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A Pragma-Craft Analysis of Shehu Sani's Selected Tweets/Headlines

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Abstract
This paper, A Pragma-Craft Analysis Discourse, aims at analyzing Shehu Sani's political (Tweets/Headline) addressing Nigerians, delivered through Twitter penultimate to and after the 2023 general elections, thereby and describing how it affects discourse. The data for this study were randomly drawn from the internet. The study adopts the Pragma-Theory propounded by Acheoah (2015), which posits that language is carefully selected and interpreted for a comprehensible understanding of discourse with the aid of p-craft notions. The study revealed the triad to which tweets and Healines were deployed as semiotics to express displeasure over nepotism, corruption, favoritism, and other social ills in the Nigerian society. Shehu Sani and many others used the social media (Twitter) to express political opinions and express their disapproval of Nigeria's political landscape, particularly those in power.

Keywords: Pragma-Craft, Shehu Sani, Tweets/Headlines, Discourse, Pragma-theory

1.0 Introduction

Language is a tool that humans use to express themselves and manipulate objects in their environment and as observed by Van Valin (2010), Evan (2010), and Levinson (2009), it is a system of communication that enables humans to exchange verbal or symbolic utterances. Language, a communication tool used by everyone in their daily lives as a means to convey information and arguments to others, was employed to combat the tweets. The role of language in society cannot be overemphasized; hence, man's reliance on language to communicate his thoughts, aspirations, and beliefs.

Online social networks and micro-blogging websites are attracting more internet users than any other kind of website. Services such as those offered by Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, threads, etc. are more popular among people from different backgrounds, cultures and interests. Their contents are rapidly growing, constituting a very interesting example of so-called big data. Big data has been attracting the attention of researchers, who have been interested in the automatic analysis of people's opinions and the structure and distribution of users in networks, etc.

Political headlines are usually riddled with the language of propaganda and rhetoric. The language of politics is a language of conflict, drama and ridicule. It is a language designed to slur men,

destroy some and change the minds of others (Szanto, 1978, cited in Omozuwa and Ezejideaku, 2008). Political headlines are forms of campaigning used by political candidates to reach and influence voters. It is a subset of advertising or a form of campaigning through the media, either print or electronic, to influence political debate and ultimately to lure voters. Politicians generally embellish their language in a unique way in order to give extra effect and force to their objectives of winning more votes. Headlines play a crucial role in newspapers; this is why they are constructed in such a way that they are commonly and linguistically manipulated to sway the readership. Most editors ensure that the variety of lexis in headlines reflect the stance, opinions and attitudes of people about issues in the news

Leadership and communication are deeply interconnected. Active leadership relies heavily on the ability to communicate clearly and consistently. Sufficient communication between the leader and led is important for fostering trust, understanding, and cooperation (Walkup, 2023)
The focus of this study is to explore the pragma-craft features rhetoric of Senator Sani Shehu's selected tweets and Headlines. He is a prominent human activist and a renowned political figure in Nigerian politics, which is known for his articulate speeches that addresses various socio-political issues. His communication style intertwines political rhetoric with pragmatic strategies to effectively convey his intended message.
Despite extensive scholarly analysis on speeches and texts from various perspectives, little attention has been paid to the pragma-Craft strategies in analyzing political statements. Hence,

This study aims to fill the gap by analyzing the statements of Senator Shehu Sani through the lens of Pragma-craft which is an off-shoot of Mey Pragmatic model, with the following objectives; to identify the p-Craft features, and to show how these features connect meaning linguistically and extra- linguistically, to also bring to fore the psychological acts (performance of the speaker, and lastly, to x-ray how the semiotic and sociolinguistics properties along with the pragmatic component convey his intended Perlocutionary effect of his political statement. Hence, the paper seeks to answer the research question: what are the Pragma-Craft communication acts from the statements in terms of linguistics acts, extra-linguistics acts, and psychological acts?

