

A PRAGMA-STYLISTIC ANALYSIS OF PIUS ADESANMI'S SELECTED COLUMN ARTICLES IN *SAHARA REPORTERS* ONLINE MEDIUM

RITA BOSSAN

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AND DRAMA

KADUNA STATE UNIVERSITY ,KADUNA

AND

GIDEON OYEDEJI

IBRAHIM BADAMASI BABANGIDA UNIVERSITY

LAPAI, NIGER STATE.

Abstract

The use of language has assumed different forms and shapes to communicate both extricate and intricate messages. Messages are basically doing certain things when appropriately situated in an institutionalized context and actual speech events. Media texts especially columns communicate tacit meaning(s) which are often misconstrued or are not properly assayed, thus, readers are plunged into meaning dilemma which hampers the effective communication of messages deployed in the column articles. This engagement is ergo; set out to elucidate methods of interpreting columns articles by explicating the interaction of the language means and the inextricable role of the contextual nuances in column interpretation. Also, this study underscores what column articles are used to do in the print and online media. A random purposive sampling technique was used to select five (5) column articles of Pius Adesanmi in *Sahara Reporters'* online medium. The articles selected basically deal with corruption related issues. The Appurtenances of a modified Jacob Mey's Pragmatic Act theory and style as choice from variant and competing forms are used as the approach for this study. This study submits that the columns are exposing, indicting, defaming and castigating the corrupt political leaders who parade themselves as the representatives of the people. Also, the pract of challenging and propelling the citizens to take informed decisions pervade the columns. The study also divulged the various stylistic devices and expressive means used in the text and their functional values were explicated especially as they aid the pragmatic act performed.

Introduction

Column articles constitute a veritable means of communicating expressive opinions about socio-political issues in any society. Columnists bring issues into perspective and such issues are adequately analysed such that can chart a course of action for concerned parties. However, columnists' disquisitions often accrue novel interpretations and misinterpretations. Readers are often plunged into meaning impasses as to the actual interpretation of the messages communicated in columns. This is due largely to the expressive means utilised and the often unexplained contextual issues that undercut columns. In the media world, different means have

been adopted to communicate to the readership in the society. The column is one of these means. A column is a regular commentary that represents an individual's opinion on issues, policies, bills, socio-cultural issues etc. These usually cut-across themes of corruption, activism, economy, religion, and socio-cultural values to mention but a few. There exist therefore, persistent styles that different columnists employ in effective communication. It must be critically noted also that beyond a mere commentary, columns are used to do things. Hence, there are different acts that pervade column articles, including those of Adesanmi.

Since, communication plays a very cogent role in the facilitation of growth and development in every society, people communicate through several means and one of these principal means of human communication is the use of language (Gideon Oyedele, 1). Language use in the society has attracted different manipulations to communicate both cryptic and ostensible issues in a manner that is "suigeneris". According to Halliday's meta-function of language, language plays three major roles which are ideational – use of language to represent our experience of the material world; interpersonal – use of language to maintain social relationships; and textual – use of language to create text of different kinds (39). The latter in the meta-function has particularly attracted a lot of attention perhaps more than the other two, and its use has assumed series of forms and functions especially in the media. To effectively communicate, it is inevitable to adopt a specific style and style rules the world. This is because everything is style.

The manipulation of language has thus created crucible engagement for textual analyst, in that, the location of certain expressive means and their interaction with the context communicate different and usually covert meanings which readers do not always divulge. Researches in this array have relapsed the analysis of the interface that exist between lexical elements employed in communication and their corresponding contextual issues that aid a holistic and congruent construction of meanings from texts, especially columns. According to John Acheoah, language use is a linguistic crafting which has pragmatic undertone. The crafting of language to communicate and the pragmatic undertone are therefore the in-thing (22). Concentration of researches has focused on the interaction of stylistic expressive means and pragmatics in other discourses (e.g. Ayeomoni 2005, Agu 2015, Karanje 2015, Acheoah 2015). This research is saddled with unearthing the various stylistic expressive means deployed in Adesanmi's column articles and how these expressive means interact with contextual issues to communicate overt and covert meanings. Also, the pragmatic acts performed by Adesanmi's columns are brought to light.

The modified Pragmatic Acts Theory used as the theoretical insight for the study provides strong elements that aid the explication of the interaction that holds between contextual issues and expressive means in texts.. This model of Pragmatic Acts theory incorporates stylistic expressive means and other elements that are apt for the analysis of columns. This model will pave way for researchers who wish to expound how language means intermingle with context to communicate tacit and ostensible messages.

Brief Biography of Pius Adesanmi

Professor Pius Adesanmi of the Department of English Language and Literature at the Institute of African Studies at Carleton University is a lecturer and an ace writer. He teaches African Studies in Carleton University in Canada. He writes for *The Premium Times* and *Sahara Reporters* and other media including social media. Since he moved to Ottawa in Canada,

Adesanmi has been a consistent social critic and public affairs commentator. His views and opinions are always stunning and often accrue few followers.

