



“A man in whom I have great confidence”: A Discourse Analysis of Former President Olusegun Obasanjo’s Farewell Speech to Nigerians

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Political leaders consciously or unconsciously employ Speech Act Theory in their effort to govern. This article discursively analyses the farewell speech of the former president of Nigeria, Olusegun Obasanjo to unearth the linguistic and political underpinnings of his speech via Speech Act analysis and pragmatics, respectively. Obasanjo’s speech is laced with a preponderance of assertives to mobilize and persuade Nigerians to support Umaru Musa Yar’Adua, “the man in whom I have great confidence”. In light of the socio-political events preceding and following the installation of Yar’Adua as Nigeria’s president and his eventual premature demise, this article argues that Obasanjo’s confidence in Yar’Adua is either misplaced or self-serving.

KEYWORDS: Discourse Analysis; Speech Acts; Pragmatics; Nigeria; Obasanjo; Yar’Adua

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The former Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo gave his farewell speech on the eve of May 28, 2007, the swearing-in of his successor - the late President Umaru Musa Yar’Adua. Following the assertion that political leaders govern largely through speech acts (Atolagbe, 2010), we engage in a Speech Act/pragmatic analysis of his speech for both linguistic and political purposes; linguistic in the sense of examining political language use for effective communication, and political in the context of the socio-political relevance of the speech to the Nigerian nation today. We discuss the speech in the context of the socio-political environment in Nigeria and also with respect to the challenges Yar’ Adua had to grapple with before his death on May 5th, 2010, a year before the end of his four-year tenure.

Introduction to Speech Act Theory

Speech Act Theory arose in philosophy as a tool to interpret the meaning and function of words in different speech situations. It concerns itself with the symbolism of words, the difference between a meaningful string of words and meaningless ones, the truth value or falsity of utterances, and the function to which language can be put. Austin (1962) dealt extensively with these issues, providing linguistic characterizations and linguistic explanations, which were further expounded and expanded by Searle (1969). These ideas serve as the core of what is known as the Speech Act Theory.

Austin (1962) observed that while it had long been the assumption that the business of a “statement” can only be to describe some state of affairs or “to state some fact”, this was not always the case (Coulthard 1985: 13). In some cases ‘to say something may be to do something’ and Austin concluded that in ‘issuing an utterance’, a speaker can perform three acts simultaneously: a

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Locutionary Act, an Illocutionary Act and a Perlocutionary Act, noting that it is not as though in speaking one has the option of one or other of these acts, but rather, one usually performs all three simultaneously.

1. *Locutionary Act*: the act of saying something in the full sense of 'say' - the production of sounds and words with meaning; a purely linguistic act.
2. *Illocutionary Act*: the act performed in saying something, the act identified by the explicit performative. That is, the conventional force achieved in the saying of that utterance. This is realized, according to Austin (1962) as the successful realization of the speaker's intention, which for Searle (1969) is a product of the listener's interpretation.
3. *Perlocutionary Act*: the act performed by or as the result of saying. This is the actual effect achieved in 'the saying' of that utterance.

To perform a locutionary act is also to perform an illocutionary act, but whereas the interpretation of a locutionary act is concerned with meaning, the interpretation of an illocutionary act is concerned with force. Meaning here must be seen as an amalgam of textual and extra-textual information and it is the function of the illocutionary act to transfer this meaning from speaker to listener (Coulthard 1977: 18). This is so because as Strawson (1973) points out, helping to clarify the issue of meaning in terms of precisely what was said, a complete mastery of the linguistic system of syntax and semantics is almost always insufficient for a listener to understand meaning. With regard to the force of locution, which could be, for example, assertion, prediction or warning in the sentence: 'John will get here in two hours from now'; there are different views. While some scholars believe that to know the meaning of the locutionary act is to know the illocutionary force (Searle 1969 quoted in Coulthard 1977), others argue that even if there are cases in which meaning completely determines force, it is not the same thing as force (Strawson 1964, Ferguson 1973 quoted in Coulthard 1977). As Coulthard (1977:19) summarizes, an illocutionary act is therefore a linguistic act performed in uttering certain words in a given context; while a perlocutionary act is a non-linguistic act performed as a consequence of performing the locutionary and illocutionary acts. Therefore an illocutionary act is potentially under complete control of the speaker and 'provided he uses the correct explicit performative in the appropriate circumstances, he can be certain that the act will communicate the intended meaning. A perlocutionary act is the effect of the utterance on the listener. For this reason, Austin (1962) distinguishes between perlocutionary

object, basically the intended result of the illocutionary act, and perlocutionary sequel, an unintended or secondary result. These two terms relate to indirect speech acts.

