

Semiotic Analysis of Dress Code and Picture Postures of G5 Governors

Nelson Orkaan Alyebo, PhD.

Department of English,

Benue State University, Makurdi

oalyebo@bsum.edu.ng nelsonalyebo@gmail.com 08032319654

and

Meshach Terfa Zayol, PhD.

Department of English,

Benue State University, Makurdi

mzayol@bsum.edu.ng and meshachterfa55@gmail.com 07034806899

Abstract

Micro and macro-linguistic branches of study have enjoyed more research attention compared to semiotics, which is generally referred to as the study of signs. Semioticians conceive semiotics as not only what is referred to as signs in everyday conversations, but also anything that stands for something else. This is because they know that signs take the form of words, images, codes, pictures, sounds, gestures, and objects, which, in turn, become subjects of rigorous investigations, leading to mastery of their application devoid of mere linguistic generalisations. This paper examines the dress code and picture postures of G5 Governors during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria. This is done using the semiotic lenses to draw out how meanings were portrayed and how realities were represented by the G5 Governors through dress codes and picture postures. The data for this study is drawn from Premium Times, Peoples Gazette, The Guardian, The Sun, The Nation Newspaper, and other electronic sources. The pictures of the G5 governors, two, are randomly selected from each of the newspapers for analysis, thus making a total of ten pictures. This sampling is purposive to ensure uniformity in the spread of data and selection of the pictures and dress codes. Through these photo-positioning and dress codes, the study examines how codes and pictures are used in news tabloids to reflect specific societal ideologies and power relations and relationships. The Theory of the "Five Codes" by Roland Barthes is adopted for the analysis of the dress codes and picture postures of the G5 Governors in this study. The findings of the study reveal hidden gems of semiotics and its cinematography in the dress codes and picture postures of the G-5 Governors. These speak to the subconscious awareness of the viewers with their visual appeal sending subliminal messages to the audience as well as the G-5 Governors and the overall nexus of their ideology. The findings further reveal the important role culture plays in semiotics as the dress codes of the G-5 Governors were always a calculated representation of the period, setting, theme, mood, style, context and setting of the occasion.

Keywords: Pictorial Semiotics, Codes, Sign, Signifier

Introduction

Unlike the other micro and macro-linguistic branches of study, very little is written on semiotics, which is generally referred to as the study of signs. Semioticians conceive of semiotics as not only what is referred to as signs in everyday conversations, but also of anything that stands for something else. This is because they know that signs take the form of words, images, codes, pictures, sounds, gestures, and objects, which, in turn, become subjects of rigorous investigations, leading to mastery of their application devoid of mere linguistic generalisations. According to Daniel Chandler, "...costume and the body are often neglected in academic analysis, with existing literature focused on the interpretation of fashion trends, production and consumption, but rarely on the embodied aspects of dress" (149). Consenting to this view, Ron Burnett opines that "dress is a fundamental daily practice found in every historic and modern society..." (78). Marcel Danesi, however, avers that "scholars have studied human motivation and the reasons we cloth our bodies but found many differences of expression among cultures. Some cultures use dress for protection, others for modesty and still others to denote social status (329).

Agreeing with Danesi's position above, John Hartley maintains that decoration was found to be the one universal driver of dress and was observed as a motivator among every civilisation, past and present. To decorate the body, therefore, is an essential human practice and clothing the body thus evolved out of this basic and innate desire" (97). The major aim of this paper is to do a semiotic analysis of dress code and picture postures of the G5 Governors in Nigeria and illustrate the consistency and clear messages they communicated using dress codes and picture postures during the 2023 general elections. The analysis is limited to the *G-5 Governors*. *The G-5 Governors* were known for their notoriety and prominence, challenging the decisions of the National Executive Working Committee of the Peoples Democratic Party to nominate His Excellency Alhaji Atiku Abubakar for president for the 2023 general election in Nigeria. They were particularly vehement and critical of power remaining in the north instead of shifting to the south.