Concept of Style and Stylistics

The study of style surfaced in 1960s, and it has continued to attract intellectual attention from different scholars and different vantages of linguistic studies. Several meanings and theories of stylistics exist in linguistic scholarship (Crystal and Derek 1992, and Wales 2001). While some view stylistics as a branch of linguistics that deals with the study of varieties of language, its properties, principles behind choice, dialogue, accent, length and register (Bradford Richard), other scholars opine that it attempts to establish principles capable of explaining the idiosyncratic use of language and various societal variables that characterize use of language (Turner Mark, 1973, Birch Dina 1997). Narrowly, the study of the peculiarities that undercut human communication are studied and categorized in stylistic study so as to ascertain consistent usage in specific fields. This is done using linguistic appurtenances. On a wider perspective, the study of style goes beyond a mere categorization of peculiar use of language. The study of style delves into unearthing the functional value of peculiar use of language in an institutionalized societal context.

All these arguments point to the very fact that style is important to the study of stylistics (Babajide 2002, Romano 2000). The word style refers to the choice of words/expressions in a given context by a given person, for a given purpose, and so on. Thus, studies on style have shown that style is “the selection and arrangement of linguistic features which are open to choice” (De Vito Joseph 358). Accordingly, a writer’s idiosyncratic way of expressing himself or herself is an offshoot of his or her personality. These choices are often determined by the intention of the language user and the audience, however, effective communication is the pivot, and this is why Crystal David and Davy Derek opine that style is the “effectiveness of a mode of expression”. (994). Stylistics therefore is the study of style. Although the status of style itself has been debated by different scholars, it occupies a central position in the study of language use in the society. It accounts for how effective communication takes place.

There are different approaches to the study of style and each of these approaches x-rays the use of language in peculiar way to communicate effectively and to send certain cryptic messages. Style as deviation focuses on the description of the variations and deviations from the norms of the operational language. According to Emmanuel Shardama and Ibrahim Mohammed “Stylistics is the description and analysis of the variability of linguistic forms in actual language use” (63). Style study also delves into explaining the idiosyncratic and constant forms of writers and how this authorial signet aids effective communication. Style as choice is a cogent approach adopted for this study. This approach to style tends to provide information about how the user of language deploys language effectively to communicate to the people and the means and modes selected for effective communication. According to Osundare, style as choice is the most author-oriented because it goes beyond the arrays of physicalities of language use to the various dynamics and imperatives that style offers. David Crystal and Davy Derek assert that language users make choices out of competing forms to communicate meanings to readers (10). These choices are a function of pre-verbal choices that writers have made. The pre-verbal choices and the intention, and other factors determine the verbal choices that writers make. Spencer in Osundare argues however that choices made by writers are determined rather by the language

resource, chosen dialect, his genre and the purpose of the writer. This study therefore explores the choices Adesanmi has made to communicate effectively.

Pragmatic Stylistics

Doing a mere stylistic analysis in order to account for the unique use of language using some linguistic tools is too reductive and will only give a quantitative analysis of occurrences. Pragmatic stylistics is a branch of stylistics that studies how pragmatic issues constitute stylistic devices, and how stylistic devices aid the felicitousness of utterances in an institutionalized context. This variety of stylistics shows the meeting point between pragmatics and stylistics, that is, how pragmatic resources, such as performative and speech acts can be employed to achieve stylistic effects.

Since pragmatics itself deals with what language use does in context, and by context we mean Context of Culture (COC) and Context of Situation (COS) as proposed by Dell Hymes, the interpretation of discourse therefore, hinges on this element. Pragmatic issues like presupposition, context, Speech Acts, Implicatures, and Inference are issues of concern to pragmatists. Verdonk defines pragmatics as the analysis of a distinctive expression and description of its purpose and effect (28). The pragmatic meaning of a text can be recovered through the context that produces the text. It is the realization that context is necessary in the exploration of the pragmatic meaning that guides a language user or text producer into employing appropriate linguistic resources in the text in order to achieve the stylistic meaning through what Ayodabo refers to as "...the degree of effectiveness of an utterance (herein referred to as text) in relation to the learners (or readers) at the perlocutionary level." (138). But for the perlocutionary level to be achieved, we are informed by the speech act theory that the illocutionary acts must have satisfied certain felicity conditions.

In pragmatic Stylistics, how elements of pragmatics are deployed in textual analysis is the purview of stylisticians. This study will therefore adopt the Pragmatic Act Theory as proposed by Jacob Mey for its analysis.

