

A Speech Act Analysis of the Speeches of Governor Alex Chioma Otti.

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Abstract

This study is a speech act analysis of the Victory and Inaugural Speeches of Governor Alex Chioma Otti. The study did a purposive sampling of twenty (20) excerpts from the Victory speech (22nd March, 2023), and Inaugural speech (29th May, 2023) of Governor Alex Chioma Otti. J.L. Austin's 1962 Speech Act, further developed by John Searle in 1969, served as the guiding framework to categorise and analyse the various speech acts embedded within the speeches of Governor Alex Chioma Otti. The study's findings revealed that Governor Alex Otti, in his victory and inaugural speeches, deployed illocutionary acts such as expressives, commissives, assertives, declaratives, and directives. In both speeches, the speaker predominantly used expressives to inspire hope, create a sense of unity, and connect emotionally with the audience. Assertives and directives further emphasised the speaker's commitment and motivated collective governance. Commissives and declaratives were used to assure the audience of the speaker's intention and reinforce his promises. The study concludes that there are two distinct patterns in the deployment of speech acts in the two crucial moments of the political communication: the victory speech tends to be more expressive, while the inaugural places a greater emphasis on vision, commitment and emotional connection with the audience.

Keywords: Speech Act, Inaugural Speech, Victory Speech, Illocutionary Act, Perlocutionary Act

Introduction

Language as a major means of communication is one of the most essential tools in human existence. It is, hence, crucial for the effective establishment of democratic governance in any nation. Language is the conveyor of power. It moves people to demonstrate support, vote, debate, or revolt. It is, therefore, a central explanation of political stability, good governance, security, or polarisation (Taiwo, 2009, p.13).

The significance of language in conveying thoughts and concepts is relevant across every domain of human pursuit, but it seems especially essential to politicians. Language and politics are closely intertwined. Language is a powerful political tool for conveying ideas, shape public opinion, and influence policy decisions. Politicians often use rhetoric and persuasive language to connect with voters and advance their agendas. In addition, the choice of language can impact how policies are framed and discussed, affecting public perception. Language can also be a source of identity and political division, especially in multilingual or multicultural societies. It plays a crucial role in politics, serving as a means of communication, persuasion, mobilisation for political purposes, persuasion, and even as a subject of political discourse. Sites in political activities at which language characteristically functions are presentation of manifestos, campaigns, rallies, elections, victory and inauguration speeches, policy formulation, and implementation.

The concept of political speech originated from the historical works of Greek philosophers like Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. Aristotle describes it as "a faculty of observing in any given case the available means of persuasion about whatever subject" (Agbogun,

2001, p.17). The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary defines political speech as the skill of using language in speech or writing that is intended in a special way to influence or incite people. Political speeches aim to exert influence, educate, inform, persuade, provoke, or entertain.

Undeniably, political discourse has been a major language use domain that has attracted the interest of many researchers for a long time. This is because political discourse is a complex human activity that deserves critical study, mainly because of its central place in the organisation and management of society. Political language deals with using power to organise people's minds and opinions. It is an instrument used to control society in general. In pragmatics, one of the most important phenomena is Speech Act Theory. In speech act, the propositions/locutions often depend on the speaker's intention and the context in which the propositions are uttered.

This study exposes the effectiveness of discourse tactics in ensuring that speech acts force is achieved in discourse. It presents a speech act analysis of the victory and inaugural speeches of Governor Alex Otti given to the Abia citizens after winning the gubernatorial elections. The study tries to establish the import of utterances based on the speaker's context: his and the electorate's enthusiasm, hopefulness, and encouragement for crucial expected changes in how Abians would be governed in the next four years. The objectives of the study are to identify the speech acts deployed by Governor Alex Otti in his victory and inaugural speeches, apply Speech Act Theory to selected Governor Alex Otti's victory and inaugural speeches, and examines how political language performs various functions/acts in Governor Alex Otti's speeches.

Theoretical Framework

The study adopts Speech Act Theory as its theoretical framework. Speech Act Theory, developed by the philosopher J.L. Austin (1962) and further expanded by John Searle (1969)

analyses how language is used to perform actions and achieve specific effects. It focuses on a speech's locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts. The preference for Speech Act Theory as the framework for analysing the selected political speeches is on the ground that people perform various actions through the use of words. When utterances are made, a particular act is performed; this is called a speech act. The Speech Act Theory is also described as "How to do things with words Theory" since it has its roots in the work of Austin (1962) and Searle (1969). Speech Acts provide a shift from constative to performative notion in the empirical verifiability of signs, that is, the truthfulness of signs to what an expression does when uttered.