Semiotics is one of the major concepts that draws attention to language users, whether it be a verbal or nonverbal form of communication. To approach this task, this study draws insights into what semiotics means. Communication is relevant to the study of semiotics since the whole idea about signification is anchored on the construction of meaning. In other words, it is an aspect of human social life by which ideas, thoughts or feelings are expressed. The act of engaging in arguments, sharing of ideas and experiences, imparting knowledge and so on are

all regarded as communication. However, West and Tuner contend that “communication is a social process in which symbols are employed to establish and interpret meanings” (10).

While several studies have been conducted on semiotics, there is none known to these researchers that has been carried out on the G5 Governors about dress codes and picture postures. This creates a research gap which the present study intends to fill. As consented to by Chapell, Micael and Real, Moses, “communication is any means by which thought is transferred from one person to another” (28). These positions imply that communication does not only mean the production or use of speech to express thoughts and ideas, but it includes wordless signals, symbols and the use of objects and materials for information transfer. It is clear, from the foregoing, that nonverbal communication is a process of generating meaning using behaviour other than words. Nonverbal communication has a distinct history and serves separate evolutionary functions from verbal communication in different cultures and communities.

The above reveals the relevance and objectives of this study which are to establish how semiotics goes a long way to reinforce the role of symbols in interpersonal or group interactions as seen in the dress codes and picture postures of the G5 Governors; unravel how their outfits and pictorial positionings convey meaning by reinforcing, substituting for, or contradicting verbal communication as well as how these are used to influence Nigerians and regulate or stimulate conversational flow. The study also analysed how dress codes and picture postures played a central part in relational communication and identity expression during the 2023 general elections.

Conceptual Clarifications

It is apt to posit that the analysis of meaning based on signs and symbols is purely a semiotic enterprise. According to Hodge, Robert and Kress Gunther, semiotics “...is an investigation into how meaning is created and how meaning is communicated. It is a way of seeing the world, and of understanding how the landscape and culture in which people live has a profound impact on them unconsciously” (67). Semiotics can also be said to be the study of signs and symbols, in particular as they communicate things spoken and unspoken. To come to terms with the major contentions in this study, it is apt to clarify key concepts relating to the topic. For this reason, concepts such as sign, pictorial semiotics, codes, and signifier are briefly clarified hereunder.

Sign

The term semiotic means a lot to different people, as there are varying definitions given by various scholars. What is, however, certain is that almost, if not all, the definitions are linked

to the concept of sign. Sandler opines that "...the shortest definition of [semiotics] is that it is the study of signs themselves and the way they work. The name of this science goes from the Greek *semeion* "sign" (7). He was, however, quick to observe that:

The next question appears automatically "What is the sign?" the kinds of signs that are likely to spring immediately to mind are those, which we routinely refer to as 'signs' in everyday life, such as road signs, pub signs and star signs. Now, you can probably assume that semiotics is about visual signs. (7)

While Sandler's submission above can easily be misinterpreted, it is important to realise that certain signs are used that do not point to anything in the physical surroundings. They take the place of things that are perceived in the past, or even things that can merely be imagined by combining memories or that are in the past or future experience. This explains why Sandler emphasises that signs "...serve to let us develop a characteristic attitude towards objects, which is called "thinking of" or "referring to" what is not here" (8).

According to Geoffrey Beattie, "the term sign refers to the relationship among the elements of the semiotic model, or it can be used to indicate the first of the three elements...the physical thing perceived" (134). Sandler, however, feels "the term sign is loosely defined as a pattern of data which, when perceived, brings to mind something other than itself, the notion of the sign is central to the semiotic approach to the study of communication" (12). In elaborate detail, Paul Copley explained thus:

All individuals...are meaning-makers. Distinctively, we make meanings through our creation and interpretation of "signs". Signs take the form of different objects, but such things have no any meaning and become signs only when we invest them with meaning. Anything can be a sign as long as someone interprets it as 'signifying' something – referring to or standing for something other than itself. (122)

The implication of his submission above is that signs do not mean anything in and of themselves until we assign meanings to them. What, however, is important is that the meaning assigned to any sign must relate to it, as Saussure argues that signs refer primarily to each other. "Within the language system", as consented to by Saussure, "everything depends on relations. Both signifier and signified are purely relational entities" (78). Drawing inferences from the American philosopher – Charles Peirce's pioneering postulations on semiotic triangle and signs, it can be summed here that a sign and a concept are connected by the person's perception; the concept and the object are connected by the person's experience; the sign and the object are connected by the conventions, or the culture, of the social group within which the person lives.