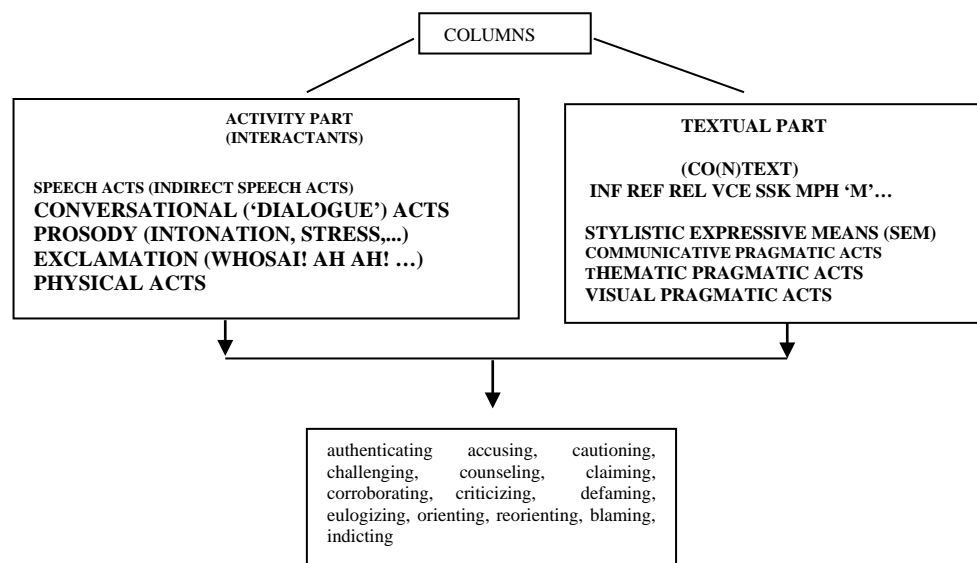
Theoretical Underpinning

The theoretical framework for the data analysis for this study is Jacob Mey's pragmatic act theory and stylistics. Pragmatic act theory is a peculiar approach to explain the manner pragmemes are represented in speech situations. Mey's criticism against the speech act theory is that in order for speech acts to be effective, they have to be situated (Kecskes 2894). Jacob Mey opines that both pragmeme and speech act actively create the situation in which they are realized. According to him, "there are no speech acts, but only situated speech acts, or instantiated pragmatic acts" (211). As a result of this, the emphasis is not on conditions and rules for an individual speech act, but on characterizing a general situational prototype (what Mey calls a pragmeme) that can be executed in the situation.

Mey's objection to the speech act theory is on the insistence on the abstract idealization of the intentional speaker and hearer and not on social reality (Francis Leo Hoyer & Kaiser Ruth 57 cited in Oluseun Ogungbe). Jacob Mey argues that the speaker/writer and listener/reader cannot be isolated from societal reality. Speech Act Theory is incongruent and not holistic. Mey radically

explicates on para-linguistic features and other resources that account for the appropriateness of language (by language we mean every mode of communication) use in a situated context. Also, discourse, that is, language in action is not limited to utterances alone and the use of performative verbs as proposed by Austin and expanded by Searle. Other language resources also do things. These are the things Mey has incorporated into what he calls Pragmatic Act theory. We therefore propose in this study that Pragmatic act is not an extension of Speech Act as many scholars feel. Pragmatic Act theory is a theory of pragmatics of its right.

A model of Pragmatic Theory has been developed in this study which is suitable for the analysis of the interaction of stylistics and pragmatic elements in column articles. This model has input from the works of (Mey 2001, Osundare 2003, Odebunmi 2008, Ogungbe 2012). The model incorporates some categories which other models do not have, especially stylistic elements that possess potentials for pragmatic acting or aiding practs performed in columns.



Modified Schema of Mey (2001) Pragmatic Act Theory

From the schema above it is clear that the column (pragmeme) anchors two categories; activity and textual parts. The activity part shows actual instance of language use which can come in any of the forms – speech act which is indirect in the recent trend of communication especially by columnists. It can simultaneously take the forms of dialogue with the use of turn taking and psychological acts. During speech events, interactants leverage on the linguistics and extra-linguistic affordances to communicate. The prosodic features as small as they are perform specific acts when they are properly situated. Exclamation has been introduced in this study to classify certain infinitesimal utterances that are used in a communicative event to communicate certain things. Acheoah (2015) asserts that exclamatory words express strong emotions which invariably perform acts that are understood in context. The textual part provides a strong basis for the production and interpretation of utterances. Context plays a prominent role in how meaning is construed in texts. There must be an interaction of the activity part and the textual part before there can be the pract or allopract. In essence, the interactants hang heavily on the context of situation and context of culture in the production of a specific speech act. Also,

interlocutors should be equipped with contextual nuances such as inference, reference, share situational knowledge, metaphor and meta-pragmatic joker for utterances to be appropriate.

Methodology

The data used for this study are obtained from the column articles of Pius Adesanmi, a consistent columnist of Sahara Reporters online medium. The study adopted a random purposive sampling technique to select five articles specifically on corruption related issues in Nigeria. Random purposive sampling is used because the research only seeks to look at how pragmatic issues constitute stylistic devices in the articles of Pius Adesanmi with the intent of exploring what he does with his column and use this pedantically to reach a generalization on the roles of columns in the media and by extension, in the society, and to divulge an aspect of media representation of the corruption issue in the fulfillment of its watch dog and communicative roles. Jacob Mey's (2001) Pragmatic Act Theory and style as choice were adopted as the theoretical underpinning for this study. The lead paragraphs of the selected articles are subjected to the analytical appurtenances of theoretical insights so that adequate contextual background will be provided for readers. The various stylistic expressive means deployed in each text are outline and explained. Text by text analysis is favoured in this study so that the various contextual issues can be easily construed; hence the practs and expressive means can be understood.