Overview on Twitter

Twitter is a popular SAS service, with tens of millions, of registered users as of June 2010. Twitter's core function allows users to post short messages, or *tweets,* which are up to 140 characters long. Twitter supports the posting (and consumption) of messages in a number of different ways, including through Web services and 'third party' applications. Importantly, a large fraction of the Twitter

messages are posted from mobile devices and services, such as Short Messaging Service (SMS) messages. A user's messages are displayed as a 'stream' on the user's Twitter page. In terms of social connectivity, Twitter allows a user to follow any number of other users. The Twitter contact network is directed so that user 'A' can follow user 'B' without requiring approval or a reciprocal connection from user 'B'. Users can set their privacy preferences so that their updates are only available to each user's followers. By default, posted messages are available to anyone. Users consume messages mostly through a core page showing a stream of the latest messages from people they follow, listed in reverse chronological order. The conversational aspects of Twitter play a role. Twitter allows several ways for users to directly converse and interact with one user that is 'forwarded' by a second user to the second user's followers, commonly using the 'RT@ username' text as a prefix to credit the original (or previous) poster.

Pragmatics and Context in Communication

The major concerns of pragmatics include: speech acts (when we speak, we perform various actions with our words); presuppositions (in communicative events, things that participants take for granted are said to be presuppositions about the context); intentions (these are participants' communicative goals); implicature (implied issues in an utterance); contexts (the relevant aspects of the physical or social setting of an utterance or discourse); inferences (making logical conclusions from available contextual data); and non-verbal communication (gestures, dressing and movements).

The term pragmatics is attributed to Morris (1938) in Aceaoh (2015), whose major concern was to outline the nature of a science of signs (semiotics). Through pragmatics, language use is explained as it relies heavily on specific contexts and social phenomena. The assumption is that significant functional explanations can be given for facts about language as it is used to convey messages. The knowledge of pragmatics helps one contextualize (situate in the right context) and explore the fundamental role of context in meaning explication. Mey (2001) posits that context is a dynamic and not a static concept in which the linguistic expressions of their contexts become intelligible. Context is valuable in pragmatics because it tells what people mean in a particular context. Context is constructive to our study because it communicates the reason behind the choice of certain words over others and provides a pragmatic explanation for an utterance. As a field of language, pragmatics explains how language users such as the various governments and politicians transmit messages, as well as the decoders of such messages (who express their views on such messages) and are able to be informed about the politics in Nigeria through the use of language when they are situated in the right

context, which is therefore relevant to this paper.

Review of Related Literature

There have been several studies done on pragmatics for the past few years.

With academics concerns, pragmatics eventuates in language teaching and in real- life

Communicative contexts. Similar to Nurhidayat's (2021) perspective, pragmatics exemplifies the effective use of language, where comprehension aligns with the intended meanings. Within social context, Lo Castro (2003), as mentioned by Abrams (2020), highlights that it studies the communicative choices of every speaker in certain circumstance he/she makes to impact meanings related to factors such as roles, conditions, ages, and the like.

Through linguistic and extra-linguistic acts, the emotions that are being expressed are psychological acts. Wharton and de Saussure (2022) explicate that "emotional communication" is explored in different levels and approaches, they believe that interjections, facial expressions, and effective tone of voice could provide in depth interpretations of how one learner produces messages and texts, delving into the psychological aspect of how people understand the language in real –world interaction enriches the pragmatic competence of the communication process.

Semiotics is a way to analyze meanings and/or intentions through the presence of sign as words, pictures, and symbols that give certain messages.

Suzanne Abdul (2022) examined A Stylistic Study of Soliloquies in Shakespeare's English Drama Texts with the aim of showing how pragmatic theories are subordinated stylistically in literary discourse in general and in theoretical in particular, by stipulating the main categories of speech acts, and how it is achieved through soliloquies. Also, the study display how these pragmatic strategies yield stylistic devices in the play. However, this current study explores A pragma-Craft Analysis of Senator Shehu Sani's selected Tweets/Headlines, to bridge a gap of genre discourse.