These connections are important to the study of how meaning arises during the daily encounters with the many signs that fill the human environment.

Pictorial Semiotics

It is apt to posit that human beings recognise patterns of information and can organise them to generate meaning and it is the collections of these organised patterns that form the languages that humans use when they communicate. According to Graham Allen, “semiotics is considered as the theory of the production of meaning. Meaning is made by the deployment of acts and objects which function as 'signs’ about other signs” (60). He further posits that “in general, meaning is not believed to reside within any particular object, text or process, rather, meaning arises during the communication process itself” (60-61).

Code

When one pays close semiotic attention, one will understand that our perception of the everyday world around us involves codes, and as consented to by Chandler, “a perception is always already representation. Perception depends on coding the world into iconic signs that can re-present it within our mind” (158). With elaborate illustrations, he emphasises what codes are and what they are not, and though lengthy, it is useful to quote him here thus:

Codes are not simply “conventions” of communication but rather procedural systems of related conventions, which operate in certain domains. Codes organise signs into meaningful systems, which correlate signifiers and signifieds. Codes transcend single texts, linking them together in an interpretative framework. Stephen Heath stated, “While every code is a system, not every system is a code”. Codes are interpretive frameworks, which are used by both producers and interpreters of texts. In creating texts we select and combine signs in relation to the codes with which we are familiar “in order to limit the range of possible meanings they are likely to generate when read by others”. In reading texts, we interpret signs with reference to what seem to be appropriate codes. (158-9)

The implication of Chandler’s postulation above is that a range of typologies of codes are found in the literature of semiotics but the ones most widely mentioned in the context of media, communication and cultural studies are social codes, bodily codes, commodity codes, rhetorical and stylistic codes, technical and conventional codes, perceptual and interpretative codes, aesthetic codes, ideological codes such as individualism, liberalism, feminism, racism, materialism, capitalism, progressivism, conservatism, socialism, objectivism, consumerism and populism; and verbal language codes covering phonological, syntactical, lexical, prosodic,

and paralinguistic sub-codes. A close linguistic observation of the dress codes and picture postures of the G5 Governors reveals how the aforementioned inundated the G5 Governors with resultant semiotic interpretations. The above ideological codes pontificated the dress codes and picture postures of the G5 Governors as would be seen in the analysis later in this paper.

Methodology

The data for this study is drawn from *Premium Times, Peoples Gazette, The Guardian, The Sun, The Nation Newspaper, and other electronic sources*. The pictures of the G5 governors, two, are randomly selected from each of the newspapers for analysis, totalling ten pictures. This sampling is purposive to ensure uniformity in the spread of data and selection of the pictures and dress codes. The researchers conducted three viewings of each of the dress codes and picture postures, each time with a different goal in mind. For the first viewing, the researchers looked at the pictures as normal individuals would, not overly conscious of any minute details, nor trying to draw any conclusions about the dress codes or postures. The intention was to grasp the bigger picture of the pictures' context, the G5 Governors, and their overall tone and let pictorial postures play the secondary role they do for the average viewer or onlooker. For the second viewing, however, the researchers took the opposite and spent a great deal of time with each code and posture of a picture and pictorial semiotics observed therein. The pictorial images with each code and posture change occurrence were captured and copious notes of the action in each shot were taken as well. This yielded two pictures each from *Premium Times, Peoples Gazette, The Guardian, The Sun, and The Nation Newspaper*, respectively. Before the third viewing, the researchers spent time culling through the pictures selected from each newspaper and narrowed the list for analysis down to a handful. These curated pictures were the best representations of the G5 Governors' costume designs from a clothing, dress codes, pictorial positioning, conveyed through a hidden ideology and power relations perspective. The pictures were then viewed for the third time, focusing closely on the semiotic undertones and the language surrounding each picture. The contexts and ideologies that unfolded in each of these pictures, as well as the semiotic messages inferred by the viewer leading up to, during, and immediately following the capture of each picture, were notated by the researchers. It was upon the completion of this step that analysis of each picture was done using the theoretical framework explained below.