Data Analysis

TEXT 1, March 16, 2016. Title: Ladies & Gentlemen, Please Rise Up to Recognise the Presence of Thieves

The Nigerian-Canadian civil servant, Nellie Meyshak, spent years working for the government of Ontario. Not one accusation of stealing and corruption. Then she goes back home to work in Nigeria and steals from Nigerian pensioners humongous amount of money...

Explicit Pract: informing, stating, commenting

Implicit Pract: indicting, accusing

Adesanmi used this column not only to expose the corruption of Nellie Meyshak, he has also exposed how corrupt public servants are celebrated in the society. The text explicitly informs readers of prevailing issues and the antecedent of the personae, states obvious facts in the political scene of Nigeria and makes some comments on the issue of corruption after bringing the instance of Nellie Mayshak into perspective. It is this explicit practs that paved the way to communicate certain cryptic messages such as indicting other political officials and in fact accusing all politicians of having a "Skeleton in their cupboards".

The general structure of the column is chatty and has short successive paragraphs. Also, the infusion of conversation in the rhetorical sequence of the text aids easy comprehension and the reorientation of the readers. One very general truth in Nigeria is that, we don't ask questions of how people made their money; yet, they are celebrated and given adequate recognition in public functions. The religious institutions that should check their activities also celebrate these thieves. This column has therefore, succeeded in disorienting readership of the attitude towards thieves

by exposing them and reorienting the citizens on how to deal with public thieves who parade themselves as the representatives of the people.

The explicit practice of exposing and informing pervades the column. This is to show the general public of the harm this character has done. The implicit practice of propelling the readers to take practical actions are also evident.

Stylistic Devices and Expressive Means

Suspense: This is the syntactic arrangement of discourse in a way that the theme is delayed to a specific location within the same matrix clause. Suspense is also a device to whet the appetite of readers such that the attention of readers is held spell bound.

- That Nigerian-Canadian civil servant, Nellie Meyshak, spent years working for the government of Ontario. Not one accusation of stealing and corruption.
- Come with me
- For Nigerian with criminal proclivities living and working in the Western world, that is the proposition that Nigeria constantly fixes in your consciousness: come back home and join our commonwealth of crime without punishment. Come back home and become an instant billionaire. Here, we do not ask questions about how you made your money.

Hyperbole: Hyperbole is a deliberate exaggeration of an idea.

- Then she goes back home in Nigeria and steals from Nigerian pensioners humongous amounts of money that would have crippled the economy of Ontario had she stolen a fraction of such amounts while she was there.

Asyndeton: This is the use of covert connectors in expression.

- But. She. Did. Not. Steal.

Personification: This is the transfer of animate quality to inanimate entities.

- Canada did not work for her.
- Eaten up by federal and provincial taxes
- Proposition that Nigeria constantly fixes in your consciousness

Paradox: In paradox, a speaker makes a statement which is seemingly absurd but contains a fundamental truth in close examination.

- Canada did not work for her.
- Where thieves feel valued and recognized in the context of societal mores and mentality, no level of leadership or institutional enhancement will work.

Symbolism: This is the use of symbols to depict significant meanings or ideas

- Go up in smoke every month.

Parallelism: This is a figure of speech characterized by a syntactic arrangement of similar structures in succession.

- That Nellie did not steal in Ontario
- That she has been suspended is a good start.

Expletive: This is a vulgar expression that is used for specific effects.

- Nellie Mayshak was already a thief when working in Toronto
- 2015-2016 class of theft and corruption indictees

Epigram: This is a terse expression that expresses general truth credited to an individual.

- The day you develop the courage to stop recognizing the presence of known thieves in your public and social ceremonies, we would have started our long journey to civilization.

These figurative expressions contribute in significant ways to the pragmatic acts of his text. The use of expletives is quite instrumental in aiding the practice of exposing and indicting the personae of this article. The use of epigram further buttresses the fact that the Nigerian State still supports corrupt practices. The Parallel constructions make for interesting reading as the flow of thought through an equal ranking of syntactic expressive means is aptly deployed. Furthermore, the interaction of the stylistic expressive means and the contextual nuances in this text helps to communicate effectively and, this overtly and covertly aids the practice. Columnists ostensibly take a leaf from news reportage to communicate meanings beyond reports often by the employment of language expressive means and the exploitation of the background knowledge that the interlocutors have about the immediate situation and remote issues. Thus, the felicity of this text, is based on the various presuppositions and Shared situation knowledge that readers have.

TEXT 2, March 11, 2016. Title: B'AjaBa N Gbo

Seantor Dino Melaye is a tragic commentary on Nigeria Society. No, scratch that, he is an indictment on Nigerian society. He is one of those reasons why I have argued over the years that Nigeria's membership of the 21st century civilization should be suspended by the international community until we have shown sufficient evidence that we are even minimally aware of the civilization and modernity.

