

Pragmatic Analyses of President Muhammadu Buhari's 2015 Inaugural Speech

Esther Olajumoke Adeagbo, Ph.D

Department of English

Ajayi Crowther University

estheolajumoke99@gmail.com. +2347035536376

Abstract

Inaugural speech which is the first speech given by the new leader of an organisation or a country is a frontline issue in political discourse. Previous studies on political discourse in Nigeria have focused on pragmatics, semiotics and general stylistic features, but have not significantly explored the combination of discursive acts and communicative principles in meaning negotiation. This study, therefore, examines speech act types and communicative precepts in the inaugural speech to establish different roles in meaning negotiation. Data was collected via the Punch newspaper, and the inaugural speech consists of twenty-eight paragraphs, from which a total number of twenty sentences is being extracted and analysed. The study adopted aspects of Austin's (1969) speech acts theory and Grice's (1975) cooperative principle. Findings reveal that the inaugural speech was uttered in different speech act forms such as habitive acts, exercitives, verdictives, commissives, and expositive acts. The study also reveals that the inaugural speech manifests different communicative principles such as maxims of quantity, quality, relation and maxims of manner which communicate politically sensitive meaning. The study concludes that language is a very important tool in politics, as it is used to persuade, instruct, promise, expose and inform at the beginning of a new administration, to make the new government welcoming to the people.

Key Words: *Pragmatic analysis, inaugural speech, President Muhammadu Buhari, Speech act, Co-operative maxim*

Background of the study

Language is a distinctive characteristic of humans, which is used as a fundamental form of communication for creating interpersonal relationships, exchange of ideas and passing of information. Politics has to do with the struggle for power to put certain political, economic and social ideas into practice (Bayram 2010). For a politician to attain any political office, he must master the skill of rhetoric (language) which is the proficiency to address effectively and

convincingly. Politics is manifested in the power to make verdicts, influence resources, control other people's behaviour and, at times control their values. In this progression, language plays a central role in every political activity that is formulated, supported, impacted and played by language. Language, therefore, plays an important role in politics because its main function in different political situations is to allow politicians to establish structurally stable social relationships. Gunta and Karapetjana 2009). Language has been ascertained to be a substantial instrument for those who seek to influence peoples' thoughts, values and actions.

Every government, whether civilian or military, has to be traditionally ushered in by a political speech by the Head of State or President. Nigeria and Nigerians have also witnessed numerous successful transitions to civil rule. All transition has always been heeded by a presidential inaugural speech. Hinckley (1990:21) notes that "the peaceful transition of political power that defines presidential inaugurations is often considered a celebration of the democratic process". However not exactly evaluated as being constituted, the president's inaugural address is an expected component of all inaugural traditions. Campbell and Jamison (1990:34) submit that "certain inaugural addresses have articulated the notion that the President becomes the President through delivering the inaugural address ". They also argue that the inaugural address is perceived as an extension of the commitment of an office. The inaugural speech furnishes the incoming President with the initial chance to exhibit the power of language in the capacity of a President. An inaugural speech is also an outstanding feature of political discourse as it is usually delivered at a moment when the nation pays attention to the words of the man they have chosen for the highest office of the land. Campbell and Jamison (1990:29), in their extensive study of inaugural addresses, contend that inaugural addresses are "essential elements in a transition ritual in which the covenant between the citizenry and their leaders is renewed". They go on to classify inaugural addresses as a variety of discourse that Aristotle called epideictic discourse which they explain as a pattern of rhetoric that compliments or blames during ceremonial occasions and that attracts the audience to assess the speaker's performance, observe the past and deduces about the future while focusing on the current, employs a noble, dignified, and amplifies or rehearses admitted facts.

