

## Language and Image Interaction in Cartoons: A Stylistic Analysis of Language Use and Humour in Selected Punch Newspaper Cartoons

Gift Ngozi OKATA, Thomas K. EGWUONWU  
&  
Clara O.K. EGWUONWU

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### Abstract

*Although double semiotic modes characterize meaning deduction in cartoons, nonetheless the visual is the most pivotal mode. The interaction between language and image is usually encapsulated around the expressive pattern of the cartoonist in forms of caricature, exaggeration, metaphor, size, registers and symbols. In spite the robust studies on political cartoons, scant studies exist on the persuasive stylistic analysis of three political cartoons of the Punch newspaper of April to June, 2016. Therefore, this study fills this gap. Using a total of three randomly selected political cartoons from the Punch Newspaper from, specifically the works of Benne Omeke and Neero from 2016 -2018 and descriptive method of data analysis based on Grice (1975) theory of implicatures. The study exposed the interaction between verbal and visual persuasive elements in political cartoons. Findings showed that although cartoons appear simple and straight forward, they are powerful tools in cartoonist employ in addressing societal ills. Additionally, marketers employ various visual and verbal techniques such as metaphors, exaggerations, caricature, size, registers, humour, and symbols to stimulate their consumers' interests in ideas, products and services. The study concluded among others that the use of cartoons as a marketing strategy should be encouraged as more readers are attracted to the comic cartoon characters and could be persuaded through the cartoon message. Finally, readers and decoders alike should concentrate their attention on the entire verbal, non-verbal and visual details in cartoon for effective meaning retrieval.*

**Key Words:** Cartoons, Humorous mechanisms, exaggeration, metaphor, meaning retrieval

## Introduction

Language is about the only identifying mark that differentiates man from the lower animals. This is because language is the most systematised means of communicating. It is a code, an idea, a system, a convention and a major means of communicating feelings, emotions, thought and ideas (Okata: 2016). Nonetheless, communication is not limited to speaking as it could be through verbal, written, body, sign or other paralinguistic means of communicating such as the use of gong, talking drums, gun salutes, cartoons and so on. Consequently, the study of meaning transcends micro linguistics levels such which are **phonology**- the study of sound patterns of language; **morphology**- the study of word formation and structure; **syntax**-the arrangement of words to form sentences and **semantics**- the meaning deductions of a text. It also entails macro linguistic domain of discourse, conversational, pragmatic and the stylistic analysis of speech events. The pragmatic study of language takes into consideration the context of every utterance before the true meaning retrieval could be successfully carried out. The context here entails, **situation** (this answers questions such as where), **substance** (what is being discussed), **time** (when is it taking place) and **participants** (who is involved or in attendance). The study however is hitched on stylistic as the style of the selected cartoon presentations was reviewed. The stylistic study pays attention to graphological properties (physical appearance of a text), channel (medium of communication- verbal or nonverbal) and mode (genre or type of message- prose, poetry, or drama).

## The Print Media

In today's world, there are several channels of passing across information to the public, some of which are the mass media- radio, television, digital media the computer systems, sophisticated phones and the print media (newspaper and magazines). The print media's uniqueness spans from the age long durability of printed documents which more often than not act as archival data for historical purposes. Print media are also highly visible and appealing to the sense of sight and humour and these qualities easily apply to newspaper cartoons. These characteristics precipitated the choice of cartoons as the data for analysis for the present study. There exist numerous studies on the print media which range from, stylistic analysis of sports newspaper reports, discourse analysis of health columns, and newspaper cartoons, which focused on their nature and functions (See Banjo, 2017, Akinyosoye, 2015, Odebunmi, 2006). However, there seems to be lean studies on the persuasive stylistic analysis of the selected 3 political

cartoons of the Punch newspaper of April to June, 2016. This gap is what the present study is geared to bridge. Hence, the present study carried out a descriptive qualitative analysis of language use and humour in selected Punch newspaper cartoons with the view to exploring the nature of language use in cartoons with special emphasis on exaggeration, caricature, and metaphors as humorous mechanisms which stem from the interaction of verbal, nonverbal and visual elements in cartoon presentations

### **Conceptual Clarification**

#### **Concept of Cartoon**

Generally, cartoons are regarded as humorous pieces designed mostly and specially to evoke laughter. Beyond being a source of comic relief, cartoons have the following definitions:

Cartoon is a drawing or series of drawings which tell stories or express a message that entertains, teaches or enlightens (The World Book Encyclopaedia, 1994, p. 236). Cartoon is a humorous drawing that induces laughter by their humorous, satirical remarks of interest in the news that is current event (Ifedayo, 2003, p. 148). Cartoon is a drawing, representational or symbolic, that makes satirical, witty or humorous point. It may or may not have a caption and may comprise more than one panel (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2004, p. 728). A cursory look at the above definitions underscores the fact that a cartoon is a drawing meant to communicate implicit ideas. Thus, cartoon can be perceived as wise, satirical or humorous drawing intended to communicate a message with or without words.