Searle (1969), like Austin (1962), proposes his own class of speech acts, as follows:

1. *Utterance Act*: These constitute uttering words - (morphemes, sentences), the utterance of which results in performing an utterance act. These can be inferred to equate to Austin's locutionary acts.
2. *Propositional Act*: Performing a propositional act entails referring and predicating. These are comparable to Austin's illocutionary acts.
1. *Illocutionary Act*: Performing illocutionary acts entails anyone or a combination of stating, questioning, commanding, promising, etc. These are Perlocutionary Acts which express the same notion as Austin's Perlocutionary Acts.

Having identified the three major types of Speech Acts by both Searle and Austin, it is important to explain that following Coulthard (1975), there are five macro classes of Illocutionary Acts:

1. *Representatives*: Acts that express the speaker's BELIEF X and are realized through words like 'Swear, Suggest, Hypothesize, Boast, Complain', etc.
2. *Directives*: Acts which expect the listeners to do something; they express the speaker's WANTING to achieve something or some situation. They are expressed through words like 'order, request, invite, dare, challenge', etc.
3. *Commissives*: Acts similar to directives, but the speaker commits himself to acting, doing or achieving something. They express the speaker's INTENTION and could reflect in words such as 'will, can, desire, purpose', etc.
4. *Expressives*: Acts which specify the psychological state of the sincerity condition expressed about a state of affairs specified in the propositional content. These are expressed through words such as 'thank, apologize, deplore, like', etc.
5. *Declarations*: Acts that resemble performatives but typically require an extra-linguistic institution - such as a court, a committee, church or rule book - to provide rules of use. They are conventional acts, the linguistic parts of rituals; they are achieved through words (i.e. locutionary acts) such as 'I (hereby) define, abbreviate, name, call, sentence, adjure', etc.

Searle's theory of speech acts is powerful because it combines Austin's conventional theory and Grice's (1957) intentional theory of meaning. However a few aspects of Grice's theory, for

instance the notion of intentionality, are problematic. His claim that the intention to be understood and not that of producing an effect is the primary goal of an illocutionary act is controversial because the intention to produce an effect cannot be neglected in an adequate account of an illocutionary act (Adegbija, 1982).

Kent Bach and Robert M. Harnish (1979) propose an “intention and inference” approach to speech acts. They argue that illocutionary acts are performed with the intention that the hearer identifies the act being performed. They therefore affirm that linguistic communication is basically an inferential process (Bach and Harnish 1979:4). They propose that, in general, the inference made by the hearer ... is based not just on what the speaker says but also on mutual contextual beliefs; that is, salient information from the context known to both speaker and hearer. As they note, “the contextual beliefs that figure in speakers’ intentions and hearers’ inferences must be mutual if communication is to take place” (p.5). Bach and Harnish (op. cit.) label the pattern of inference involved as the “speech acts schemata.” In inferring what the speaker is saying, the hearer also relies on the “presumption of literalness”; that is, “if [the speaker] could be speaking literally, then [the speaker] is speaking literally. Conversely, if it is evident to [the hearer] that [the speaker] could not be speaking literally, the hearer supposes the speaker to be speaking non-literally and therefore seeks to identify what the non-literal illocutionary act is” (p.12). Non-literalness usually results in indirect speech act in which the speaker says one thing and means another or performs one illocutionary act while performing another at the same time.

An act is communicated successful as soon as the speaker’s intention is recognized by the hearer. Therefore “the intended effect of an act of communication is not just any effect produced by means of the recognition of the intention to produce a certain effect, it is the recognition of that effect.” From this perspective, “perlocutionary acts are limited to the “intentional production of effects on (or in) the hearer” (p.15).