The 2015 election of President Muhammadu Buhari earned history in Nigeria as it was the first time the ruling party the Peoples' Democratic Party (PDP) was voted out of office and the main opposition took over the mantle of leadership as the President and Commander-in-Chief in a

democratic dispensation. It is therefore of paramount importance, that a democratically elected president or government should place a recompense on the electorates as democracy is the government of the people, by the people and for the people. Speech-making, accordingly, is the major means of building, stabilizing and enhancing these social relationships, communicating feelings and selling strategies, opinions and programmes in any nation. From this point of view, it is reasonably agreeable that politics has now become a linguistic happening while language has become a political topic (Ayeomoni and Akinkuolere 2012).

Statement of Research Problem

The language of Nigerian politics has been given attention in previous studies from various linguistic approaches such as pragmatics, pragma-stylistics, stylistic, syntax and discourse strategies. For instance, Abuya (2012) investigates the pragma-stylistic analysis of President Goodluck Jonathan Inaugural's speech, using the Speech act theory of Austin (1962) and Searle (1969). Akinkuolere (2015) examines the patterns and functions in the inaugural speech of the speaker of the Benue State House of Assembly in Nigeria, deploying the lexical cohesion theory of Halliday and Hassan (1976). Enyi (2016) examines the illocutionary forces of speech acts employed in President Buhari's Maiden Coup Address and Inaugural Address, from the perspective of Austin's (1962) speech act theory. In the same vein, Okoro (2016) investigates the pragmatic acts of locution, illocution and perlocution of President Muhammadu Buhari's speeches using the speech act theory of Austin (1962). Akinwotun (2018) examines patterns of language use in the inaugural speeches of Governor Olusegun Mimiko of Ondo state, using a stylistic approach that blends with Michael Halliday's systemic functional Grammar. Also, Sobola (2020) examines the cognition of Metaphorical text in President Muhammadu Buhari's Inaugural Speech, using a theory of lexical concept and cognitive model propounded by Vyvan Evans. However, none of these studies has significantly explored the combination of speech act features and communicative maxims in meaning negotiation. This study, therefore, examines the speech act types and communicative strategies in the inaugural speech of President Muhammadu Buhari using the Speech act theory explicated by Austin (1962) and the Cooperative principle by Grice (1975). This is the vacuum this study intends to fill.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

This study aims to investigate the joint roles of speech act types and cooperative principles employed in the 2015 Inaugural speech of President Muhammadu Buhari.

The objectives include:

1. to identify speech act types in the inaugural speech of President Muhammadu Buhari
2. to discuss the importance of Grice's cooperative principles on how the President communicated his speech.

Significance of the study

'With its target on the application of speech act theory of Austin (1962) and the Communicative principle approach by Grice (1975), the study intends to contribute to linguistic scholarship on using words to do things. Therefore, the study will throw more light on the inaugural speech pragmatically to enable a better understanding of the speaker's point of view. It will give an insight to readers of the language of politics and the kinds of speeches made in the political process. It will also help researchers who intend to carry out an analysis of speeches as a good reference guide during their research. The study will also be of immense value to political speechwriters as they will get to know the intricacies of fusing pragmatic principles in their speechwriting to achieve the desired effects.

This research is capable of contributing meaningfully to scholarship because the results from the analysis will be of immense help to politicians, political analysts, political speechwriters and even the common man (readers) who have some interest in political speeches. Finally, Political analysts will benefit immensely from this work since it will further expose them to the divergent ways of generating implied meanings in political speeches.

Empirical Studies on Inaugural Discourse

Quite several kinds of research have been conducted in the sub-field of social, media, legal and political discourses of Inaugural speech.

Jacob (2014) investigates some selected political speeches delivered by John Evans Atta Mills. The selected speeches span almost every sphere of his political life, including; a campaign speech (as an opposition leader in the run-up to the 2008 elections), an inaugural speech, an independent day speech, a republic day speech and a new year's eve message to the nation (all as president). The objective is to unravel the stylistically significant features prevalent in the selected speeches, find a possible relationship between the background of the speaker and the stylistic features, and ascertain whether or not the inherent stylistic features project him as a Man of Peace as he was acclaimed. Through an eclectic approach, the analysis encapsulates the metafunctions as postulated in Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics and Onah's Concept

of Peace as perceived in the African Traditional culture as its framework. The findings show that the speaker employed stylistic features such as positive self-projection, repetition, code-switching, biblical allusions, historical allusions, fatherly imagery and the imagery of a preacher. Also inherent in these stylistic features are the speaker's mental disposition, his world view and traces of his background.