#### **The History of Cartoon**

Cartoon, as a concept, has evolved over time. Its history can be traced back to ancient Egypt, where caricatures were found on the ancient walls. The concept was first found within purview of the Middle Ages and Renaissance's fine art, when it was referred to as preparatory drawing or a piece of art. William Hogarth, an artist that lived in the 1700s, is notable for making humorous drawings that were about political subjects, such as poverty, election, war and riots. Cartoons had another dimension during the 19th century, when it was referred to as humorous illustrations in magazines and newspapers. These prints were not called cartoons at that time, but they sure led to the idea of modern political cartoons in newspaper. Therefore, what is known today as editorial or political cartoon started around the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century cartoons became identified as comic strips which were often referred to as animated programmes for television and other motion picture media. In modern print media, a cartoon is a piece of art, usually humorous in intent hence the oldest known picture cartoons are creature of

political leaders, which the modern day press found to be another means of attacking the corrupt leaders by the cartoon medium instead of writing against their acts.

### **Nature of Cartoons**

The media is the main source of information in today's world. It performs three basic functions. These include education, information and entertainment etcetera. In recent years, there has been an increasing research on political cartoons across disciplines. This growing research interest shows that political cartoons have become a distinct and established genre. The goal of the genre is to construct practical criticism and provide political commentary aimed at reorienting the public. Abraham (2009) in Arens (2013) posits that "...it is in the nature of cartoons to be complex. They are intended to condense and reduce complex issues into a single, memorable image often pregnant with deeply embedded meanings." It is a known fact that cartoons have a wide spread and have gained people's interest to the level that most people buy newspaper only to check the cartoon segment first, before going through the major news of the day. Most of the cartoons have visual metaphors and caricature to address complicated political situations. Often, the contents of cartoons include- biased portraits of people and events.

### **Role of Cartoons in Marketing**

Marketers employ various persuasive marketing techniques among which are the adoptions and utilization of celebrities, sportspersons, cartoon characters, sportsmen and spokes/branded characters to influence their target audiences. According to Arens, Weigold and Arens (2013:365), cartoons, puppet characters are among the very effective animation techniques for communicating difficult messages and far-reaching specialized markets, such as children's. These cartoon characters are often displayed in advertisements via electronic media, print media and product packaging. A cartoon character enhances product packaging, and when the product is showcased in a superstore, it gives the product increased consumer visibility and improves its chances of being picked up for inspection, investigation, positive judgment and eventual purchase (Borundh, 2013). Cartoon characters when used to advertise products greatly attract the attention of young adults and children, in particular. Marketers, therefore, use various cartoon characters to brand their products in an effort to get children and young adults to easily recognize their logos and products and, consequently, select such products among other brands.

Many studies have shown that the ways marketers apply specific colours, sizes, shapes, and the cartoons/brand spokes-character when promoting their products make strong visual and emotional appeal to children. Chareonsadki (2009) found that marketers commonly utilize spokescharacters, bubble/cartoonist scripts, colours, illustrations, appealing name/copy and augmentation to influence target audiences. Similar packaging characteristics are observed to have strong influence on purchase preferences in children retail stores (Ogba & Johnson, 2010). Robinson, Borzekowski, Matheson, and Kaemer (2007) assert that due to the level of awareness and product recognition that young children develop as a result of increased exposure to cartoons and other promotional characters, the children beg and nag their parents/guardians to buy the specific products or brands.

Literature, however, reveals that the role of cartoon media characters, spokes characters, bubble/cartoonist scripts, colours, illustrations, and other animations in persuasive marketing targeted at children has been contentious. Whereas, marketers in industrialized nations reap multi-billion US dollars from such efforts annually, the health issues emerging from children consumption of unhealthy fast foods, which have mostly benefitted from such promotions, have reached alarming proportions (Kraak and Story, 2015; Pavleen, 2013; Robinson, et al., 2007). Through electronic media, print media, toys, t-shirts, school bags, and so on, millions of vulnerable children are constantly exposed to the persuasive power of some food companies' brand equity mascots such as Kellogg's Tony, the Tiger; and some entertainment companies' cartoon media characters such as Dreamwork Animation 'Shrek', Walt Disney's 'Nemo' and a host of others. This situation has generated some level of advocacy that marketers should refrain from using media characters when marketing to children being that they are cognitively immature and, are also unable to differentiate between facts and persuasive marketing communications (Gosliner & Madison, 2007).