Introduction to Pragmatics

Adegbija (1982) attempts to produce what he has referred to as a “balanced and unified” theory of pragmatics, building on the work of earlier scholars, particularly Searle, Grice and Bach and Harnish. He places a high premium on utterance interpretation involving basically an inferencing process and defines an utterance, like Grice (1957), as any candidate for meaning. He submits, like Austin and Searle, that we basically perform acts without words,

and that the effects they produce are not necessarily only hearer-directed. Illocutionary acts from his perspective may be conventional but need not always be, because the force of some illocutionary acts are determined by the intention of the speaker, while others still may have to do with the pragmatics of the particular situation of social interaction.

“Hello?” uttered to a son tearing his toy into pieces may serve as a warning to stop doing so. Here, the pragmatics of the situation determines the illocutionary force: the boy concerned knows that what he is doing is wrong, and that “Hello?” is inappropriate for what he is doing and therefore is likely to be a warning or order for him to stop doing what he is doing, especially considering that the speaker is his father and he is the son. Adegbija’s pragmatic theory considers the “pragma-sociolinguistic context” Of an utterance. He argues that this need not necessarily have to do with the recognition of any fixed or specific intention of the speaker. The pragmatics of a situation of social interaction, according to Adegbija (1982), may include any or all of the following:

- a. the cognitive or affective state of the participants in the interaction at hand;
- b. special relationships obtaining among participants;
- c. mutual beliefs, understanding, or lack of these;
- d. the nature of the discourse and how this relates to the interests of both the hearer and the speaker and to the context of interaction.

Adegbija submits that an illocutionary act ALWAYS takes place and a perlocutionary effect ALWAYS occurs, even if these perlocutionary effects are not the ones specifically intended by the speaker. In other words, the hearer’s inference, based on the pragma-sociolinguistic context, determines what illocutionary act he perceives is being performed.

Odeunmi and Babajide (2007) discuss Allan’s theory of Pragmatics (1986). They note that Allan’s submission is on the assumption that the speaker constructs his utterance with the intention that the hearer can reason out his message in the context in which it is uttered. Allan’s model of the stages in hearer’s reasoning is presented as follows:

- a. Perception and recognition of speaker’s utterance as linguistic.
- b. Recognition of utterance as sentence element of language spoken with the appropriate articulation and having the semblance of a locution. The ‘communicative presumption’ is said to be involved at this point.
- c. Recognition of speaker’s proposition by matching the locution to the world spoken of. The theory of denotation is deployed here.

- d. Recognition of the primary illocution of utterance on the basis of the form of the locution and the definition of illocutionary acts which form part of the theory of speech acts.
- e. Speaker's presumed reason for performing the primary illocution is sought in the light of various assumptions and presumptions of the communicative presumption, knowledge of language and use of language.
- f. The illocutionary point of the utterance, *i.e.* speaker's message, is recognized when at least no further illocution can be uttered (Allan 1986: 251-2).

Allan's submission rests on the premise that "speech acts are pragmatic events that can only be accounted for satisfactorily within a theory that takes account of pragmatic factor" (280).

Methodology

The farewell speech was retrieved from the archive on the 15th of October, 2010. The speech is first presented and later analyzed using Pragmatics and Speech Act Theory. The analysis of the speech is conducted by (i) exploring the pragmatic import of the speech as at the time the Speaker (former President Obasanjo) handed over to the late Umaru Musa-Yar'Adua and during the tenure of his successor in whom the Speaker 'had great confidence'; (ii) placing components of the speech in context by examining the political prowess of the speaker as both a notable Nigerian and African leader; (iii) analyzing the felicity of the speech; (iv) examining the speech in the light of the current socio-political circumstances in the country.

Discourse Content

In discussing the discourse content of this speech, we consider the setting/context, the participants (addressee(s)/addressor(s), the medium/channel), the genre, the form and content of the message, and the intent and effect of the communication.