Akinkurolere (2015) explores the lexical devices in the Inaugural speech of the Speaker of the State House of Assembly as an avenue to expand the frontiers of knowledge on the language of politics by legislators. The data were drawn from the speech of the Speaker of Benue State House of Assembly (2011-2013) and analysed based on the Lexical Cohesion theory of Halliday and Hassan (1976). The study reflected that legislators employed lexical cohesive devices such as repetition, synonymy, antonym, collocation, and superordination to achieve certain purposes such as interconnectivity, directness, emphasis, appreciation and appeal in the process of negotiating meaning in their use of language. It is therefore recommended that further researchers should beam their searchlight on other speeches of Speakers in Nigeria. Also, linguistic approaches that differ from linguistic stylistics could be applied to Speakers' speeches. Subsequent researchers could also throw light on the linguistic-stylistic approach through other frameworks.

Okoro (2016) examines the pragmatic acts of locution, illocution and perlocution of President Muhammadu Buhari's speeches during the campaign build-up of the March 2015 general elections. To do this, the study adopted the Speech Act Theory of Austin (1962) using the illocutionary acts of the expressive, commissive, declarative, directive, assertive and verdictive. The data for the study were drawn from five purposively selected speeches of President Buhari: Formal Declaration of Interest for Presidency, My Manifesto and Vision for Nigeria, his speech at Chatham House, London, Acceptance Speech and Inaugural Speech. The quantitative research methodology was used, of which the descriptive survey method was employed for the analysis of data. The result revealed that these speeches were characterized by a preponderance of assertive and commissive acts which are mostly used as mobilization strategies especially in political campaigns by candidates to persuade their listeners to win elections. The study concluded on the note that President Buhari should match his words with actions to fulfil all his campaign promises as Nigerians expect a complete turnaround and positive change in all aspects of their nation's life. The researcher recommended that future research on President Buhari's speeches

should be done in the area of linguistic stylistic analysis, multimodal discourse analysis, Felicity Condition of Austin and Grice's Cooperative Principle.

In a similar vein, Enyi (2016) examines a comparative analysis of President Muhammadu Buhari's Maiden Coup Address on January 1, 1984, and his Inaugural Address on May 29, 2015, from a general pragmatic perspective. Adopting the Speech Act theory of Austin (1962) as revised by Searle (1962, 1999) the study was aimed at unveiling the illocutionary forces of the speech acts employed in both speeches to manipulate and galvanize the populace into making the intended and desired inferences in the pragmatic contexts in which the speeches were made. The result showed that the speech acts used in each of the speeches, though used by the same protagonist, depend on the socio-political context in which the speeches were made. The study also holds that President Buhari's use of language in his maiden coup speech reflects his military disposition as his utterances were seen to be authoritative, forceful, pre-emptory, and direct as he needed to exercise solid control through commands, orders, firm request, and threats. In contrast to the above, his use of language in his inaugural address which was made in the context of popular democracy was relatively informative and persuasive and reflects the ingredients of social relations and interactions.

Akinwotu's (2018) paper investigates the combination of stylistics and Michael Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar as approaches to examine the patterns of language use in the inaugural speeches of Governor Olusegun Mimiko of Ondo State with the view to uncovering the specific stylistic choices that characterise the speeches and their pragmatic import. The speeches are characterised by lexical items (adjectives, adverbs, pronouns) which the speaker creatively deploys to promote his political programmes and to present himself as a committed, sincere and responsible leader. There is a preponderance of declarative sentences and declarative mood which Mimiko engages in promising, assuring and stating to persuade and mobilise listeners. Topicalisation and graphology; testimonial argument and promising; and rhetorical forms are creatively organised to convey pragmatic information such as humility, respect, unity, responsibility and commitment

Sobola (2020) investigates the cognition of Metaphorical text in President Muhammadu Buhari's Inaugural Speech on his assumption of office as the President of Nigeria on 29th May 2015. The theory of lexical concept and cognitive model (LCCM) propounded by Vyvyan Evans was employed for analysis. The study concludes that metaphors are used in political discourse to

encode ideological belief; interpretation of ideological views in the metaphorical text contributes towards cognition; linguistic contents in the metaphor and their relationships contribute towards interpretation and cognition of metaphors and metaphors in Nigerian political discourse.