Speech Acts, according to Austin (1962), fall into three classes: locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts. The locutionary act is an act of saying something, producing an utterance. Illocutionary acts are the core of any theory of speech act. An illocutionary act is a speech act that performs a specific action, such as making a statement, giving an order, or making a promise. The perlocutionary act is the effect or influence on the feelings, thoughts, or actions of the listener/hearer, unlike locutionary acts. Perlocutionary acts could be inspiring, persuading, consoling, promising, encouraging, etc. It affects the beliefs, attitudes, or behaviours of the addressees. In consonance with this, Levinson (1983) describes perlocutionary acts as the intended or unintended consequences of the speaker's utterance.

Searle (1969) improved on Austin's (1962) Speech Act Theory by

distinguishing between two types of speech acts: direct and indirect speech Acts. Searle (1969) categorises the illocutionary act into five classes: Assertives, Directives, Commissives, Expressives, and Declaratives.

- Assertives are speech acts that convey information or make statements about the world. Examples include asserting, claiming, describing, or stating.
- Directives are speech acts meant to get the listener to do something. Commands, requests, and suggestions fall into this category.
- Commissives involve the speaker committing themselves to a future course of action. Promises, oaths, and vows are examples of commissive illocutionary acts.
- Expressives are speech acts that express the speaker's psychological state or emotional stance. Apologies, congratulatory messages, and condolence messages are expressive illocutionary acts.
- Declaratives are speech acts that bring about a change in the external world simply by the act of uttering them. For example, pronouncing someone married at a wedding ceremony or declaring something "opened" or "closed" (Searle, 1969, pp. 22-23).

Existing Positions

Gadiola (2021) carried out research that focused on analysing the speech act patterns in the addresses and statements of political leaders. This study shed light on how politicians skillfully employ assertives, directives, commissives, and other speech act types to

achieve their rhetorical and persuasive goals, whether it be to inform, persuade, promise, or call for action. The study employed the use of purposive research design and was library based. The integration of these complementary analytical frameworks were mainly to provide valuable understanding of the complex role of speech acts in shaping political rhetoric and public discourse. The finding of the study posed that dissecting the illocutionary intent and perlocutionary effects of political speeches provides valuable insights into the role of language use in political communication and decision-making. This review is relevant to this study as it expound on how language is used in political communication.

Amos (2017) carried out research that aimed to examine the speech act patterns in famous historical speeches delivered by civil rights leaders, social activists, and renowned orators. Analysis of speeches like Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" and Nelson Mandela's inauguration address have revealed how these iconic figures harness the power of speech acts to inspire, challenge, and mobilise their audiences. Such research has furthered our understanding of the linguistic mechanisms that contribute to the enduring rhetorical and social impact of these influential speeches. The study utilised qualitative research design and employed the theory of speech modification. The study revealed how these iconic figures harness the power of speech acts to inspire, challenge, and mobilise their audiences. This review is relevant to this study as it furthers the understanding of the linguistic mechanisms that contribute to the enduring rhetorical and social impact of speeches.

Jones (2017) carried out a study titled "The Framing Mode of Political Speeches: A Linguistic Analysis". The author employed

speech act theory and rhetorical devices as the theoretical framework. The findings reveal that the skillful use of persuasive language, rhetorical devices, and strategic framing in political speeches can enhance their impact and effectiveness. This literature is relevant to the current study as it provides a useful framework for analysing the framing techniques used in political speeches.

Smith (2018) conducted research on “Performative Utterances and the Construction of Political Reality,” grounding the study in speech act theory and the concept of performative utterances. The findings indicate that the performative aspect of political speeches, where the act of speaking constitutes the action, can shape the political and social landscape. This literature is relevant to this study as it aids the understanding the performative nature of Governor Otti's inaugural speech and its role in establishing his authority and vision for the state.

Davis and Garcia (2018) conducted research on “Narrative Structures in Inauguration Addresses: Shaping the Political Landscape,” grounding the study in narrative theory and discourse analysis. The findings suggest that the narrative elements in inaugural addresses can shape the public's perception of the new administration and its priorities. This literature provides insights into how Governor Otti crafts a narrative in his inaugural speech to convey his vision and priorities for the state.