Explicit Pract: Commenting, challenging, stating, condemning

Implicit Pract: castigating, demeaning, exposing, indicting

This text basically explicates and x-rays the notion of big *manism* in Nigeria as a dreadful method to demean the citizens through both physical assaults and psychological terrorism. Adesanmi's opinion is not only geared towards informing and commenting, this column is doing some other things. The text preponderantly performs implicit practice of propelling the budding generation to come out of a system that supports and consistently romances mediocrity, and instigating a social action against the politicians who are using national wealth as a means of psychologically hampering the thought of younger generation, the effect of which is shaping the thought the budding generation towards making national wealth a means to become a "big man".

The style the author adopts by alluding to Senator John Edward of USA and a consistent comparison further question the statehood of Nigeria and its membership in the 21st century modernity. These practices performed are aided by the language means deployed in the text. Language affordances provide language users with the resources to communicate depth of meaning to readers. Adesanmi with the use of English as an operational language and Nigerian vernaculars communicates both lucid and tacit messages.

Stylistic Devices and Expressive Means

Metaphor

- Senator Deno Melaye is a tragic commentary on Nigerian society.
- He is an indictment on Nigeria society
- If you are a big man, the ordinary Nigerian is your floor mat and your toilet paper rolled into one.
- Okorocha is another misguided oaf ruining a state in Nigeria and doing big man

Hyperbole

- After all, because more than 90% of Nigerians live above their means
- His path litter the internet
- State is mass shooting people like that Biafra proster

Metonymy

- Brother visits you seeking explanations.
- Was having a blast
- Not white

Alliteration

- Big Brother

Expletives

- But he is also a wife molester
- Nigeria's rotten senate
- Misguide oaf running a state in Nigeria
- Two Nigerians brutes
- Useless journalists!

Allusion

- Does anybody still remember Senator John Edwards who nearly became...

Simile

- Woman beater like Dino Melaye

Synecdoche

- On the floor of

Polysyndeton

- Badgered and battered and bloodied
- Adulates and worships you.
- World and bark and harass

Stylistic inversion

- He is of a very violent disposition

Acronym

- NAFDAC

Hyperbole

- A good laugh

Nigerianism

- Big man

Babarism/ pidgin

- You no get respect
- B'AjaBa N Gbo

Antomonasia

- An almighty Nigerian senator

Idiophone

- Gagra

Parallelism

- To protest, to heckle, to proclaim ...
- This is what citizenship is in civilization ... This is what citizenship is in modernity... This is why I can neither sleep nor rest...

Right from the title of the text to the conclusion, it is ostensible that Adesanmi is quite critical of the nature of the social fabric of the Nigeria Society. In fact, the title is quite suggestive. The meaning of **“B’aja N BaGbo”** is “what else should a dog do if not to bark”. The pragmatic meaning of this assertion gives readers a sense that some public officers lack regard for human right and it shows in their handling of their employers – the populace. Also, the shared situational knowledge that pervades the Nigerian politics is that of a wide gap existing between the proletariat and the bourgeois. Because of this gap, there is a psychological act that consistently put the proletariat at the mercy of those in power. The use of antonomasia **“the almighty Nigerian Senator”** (emphasis mine) further corroborates this fact. Also, the simile used in the text “woman beater like Dino Melaye” shows the extent to which some political officials demean human right and even physically assaults the proletariats. This act is against the 21st century civility. The expression aids the practice of exposing and condemning the actions of some Nigeria political officials. Other figurative expressions are deliberately deployed to buttress the practice more lucidly.

TEXT 3, APRIL 21, 2016. Title: Sarakius and The Fate of Sodom

And when his Son and the Holy Ghost has come into his presence, the Lord opened his mouth and spake: “the cries of the people of Sodom, who we have punished this past fifty years because of their evil and corrupt ways have reached up to me. We hath sent our angels to find but ten righteous souls among them but there was none for the land of Sodom is peopled by thieves and liars and hypocrites and the covetous. We have punished them with darkness for fifty years. It is meet now that we take pity on them and bring them from darkness to light if they repent and change their ways.”

Explicit Pract: Commenting, stating**Implicit Pract: Directing, exposing, defaming, indicting**

The text brings to fore in Elizabethan English the protracting litigation of Saraki's corruption case at the Code of Conduct Bureau on issues bordering on false declaration of assets and other malfeasance. The author has used this text to further expose why it has ceaselessly become difficult for the culpability of the senate president. The style adopted by the author in this column is quite interesting. The use of the early modern English in the 21st century to explain any concept or a situation is pragmatic as well as stylistic. Adesanmi is typical in the portrayal of Nigeria living far behind the 21st century modernism, hence; the use of this language variety to further buttress his stand. He made a lot of metaphoric biblical allusions to drive his points. Implicit pract of exposing and indicting is preponderant in the text. This shows that the column is not only to inform and critique but to make Nigerian citizens see that the litigation process of Saraki has become political; the need to take social actions becomes imperative. Nigeria is as recalcitrant as the people in it. Adesanmi explains that since the elders who are supposed to bring this man to book have soiled hands, the litigation process will continue until he finishes his tenure or the case is squashed.