Setting

This speech was delivered by the former Nigerian President, Olusegun Obasanjo (1999-2007), on 28th May, 2007 to the Nigerian populace, the day before he was to hand power over to his successor – the late President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua (2007-2010). Same Day Analysis (2007), Naijviewpoints (2007), WSVN TV (2007), all online review commentaries on the speech under focus, maintain that there was widespread and overt election fraud, mostly by the ruling People's Democratic Party (PDP) in the elections that brought Umaru Musa Yar'Adua to

power. While Naijviewpoints (*op. cit*) criticizes Obasanjo as having lied in this speech, saying 'it was a mess when he came in, he is leaving the stage in total mess', Same Day Analysis (*op. cit*) highlights among other things, the many challenges facing Yar'Adua, against the background of Obasanjo's many political shortcomings. WSVN TV, however, affirms that despite the view that many of Obasanjo's critics say he failed woefully, 'one must - like Olisa Agbakoba, a human rights activist/lawyer, distinguish between Obasanjo's political failings and economic achievements'. Indeed, the latter are acknowledged by the international community, such as Nigeria paying off more than \$32 billion foreign debt, forging new economic partnership with China and assisting with peacekeeping efforts in African countries.

Umaru Musa Yar'Adua, relatively unknown on the Nigerian political landscape, was one of the few governors never to have been investigated on allegations of fraud by Nigeria's anti-corruption Agency - EFCC. However, Same Day Analysis (*op. cit*) argues that while Yar'Adua's incoming government had a credibility/legitimacy issue to contend with, some Nigerians questioned Yar'Adua's track record, having been alleged to have awarded lucrative contracts to a company fronting for his own family.

Participants

The Addressor in this speech is the outgoing President at the time of speaking, Retired General Olusegun Obasanjo. The addressees are the entire Nigerian nation and the incoming President himself, Alhaji Umaru Musa Yar'Adua, who needed to be re-assured of his predecessor's support.

Medium

The medium, expectedly, is the spoken medium and the channel is the electronic mass media, namely television and radio stations.

Genre

The genre is spoken discourse, precisely 'written to be spoken'. Discourse in this sense refers to language use above the sentence, a cohesive sequence of linguistic units that form a text, used in meaningful communication.

Speech

Broadcast on the Eve of the Swearing-in Ceremony of His Excellency, Alhaji Umaru Yar'Adua as the President and Commander-In-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Abuja, 28th May, 2007 (presented in its entirety in **table 1**).