The foregoing has shown that though some of the linguistic research on inaugural speeches have used pragmatic approaches, that is, the speech act theory of Austin, but insufficient studies on communicative principles and speech act analysis of inaugural speech. The combination of the two pragmatic theories is deemed to be of a high scholarly prospect. The study intends to fill this gap.

Language and Politics

Harris (1979) observed that words have a powerful effect on politics. He further says that language is how political ideas are conveyed to the community. According to Fairclough (1989) and Thomas and Wearing (1999), the acquisition of power in politics is based primarily on citizens' belief that the views of their political leaders match their views and interests. This is because politicians use a wide range of linguistic resources and options to construct their discourse and usually have a significant influence on shaping an ideology that allows people to more easily accept their argument. will inspire. The ability to accurately and creatively exploit appropriate linguistic resources to suit specific communication situations is the most valuable asset a politician can have to achieve his personal or public objectives. Again, Thomas and Waring (1999) captured the influential power of language in politics: by subtle manipulation of language skills, the skilled speaker was traditionally able to exert great influence on the preconceptions, beliefs, aspirations, and fears of the public. From the various views stated above, it is clear that language is an important factor in political behaviour to control the views of the people and to make them support and follow. Apart from keeping citizens informed, the ultimate goal of political language is to persuade, take over and control. Government whether civil, democratic or military, has to use language to communicate, inform, persuade, advertise, issue its own rules and regulations, decrees, announcements, proclamations, make laws etc. Subsequently, language inevitably constitutes a de facto tool in politics as it is a common element in gaining public support and acceptance for political policies and programs. Kress (1989) and Fairclough (1989) present an idea to which the current study subscribes when they see that political discourse is mediated by institutions that in turn provide readers and writers, speakers and listeners with various powers and knowledge. For Rozina and Karapetjana (2009), language has

an influential and important relationship with power. They point out that the dominant power of language drives people to either behave in certain ways or to adopt opinions/points of view without putting explicit emphasis on them. This applies in contexts such as advertising, culture, media and politics. In such contexts, people are usually not punished or punished for resisting dominant power. They compare this to instrumental power, which they say is explicit power that is usually exercised by the state through its laws and conventions, the institutions, agencies and organizations for which the people work. It operates in social sectors such as business, education and various types of management. It can also be said that, in most cases, resistance to instrumental power often attracts sanctions or punishment of some sort. Relating the foregoing to the present study, we can say that politicians use the additional power of language when they use language to implement laws, taxes and bureaucratic systems etc. They try to influence us to support their policies or vote for them. To invest them with the executive power to direct, influence and control certain important aspects of our lives during elections.

Theoretical Perspectives

Pragmatics will serve as the linguistic framework on which this study rests as it focuses on the use of language in real linguistic situations. This area of linguistics has historically been attributed to the Philosophy of Language and the American Philosophical School of Pragmatics. Various scholars have attempted to define pragmatics from a different point of view and as a result, there is no universally acclaimed definition. To Crystal (1987) "Pragmatics studies the factors that govern our choice of language in social interaction and the effects of our choices on others". The theoretical framework for this study is the speech act theory of Austin and Grice's communication theories. The choice of two pragmatic theories was based on the relevance of the subject matter and the intention to limit the focus of the work.