### **Theoretical Framework**

The influence of cartoons and other promotional characters on target audiences find their roots in some marketing communications theories. The hierarchy of effects theory propounded by Robert Lavidge and Gary Steiner (1961) indicates the process, or steps, that an advertiser assumes customers pass through in the purchase process. This comprises stages of awareness, knowledge, liking, preference, conviction and purchase. Among subsequent scholars who agree with the theory are Barry and Howard (2009) and Munoz (2012). Friestad and Wright (1994) theory of persuasion was also deemed apt to anchor this study. Linguistically, the study anchors on Grice (1775) theory on Maxim of quantity, quality, Manner and Relevance. To him, the information that characterises every

language event should be appropriate, not exceeding the quantity required, be adequate in quality, be relevant to substance on ground and the manner which it should be communicated should not inhibit on the face of the interlocutors in the talk event. These maxim reviews the approach employed in the various cartoons under analysis. (Grice: 1975)

### **Types of Cartoons**

Cartoons have different types, as used in different contexts for different purposes. Basically, there are two types of cartoons: political cartoons also known as cartoon of opinion, and comedy cartoons, also known as cartoon of jokes. Although their styles and techniques may be similar, political cartoons draw more attention to major societal issues; there is a thin line differentiating this two. El Rafaie (2009) illustrates that political cartoons function as a communicative tool in the society. They form a distinctive media genre with their own history, specific style, conventions and communications purposes.

### **Features of Cartoon**

Cartoons are usually created to convey messages about ideas and judgments that the cartoonist is making about people, events or issues. The message may be light-hearted, mocking or sympathetic. Each cartoon has a number of visual and language features that create an overall impression and help communicate the message. These features include **Caricature, Exaggeration, Metaphor, Size, Registers and Symbols.**

**Caricature:** A caricature is a portrait that exaggerates the essence of an individual to create an easily identifiable visual likeness. Caricature has been a popular vehicle for political satire and celebrity ridicule as it can be insulting or complimentary and can serve a political purpose. It is the briefest and sharpest way of a stating a criticism, largely aimed to address societal anomalies.

**Exaggeration:** This means the describing of something and making it more than it really is. Exaggeration is all about making something or somethings to appear worse or better than they really are.

**Metaphor:** According to Finnegan (2008 p.1), a metaphor is “an extension in the use of words beyond its primary sense to describe referents that bear similarities to the word's primary referent...” It is as imaginative way of describing something by referring to something else that has the same qualities that a person wants to

express. Muhammad (2012) observes that metaphor is so important in cartoons because without it, a cartoon will be so explicit that it will lead to a conflict between the cartoonist and the political leaders for issues represented.

**Size:** The size of a cartoon conveys a message in the sense that an oversized figure appears powerful, threatening and serious whereas a small figure appears powerless and intimidated.

**Registers:** George (1976) defined register "...as the linguistic reflection re-occurrence of languages in a particular situation."

**Symbols:** Symbols stands for the use of simple objects to represent larger ideas or concepts.

### Language of Cartoons

The language of cartoons has specific features which are common among the different genres of cartoons. According to Tracy (2002), the characteristics of cartoon language include that it is similar to the everyday language used in communication but artistically crafted to tell stories with the aid of drawing; it can be humorous and satirical especially when it is targeted at the current political leadership in order to discuss a serious subject on a lighter mood; and it is carefully selected to address the right audience. Satire is a very powerful artistic form often employed to critique specific human behaviours. It is a critical writing which is targeted at exposing the follies of an individual or organisation. It ridicules the target with the ultimate goal of provoking a change. According to Taiwo (2007: 20), "the most important technique of the satirist is inversion"- a device which turns human norms upside down and which is normally expected to makes the reader reflect on the issue. Additionally, the basis of satire today largely depends on the criticism of injustice and the abuse of power usually perpetrated by those in power or the dominant ruling party (Bal *et al.*, 2009). Humour, on the other hand, is created when there is a clash in mental representations of meaning which sometimes brings about ambiguity. Readers of the jokes have to recognize this before they can react to it in laughter. As it would be seen in some of the data, humour can also be a powerful tool in the hands of the people to highlight the faults of those they dislike. Humour according to Obadare (2009: 244) is sometimes used as "a double assault that is to ridicule the state as a form of self-critique by the people".