Theoretical Framework

This study uses the Theory of the “Five Codes” by Roland Barthes for the analysis of the dress codes and picture postures of the G5 Governors in this study. His theory advances the reason for which an analysis of dress code and picture posture is important, “For an understanding of dress codes or fashion – if taken as a language – this suggestion is crucial: we are innately obliged to narrate clothing forms either verbally or mentally; if we do not do this when thinking about clothing, especially fashion, then a magazine, an advert, a friend, a shop-worker, [a film], whatever, will do it for us” (122). And in Barthes’ own words, ‘It is impossible to consider a cultural object outside the articulated, spoken and written language which surrounds it’ (122). Many Semioticians posit that to properly examine Barthes' work and fully understand the contributions he made to studying pictorial fashion as a language, we must first look to Ferdinand de Saussure, who is credited as one of the forerunners of semiotics. Chandler, particularly, maintains that “it is Saussure who originally developed the concept of Sign, Signified, and signifier, asserting that a linguistic sign is the resulting product when a concept and sound-image unite” (197). Echoing this first formulation of Saussure’s sign system, Barthes developed a rhetoric of fashion which is often referred to as the “poetics of clothing” (264). Using the same terms as Saussure, his system includes three codes. First, the signifier, which Barthes classifies as the garment or article of fashion. Then, the signified, which represents the world or the culture surrounding the signifier, and, finally, the sign is commonly considered the intersection of the two and often cited as the “reason” behind fashion (264-270). According to Chandler:

Barthes describes this system of fashion as a “work in reverse” and theorises that the act of dressing is always an answer to a question, a question of being: *the who* or a question of doing: *the what, when, or where*. The former is a question of identity (who) and conjures the statement, “If you want to be this, you must dress like this.” The latter addresses matters of circumstance or activity (what, when, where) and sounds something like, “If you want to signify what you are doing here, dress like this” (Barthes, 1983, p. 278). The final step in Barthes’ vestimentary code is the sign or union of clothing and the world surrounding it. (198)

The point to take from Barthes’ above is that since pictures, dress codes or fashion do not directly declare their reasons, they use rhetoric to communicate the relationship between the signifier and the signified. Since clothing did not evolve as a coded system like that of grammar, the quest for its meanings lies in its “functions, distinctions, oppositions, and congruencies”

(293-295), as he puts it. This study analyses the dress codes and picture postures of the G5 Governors through the lens of Roland Barthes' Theory of the Five Codes in this study.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Plate 1. (Taken from *Premium Times Newspaper*). Part of the positions espoused by the theory adopted in this study pertain, in humans, as is the case between the G5 Governors and the viewers, the persistence of the mode of thought suggests that concepts start as mimetic or osmotic portrayals of the physical environment. These are first tied to the operations of our sensory apparatus. It is only after they have become routinised through cultural diffusion that they become free of sensory control and take on an abstract quality.

The iconicity of the G5 Movement, due to persistence and self-styled modelling messages,



dress code and picture postures, became cemented in the minds of and at the core of how Nigerians responded to their mission and vision.

A group of five governors known as G5 – led by Nyesom Wike (Rivers State), Samuel

Ortom (Benue State), Ifeanyi Ugwuanyi (Enugu State), Okezie Ikpeazu (Abia State), and Seyi Makinde (Oyo State)- were against the presidential bid of Alhaji Atiku Abubakar, arguing that his election as presidential candidate goes against the agreement to zone the presidency to the south. As they were often heard saying, “all we are asking for is equity, fairness, and justice, and that is the hallmark PDP stands for. All we are saying, let the right things be done. When the right thing is done, the country would see that the crisis in the party is over”. The symbolic reality is that the G5 were a crack in the wall of the PDP party. Their vehement refusal to team up with the party pierced a huge hole in the party's 2023 presidential election bid. Their potential to do this was intensified by the right fight the wrong, as it was morally and constitutionally right for the rotation of the presidency from north to south.