Table 1. Former President Alhaji Umaru Yar'Adua's farewell speech

1	<i>My Dear Fellow Nigerians</i>	28a	<i>I have confidence</i>
2	<i>Tonight, I wish to bid you farewell as President of our country for the past eight years.</i>	28b	<i>that we are well on our way to a glorious destination.</i>
3	<i>Tomorrow, May 29th, will usher in a new and glorious dawn for our country.</i>	29	<i>With determination, with tenacity and with the courage of our conviction, we can continue to face the future with confidence.</i>
4	<i>A new generation of Nigerian leaders will take over the great responsibility of running this great and diverse nation.</i>	30a	<i>We have set for ourselves ambitious targets</i>
5a	<i>In the past eight years, you, by which I mean Nigerians, have worked together with me to revive our national image, our economy,</i>	30b	<i>that ours will be one of the largest economics in the world by the year 2020 .</i>
5b	<i>and to place it firmly on the path of sanity and progress.</i>	31a	<i>It is attainable and achievable</i>
6a	<i>For the eight years that I have enjoyed your mandate and support</i>	31b	<i>but if we divert from the path of economic prudence, reform and realities</i>
6b	<i>we changed not only the image of our country in the eyes of fair-minded honest and objective observers both at home and around the world.</i>	31c	<i>we can miss the road</i>
7a	<i>We have run the longest democratic dispensation</i>	32	<i>Then, the year 2020 will be a mirage.</i>
7b	<i>and eliminated the risk of violent changes of government through coups and counter-coups in our political culture.</i>	33	<i>God forbid!</i>
8a	<i>We have made clear to the world</i>	34a	<i>We have waged relentless battles</i>
8b	<i>that the idea of Interim National Government does not have a place in our political culture and practice.</i>	34b	<i>to correct many of the ills in our society.</i>
9a	<i>It is something</i>	35a	<i>We have demonstrated our determination</i>
9b	<i>we must continue to detest.</i>	35b	<i>to bring about a more moral society.</i>
10	<i>We have widened, deepened and strengthened democracy.</i>	36	<i>We see a bright and prosperous future for our country.</i>
11a	<i>But democracy is not a destination;</i>	37	<i>I am particularly gratified to note how united our country is today, better than any other time in the past.</i>
11b	<i>it is a journey.</i>	38	<i>In the past few months, Nigerians from every corner of the country have amply demonstrated their yearnings for national unity, for harmony and for progress.</i>
12	<i>We must remain firmly committed and undistracted in the journey.</i>	39a	<i>The recent events have indicated</i>
13	<i>Tomorrow morning, we will for the first time in our history, witness a peaceful transition of political leadership from one democratically-elected government and personality to a new set of elected President, Governors and Legislators.</i>	39b	<i>that we are no longer divided along ethnic, tribal, religious lines or north - south divide</i>
14a	<i>As we usher in our new President and new Government tomorrow let us take a moment and reflect on our journey so far.</i>	40a	<i>We have become simply Nigerians</i>
14b	<i>When we started on this journey on 29th May, 1999,</i>	40b	<i>interested in the development and progress of our country.</i>
15a	<i>Nigeria was at its lowest ebb</i>	41	<i>This is a great gain.</i>
15b	<i>and shunned not only in the international arena</i>	42	<i>Let us respect this spirit of oneness and unity in all that we do from now on.</i>
15c	<i>but even here at home.</i>	45	<i>Tomorrow, I will hand over the instruments of governance to Alhaji Umaru Musa Yar'Adua, our newly elected President.</i>
16	<i>Many Nigerians had lost hope for the future of the country.</i>	44	<i>He is a man in whom I have great confidence.</i>
17	<i>Our citizens were leaving our shores in droves in search of better conditions in more advanced countries of Europe, the United States of America and the Middle East</i>	45a	<i>I have worked with him</i>
18a	<i>We thank God</i>	45b	<i>and observed him at very close quarters.</i>
18b	<i>that many of these people are now returning home</i>	46	<i>I know his track record and his pedigree.</i>
18c	<i>and are beginning to actively participate in the country's development.</i>	47a	<i>I have confidence</i>
19a	<i>On the Economic Front, we have reformed the economy</i>	47b	<i>that he will discharge his mandate to the satisfaction of all Nigerians.</i>
19b	<i>and are beginning to notice the benefits of the reforms on our development and progress.</i>	48	<i>I pledge my continued support for him and his Government.</i>
20	<i>We are poised to witness positive changes for the benefit of our people.</i>	49	<i>Nigeria is in a better shape today than any time since 1979.</i>
21a	<i>We have ceased to be one of the most heavily indebted nations of the world</i>	50	<i>We have started to move to the glory that God has ordained for us.</i>
21b	<i>and are now truly independent in all that we do for our country.</i>	51a	<i>Let me end this farewell address</i>
22	<i>Infrastructural facilities, like telephones, which were once regarded as the preserve of a privileged few, are now commonly accessible to all.</i>	51b	<i>by thanking all Nigerians for eight years of working together for our fatherland.</i>
23	<i>These are solid foundations upon which future governments can build.</i>	52a	<i>I am particularly grateful to my Critics</i>
24	<i>In Science and Technology, in Agriculture and Food Security, our nation has made tremendous and noticeable progress.</i>	52b	<i>for keeping me constantly on my toes.</i>
25a	<i>Nigeria is not only becoming a food sufficient nation</i>	53a	<i>Let us continue in the same spirit of what is best for our country,</i>
25b	<i>but also a food-exporting nation.</i>	53b	<i>motivated by patriotism and fear of God.</i>
26	<i>Our industrial take-off is today more assured than at any earlier time in the past years.</i>	54	<i>I bid you good night and good-bye</i>
27	<i>There still remains a lot that we must do.</i>	55	<i>God bless you.</i>
		56	<i>God bless Nigeria.</i>

Results

The speech was broken down into illocutionary acts. Analysis of Theme/Rheme and Mood of Obasanjo's speech is presented in **Table 2**. There are fifty-six main illocutionary acts (IA) in the speech. The section of the speech to which this paper pays specific attention is a sequence involving 'members' 43-48 as given in **Table 3**.