Speech act theory, which has historically been attributed to the Austrian philosopher, Ludwig Wittgenstein, was given prominence by the British philosopher, John Langshaw Austin, in his William James lecture at Harvard in 1955. However, his ideas were refined and arranged by his student, John R. Searle, an American philosopher. Griffiths (2006) defines speech acts as 'the basic units of linguistic conversation', while Osisanwo (2003), "an utterance is a speech act'. This is because whenever a person pronounces, an act is done. Acts done include but are not limited to stating a fact, giving an opinion, confirming or denying something, making a prediction or request, issuing orders, asking questions, etc. It should be noted that "speech acts

are bound by sentences" (Verschueren1999). Therefore, it means that a formal or political speech is not a speech act but a sequence or series of speech acts. Speech act theory aims to do justice to the fact that people do more with words than their words usually encode. The most important part of Speech Act Theory is the tripartite distinction of Speech Acts into different types which are Locutionary Acts, illocutionary Acts and Perlocutionary Acts. The locutionary act is the act of saying something, the illocutionary act is the act performed in saying something, while the perlocutionary act is the act performed by saying something, the effect the utterance has on the psychological state of the hearer. The illocutionary forces of utterances have been classified by notable scholars like Austin (1962), Searle (1969) and Keith Allan (1986).

Austin classified illocutionary forces of speech acts into five: verdictives, behavities, expositives, commissives and exercitives.

Verditives: Typified by the giving of a verdict by a jury, arbitrator or umpire. It may also include giving an estimate, assessing, reckoning or appraisal.

Exercitives: Typified by the exercising of powers, rights, or influence. They include appointing, voting, and urging.

Commissives: It commits a speaker to a certain course of action. It is typified by promising.

Behavities: This has to do with social behaviour and attitudes. They include congratulating and challenging. Expositives: Makes plain how our utterances fit into the course of an argument or conversation. Examples are denying, affirming and stating.

Searle, refining and Searle also gave five types of illocutionary acts which are: expressive, commissive, directive, assertive and declarative features. However, for the analysis of this work, Austin's illocutionary types will be employed.

Co-operative Principle

The cooperative principle is a 'social-psychological perspective' on how communication takes place between or among people (Wilson, 1985:639). Grice believes that certain norms ought to be followed while conversing. He, therefore, developed four conversational maxims from his cooperative principle which are:

🕒 **Maxim of Quantity:**

Make your contribution as informative as required.

Do not make your contributions more than required.

🕒 **Maxim of Quality:**

Make your contributions true. Do not say what you believe to be false. Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.

🕒 **Maxim of Relation:**

Make your contribution relevant and related to the subject of discussion at the immediate need.

🕒 **Maxim of Manner:**

Be brief

Be orderly

Avoid obscurity

Avoid ambiguity.

Maxims are norms to be followed in communication

Research Method

The Data

The data for this study is from the 2015 inaugural speech of President Muhammadu Buhari. Emerging the winner of the 15 presidential elections necessitates that President gives a speech during his inauguration. This speech was delivered after he was sworn in on the 29th of May 2015 at the presidential villa, in Abuja. Data was collected via the Punch newspaper, and it consists of twenty-eight paragraphs.

Method of data analysis

The qualitative research methodology would be adopted for the analysis of data. The selected theories of pragmatics, which are the speech acts theory by Austin (1962) and the co-operative principle of H.P Grice shall be deployed in the course of the analysis of this study. Austin's classifications of the illocutionary act/ speech act have been chosen out of other taxonomies of its likes because of the similarities between Austin's and other scholars like Seale's (1969), Bash and Harnish's (1979) and Osinsanwo's (2003) taxonomies. And these similarities have been subsumed into one, which is Austin's classification. The data is subjected to pragmatic analysis. From the data, a total number of twenty sentences were extracted and analysed with orientation from the selected theories. Also, each sentence will be labelled Speech 1, Speech 2, speech 3 and so forth for ease of reference. The choice of selecting just twenty statements was necessitated by the fact that studying the entire population would not be plausible in a study like this due to some logistic reasons, which include time. The purposive sampling technique was used to arrive at the

selection of this speech. The choice of this sampling technique was because it aids in the selection of “those elements that satisfy certain requirements or criteria critical to the research purpose” (Nworgu 108).