### **Methodology**

The Descriptive qualitative method of analysis was employed in order to foreground hidden messages within the cartoons. This is in consonance with the works of Creswell (1998) and Moleong (2003) on descriptive qualitative method of research. The data for analysis were retrieved from political cartoons of Punch newspapers. The unit of analysis for this research work were cartoons extracted from the *Punch Newspaper*, specifically the works of Benne Omeke and Neero of the same newspaper from 2016 - 2018. Attention was focused on both the verbal and nonverbal aspects of the cartoon as both were assumed to contain certain messages. A total of 10 (ten) cartoons were retrieved within these years. However, 3 (three) political cartoons were randomly strategically selected. The researcher numbered the cartoon from numbers 1-10 and the range that occurred within the odd numbers were chosen as sample for analysis. The choice of only 3 political cartoons was precipitated by the desire to carry out a detailed analysis. The selected data were analysed with emphasis on the implicit messages within the cartoons and discussions on them.

### **Data Analysis and Interpretation**

The focus of this study is on political cartoons. A political cartoon or editorial strip is a rendition of any situation, event or person with a social, political or economic context, recording the social world and playing a critical role in political discourse and dialogue, through caricature, exaggeration and in most cases, laughter. It pokes fun at the powerful section of the society through incisive drawings, enclosing a personality or even an event into a memorable single caricature. Political cartoons are hand written graphic illustrations which are accompanied frequently by written text or a thought bubble in form of a dialogue. Given the use of linguistic and non-linguistic devices, the political cartoon provides a medium for communicating messages reflecting the currents sensitive issues through which social agenda are set. The analysis of the selected data is as follows:

### **Analysis and Interpretation**

In this chapter three political cartoons of the Punch newspaper were examined and they are:

Cartoon I - A snake swallowed N36M from Jamb Office

Cartoon II – EFCC detains former SGF, Babachir Lawal

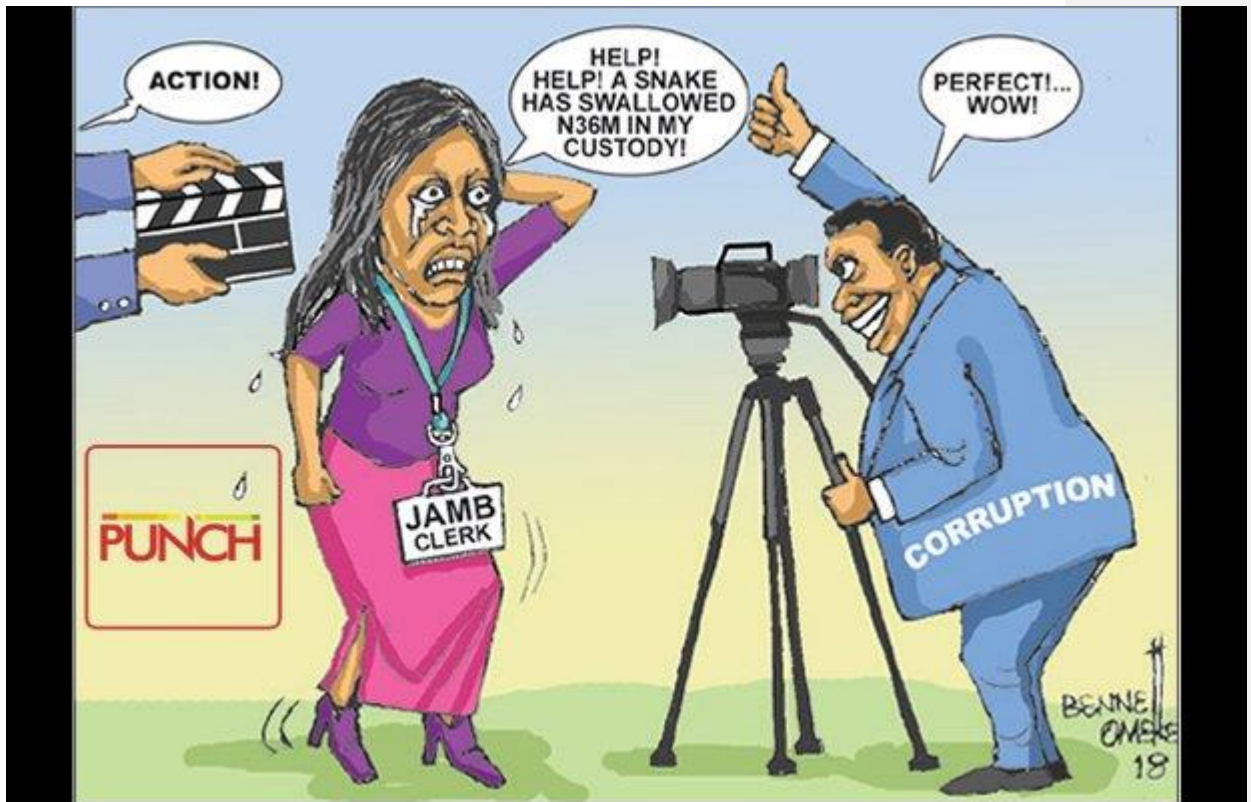
Cartoon III - Osinbajo's Panel Report and the Herdsmen Killings