Similarly, Oluwayemisi A. (2023), conducted A Pragma-Rhetorical Analysis of Speeches of President Buhari Muhammadu on Covid-19. It examines the aptness of Buhari's choices of words and tropes in the heat of the pandemic. The study adopts Douglas Walton's rhetorical pragmatics to identify the discursive strategies and the persuasive intentions each strategy serves. The study reveals that Buhari deployed eight discourse strategies, which fall within the logos, ethos, and pathos….. etc. to establish a Covid -19 compliance, and portraying the government as being proactive in the face of the pandemic. Despite the contribution, this present study however looks at A Pragma-Craft analysis of Tweets/Headlines with reference to Acheoah Emike's model to bridge a gap,

Anyanwu (2023) examines a Speech Act analysis of Tinubu's inaugural address, the study aims to uncover the communicative intentions and illocutionary force embedded in the text. She sheds light on how Tinubu uses language to perform various actions, such as promising, declaring, and appealing to the public. However, this present study will examine political speeches of Senator Sani Shehu via tweets and Headlines to fill the gap.

In addition to these studies, Amoudou, Alagbe, and Toboula (2024), perform a pragma-stylistic analysis of the same speech. They examine features such Speech Acts, tenses, deitic expressions, and tropes, providing a compressive understanding of the stylistic and pragmatic aspects of the speech.
This study, however, focuses on Shehu Sani's political Tweets and Headlines from a pragma-craft perspective to further enrich the existing literature on his political discourse, It aims to ascertain the rhetorical features/strategies, to drive home his political point of view and their perlocutionary effects on the public. In other words, this research seeks to provide a deeper understanding of how Shehu Sani's use of language pragmatically influences and persuades listeners, as well as the wider implication of his rhetorical choices

Research Methodology
This research design is descriptive in nature with a view of providing detailed descriptions of the selected tweets of Senator Shehu Sani in 2023. Kombo and Troomp (2006: 71) note that "descriptive research design's major purpose is the description of the state of affairs and research finding" on the other hand, Kerlinger (1969:71) points out that descriptive studies are not only restricted to research findings, but may often result in information on important values of knowledge and solutions to significant problem. Five (5) data were randomly selected from the internet . The primary sources of data for this paper are tweets obtained from Senator Shehu Sani tweets over the internet, while the secondary data include scholarly journals and other textual material. The paper is qualitative in nature and the data is purposively selected from internet. The data was analyzed by the application of the pragma-craft theory of Acheaoh (2015).

Theoretical Framework
The paper adopts the pragma-craft of Acheaoh (2015), which is an offshoot of Mey's theory. Arguing that effective use and interpretation of language are essential (that is, skillful selection and arrangement, interpretations of verbal and nonverbal communication from smaller structures to larger ones). The theory is one of the latest emergent linguistic theories for the analysis of discourse. Insights from research in pragmatics, sociolinguistics, and semiotics informed the theory. Acheaoh states that every pragma-craft involves 'illocrafting', 'uptake' and sequel'. It is a superordinate communication that is split into texts and events, which produce linguistic and extra-

linguistic elements of communication.