Stylistic Devices and Expressive Means**Neologism**

- Sarakius

Antonomasia

- The lord
- The son and Holy Ghost

Symbolism

- Thunder and disease
- Blood and fire

Litotes

- Shekels but I bought fish
- Shekels but I bought assess and horses
- Our small victory shall give us

Biblical allusion

- When he takes a donkey to Jerusalem
- Repent and change thine ways and Jehovah shalt take pity
- We are of the generation of those who sat on the fence of Jericho

Parallel construction

- And the hearts...
- And the people...
- And the dissenters

Apposition

- The land names Sarakius the moneychanger

Epithet

- Unrighteous thief

Simile

- Temple like all the other moneychangers

Metonymy

- Throne of judgment

Irony

- And the people kept vigil ...

It should be noted that the pragmemes in this text are a product of a societal context. It is not a mere *ad nauseam* to opine that this piece represents the voice and opinion not just of Adesanmi but of a section of well-meaning Nigerians who are dissatisfied with the way Saraki's case at CCT (which is represented as "Throne of judgment") is being handled. The text x-rays the usual "justice delayed, justice denied syndrome" of the Nigerian judicial system. The stylistic choices and patterns of this text exemplify the event that happened in Genesis 19:1 – 29 when Abraham had to intercede for Sodom and Gomorrah which had been earmarked for destruction. Maximal meaning will only be apt if readers have a shared situational knowledge not just of the prevailing socio-political issues in Nigeria but of the content of Genesis 19. The use of parallelism in the text further gives the text rhythm and a resonant quality. Other expressive means used also contribute to the felicity of the piece. For instance the ironic "and the people kept vigil" communicates the fact that people are waiting to see the the conclusion of this prolonged process.

Text 4, June 29, 2016. Title: How to Fight Corruption Fight Back

By now, it should be visible to the blind and audible to the deaf (apologies to Patrick Obahiagbon) within the Buhari administration that corruption does not intend to limit her war against the anti-corruption war to the mere deployment of the enormous resources at its disposal. All the guys in the dock have been stealing massively from Nigeria for a very long time so they have limitless financial resources and they are pumping such massively into a well-honed strategy aimed at delegitimizing anti-corruption war.

Explicit Pract: commenting, exposing,

Implicit Pract: indicting, lamenting, challenging

The prevalent explicit pract of indicting, commenting and exposing underscores reasons why the author wrote this column in a simple down to earth language. The text also performs the implicit pract of exposing some anti-corruption detractors. The title of the column (How to Fight Corruption Fight Back) is suggestive of this fact. The implicit pract of challenging is also evident to propel the president to first be an example of the anti-corruption fight and be apt and tenacious in bringing corrupt leaders to book. The column is well situated because it came when the anti-

corruption war was at the peak and when a section of well-meaning Nigerians sought justice for corrupt leaders. The pragmeme propels Nigerians to take social actions against the regime of Nigerian leaders who have stolen heavily from this country. The author also uses different stylistic devices to communicate effectively. Adesanmi has a way of creatively using expletives to describe the public servants who have become vile in their thinking and corrupt in their action. This is used to appeal to the emotion of the readers on the need to take radical steps to deemphasizing the philosophy around the Nigerian politics –the philosophy of sapping the people to get rich.

Stylistic Devices and Expressive Means

Pun

- How to fight corruption fight's back
- He is being advised wrongly or he is advising himself wrongly

Oxymoron

- It should be visible to the blind and audible to the deaf

Personification

- Fight corruption fight back
- corruption does not intend to limit her war
- When ethnicity is always there to be mobilized for free in Nigeria

Hyperbole

- Saraki for instance has spared no naira in his massively-funded operations against the anti-corruption war.
- ...will bring down the roof unless
- We have spent more than two decades calculating everything Babangida could have earned legitimately in his entire military career.

Irony

- That is their funeral
- If you are in the red, you start paying debts

Synecdoche

- why is understanding that the position of these men has become untenable rocket science for the president
- hiding behind a finger

Metonymy

- trying to buy every available voice in Nigeria
- That is the way to cut off oxygen supply to the enemies

Simile

- Strutting around like peacocks

Expletives

- In Chief's Kwashiorkor's reasoning
- Chief Oyegun's unbelievable infantilism

Barbarism

- Ndiigbo

Aposiopesis: this is device that is used to allow readers to work out the meaning of an expression from a terse expression which usually suggests the meaning.

- Behold the persecution of your son **by em...em...**

Antonomasia

- Fulani cattle owner from Daura
- A Trumpian wall of silence around the growing...

Parallelism

- Did you forge documents or not? Are you corrupt or not?

Chiasmus

- It starts somewhere and sometime. It must start everywhere since 1914 to be acceptable
- Nothing must be done about anything until you do all things about everything at once.

Metaphor

- Caterwauling hordes...

Adesanmi's deployment of special expressions in this text contributes immensely to the construction of meaning. The play on words "fighting corruption fight back" suggests typically that this text principally seeks to expose saboteurs of the anti-corruption war as there are certain ethnic nationalities or groups who feel that the anti-corruption war is lopsided. The use of barbarism "**Ndigbo**" and the antonomasia "**Fulani cattle owner from Daura**" suggests the fact that these two "powerful" ethnic nationalities are at a loggerhead. These expressions and the shared situational knowledge of the old "fight" that exists between the "Ndigbos" and "Fulani Cattle owners" aid the reader to infer that the text is basically used to expose this unsettled rivalry and further portray the tribal chauvinism that still exists in the nation as a bane for sustainable national development. Also, the complex nature of Nigeria has contributed to the growing corrupt practice and nipping it has become a crucible. The use of chiasmus further exposes the ideas those fighting the anti-corruption moves of the Buhari Administration. This is why the metaphorical description of these set of people is apt.