Miller and Chen (2013) carried out a study titled “The Pragmatic Functions of Political Speeches: A Cross-Cultural Comparison” employed speech act theory and pragmatic analysis as the theoretical framework. The findings indicate that the pragmatic use of language in political speeches, such as making promises, issuing directives, and expressing commitment, can have a significant impact

on the audience's interpretation and response to the message. This literature is useful in analysing the pragmatic functions of political speeches and how they contribute to the overall effectiveness of communication.

Application of Pragmatics to Analysis of Political Speeches

Political speeches can establish and maintain social relationships, express feelings, and sell ideas, policies, and political projects in any society. In political speeches, it is essential to use language effectively to communicate ideas and ideologies, ensuring that the immediate audience and those who later encounter parts of the speech through media agree with them. Meaning can be influenced in various ways by using or omitting words and expressions. Furthermore, political speeches are typically crafted by a team of skilled speech writers with expertise in persuasive language. A political speech is not necessarily a success because of the correctness of truth; rather, it may be a matter of presenting arguments (Beard, 2000, p. 18). A political speech serves as a text, output, and process that may be spoken or written.

Pragmatics is seen as the study of language use in particular communicative contexts or situations of necessity; this would take cognizance of the message being communicated or the speech act being performed: the participants involved, their intention, knowledge of the world and the impact of these on their interactions; what they have taken for granted as part of the context; the deductions they make based on the context; what is implied by what is said or left unsaid; etc. (Leech, 1983, p. 20; Watson & Hill, 1993, p. 146; Thomas, 1995, p. 7).

Most politicians need to realise the connection between what is said, what is meant, and the actions conveyed by what is said. One

prominent theory that is effective and adequate for studying and analysing political speeches is the Speech Act Theory, which is a strand of Pragmatics. This is the model preferred in the examination of data used in this study. The data and analysis are presented as follows.

Data Presentation/Data Analysis

Data I: Victory Speech

S/N	Locution (utterances)	Illocutionary Act	Perlocutionary Act
Excerpt 1	With deep humility and a profound sense of responsibility, I wholeheartedly accept your mandate to be your chief servant for the next four years (Paragraph 1, sentence 2).	Expressive (expressing emotion)	The speaker seeks to convey sincerity, humility and commitment, aiming to instill confidence and trust in the speaker's dedication to serve the audience over the next four years.
Excerpt 2	I want to salute the industry and resourcefulness of all Abians (Paragraph 10, sentence 1).	Expressive (expressing appreciation)	The speaker expresses appreciation for the audience's hard work, aiming to inspire pride, motivate them and foster unity among Abians.
Excerpt 3	I also dedicate this victory to the millions of Abia citizens who have been the unfortunate victims of bad governance these past decades (Paragraph 2, sentence 2).	Declarative (declaring)	The speaker acknowledges the suffering of Abia citizens, aiming to show empathy and solidarity with the for the poor governance they have experienced over time.
Excerpt 4	As I acknowledge this victory, I am fully conscious of the huge expectations of millions of the good people of Abia, who have been denied the dividends of democracy and good governance for such a long time (Paragraph 2, sentence 3).	Assertive (stating)	The speaker acknowledges the high expectations of the people, aiming to demonstrate awareness of their long -standing dissatisfaction and to signal a commitment to addressing their needs.
Excerpt 5	I want to sincerely thank Abians and non -indigenes alike who participated in this election (Paragraph 2, sentence 4).	Expressive (expressing gratitude)	The speaker expresses genuine gratitude, aiming to appreciate the efforts of both Abians and non-indigenes involved in the election.

Excerpt 6	I want to assure you that your ideas and dreams that are consistent with building a virile Abia State shall come to fruition under my watch (Paragraph 3, sentence 4).	Commissive (promising)	The speaker offers reassurance and inspire confidence, promising that ideas and dreams aligned with improving Abia state will be realised under his leadership.
Excerpt 7	I therefore invite all of you to join hands with our administration in order to serve Abians who have been victims of several years of maladministration and state capture (Paragraph 3, sentence 5).	Directive (invitation)	The speaker encourages collaboration and collective effort, aiming to unite the audience in addressing and remedying the effects of past maladministration and state capture.
Excerpt 8	This will be a government that would unite everyone in this state as we are all brothers and sisters (Paragraph 9, sentence 9).	Assertive(stating)	The speaker seeks to foster a sense of unity and solidarity, aiming to create an inclusive environment where everyone feels like family.
Excerpt 9	There shall be no discrimination whatsoever in the amenities that each person is able to access in our government (Paragraph 10, sentence 2).	Declarative (declaring)	The speaker assures the audience of fairness and equal access to resources, aiming to eliminate any concerns about discrimination in the distribution of government services.
Excerpt 10	I promise you that I will serve you as the Governor of all Abians and all citizens living in Abia irrespective of clan, religious persuasion or political leaning (Paragraph 9, sentence 5b).	Commissive (promising)	The speaker assures the audience of inclusivity and impartiality, aiming to build trust by committing to serve all Abians equally, regardless of their background or beliefs.