Table 2. Theme²/Rheme³, and Mood⁴ of Obasanjo's speech

Theme/Rheme	Mood
Member ¹ (43) Adjunct/SPCA <i>Tomorrow, I will hand over the instruments of governance to Alhaji Umaru Musa Yar'Adua, our newly elected President.</i>	Indicative: Declarative
Member (44) Subject/PC <i>He is a man in whom I have great confidence</i>	Indicative: Declarative
Member (45a) Subject/PA <i>I have worked with him</i>	Indicative: Declarative
Member (45b) (coord. Conj.) ellipt. S/PCA <i>and observed him at very close quarters.</i>	Indicative: Declarative
Member (46) Subject/PC+CI <i>I know his track record and his pedigree</i>	Indicative: Declarative
Member (47a) Subject/PC <i>I have confidence</i>	Indicative: Declarative
Member (47b) (relative. Conj.) Subject/PCA - <i>that he will discharge his mandate to the satisfaction of all Nigerians.</i>	Indicative: Declarative
Member (48) Subject/PCA <i>I pledge my continued support for him and his Government.</i>	Indicative: Declarative

¹*Member*: This unit is isolated on syntactic criteria. Each member is either part of the main discourse or subsidiary discourse. Each member is a free clause or a free clause together with its bound clauses; it is 'played off against the preceding one and is heard as doing something in relation to it' (e.g. reformulation, qualification, expatiation, etc.). However, members are considered first as functionally related units and secondarily as syntactic units (Coulthard, M. and Montgomery, M. 1982, 46).

²*Theme*: Theme is 'the left-most constituent of a sentence; the starting point of the sentence' (Brown and Yule 1983, 126).

³*Rheme*: Everything that follows in the sentence, which consists of what the speaker states or in regard to the starting point is called the 'Rheme' (Brown and Yule, op cit).

⁴*Mood*: Mood is a system that operates within the Verbal Group, organizing the various inter-personal relationships among the participants in any given environment. According to Webster's New Encyclopedic Dictionary (1995), mood is a set of inflectional forms of a verb that show whether the action or state expressed is to be thought of as a fact, a wish or possibility. Palmer (1990, 11-12) asserts that the term is restricted to inflectional systems, i.e. verbal morphology, and Lyons (1977: 742) contends that it includes all the potentially modal functions of English, e.g. subjunctive, indicative, interrogative, imperative moods.

Table 3. Speech Analysis of Illocutionary Acts 43-48

IA	Analysis
43	<i>Tomorrow, I will hand over the instruments of governance to Alhaji Umaru Musa Yar'Adua, our newly elected President.</i> COMMISSIVE and ASSERTIVE
44	<i>He is a man in whom I have great confidence.</i> ASSERTIVE and INFORMATIVE
45a	<i>I have worked with him</i> ASSERTIVE and INFORMATIVE
45b	<i>and observed him at very close quarters.</i> INDICATIVE and DECLARATIVE
46	<i>I know his track record and his pedigree.</i> ASSERTIVE and INFORMATIVE
47a	<i>I have confidence</i> INFORMATIVE and EXPRESSIVE
47b	<i>that he will discharge his mandate to the satisfaction of all Nigerians</i> ASSERTIVE and EXPATIATION
48	<i>I pledge my continued support for him and his Government.</i> COMMISSIVE/PROMISE and ASSERTIVE/INFORMATIVE

Discussion

Speech Act Analysis

The Sequence (43-48) that addresses Yar'Adua's person as the incoming President is rich in assertives. As observed by Babatunde and Odepitan (2009), assertives are essential for the realization of a rhetorical end, which is PERSUASION, and assertives are the major illocutionary acts in this speech. Babatunde and Odepitan (op. cit) also state that assertives are further used as a mobilization strategy through which the speaker informs the audience and consequently mobilizes them towards a desired goal. These uses to which assertives are put are indeed what we find again in this segment of Obasanjo's farewell speech.

The Speaker starts off promising to hand over to a successor the following day; he then asserts many positive things about his successor with the aim of persuading Nigerians to believe in the newly elected President and finally he concludes with a promise, pledging his support for the new President.

Pragmatics and Conversational Implicatures

From a Speech Act/Pragmatic theoretical background, the following conversational implicatures can be derived from the 'sequence' of the speech under focus, that is, members 43-48.

1. The rumoured unconstitutional third term bid of the outgoing president Obasanjo has certainly been jettisoned; a new President - Umaru Musa Yar'Adua - is due to enter office.