Plate 2. (Taken from *Premium Times Newspaper*). A keen observation of modern times reveals that walking sticks are usually only seen worn by people with formal attire. This is used not just as a walking aid but also as an ornamental accessory to flaunt one's social status and accent



styling wardrobe. This is the case in this plate, where the G5 Governors are seen as revealed in the picture.

The posture and photo-positioning also confirm a representation of power and influence. Both governors are seen wearing the same cap, with the cap node falling to their left, even as their right

hands wield the walking stick. Unlike Nyesom Wike, whose both hands support the stick, the rest of the G5 allow their left hands to lean on their sides. The fact that Wike does this and is in the centre of the picture is deliberate. This is to confirm his position in the G5 as the leader. While the four others are in black shoes, he is seen in white shoes. He is also the only one wearing goggles here. The semiotic implications of this dress code and picture reveal Barthes's symbolic or proairetic codes. This also highlights how cultural semiotics emphasises the importance of context in interpreting signs and symbols. It recognises that the meaning of a sign or symbol is not fixed, but rather depends on the cultural context in which it is used. Therefore, cultural semiotics emphasises the need to understand the cultural context to fully interpret the signs and symbols used within it. The theory further asserts that culture is a system of signs and symbols that people use to communicate and make sense of the world around them.

Plate 3. (Taken from *Peoples Gazette*). This plate contains a picture showing the G5 in Tiv traditional attire known as *Anger*. They are also wearing caps woven from the traditional attire,



while holstering onto their shoulders *ikpa Iabor atar*. This attire and bag are symbolic representations of the Tiv people as well as their culture. Both are wielding *iwange*, a highly revered Tiv traditional staff bestowed upon someone deserving of recognition and honour. This also affirms that

the G5 are received wholeheartedly by the host and are also a worthy representation of the Tiv tradition, anytime, anywhere. His Excellency, Governor Samuel Ortom, who hosts the G5, is seen as the only person wearing a different outfit. This is symbolic as much as it is deliberate. He also stands in the middle as a mark of hospitality.

Plate 4. (Taken from *Peoples Gazette*). The spoken semiotic messages of this picture's posture and clothing are just a small piece of the overall picture.



The code and posture are messages that can be translated as communicative symbolism, using the G5 Governors' bodies as the informational vehicle, their eyes as message senders and interpreters, as well as the mind. The cut and alignment lines of their clothing and the

composition of their bodily adornment, as well as their relation to surrounding scenery, underscore the commitment of the G5 Governors.

Plate 5. (Taken from *The Guardian Newspaper*). This plate is a prime illustration of how picture posture and dress code can be distilled in diverse and semiotic ways to set a scene,



convey a mood, create a context, or even send a shocking message capable of making enemies frozen with fear and stark terror. This was the case as their meeting in London became the topic of discussion on the lips of Nigerians and in

virtually all media houses in the country. Worse still, the meeting of the G5 in London showed flashes of a looming collaboration with Bola Tinubu of the APC. Using the skilful costume canvas of the designer, they appear impeccable, revealing visual messages of power and resolutely cultural backings which not only added to the occasion's buzz but nearly rump it in hype. This meeting knitted and kneaded the key moments of their decision to become a thorn in the flesh of their party's presidential candidate if their conditions were not met. They were indeed not met as the party refused to remove Dr Iorchia Ayu as its National Chairman, nor did it change its flag-bearer, nor nominate Wike as its Vice-Presidential candidate.

Plate 6. (Taken from *The Guardian Newspaper*). This plate bears a reflective approach by mirroring the symbolic import of the meeting as conveyed behind their smiles, posture, and artistic fabrics. This makes a symbol of the G5, their mission, and idea with a directly



representational intent. This serves us with many symbols to convey interpretational objectives that ordinary words would not describe.