Analysis

The different types of speech acts found in the President’s speech will be identified here, going by Austin’s (1962) taxonomy of illocutionary acts force of the speech acts.

Analysis of the Types of Speech Acts in the Inaugural Speech

1. **Commissives:** commissive acts are those utterances that create an obligation, this obligation is usually created in the speaker, not in the hearer. In other words, it makes the speaker commit himself to a future course of action. Commissive utterances are’ promise, pledge, undertake etc. In the speech under analysis, there are several ways in which the president committed himself, by making promises to the people in almost all spheres, either directly or indirectly while some are made with conditions. Examples of commissives in the speech are:
Speech 1, example 1(Para. 8)

‘our neighbours in the sub-region and our African brethren should be rest assured that Nigeria under our administration will be ready to play any leadership role that Africa expects of it’

Speech 2, example 2 (para. 9)

I also wish to assure the wider international community of our readiness to co-operate and help to combat threats of...’

Speech 3, example 3 (Para. 13)

‘The law enforcing authorities will be charged to operate within the constitution’

Speech 4, example 4(Para. 13)

‘We shall rebuild and reform the public service to become more effective and more serviceable’

In the above examples, we can see how the president has promised Nigerians to keep his oath and be a good leader as expected and also to put in the necessities and priorities of the country, such as security and other things as is evident in the expressions above. In other words, the above statements are commissive speech acts that the President used to express his intention to strengthen democracy and good governance in the country. A commissive force commits the speaker to undertake the course of action proposed in the utterance’s

propositional content. The President, by uttering these commissive acts, places his party and his government under obligation to carry out these intentions.

2. **Expositives:** expositives are those utterances that either argue, concede, or reply to conversations and also illustrate, etc. Examples of expositives acts in the speech are:

Speech 5, example 1(Para.6)

‘I belong to everybody and I belong to nobody’

This is an example of an expositive act which denotes the final decision of the president. The above expression is used by the president to reply to those who say he has plans to turn Nigeria into an Islamic state. The President is not unaware of the negative tag of Islamic fundamentalist which some Nigerians have given to him. He used these utterances to dispel these fears and other such insinuations and to reassure Nigerians that he is going to be a fair and just leader who will dispense his duties dispassionately, disinterestedly and justly to all Nigerians, Muslims and Christians alike.

Speech 6, example 2 (Para. 10)

‘we can fix our problems’

The above utterance is a certainty, and also a reply to the co-text, (we must not succumb to hopelessness and defeatism) proceeding with this expression which talks about the issues Nigerians have been serving, and it also addresses the idea of succumbing to hopelessness and defeatism. The president then concluded that we can fix our problems.

Speech 7, example 3 (Para. 23)

‘No single cause can be identified to explain Nigerian’s poor economic performance over the years than the power situation’; ‘we will not allow this to go on

This is an expositive utterance that gives a response to many questions on the minds of Nigerians, concerning the poor power supply of the country. The President Strategically used the expositives to illustrate the problem of power generation and distribution and the effects on Nigerians It further gives an illustration as to why the power supply should not be as poor as t is.

3. **Verdictives:** Verdictives are those speeches that come in the form of a verdict. They are utterances that acquit, diagnose, convict, analyse or conclude. Verdictive statements are usually used by people in higher positions to make such utterances, such as doctors,

umpires, juries, judges and presidents. It is therefore no surprise that not just a few but many verdictive statements are found in the President's speech. Examples are:

Speech 8, example 1 (Para. 1)

'Nigerians have shown their commitment to democracy and are determined to entrench its culture'

This expression shows the view of the President regarding the Presidential election. With this expression, President Muhammadu Buhari is concluding that he is the winner and he is also happy about how people voted him in. While paragraph 2, is a conclusion on the President's part that the efforts of the ex-president Goodluck prevented the perceived tension in the country from becoming realistic. The president with this statement has acquitted his predecessor, Dr Ebele through the use of language Although, this is not overtly stated.