2. The audience must believe in the ability, capability, integrity, *etc.* of this newcomer, since the outgoing president has great confidence in him.
3. Implicature 2 is qualified because:
 - i. the outgoing president has worked with him;
 - ii. the outgoing president has relied on the opportunity of working with him to observe him at close quarters;
 - iii. the outgoing president knows what Umaru has achieved/done before and the quality of his character - his track record and pedigree.
4. Certainly therefore Musa Yar'Adua would discharge his mandate to the satisfaction of all Nigerians.
5. Indeed, the outgoing President shall support Musa Yar'Adua in office, ensuring that his government succeeds.

From the five implicatures above, the pragmatic implications could also be summed up in two statements:

1. Nigerians, give Musa Yar'Adua your support because he is able and capable to satisfy ALL Nigerians.
2. I, outgoing President Olusegun Obasanjo, will give Musa Yar'Adua and his government my continued support because I have great confidence in him.

The issues for discussion here, therefore, are the examination of these five implicatures and two pragmatic implications in the light of what actually transpired during the brief tenure of Musa Yar'Adua, who, through ill-health, could not complete his four-year term. The pertinent questions to ask are:

- Did Nigerians give Musa Yar'Adua their immediate support?
- Did Obasanjo give Musa Yar'Adua and his government continued support?
- Did Musa Yar'Adua discharge his mandate to the satisfaction of ALL Nigerians?
- Was Musa Yar'Adua indeed able and capable?
- Did Olusegun Obasanjo truly know Musa Yar'Adua's track record and pedigree as claimed in his speech?

Generally speaking these points ask if the speech was felicitous and did it achieve its intended main goal of PERSUASION.

Felicity Condition of the Speech

Discussing the felicity conditions of Nigerian political speeches, Atolagbe (2007:172-173) states that illocutionary acts are to be described in terms of felicity conditions which are specifications for

appropriate usage; they are a part of constitutive rules which specify dimensions on which utterances can go wrong. Each of the five macro classes of illocutionary acts identified in Atolagbe (op.cit) has its own felicity conditions (FC's) classified under the following: preparatory condition, propositional content condition, sincerity condition(s) and essential condition. In the speech under analysis, the main macro class of illocutionary act identified is the assertive, while there are two instances of the commissives. Thus, the FCs of Assertives and commissives are stated below:

It is the case in this speech that the Speaker wants the audience to know the content of utterances/members 43, 44, 45a, 45b, 46, 47a and 48 - all of these being primarily assertive, or secondarily expressive (as in the cases of 43 and 48 that are primarily commissive and 47a which is secondarily an expressive). It should be recalled that the force of illocution of an utterance determines its class of illocutionary act, often expressed through some Function Indicating Device(s) (Atolagbe 2010:333). The propositional contents of these utterances actually count as an attempt by the speaker to get the hearer to know the utterance, irrespective of whether H believed U or not. This is particularly so with regard to the uncertainty surrounding the true state of health of Musa Yar'Adua whom Obasanjo had to call from his hospital bed during one of his party's pre-election campaigns to ask on national television: "Umaru, they say you are dead; are you dead?" and to which Umaru responded feebly but humorously: "I am not dead, you can hear me." Thus, the assertives were felicitous; they conformed to appropriate usage.

For expressives that do not express some form of gratitude or greeting, etc, nor initiate phatic communion, but are more of assertive informatives like the only one here - (47a) 'I have confidence (in him)', the same felicity conditions that apply to assertives as discussed immediately above, also apply. Consequently, these assertives/expressives too were felicitous. Hearers were encouraged to have confidence in Musa Yar'Adua because Olusegun Obasanjo also had confidence in him.

The following four universal felicity conditions are crucial to the interpretation of our data:

1. Both speaker and hearer comprehend the utterance.
2. Both speaker and hearer are conscious, normal human beings.
3. Both speaker and hearer are in normal circumstances, not dreaming, not acting in a play.
4. The utterance contains some Illocutionary Force Indicating Device (IFID) which is only

properly uttered if all the appropriate conditions obtain.

Both commissives were felicitous because Obasanjo was committed to handing over to Yar'Adua, having practically handpicked him through his own party, as well as committed to supporting the in-coming government. Secondly, Obasanjo had the power, the authority and the will to do as he had promised; subsequent events thereafter proved this. Finally, Yar'Adua was just going to be sworn-in the following day.