This picture came out of a moment of a hard decision, which, it must be said, was much harder for Governor Samuel Ortom. It was so for him as he and Iyorchia Ayu are from the same state and geopolitical zone in Benue. Ortom may have pretended to put on a broad smile, but inwardly, he was heartbroken because it was he, Samuel Ortom, who fought tooth and nail for the installation of his kinsman Iyorchia Ayu as the PDP National Chairman. The smiles wielded by the rest of the G5 Governors were

genuine and as an expression of fulfilment. It was here that they also solidified their right to kick against their party's decision to give the position of the national chairman to North Central and worse still, give the presidential ticket to the north. These facts attracted sympathy from good people of conscience and expanded the publicity of their movement. As their looks in the picture suggest, they also excluded themselves from the party's presidential campaign over calls for Iyorchia Ayu to step down as the national chairman of the Peoples Democratic Party.

Plate 7. (Taken from *The Sun Newspaper*). This plate contains a picture showing the G5 in Tiv traditional attire known as *Anger*. They are also wearing caps woven from the traditional attire, but unlike in plate 2, they are not heaving onto their shoulders *ikpa I abor atar* neither are they wielding *iwange*. This is deliberate as the context and purpose of the occasion is a visit to the IDP Camp in Benue State.



Unlike in the other pictures analysed, they appear gloomy and unsmiling, the mood befitting the occasion of their visit. Those wearing eyeglasses appear to be shielding tears and sorrows from the public eye. The symbolic aspect of this picture, posture and attire attracts sympathy from the

onlookers, unveiling the possibilities of drawing meaningful symbolic and cultural conclusions. In this picture, it can be seen, the powerful ability of clothing and posture to communicate messages of innocence and maturity, exhaustion and excitement, strength and grief, is heaped in semiotic underpinnings all at once without sounds.

Plate 8. (Taken from *The Sun Newspaper*). This plate contains the G5 Governors hovering around His Excellency, President Bola Ahmed Tinubu.



Both governors entered into a closed-door meeting with Tinubu as they continued in their fight against their party's nomination of Alhaji Atiku as the party's presidential flag-bearer. Here, as is the case in the rest of the pictures, Nyesom Wike, alongside Samuel Ortom and the rest of the G5, is posed in the picture. The symbolism in

this picture reveals the contrast of the event and occasion: the outfit and woven fabrics they are wearing are not uniform. While the rest of them as well as the president appear in caftans, Wike is seen in a navy-blue suit, over a white shirt and a tie with sparkling shades of red-cornflower tie on the storefront. The broad smiles on their faces appear to suggest how unafraid they are that they are wining and dining with the All Progressive Congress even as members of the Peoples Democratic Party. The semiotic implication, as well as the symbolism, lies in the complete resolve of their ideology.

Plate 9. (Taken from *The Nation Newspaper*). This plate reveals what others may have overlooked for the wrong reasons as the costume and the body on which the attire embodies aspects of power relations, ideologies, and collaboration by a people united into a common force.



In a grand style, they move in lock-step as they head to make a press statement. They hammered on their resolve to turn things around and ensure the rule of law is enforced in PDP. The colour, style and posture, pontificated by the grand movement, symbolise integrity, patriotism, equity, fairness, and justice. This was the hallmark of their resolve.

Their uniquely distinct style of dressing became a fundamental daily practice found in every historic and modern event in the build-up to the 2023 presidential election, much to the chagrin of Alhaji Atiku Abubakar – the PDP Presidential flag-bearer and his fellow travellers.

Plate 10. (Taken from *The Nation Newspaper*). This plate shows the G5 in blue except Governor Seyi Makinde, who is wearing a cornflower dress. The colour and its role to



communicate notions of morality, femininity, religion, order, respectability, passivity, and confidence are drawn, symbolically, from the picture.