The analysis of the cartoons will be in a tabular form, showing the tool, the import and the relevance to the subject matter.

### Analysis of Cartoon I

**TITLE: “A snake swallowed N36M from Jamb Office”**



#### **Background:**

The sales clerk of Joint Admission Matriculation Board (JAMB), Philomena Chieshe, on the 10<sup>th</sup> of February 2018, reported that a mysterious snake had swallowed 36 million naira from the JAMB office where she worked. This piece of information of course sparked a serious controversy as citizens of Nigeria saw this as a baseless and fabricated claim. This action led to the creation of different videos, pictures, cartoons. Among them is the above cartoon under analysis.

**Non Verbal Signs / Pictorial Content**

	<b>Signs</b>	<b>Representa tion</b>	<b>Interpretati on</b>
	A corporate dressed man in a well- tailored blue suit	Corruption	How corruption would look like if it were non abstract or human, deceitful and well packaged.
	Clapperbo ard and a video camera	Movie making	A fictionalized situation that is being created. Stressing that all is mere drama “meant to entertain” and never to be taken seriously.
	The lady crying in front of the camera	JAMB clerk	The corruption controlled state JAMB as well as the nation is in.

The picture resembles the drama that plays out in the Nigerian theatre daily. It satirizes the stories that people are fed about huge sums of public money that

government officials have made away with. The cameraman represents “corruption”. He is highly thrilled with the level of perfection of the entire scene. The lady in front of the camera appears to be crying as she narrates her “ordeal”. The paraphernalia of film acting is present to further stress that all is mere acting and a melodrama “meant to entertain” and never to be taken with seriousness. The tears on the face of the lady would be a part of the “costume” for the rehearsals before the main scene. The picture is replete with stories and represents the numerous spin by public officials and the disappearances of public funds placed in their care. All is satirically captured as drama since they are mere fabrications presented in order to shield their level of corruption and embezzlement of public fund.

The tools of Symbolism, Emboldening, Analogy, Punctuation, Irony, Exaggeration, Caricature and Presupposition are employed for the analysis of this study.

**Symbolism:** The cartoon symbolizes corruption and dishonesty among the public servants in Nigeria.

**Analogy:** The depiction by the cartoonist of corruption as fat and well-dressed.

**Import:** This is a perception of what corruption would look like if it were non abstract, corporately dressed and seemingly healthy. Corruption is an abstract thing, but it is represented as someone that is fat, meaning that; the cartoonist feels that corruption has eaten a lot from the Nigerian economy and society, and as a result is now fat and well fed.

**Punctuation:** The only punctuation mark used in the cartoon is Exclamation mark.

- i) ACTION!
- ii) HELP! HELP! A SNAKE HAS SWALLOWED N36M IN MY CUSTODY
- iii) PERFECT!...WOW!

**Import:**

- i) Here, an exclamation mark is used to depict shouting or a raise in voice.
- ii) It is used to show fear, astonishment and surprise at what is claimed to have happened.

iii) It shows wonder, most likely of how well the JAMB clerk (the actress) has acted.

**Irony:** It is seen in the depiction of the incident. The ironic nature of this cartoon is not seen in the cartoonist's creativity, but in his ability to depict things as they appear.

**Import:** N36M is missing from JAMB office, and instead of stating how or why the money is missing, a fictitious and unfounded explanation is provided; "HELP! HELP! A SNAKE HAS SWALLOWED N36M IN MY CUSTODY".