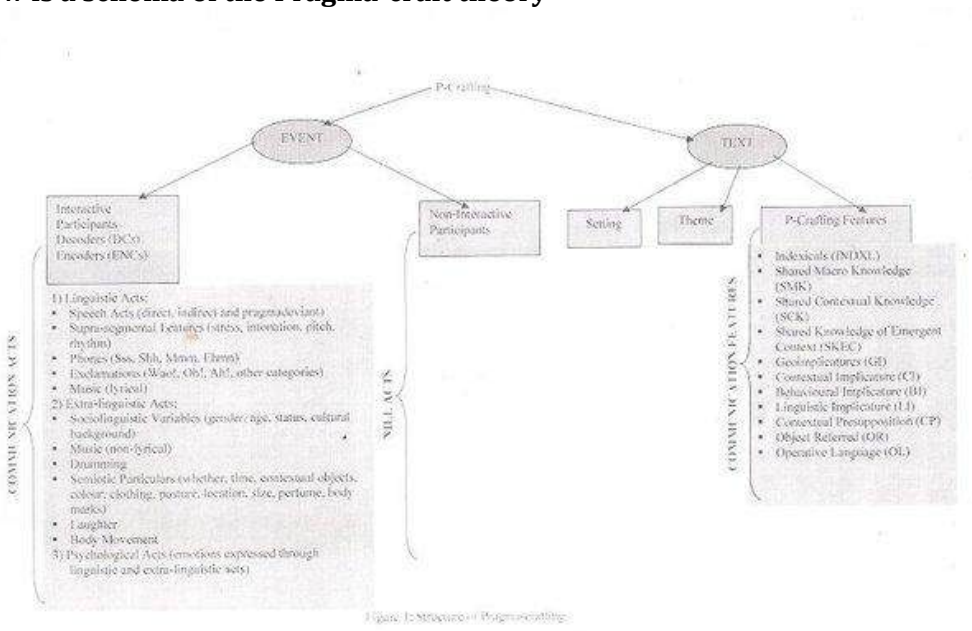
P-craft comprises two-fold terms of event and text.

1. Event: The event shows the participants of discourse (interactive and non-interactive participants) constitute event.
   a. The interactive participants perform linguistic, extra-linguistic and psychological acts, which contribute to a communication event, the non-interactive participants do not, and even if they do,their acts are always unconnected to the communication at hand.
   b. Non-interactive participants: Although present in a communication event, the non-interactive participants do not make verbal or non-verbal contributions that concern the communication event. He used H2 to refer to participants, who are present in discourse, but are not speakers' interlocutors.
2. Text: Text captures the trio: Setting, Theme and P-Craft
   a. Setting: This is the physical place in which a communicative event takes place as can be ascertained from pragmatic or linguistic data.
   b. Theme: It is the message in Text as worked out by P-craft Features.
   c. P-craft Features: This is a concept which has discrete theoretical notions demonstrated by the interactive participants in three different frames: linguistic acts, extra-linguistic acts and psychological acts.
      i. Linguistic Acts: include speech acts (direct, indirect and Extra-linguistic Acts:
      ii. Extra-linguistic acts include: Sociolinguistics variables (age, cultural background, social status/class, gender, relationship); non-lyrical music, drumming as well as semiotic particulars (weather, time, contextual

object, color, clothing, posture, perfume, location/position, size, body mark and silence), laughter, body movement).

iii. Psychological Acts: These are the different emotions expressed through linguistic and extra-linguistic act.

Below is a schema of the Pragma-craft theory



Like most theories, the pragma-craft theory of Aceaoh (2015) is both an improvement and an extension of Mey (2001), which concentrates on the environmental constraints that determine what can be said, what is being said and what cannot be said in communicative events and it has its strengths and weaknesses. This paper however, focuses on the strength of the theory as it allows users to make connections between sentence meaning and speaker meaning linguistically or extra-linguistically. In addition, the messages in linguistic, extra-linguistic and psychological acts are not separable from the intentions of performers or speakers. The pragma-craft theory has a wide range of non-

verbal elements, which communicate intended and unintended messages in discourse. Also, semiotic and Sociolinguistics properties interact with the pragmatic components of texts in conveying meanings and messages in discourse. The versatility of the theory in handling verbal and non-verbal communication makes the theory a viable choice for data analysis

Presentation of Data and Analysis
Text 1:

'Tinubu Dodged A Poisonous Knife', Shehu Sani Mocks El-Rufai Over Chief Of Staff, SGF Slots

A former senator who represented Kaduna Central at the 8th Senate, Shehu Sani, on Wednesday mocked the immediate past governor of Kaduna State, Nasir El-Rufai...