Data II: Inaugural Speech

S/N	Locution (utterances)	Illocutionary act	Perlocutionary act
Excerpt 11	It is, therefore, with great delight, humility, and a high sense of duty that I address you all now for the first time in this capacity (Paragraph 1, sentence 2).	Expressive (expressing emotion)	The speaker aims to convey sincerity and humility, prompting the audience to feel honoured or appreciated, thus, gaining their support for the new government.
Excerpt 12	Finally, today is the day all well meaning citizens of Abia, people of goodwill all over the world have been waiting for (Paragraph 4, sentence 1).	Assertive (stating)	The utterance is to evoke anticipation, excitement, and a sense of belonging, fostering unity and a shared sense of importance and positive attitude towards the new government.

Excerpt 13	I thank you for your overwhelming mandate; for your faith and trust in me and my ability and willingness to be your Chief Servant (Paragraph 15, sentence 1).	Expressive (gratitude)	The speaker expresses gratitude, aiming to make the audience feel valued and reassured, which in turn fosters trust, support, and a sense of connection to the new government.
Excerpt 14	Everyone of goodwill is therefore enjoined to come on board as we seek a common purpose, to actualize our long -held positive desires for our people (Paragraph 10, sentence 6).	Directive (requesting)	The speaker, by this utterance seeks to encourage and enjoins the people to actively participate in the development of the state and actualisation of their long desires, thus it evokes in the people a sense of belonging.
Excerpt 15	We must now, more than ever before, come together to pull Abia state out of her current sorry state and quagmire (Paragraph 10, sentence 7).	Declarative (appealing)	The speaker urges the audience to step up, unite and take collective action to develop Abia state and seek solution to improve the poor condition of the state.
Excerpt 16	It is the time to rebuild our individual and collective values. It is now the time to take back our society (Paragraph 11, sentence 9).	Directive (exhorting)	The speaker seeks to motivate the audience to uphold and restore societal values and make them conscious of their collective responsibility in actualising this.
Excerpt 17	My pledge to you today is that I will lead that charge to restore our society to greatness (Paragraph 13, sentence 6).	Commissive (promising)	The speaker aims to gain the confidence and trust of the audience on his commitment to lead efforts in restoring the state to greatness.
Excerpt 18	Today, I stand before you, my good people of Abia state, to declare once again, boldly that in line with my campaign theme, you should 'Weep No More, Help is Here' (Paragraph 15, sentence 2).	Assertive (stating)	This utterance is to reassure the audience of the speaker's commitment, encouraging them to feel hopeful and confident that help and positive change are on the way.

Excerpt 19	Our earnest desire is to turn our electoral victory into an instrument for improved fortunes of all well-meaning people (Paragraph 16, sentence 5).	Expressive (expressing desire)	The speaker inspires hope and optimism in the audience, that the electoral victory will be used to enhance the well-being of the people.
Excerpt 20	As we get ready to cross our River Jordan into the Canaan land that God has graciously placed before us, let us not be under any illusion that the worst is over (Paragraph 17, sentence 1).	Directive (warning)	The speaker urges the audience to be mindful of challenges that may arise as they work towards bringing development to the state.

Data I- Victory Speech

Excerpt 1

Locution: With deep humility and a profound sense of responsibility, I wholeheartedly accept your mandate to be your chief servant for the next four years.

Illocutionary Act: Expressive (expressing emotion)

Perlocutionary effect: Inspiring

Excerpt 2

Locution: I want to salute the industry and resourcefulness of all Abians.

Illocutionary Act: Expressive (expressing appreciation)

Perlocutionary effect: Inspiring

Excerpt 3

Locution: I also dedicate this victory to the millions of Abia citizens who have been the unfortunate victims of bad governance these past decades.

Illocutionary Act: Declarative (declaring)

Perlocutionary effect: Empathy and solidarity

Excerpt 4

Locution: As I acknowledge this victory, I am fully conscious of the huge expectations of millions of the good people of Abia, who have been denied

the dividends of democracy and good governance for such a long time.