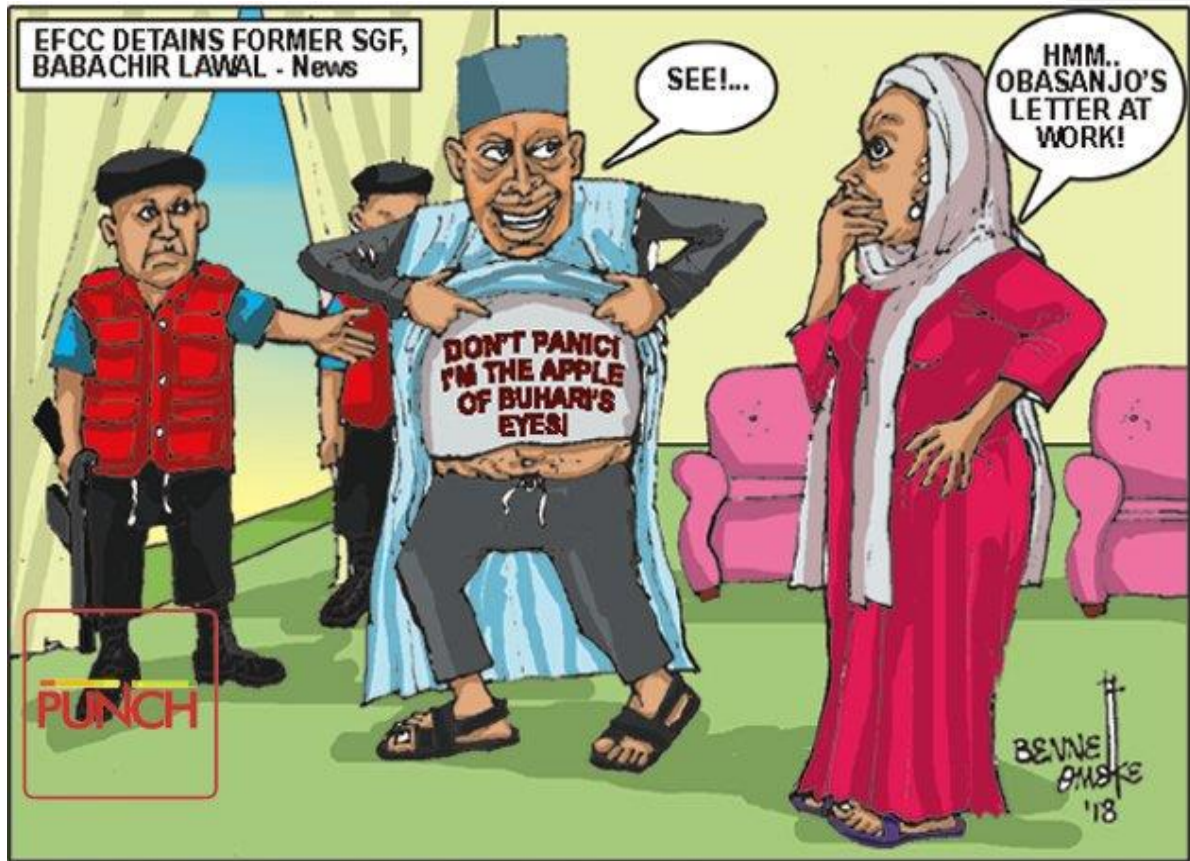
**Exaggeration:** This is seen in the use of gadgets such as clapperboard and video recorder and an accompanying costume. The cartoonist is exaggerating the details of what actually happened. The cartoonist also made use of this tool as he showed someone (corruption) behind the video recorder seemingly telling the JAMB clerk what to say or do. The exaggeration here is not as apparent as the other tools. This violates the maxim of relevance. The issue on ground is stolen fund and a reptile that does not eat money is being mentioned.

**Caricature:** It is used in the cartoon as the cartoonist represents "Corruption" with a fat looking man in a blue suit behind the camera. This depiction is subjective to what he feels corruption would look like, which as is evident, healthy and fat from embezzlement. On the other hand, the depiction of Philomena Chieshe, the cartoonist represented her as someone who is forced to cry in front of a camera.

**Presupposition:** This is employed in the cartoon as the cartoonist assumes that everyone viewing his cartoon must have the knowledge of what JAMB stands for. Also, the cartoon assumes that his readers must have an idea of what a clapperboard and a video camera is used for, and finally, that readers should have an idea of movie production.