Speech 9, example 2 (Para. 2)

'with the support and co-operation, he has made it possible for us to show the world that despite the perceived tension in the land we can be a united people capable of doing what is right for our nation'

Para. 7 continue to exhibit the verdictive nature of the President when he says

Speech 10, example 3

'...there will be no paying off old scores. The past is prologue'

This expression is in regard to those who fear being punished as a result of their act of impunity. This expression infers that even if the President has an intention of punishing the defaulter, he may not be able to, considering the above utterance in the President's speech.

4. **Exercitives:** These are those utterances that discharge duties. Such utterances are made by those in power, they appoint, order, command etc. Examples of exercitive expressions in the speech are:

Speech 11, example 1 (Para. 10)

'We must not succumb to hopelessness and defeatism'

Speech 3, example 2 (Para. 13)

'The law enforcing authorities will be charged to operate within the constitution'

Speech 12, example 3 (Para. 14)

'... the legislative arm must keep to their brief of making laws...'

Speech 13, example 4 (Para. 22)

‘I call on the leadership and people in these areas to cooperate with...’

As much as the examples above are exercitive utterances, they are as well utterances that inform and give instructions and also persuade Nigerians.

5. **Behabitives:** Behabitives are those utterances that show the psychological state of mind of a speaker at a point in time. Behabitives utterances apologize, thank, condole, sympathize etc. The President has some acts of behabitives exhibited in his speech, it would therefore be necessary to take cognizance of these acts. Examples are:

Speech 14, example 1, (Para. 1)

‘I am immensely grateful to God who has preserved us to witness this day and this occasion
In the above example, the President acknowledges the fact that only God has the power of keeping him and people at the particular time he is giving this speech. This shows the state of mind of the president had been happy to witness the day of his inaugural speech. This utterance also gives an insight into the religious beliefs and mentality of the President. The utterance shows the fact that he is a believer in the fact that there is God but that the president is not a fanatic, in the sense that he could have decided to mention ‘Allah’ because of his religion, but he refused to do so.

Speech 15, example 2, (Para. 3)

‘I would like to thank the millions of our supporters who believed in us even when the cause seemed hopeless.

Speech 16, example 3, (Para. 8)

Here I would like to thank the governments and the people of Cameroon.

Speech 17, example 4, (Para. 4)

I thank all of you

In the above examples, the President used these behabitives acts to continue to communicate his gratitude to God for his grace, to his predecessor, for his spirit of sportsmanship, statesmanship and patriotic disposition; to the Nigerian citizenry, for their votes and to his party and their supporters, for their solidarity and support.

Analysis of the Communicative Principles in the Speech

The Proponent of the Co-operative Principle Grice, Identifies Four Conversational Maxims the maxim of quantity, quality, relation and manner. These maxims are norms to be followed in a conversation or while making an utterance. The following speeches reveal these maxims.

Speech 18, example 1, (Para. 15)

‘As far as the constitution allows me I will try to ensure that it is responsible and accountable governance at all levels of government in the country

In terms of the maxim of quantity, the utterance above is very informative just as required because it serves as an assurance to Nigerians that the sworn-in President will neither be judgmental nor biased in ruling the country. Assuring Nigerians is one of the things expected of President Buhari at the inauguration. In other words, the utterance above explains the intention of the speaker, leaving nothing unsaid. In terms of the maxim of quality, the utterance is true to the fact that the speaker is the President of a country, which makes him fit and able enough to carry out what he has said. The utterance also proves the fact that no one is above the law or constitution in a democratic society, that is why even the President seeks that as long as the constitution allows him, he will ensure certain things. In terms of the relation maxim, the speech above is related to the subject matter and also to the context in which it is uttered at an inauguration ceremony. In terms of manner, the above utterance is straightforward to comprehend, free of ambiguity.