Socio-political considerations

“The Man in Whom I Have Great Confidence” is an expression that does not only seek to sell Umaru Musa-Yar'Adua to Nigerians, but also seeks to justify the speaker's earlier actions of openly blocking the presidential aspirations of other notable Nigerians. Through this expression, the Speaker passes the information to Nigerians that, unlike others about whom the president had expressed frustration, Umaru Musa Yar'Adua enjoyed his great confidence on the account of the implicatures already discussed: the fact that the speaker had worked with him, proving his pedigree.

The manner in which Umaru Musa Yar'Adua emerged as the Speaker's successor suggests the degree of confidence that the former enjoyed from the latter. To start with, Umaru Musa Yar'Adua never indicated any interest to vie for the presidency; it was Olusegun Obasanjo who sought him out and persuaded him to contest. Secondly, the then president saw to it that Musa-Yar'Adua emerged as the People's Democratic Party's (the then ruling political party in Nigeria) flag-bearer. Thirdly, even when the health of Musa Yar'Adua could not withstand the rigours of nation-wide electioneering campaigns, Olusegun Obasanjo filled-in the gap by traversing the length and breadth of Nigeria persuading Nigerians, to accept his choice of Yar'Adua as his successor.

It was not an easy ride to presidency for Obasanjo's Yar'Adua as Nigerians queried the incumbent president's choice of an incapacitated candidate. At an open rally in the course of the campaign in Nigeria, Obasanjo had to put Yar'Adua on telephone, from a hospital in far away Saudi-Arabia where he was receiving treatment, to address the rally through the speaker of his mobile phone in order to douse the tension generated by his rumoured death. Not a few people were worried about the manner in which Obasanjo carried on with electioneering campaigns on behalf of Musa-Yar'Adua. Again, in one of the open rallies, Obasanjo

declared that the election of Umaru Musa-Yar'Adua as his successor was ‘a do or die affair’. Therefore, not many people were surprised at the claims of both local and international observers that the 2007 general elections that produced Umaru Musa-Yar'Adua as president were flawed. In fact, Opanachi (2009) concludes that Obasanjo's speech exhibits militaristic, discriminatory discourse in a democracy, portraying him as an intolerant person.

It is in the light of the foregoing that we situate the discourse content of Olusegun Obasanjo's farewell speech. One question that must be asked is: Did former President Olusegun Obasanjo really have confidence in Umaru Musa-Yar'Adua? The events that took place since Musa-Yar'Adua became president, especially his health issues, necessitated this question. Since he assumed office, the man had been battling with strange illnesses which culminated in his death on the 5th of May, 2010. The man spent only three years out of his four year term in office. His performance in office was considered worse than average, largely due to ill health. So what was the basis of the confidence that Obasanjo had in Yar'Adua? Was it the confidence that was predicated on Obasanjo's knowledge that Musa Yar'Adua would deliver the dividends of democracy? Or the confidence that Musa Yar'Adua, conscious of his health frailties, would permit himself to be used as a tool to frustrate the political ambition of Obasanjo's perceived political enemies, including his then vice president? Musa Yar'Adua's health problems were well-known to Nigerians, including the former President Obasanjo. Therefore, we submit that having been aware of the huge demand of the duties of the presidency on the health of the occupant of the office, and having been conscious of the health failings of Umaru Musa Yar'Adua, Obasanjo's insistence that Musa Yar'Adua should succeed him points attention to what Obasanjo himself, rather than Umaru Musa Yar'Adua nor Nigerians, stood to gain from such an exercise. Therefore, the eventual death of Yar'Adua and the fact that there were very low indices of social, economic and political developments while he was in office are indications that the confidence Obasanjo had in him was either misplaced or self-serving.

Conclusion

We have examined the discourse content and pragmatic import of the farewell speech of the Nigerian former president – Olusegun Obasanjo. We have analysed the speech in terms of its locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary conditions, discovering that the speech utilized the resources of

the assertives, commissives and expressives to address Nigerians both on the issue of the past – his administration while in office – and the issue of the future – the installation of Umaru Musa-Yar’Adua as his successor in office. The speech is an attempt to persuade Nigerians to share the view-point of the then out-going president about the man he had committed both human and financial resources to make his successor. This is in line with his determination not to hand over power to the candidates who had willingly indicated interest in the presidency, among whom was his vice president who openly and consistently had battled with him.

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