Text 5, July 19, 2016. Title: Thought On the Indictment of the Nigerian Army for the Zaria Massacre

Not content with opening fire on members of the Shi'ite Muslim group they said blocked the route of the General Buratai their boss – yes, I saw that video and I still do not see anything that tear gas could not have solved in the circumstance ...

Explicit Pract: Commenting, stating, exposing

Implicit Pract: indicting, castigating,

This column x-rays the laxity of the president (Gen. Muhammadu Buhari) on issues that revolve around the incessant gruesome activities of the Nigerian Army in civilian space. Nobody seems to be questioning their expressive power in mauling civilians in Nigeria. Adesanmi's pract of explicitly exposing the actions of the military and the inaction of the president are copious of the

country still living behind the 21st century civilization. Also, implicitly, the text directs the appropriate quarters to rise up to take specific actions that posterity will make reference to.

Furthermore, the situation around this text is dicy, in that, taking a position will largely depend on personal ideology about the role of the military vis-a-vis the civility of the populace and the 21st century modernity. The Nigerian state seems to lack adequate knowledge of what the disposition of the military should be on civic responsibilities and matters of civility. President Buhari and Buratai seem to have engaged in some fishy and suspicious endeavours which need to be investigated. This is suggested by his audible silence on the issue.

Stylistic Devices and Expressive Means

Zeugma

- The gruesomeness of this 21st century crime against humanity was perhaps only equaled by the inhuman gruesomeness of the public acclamation which greeted the act.

Hyperbole

- It was worse than mass hypnosis
- ...dead in an ocean of voices lionizing Buratai.

Personification

- Nigeria hysteria married national orgy in lionizing Buratai as a hero

Litotes

- The Army did not even have to lift a finger to justify or rationalize the sorrow, tears, and blood they visited on innocent civilians in their sleep in Zaria.

Aposiopesis

- Nothing doing.

Repetition

- I screamed and screamed and screamed.

Nonce Words

- Buharist
- Buratalization

Expletives

- Some of the idiots who justified the massacre in Zaria
- Shior.

Barbarism

- *Efulefus*

Stylistic Inversion or Anastrophe

- He it was who authorized the operation

Oxymoron

- I expect him to greet this with silence as he has done so many other issues

Parallelism

- I expect him to greet this with silence as he has done so many other issues. I expect him not to act on Buratai. I expect him not to even talk to us.
- This episode is an occasion for sober reflection. This episode is an occasion for national self – teaching.

- Tell yourself that soldiers have no powers of arrest. Tell yourself that soldiers are in violation of the rules...

Allusion

- We suffered more than three decades of military brutalization

Metonymy

- ..., the school pupils he often scolds
- Military uniforms have no place in civilian spaces

The contextual underpinning of this text informs the cautious language use and the expressive means deployed by the author. Religious issues are slippery ground for scholars. However, Adesanmi only makes a case for the citizens irrespective of their ethnic and religious affiliations. He does this by making clear statements about the role of the military in civilian space. Expressions that suggest this are the parallel expressions that litter the piece. Also, the nonce word “Buratalization” coined from “Buratai” the chief of army Staff and “brutalization” suggest that Adesanmi only uses this text to expose and condemn the actions of the military on the Zaria Massacre and the inaction of the President on the issue. The text also portrays how public officers and military officers use power to psychologically condition the behaviour of the citizenry...**The school pupils he often scolds** foregrounds this fact. (Emphasis mine)

Findings

The analysis of the texts of this study has shown that columns are published not only to comment on socio-political issues but also used to question, criticise, castigate, indict and propel readers to take specific and social actions. One can therefore, conveniently assert that columns are language in action performing specific tasks as this study has shown. All the titles of these columns are foregrounded in a conspicuous way. Some of the devices deployed aided the effectiveness of the pragmemes. The explicit pragmatic act of exposing the ills of the government officials is preponderant in the texts. This is done basically to implicitly criticise and reorient both the officials and the budding generation to take informed actions.

One interesting attribute of media text is that the first paragraph usually captures the theme of the whole text. Most often, the topic does not give a clue to the content of the whole text especially in column articles. However, some columnists, depending on issues and choices, delay the lead paragraph to somewhere else within the text. Adesanmi’s consistent pattern is in tandem with the canonical convention of a typical journalese i.e. the lead paragraph serves as the fulcrum for the entire text. Adesanmi’s column articles discuss the bane of the Nigerian society – corruption. His views on corruption are critical and quite encompassing. His opinions are objective as well as subjective; perhaps because he is not in Nigeria and that he is not interested in partisan politics. This actually may be also true for other columnists in the media.