## Analysis of Cartoon II

**TITLE: “EFCC detains former SGF, Babachir Lawal ”**



**Background:** the cartoon is on the event of the 23<sup>rd</sup> of January 2018, when a former Nigerian Secretary to the Federal Government, Babachir Lawal was arrested and detained by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission over fraud allegations relating to grass contracts. It should be noted that he was removed by President Muhammadu Buhari in 2017 following allegations that he diverted aid funds intended for the humanitarian crisis in the North-East Nigeria which caused the masses to raise eye brows.

**NON VERBAL SIGNS / PICTORIAL CONTENT**

	<b>Signs</b>	<b>Representati on</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
1.	The official's revelation of what is underneath his shirt.	A writing that reads "DON'T PANIC I'M THE APPLE OF BUHARI'S EYES!"	Protection. He reassures his wife that he is safe and far from any form of harm, because of his protection, being "the apple of Buhari's eyes".
2.	The smile on the face of the Official.	Comfort	He is comfortable, knowing that nothing bad or harmful can come his way.
3.	The official's wife placing her hand over her mouth.	Surprise	The official's wife was not aware of the relationship that ensued between her husband and "Buhari", until it was revealed by her husband.
4.	One of the security men	Direction	The security man is directing the official to



	gesturing		move towards a particular direction instead of forcing him to.
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The cartoon pokes fun at a government organisation – the EFCC and the fight against corruption. It tries to convey the message that the corruption watchdog, EFCC, does not fight corruption for real, or at best, does it selectively. Here it is seen that a public official is being arrested by EFCC and he is not perturbed just because he is “the apple of Buhari’s eyes”. That he lifts his robe to reveal this “fact” shows that it is not always obvious but it is real. The wife of the official did not know the relationship her husband has with Buhari. The purported arrest is therefore “for the eyes of the public only”. It is worthy of note that the situation is portrayed as endemic. At least, it is not a new occurrence and it is not limited to the Buhari’s regime. This can be seen in the comment of the official’s wife. That seems to confirm what perhaps she had heard about the regime of Obasanjo and his use of EFCC to “fight” financial crimes. It is not clear whether the official’s wife is insinuating that Obasanjo has written a letter to Buhari or to the EFCC. The obvious fact as shown in the picture is that the corruption watchdog is not sincere in the purported “fight” of financial crimes and corruption in the country Nigeria.

The cartoonist used these stylistic tools in this cartoon: Symbolism, emboldening, Punctuation Marks, Irony, Caricature and Presupposition.

### **Symbolism**

i) This is seen in the cartoon in the official’s revelation of what is underneath his shirt. The revelation shows Protection written as “DON’T PANIC I’M THE APPLE OF BUHARI’S EYES!”

ii) Another symbolic instance is depicted in the smile the official gives his wife.

iii) The use of symbolism is also seen in the depiction of his wife putting her hand over her mouth as she sees the revelation underneath her husband’s shirt which is an assurance that nothing will come out the arrest.

**Emboldening** is seen in the writing that is revealed by the official. The writing being revealed is not just in uppercase as everything is, but is also bold and coloured.





**Punctuation marks** are used when the official said;

i)“SEE!...”.

ii) “HMM... OBASANJO’S LETTER AT WORK”.

Import:

The cartoonist used ellipsis to show that there is more to what that is being said. The ellipsis used implies that she is at a loss of words to describe her wonder and amazement.

**Irony:** Though subtly used in the cartoon plays a vital role. A public official is arrested (invited) by EFCC and he is not rattled just because he is “the apple of Buhari’s eyes”. To him, the public should see that he has been brought to justice, whereas he knows that he cannot be harmed as he is protected the president.

**Caricature:** This is clear, as Babachir Lawal is represented by a man wearing what appears to be *agbada*. EFCC is also depicted by the security men holding guns.

**Presupposition:** This is evident as the cartoonist expects the readers to know what EFCC stands for and its functions. Also, he does not go on to describe who Buhari is, as he is certain that whoever is viewing the cartoon knows exactly who Buhari is or what the name stands for.

## Analysis of Cartoon 111

### TITLE: “Osinbajo’s Panel Report and the Herdsmen Killings”



**Background:** the background to the cartoon is that on the 30<sup>th</sup> of January 2018, The Committee for the Defence of Human Rights and the Ijaw Youth Council have called on Nigeria’s President Muhammadu Buhari to implement the recommendations of Vice-President Yemi Osinbajo panel that soldiers should be deployed to end the killings of innocent citizens by herdsmen.

