anointed and inoculated against any form of external aggression. Therefore, the beneficiary of such gesture is safe and secure. Thus, to the producers of the song text, Chief Tinubu and Mr Ajimobi were safe and secure. The song was well chorused by the crowd as a way to show full support for the two politicians. The

second text is in fact a more forceful expression of assurance to the personality that the song was meant for. The composer of the text exuded so much confidence in the invincibility of the Governor of Osun State whom he described as unbeatable. This kind of songs is typical of political rallies in Southwest Nigeria even though one might not be able to verify the truth value of the remarks.

It must be remarked that apart from the above specific functions of music in the discourse in focus, it serves a general purpose of entertainment in the discourse environment. Music at political rallies in Southwestern Nigeria enlivens the discourse environment and makes the participants in the discourse not to be overly bored. It has a psychological effect on the discourse participants who could be naturally bored by the unending talks at the rallies. In fact, it is through music mainly that the feasting nature of political rallies manifests as politicians and their followers dance to the songs in a joyous mood.

Conclusion

This paper has further shown that there exists an inextricable relationship between music and politics as a great deal of political communication at political rallies is rendered through political songs. The analysis of the political songs in the discourse has shown that the discourse participants who produce the song texts bring to bear their social, religious and cultural knowledge in generating songs in the discourse even though those songs serve purely political purposes. The paper also revealed that political songs are used at political rallies to annoy political opponents, praise political leaders as well as assure them of victory in forthcoming elections.

References

- Adedeji, F. & Olaniyan, Y. (2010). "The Traditional Hymnic Texts of the Yoruba of Africa as an Agent of Socio-political Mobilization" *Journal of the Pan African Society for Musical Arts' Education*, 4, 75-97.
- Bateye, M. (1997). "Music and Partisan Politics: An American and Nigerian Experience" In O. Ogunba (Ed), *Governance and the Electoral Process: Nigeria and the United States of America* (Pp405-420), Lagos: University of Lagos Press.
- Chilton, P. (2004). *Analysing Political Discourse: Theory and Practice*. London: Routledge.
- Halliday, M.A.K (1973). *Explorations in the Functions of Language*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Heywood, A. (1997). *Politics*. London: Macmillan.
- Olaniyan, O. (1997). "Music and the Electoral Process: A Comparative Analysis of the Nigerian and American Experiences" In O. Ogunba (Ed), *Governance and the Electoral Process: Nigeria and the United States of America* (Pp421-433), Lagos: University of Lagos Press.
- Phillips, D., Nyemutu, R. & Benjamin, S. (1999). *Political Communication through Newspaper Advertisement: The Case of the 1999 Presidential Election in Nigeria*. Ibadan: Niser.
- Street, J., Hague S. & Savigny, H. (2007). "Playing to the Crowd: The Role of Music and Musicians in Political Participation" *Political Studies Association* 10 (11): 1-17.