Illocutionary Act: Assertive (stating)

Perlocutionary effect: Hopefulness

Excerpt 5

Locution: I want to sincerely thank Abians and non-indigenes alike who participated in this election.

Illocutionary Act: Expressive (expressing gratitude)

Perlocutionary Act: Appreciation

Excerpt 6

Locution: I want to assure you that your ideas and dreams that are consistent with building a virile Abia State shall come to fruition under my watch.

Illocutionary Act: Commissive (promising)

Perlocutionary Act: Assurance

Excerpt 7

Locution: I therefore invite all of you to join hands with our administration in order to serve Abians who have been victims of several years of maladministration and state capture.

Illocutionary Act: Directive (invitation)

Perlocutionary effect: Appealing

Excerpt 8

Locution: This will be a government that would unite everyone in this state as we are all brothers and sisters.

Illocutionary Act: Assertive (stating)

Perlocutionary Effect: Assurance

Excerpt 9

Locution: There shall be no discrimination whatsoever in the amenities that each person is able to access in our government.

Illocutionary Act: Declarative (declaring)

Perlocutionary Effect: Reassurance

Excerpt 10

Locution: I promise you that I will serve you as the Governor of all Abians and all citizens living in Abia state.

Illocutionary act: Commissive (Promising)

Perlocutionary Effect: Assurance

Data II- Inaugural Speech

Excerpt 11

Locution: It is, therefore, with great delight, humility, and a high sense of duty that I address you all now for the first time in this capacity.

Illocutionary Act: Expressive (expressing emotion)

Perlocutionary Effect: Enthusiasm

Excerpt 12

Locution: Finally, today is the day all well-meaning citizens of Abia, people of goodwill all over the world, have been waiting for.

Illocutionary Act: Assertive (stating)

Perlocutionary Effect: Optimism

Excerpt 13

Locution: I thank you for your overwhelming mandate; for your faith and trust in me and my ability and willingness to be your Chief Servant.

Illocutionary Act: Expressive (expressing gratitude)

Perlocutionary Effect: Reassurance

Excerpt 14

Locution: Everyone of goodwill is therefore enjoined to come on board as we seek a common purpose, to actualise our long-held positive desires for our people.

Illocutionary Act: Directive (requesting)

Perlocutionary Effect: Appealing

Excerpt 15

Locution: We must now, more than ever before, come together to pull Abia state out of her current sorry state and quagmire.

Illocutionary Act: Declarative (appealing)

Perlocutionary Effect: Determination

Excerpt 16

Locution: It is the time to rebuild our individual and collective values. It is now the time to take back our society.

Illocutionary Act: Directive (exhorting)

Perlocutionary Effect: Commitment

Excerpt 17

Locution: My pledge to you today is that I will lead that charge to restore our society to greatness.

Illocutionary Act: Commissive (promising)

Perlocutionary Effect: Inspiring

Excerpt 18

Locution: Today, I stand before you, my good people of Abia state, to declare once again, boldly, that in line with my campaign theme, you should 'Weep No More, Help is Here.'

Illocutionary Act: Assertive (stating)

Perlocutionary Effect: Hopefulness

Excerpt 19

Locution: Our earnest desire is to turn our electoral victory into an instrument for improved fortunes of all well-meaning people.

Illocutionary act: Expressive (expressing desire)

Perlocutionary Effect: Optimism

Excerpt 20

Locution: As we get ready to cross our River Jordan into the Canaan land that God has graciously placed before us, let us not be under any illusion that the worst is over.

Illocutionary Act: Directive (warning)

Perlocutionary Effect: Cautious feeling.

The above analysis is discussed below to further buttress the ideas of the locution in each excerpt, expounding on their illocutionary acts, the speaker's communicative intentions, and the perlocutionary effects in each excerpt from Data I (Victory speech) and Data II (Inaugural speech).

Discussion of findings

Data I (Victory Speech)

In the victory speech, the speaker predominantly deploys expressives (Excerpts 1, 2, and 5) to convey emotions such as humility, gratitude, and respect. These expressions are aimed at inspiring the audience and fostering a sense of appreciation and emotional connection. Using phrases like "with deep humility" and "I want to sincerely thank," the speaker demonstrates a personal and heartfelt engagement with the audience, which likely creates a positive perlocutionary effect of inspiration and appreciation.