This study also found that the deployment of stylistic devices in Adesanmi’s columns is deliberate to: communicate effectively by appealing to the emotion of the reader; create a mental imagery of certain ideas; give his works beauty; and de-familiarise certain ideas.

Conclusion

Language use has been manipulated in various ways to achieve various things. Column articles which are a regular feature in the print and online media have been veritably used in exposing and commenting objectively on socio-political issues with the intent of ensuring that the citizenry take informed decisions. It should therefore, be noted that columns as instantiated utterance are doing specific things. Like this study has submitted, Adesanmi saddled his opinions with a lot of explicit practice of exposing and defaming the corrupt leaders with the use of expletives. Implicitly, the columns are used to propel the citizens to rise up to take their rightful place in the country. Adesanmi is also of the view that Nigeria is still living behind the 21st century modernity hence; his opinions and the opinions of other columnists have driven the Nigerian government into taking issues of civility serious. Also, this research has brought to light the interface between pragmatic and stylistics. It follows that, stylistic expressive means are heavily hinged on the contextual nuances that produce them. This suggests that stylistic devices cannot be effectively or sufficiently analysed without being situated. Thus, the modified Pragmatic Act Theory is apt for the analysis of the interaction of pragmatics and stylistics in texts of varying kinds.

Works Cited

- Abioye, Oyediji Gideon. Language, Meaning and Visual Imagery in Newspaper Political Cartoons: A Multimodal Discourse Analysis. Unpublished undergraduate Long Essay, IBB University, Lapai, 2013.
- Agu, Innocent. "A Linguistic Stylistics Analysis of Newspaper Reportage". *International Journal of Humanities and Social Studies*. 2(8) 20-27, 2015. Print.
- Austin, John. Langshaw. *How to do things with words*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962. Print.
- Ayeomoni Moses Omoniyi, A Linguistic-Stylistic Investigation of the Language of the Nigerian Political Elite. *Nebula* 2(2):153 – 168, 2005. Print.
- Ayodabo, Joel Olatunde. "A Pragma-Stylistic Study of Abiola's Historic Speech of June 24, 1993." In Lawal, A. (Ed.). *Stylistics in Theory and Practice*. Ilorin: Paragon Books 1997. 136-149. Print.
- Babajide, "Of Style and Stylistics" in Adeyemi O.B. (ed.) *Studies in English Language*. Ibadan: Any Crownfit Publishers, pp 123 – 136, 2000. Print.
- Birch, Dinah. *Context and Language: A Functional Linguistic Theory of Register*. London and New York: Pinter, 1997. Print.
- Bradford, Richard. *Stylistics*. London and New York: Routledge, 1997. Print.
- Crystal, David and Davy, Derek. *Investigating English Style*. London: Longman, 1969. Print.
- De Vito, Joseph. "Levels of Abstraction in Spoken and Written Language". *Journal of Communication*. 12(4.), 1967. 354-362.

- Emmanuel Sharndama and Ibrahim Mohammed, "Stylistics is the description and analysis of the variability of linguistic forms in actual language use". *Asian Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*.1(2) 2013. Print.
- Halliday, Micheal and Alexander Kekwood. *Language as a social semiosis*. London: Edward Arnold. 1978. Print.
- Halliday, Micheal and Alexander Kekwood. *Introduction to Functional Grammar* (4th Ed.). London: Edward Arnold, 2004. Print.
- Hoye, Francis Leo and Kaiser Ruth. Branding a symbol: context and meaning across cultures. *Intercultural Pragmatics* 4. (1): 2007. 51-69. Print.
- Karanja, Joseph Kamau. "A Linguo-Stylistics Analysis of Newspaper Reporting of ICC Cases in Kenya: A Case Study of the Daily Nation and the Standard". *Journal of Language and Communication* Vol. 2(2): 65-73, 2015
- Kecskes, Istvan. Situation bound utterances as pragmatic acts. *Journal of Pragmatics*. 42(11): 2010. 2889-2897, Print.
- Mey, Jacob Lee. *Pragmatics: An Introduction* (2nd Ed). Maiden, Mass and Oxford: Blackwell, 2001. Print.
- Mey, Jacob Lee. Developing pragmatics interculturally. Explorations in pragmatics; *Linguistics*. 2007. Print.
- Odebunmi, Akin. Pragmatic functions of crisis-motivated proverbs in Ola Rotimi's *The Gods Are Not to Blame*. *Linguistik Online*. 33.1. 2008. Web.
- Ogungbe, Ebenezer Oluseun. Pragmatic acts in the news reports of some Nigerian newspapers. Unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Ibadan, Ibadan. 2012.
- Osundare, Niyi. *The Courteous Path through the Bramble*. Ibadan: Hope Publications, 2003. Print.
- Romano, Tom, "Blending Genre, Altering Styles." Portsmouth: NH: Heinemann/Boymton, 2000
- Turner, Mark. *Stylistics*. Harmondsworth: Penguins Books, 1973. Print.
- Verdonk, Peter. *Stylistics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006. Print.
- Wales, Katies. *A Dictionary of Stylistics* (2nd ed.). Harlow: Longman, 2001. Print.