#### NON VERBAL SIGNS / PICTORIAL CONTENT

	Signs	Representation	Interpretation
1	The bowl of lathered water on	Washing	Something is being washed or cleansed.

	the floor		
2	The stain on the shirt being washed	Herdsman Killings	A shirt has been stained by Herdsman killings
3	Detergent labelled "Osinbajo Panel Report"	The solution to the herdsman killings	Osinbajo Panel Report is the solution to the problem at hand.
4	The hand holding the detergent, labelled CHDR & IYC	The Committee for the Defence of Human Rights and the Ijaw Youth Council	The ones advising the President to use the solutions provided by Vice President Yemi Osinbajo in the Panel report, to address the herdsman killings.
5	The man washing	President Muhammadu Buhari	The President Muhammadu Buhari is trying to solve the herdsman killing problem.

In this cartoon, this is in apparent reference to a report by the committee headed by the Vice President, Osinbajo on militancy. The committee after sitting recommended military action as a way of dealing with insurgency. Note here that the person at the basin trying to wash the clothes is in “Hausa” traditional outfit. This apparently refers to the President who is of the Hausa/ Fulani extraction. Also, it is worthy to note that the man at the laundry is using some form of detergent but the “herdsmen” on the shirt is clear and intact. This is a veiled reference to previous failed attempts to deal with the herdsmen killings. The cartoonist here makes mockery of futile attempts to wash off the “herdsmen killings” This cartoon points out that Osinbajo’s “solution” is the only way to peace in the year, 2019. The cartoon recognizes that the stain of the herdsmen killings is “stubborn” as it has defied all other “detergents”, and must require some drastic measures. This is subtly mocking the use of other methods other than the product of a committee of the same administration.

The cartoon employed; Symbolism, Captioning and Label, Analogy, Punctuation marks, Caricature and Presupposition.

**Symbolism:** The first instance of symbolism is seen in the bowl of lathered water on the floor present. The second is seen in the stain on the shirt being washed and a detergent labelled “Osinbajo Panel Report”. The last symbol is the hand holding the detergent, labelled CDHR & IYC and the man washing the blood stained shirt.

**Analogy:** It is found in the depiction of the “OSINBAJO PANEL REPORT”. The cartoonist replaces the panel report with detergent and a hand representing the CHDR and IYC as having the same solution, hence proffering the solution to the problem being faced. This implies that that was the only reasonable and applicable solution to the “Herdsmen Killings”.

**Punctuation:** This is seen only in two instances in the cartoon. TO REMOVE THE STUBBORN STAINS FOR A BETTER 2019, SIR!

**Import:** The use of an exclamation mark in this cartoon points to the fact that the CDHR and IYC are being very vocal and loud about their advice. They feel they have the right answer, and as a result, want their voice to be heard by the masses.

**Caricature** is an important tool used in this cartoon to depict President Muhammadu Buhari while at the same time, not being too clear about their depiction, so as not to avoid any hubbub.

**Presupposition** in this cartoon is evident as the cartoonist expects his readers to know what the Panel Report says; what the CDHR and IYC stand for; who Osinbajo is and who is being represented by the caricature in the cartoon. The

cartoon violated the maxim of quantity. This is as a result of the fact that there are excessive assumptions on what the reader should know.

### **Findings**

The study found that language is the basis of all forms of communication and thus a fundamental factor to human development. Hence, it is quite logical to say that language is the essence of human existence. Secondly, in order to fully understand the embedded meanings in political cartoons and their place in the society, attention should be paid to both the verbal and nonverbal perspectives of cartoons in various newspapers. Cartoons serve as persuasive marketing techniques that marketers deploy. Though cartoons are generally considered as being simple and straight forward, they are powerful tools in addressing societal ills, in many cases, stimulating consumers' interests about ideas, products and services. Though totally subjective to the worldview of the cartoonists, one can trust that amidst the subjectivity of their perspectives, bits of reality are present especially as it relates to the Nigerian society.

### **Conclusion and Recommendation**

The study concludes, among others, that considering the chemistry existing between the verbal and non-verbal features present in cartoons, cartoons serve as a strong persuasive mechanism and a viable source of data as it relates to politics in the Nigerian society. Cartoons, in general, provide a useful source of data that enables researchers to work with any social discourse. The study recommended that the use of cartoons as a marketing strategy should be encouraged because many readers are attracted to the comic cartoon characters and could be persuaded through the cartoon message. Readers and decoders alike should concentrate their attention to the entire verbal, non-verbal and visual details in cartoons in order to carry out a detailed meaning retrieval.

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