The straightforward, visual component of the attire, which could be seen as contained within the picture, is intended to draw the viewer's attention to their call as

integrity governors. Whether they are true to their words or not is up to the viewers to decipher. From a semiotic point of view, the action surrounding the picture and the context in which the picture is occasioned index the signified as well as the significant, both of whom are tied to resolve and conviction by the G5 Governors. In addition to this validation is the article of clothing, accessory, hairstyle, picture posture, which, working in tandem with the pictorial context, have given room for drawing symbolic and cultural conclusions based on the observations raised in the preceding sentence.

Findings and Conclusion

This paper examined the dress code and picture postures of G5 Governors during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria. This was done using the semiotic lenses to draw out how meanings were portrayed and how realities were represented by the G5 Governors through dress codes and picture postures. Through these photo-positioning and dress codes analysed, findings revealed how codes and pictures were used in news tabloids to reflect specific societal ideologies and power relations and relationships. The analysis carried out has revealed hidden gems of semiotics and its cinematography in the dress codes and picture postures of the G-5 Governors. These speak to the subconscious awareness of the viewers with their visual appeal sending subliminal messages to the audience as well as the G-5 Governors and the overall nexus of their ideology. The analysis also revealed the important role culture plays in semiotics as the dress codes of the G-5 Governors were always a calculated representation of the period, setting, theme, mood, style, and context of the occasion.

It suffices to state that the findings have indeed proven that the study has achieved its set aim and objectives. Based on the objectives of the study, the findings have shown that the people

have symbols relating to ceremonies, marriage rites, burials and use them before and during such practices. The findings further established how semiotics goes a long way to reinforce the role of symbols in interpersonal or group interactions, as seen in the analysis of the dress codes and picture postures of the G5 Governors. The analysis also unravelled how their outfits and pictorial positionings conveyed meaning by reinforcing, substituting for, or contradicting verbal communication, as well as influenced Nigerians and regulated or stimulated conversational flow. The study also analysed how dress codes and picture postures played a central part in relational communication and identity expression during the 2023 general elections.

From the foregoing analysis thus far, this study concludes that there is a powerful ability of dress codes and picture postures to communicate messages of conviction, justice, rejection, innocence and maturity, exhaustion and excitement, strength and grief. The G5 Governors, whose dress codes and pictures have been interrogated in this study, were often seen adorned with costumes and attires that were constantly working in tandem with the group's context and ideology, saying important things to the viewer and Nigerians, often on a subconscious level. The spoken messages of their dress codes and picture postures conveyed what codes were embedded in the cut, colour, and composition of their attire, how these pictures spoke semantically and what their symbolic connotations were, and finally, the cultural and linguistic messages that were conveyed through their dress codes and picture postures. Through the researchers' observations and personal perspectives, the anatomy of dress codes and picture postures have been dissected to understand, more deeply, the meaning, message, and symbolism of the role the G5 Governors played in Nigeria's 2023 presidential election.

Works Cited

- Allen, Graham. *Intertextuality*. Routledge Press, 2000.
- Barthes, Roland. *S/Z*. Hill and Wang Press, 1974.
- Barthes, Roland. *Système de la Mode*. Éditions du Seuil Press, 1983.
- Barthes, Roland, Stafford Anderson and Michael Carter. *Language of Fashion*. Bloomsbury Academic Press, 1974.
- Beattie, Geoffrey. *Visible Thought: The New Psychology of Body Language*. Routledge Press, 2003.
- Burnett, Ron. *How Images Think*. MIT Press, 2005.
- Chandler, Daniel. *Introduction to Semiotics*. Routledge Press, 2007.
- Chapell, Micael and Real Moses. *Communication: Any Means by Which Thought is Transferred from One Person to Another*. Routledge Press, 1997.
- Cobley, Paul (ed.) *The Routledge Companion to Semiotics and Linguistics*. Routledge Press, 2001.

- Danesi, Marcel. *Encyclopaedic Dictionary of Semiotics, Media, and Communication*. University of Toronto Press, 2000.
- Hartley, John. *Communication, Culture and Media Studies: The Key Concepts*. Routledge Press, 2006.
- Hodge, Robert and Kress Gunther. *Social Semiotics*. Polity Press, 1988.
- Malcolm, Barnard. *Graphic Design as Communication*. Routledge Press, 2005.