Speech 19, example 2, (Para. 3)

‘I hope this act of graciously accepting defeat by the outgoing President will become the standard of political conduct in the country’

In terms of the maxim of quantity in the above utterance, the maxim of quantity is observed, in that the speaker did not say lesser or beyond what is expected, as regards the acknowledgement he accorded the outgoing President. Grammatically, the utterance makes a perfect sentence, and it makes a whole sense, such that it can be deduced from the utterance that a presidential election has just been concluded, the incumbent President has been defeated, and such has never happened in the country. Despite the numerous information the utterance carries, it did not go beyond a sentence. In terms of the maxim of quality, the utterance above is true to the fact that the outgoing President was defeated in the 2015 Presidential election. And this act is considered gracious on the basis that President Buhari emerging as the winner marks the first time in Nigeria that an incumbent President would be defeated in a general election by the leader of the

opposition. In other words, the speech above has elements of truth embedded in it and this follows up with the maxim of quality. In addition, the speaker is one who once led the country as a militant, and he is also a politician. He is for this reason assumed to have adequate facts about the country, as regards its political conduct of the country. In terms of the maxim of relation, the utterance above can be said to be related to the subject matter, which is the inaugural speech. The utterance is also related to the gathering in which the utterance was made, that is, the inauguration ceremony. The utterance is also related to the political aspect of the country to which it refers. In other words, the utterance above did not deviate from the maxim of relation. In terms of manner, the utterance above is clearly articulated in simple words and it is not in any form ambiguous.

example 3,

‘I appeal to employers and workers alike to unite in raising productivity so that everybody will have the opportunity to share in increased prosperity

In terms of quantity, the utterance above is very informative, not less or beyond information, and it conveys the intention of the speaker to those it concerns. In terms of quality, the utterance is true to the fact that there are employers and workers in the country, to whom the President directs his utterance. In terms of relation, the above utterance is related to the goings in the country in that, the President must address employers and workers, both in the private and public sectors, for the benefit of every citizen. In terms of Manner, the above speech lacks ambiguity and obscurity, there, it is quickly and broadly understood by readers.

Some other utterances that followed communicative principles in the speech are:

example 4, (Para. 10)

‘We must not succumb to hopelessness and defeatism

Speech 20, example 5, (Para. 20)

‘Boko Haram is a mindless, godless group who are as far away from Islam as one can think of’

Summary of Findings

This study, so far, examined the speech act types and communicative principles used in the inaugural speech of President Muhammadu Buhari to establish their different roles in meaning negotiation. It is an exercise that addresses the academic lacuna in political discourse. Amongst the findings of the study are:

The Inaugural speech is characterized by different speech act types such as Verdictive acts, Expositive, Behabitive, Excercitive, and commissive acts which manifest the following functions: concluding, replying, arguing, thanking, ordering, commanding, appointing, and promising. This is in line with Maulana (2017) who observes that the political speeches of Donald Trump reflect the types of speech acts types in the theory of Austin, which are: verdictives, excercitives, commissives, behavitives and expositive acts.

The study reveals that different communicative principles manifest in the inaugural speech of President Muhammadu Buhari: they are the maxim of quantity, the maxim of quality, the maxim of relation and the maxim of manner for communicating politically sensitive meaning. This is also in line with the view of Issa and Ahmed (2019) who argue that the maxims of speech are probably controlled by the political speakers sometimes and is being uncontrolled at other times.

Conclusion

The study has attempted a pragmatic analysis of the 2015 inaugural speech of President Muhammadu Buhari with insight from Speech act theory to communicative principles. We discovered from the study that in the process of performing a particular act, other acts are being performed through our identification of the illocutionary acts in the speech. The analysis of the speech acts and the communicative principles employed by the President has dug deep into meanings in the speech and has enabled the understanding of various communicative functions and communicative norms used in the process of making a speech, especially, political speech. The study of President Muhammadu Buhari's inaugural speech from the perspectives of Austin's speech act theory and Grice's communicative principles has justified the fact that language is a very vital tool in politics and is used to persuade, instruct, promise, expose and inform, at the beginning of new governance.

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