The use of declaratives (Excerpts 3 and 9) reflects the speaker's intention to affirm his authority and convey empathy. By dedicating the victory

to the victims of poor governance and ensuring no discrimination in governance, the speaker aligns with the audience's desires for empathy and fairness, eliciting empathy, solidarity, and reassurance.

Assertives (Excerpts 4 and 8) are also prevalent. In these, the speaker makes statements of fact or belief to instill hope and assure the audience of future positive changes. This approach helps manage the audience's expectations and emphasises the speaker's awareness of the challenges ahead.

Commissives (Excerpts 6 and 10) serve as promises to the audience, ensuring commitment to their welfare and reinforcing trust. Pledges like "I promise you that I will serve you" are designed to solidify the speaker's dedication and foster a perlocutionary effect of assurance.

The use of directives (Excerpt 7) to invite the audience to collaborate reflects a strategic call to action. This encourages the audience to participate actively in the governance process, which creates a sense of unity and collective responsibility.

In the inaugural speech, the speaker shifts slightly to focus on fostering optimism and commitment through assertives and directives. Assertives (Excerpts 12 and 18) are used to state optimism about the future and reiterate the campaign's hopeful themes. This approach creates a perlocutionary effect of optimism and hopefulness, motivating the audience to trust the new administration's vision.

Directives (Excerpts 14, 16, and 20) appeal to the audience to work together toward common goals, rebuild values, and remain vigilant despite the anticipated challenges. These directives create a sense of collective effort and commitment, encouraging the audience to take proactive steps toward improving their community.

Expressives (Excerpts 11, 13, and 19) play a significant role in expressing emotions and desires that resonate with the audience's expectations. By these utterances, the speaker aims to create excitement and a positive attitude towards the future, enhancing the speaker's connection with

the audience.

Commissives (Excerpt 17) and declaratives (Excerpt 15) appear less frequently but are strategically used to promise good governance and appeal for collective action to achieve shared goals. The speaker seeks to inspire determination and a shared sense of purpose among the audience.

Comparative Analysis

The victory speech (Data I) primarily focuses on expressing gratitude, solidarity, and promises, which aim to inspire, assure, and mobilise support from the audience. The speech is marked by a strong emphasis on empathy, assurance, and calls for unity.

In contrast, the inaugural speech (Data II) combines emotional expressions with assertive statements, directives, and warnings. It aims to instill enthusiasm, optimism, and a sense of caution and determination in the audience. The inaugural speech emphasises commitment to societal improvement and readiness to face challenges.

In both speeches, the speaker strategically varies the use of illocutionary acts to achieve different communicative goals. Expressives are the most frequently used, highlighting the speaker's emphasis on emotional connection and empathy with the audience. The consistent use of assertive and directive acts across both speeches suggests a focus on inspiring optimism and a collective commitment to future goals. Meanwhile, the selective use of commissives and declaratives underscores moments where the speaker must assure the audience of their intentions and reinforce their leadership role.

Table 3 Categorisation of Speech Acts in speeches of Governor Alex Chioma Otti

SN	Speech Acts	Frequency of Occurrence	Percentage (%)
1	Expressive	6	30
2	Declarative	3	15
3	Assertive	4	20
4	Commissive	3	15
5	Directive	4	20
	Total	20	100

The table above shows that Governor Alex Otti's speeches emphasise emotional connection, with expressive acts (30%) being the most frequent. Assertive (20%) and directive (20%) acts indicate a focus on sharing facts and motivating action. Directive (15%) and commissive (15%) acts were used selectively, reflecting caution in making commitments or authoritative statements. Overall, Governor Alex Otti's communication style balances emotional engagement, credibility, and action-driven leadership.

Conclusion

The analysis of Governor Alex Chioma Otti's victory and inaugural speeches through the lens of Speech Act Theory has provided valuable insights into the complex relationship between language and politics. The findings reveal distinct patterns in the deployment of speech acts in the two crucial moments of political communication. The findings further reveal that

victory speeches tend to be more expressive, aiming to inspire and connect emotionally with the audience. In contrast, the inaugural speech places a greater emphasis on vision, commitment, and emotional connection with the audience. The perlocutionary effects in the excerpts reviewed in this work include a combination of appeal, assurance, enthusiasm, optimism, excitement, commitment, inspiration, hopefulness, and optimism.

Overall, this study demonstrates how the application of Speech Act Theory provides a nuanced understanding of language used in political discourse. It sheds light on the rhetorical strategies leaders deploy to communicate their messages effectively to the public. It underscores the importance of language as a powerful tool in politics, shaping perceptions and influencing the course of a nation.

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