S/N	Linguistic Acts	Extra-Linguistic Acts	Psychological Acts	P-craft Features
	Direct speech: informative, assertives ascriptives suggestive indirect speech act:disinvites, disputative	Sociolinguistic variables: Gender-both are male. Status: both are politicians Semiotic particulars: (contextual object) 'poisonous knife'	The encoder is happy.	The encoder is happy that Tinubu did not make such a mistake. The qualities he ascribes to the object referred to (OR) as El-rufai are an expression of mockery, and the operative language (OL) is English. However, there seems to be a shared context (SCK) that Tinubu is the president and El-Rufai is aspiring for the post of CSO. Also, there is shared contextual knowledge (SCK) that Shehu Sani and El-Rufai are arch enemies. The SKC led to the behavioral implicature (BI) mood (happy) of the encoder. The linguistic implicature (LI) of the poisonous knife implies that El-Rufai is dangerous and capable of causing disunity amongst Nigerians if given the opportunity to serve in those positions. The geo-

				implication (GI) shows that the encoder and indirect object referred to (OR) are from the same geo-political zone (North-West).

Text 2

S/N	Linguistic Acts	Extra-linguistic Acts	Psychological Acts	P-craft Features
	Direct speech acts: informative, assertives, suggestive, ascriptives Indirect speech acts: suggestive, disputative.	Sociolinguistics variables Gender: male • Social status: Politician. • Cultural background: married.	Apprehension	The tone of the encoder indicates there is a conflict of trust; hence, he is not comfortable with the referred object (OR), who are former political office holders. However, there is a shared contextual knowledge

				between the encoder and the former political office holders that prompted his attitude (BI) Behavioral Implicature which he expects the decoder to be aware of. The operative language (OL) is the English language. The verbal element (VE) 'probe' led to linguistic implicature (LI), which implies that the encoder feels the former office holders have some corrupt records and should not be given any political office based on their political antecedents.

Text 3
Shehu Sani Vows not to Bribe Delegates

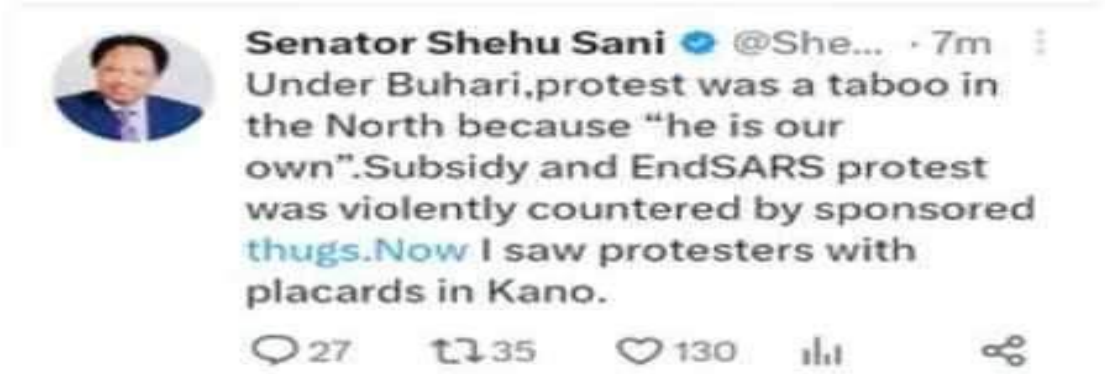
Datti Ahmed and Shehu Sani

2023: Shehu Sani vows not to bribe delegates as another aspirant withdraws from contest

SN	Linguistic Acts	Extra-linguistic Acts	Psychological Acts	p-craft Features
	Direct speech: informative, ascriptives with an indirect themes of disputative, assentives and concessive.	Sociolinguistic variables: gender-male Status- politician, married.	Aggrieved and Disapproval	The formidable force of the encoder indicates something amiss in the political arena but has not yet been unraveled by the decoders. There is shared macro knowledge (SMK) that politicians all over the world delegate members to exercise their franchise by nominating candidates of their choice via voting. However, they seem to be shared contextual knowledge (SCK) in the political domain that prompted his attitude (BI)

				behavioral implicature, which he expects the decoder to figure out, and the product of it is informed by the contextual presupposition (CP) that there is selling of votes by the delegates. The operative language is English (OL), and the implied object (OR) referred to here are the 'delegates,' whom the encoder thinks are shamelessly selling their votes.

Text 4



S/N	Linguistics Acts	Extra-linguistics Acts	Psychological Acts.	P-Craft Features.
	Direct speech acts of informing Nigerians of the happenings. Indirect speech of direct Speech of ascriptives and disputative	Sociolinguistics variables: gender-male Status- politician	Disgust	The encoder has indirectly informed Nigerians of the biased mindset of President Muhammad Buhari. However, there is a shared contextual knowledge (SCK) of thugs being sponsored during the ENDSARS and subsidy protest; this led to the Behavioral Implicature (BI) 'na mu ne' meaning', 'he is our own' and untouched as long as he is from one part of the country's mood of being sad. The Geo-implicature (GI) of the object referred to (OR) as

				'Buhari'. The contextual implication of the GI presupposes the object referred to (OR) is untouched, and even if he plunges the entire nation into the murky waters of mediocrity and incompetence, he has committed no crime. The encoder of the utterance is upright in his utterance. His utterance conversationally implies that he does not want sentiments to be imposed on the country.

Text 5: The Cabal are free and Godwin is not. It's not just and fair.

S/N	Linguistics Acts	Extra-linguistics Acts	Psychological Acts	P-Craft Features
	Direct Speech acts: Informing, suggestive. Indirect speech act: dissenvites and descriptive	Sociolinguistics variables: Age- adult, Status: politicians/married	Sad and dissatisfied	The encoder is sad, embittered in informing and asserting to the decoders (DDCs) that the object referred to (OR) is not being treated fairly. Based on shared contextual knowledge (SCK), that Godwin must have been acting on instructions; presupposes did not operate alone in redesigning the naira. Hence, other perpetrators should be arrested as well. However, the behavioral implicature (BI) of the encoder produced an assumption that justice was not served. The operative language (OL) is English and the geo-implicature of the "cabal" can only be understood in the context of Nigeria to mean sets of masked persons, who are controlling the affairs of the country and are above the law.

Text 6:

S/N	Linguistics Acts	Extra Linguistics Acts.	Psychological Acts	P- Craft
	Direct speech act: informing, Indirect speech act: disputative, dissentivies	Sociolinguistics variables: age-adults. Social status: politicians.	Disgust	The encoder is bitter with the ministerial list made. Suggesting there is something amiss, but not yet unraveled to the decoder. However, there seems to be a shared contextual knowledge (SCK) with the nominees, which prompted his attitude (BI) Implicature which, she expects the decoders to have responded to. The operative language (OL) is the English language. The linguistic/verbal elements of words like

				'serpent', snakes' 'vulture' reflect the aggrieved psychological state of mind by their shared contextual knowledge (SKC).

Conclusion

From the above analysis, linguistic acts in text 1 are in response to the utterances of the decoders. Supposedly, the encoder, Shehu Sani, believes that Tinubu would have made the greatest mistake, if he had appointed the object referred to (OR) El-rufai in those positions. The encoder covertly portrays El-rufai as a divisive fellow, who is capable of causing disunity in the country. In text 2, the encoder, through linguistic acts, informs and asserts to Nigerians that the referred object (OR), that is, the judiciary, are tricksters, who deprived the people of Osun their mandate. In text 3, the linguistic act of informing the shady deeds of the referred object (OR),(i.e) the delegates, is brought to bear through the shared macro knowledge (SMK), which permits the encoders to assume that the delegates are selling their votes. In addition, the geo-implicature (GI) of the word "cabal "in text 6 enjoins accommodation of shared contextual knowledge (SCK). Therefore, the overall theme of Sani's communication is exposing corruption and criticizing those he believes are harming Nigeria. These are configured in suggestive dissentivies, ascriptive and disputative utterances are prevalent in Shehu Sani's tweets and headlines. Shehu Sani uses social media (Twitter) to express his political opinions. The texts suggest Sani disapproves of Nigeria's political landscape, particularly those in power. The text uses terms like "disunity," "tricksters' and "shady deeds," suggesting Sani believes on the existence of corruption and lack of transparency.

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