"MY DEAR COUNTRY MEN AND FELLOW NIGERIANS": PRAGMATIC STUDY OF (LATE) GEN. ABACHA AND GEN. ABUBAKAR'S MAIDEN BROADCASTS

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Abstract

This paper examines the pragmatic features in the maiden broadcasts of Gen. Sanni Abacha of November, 18, 1993 and that of Gen. Abdulsalami Abubakar of June 9, 1998 with a bid to find out the differences in the pragmatics of the two speeches. Out of 52 sentences in Abacha's maiden speech, 25 which have explicit performatives were selected for analysis. Also, from Abubakar's maiden speech which has 20 sentences, 17 were randomly selected for our analysis. Pragmatic concepts of speech acts, context and mutual contextual beliefs were employed for analysing the sampled data. Simple percentage statistical tool was used in analysing the data. The paper attempts to fill the existing gap in pragmatics study since scanty work exists on the pragmatic study of the maiden speeches .Our findings revealed that Abacha's maiden speech is full of verdictives and assertives because it is a para-coup speech made to assert his ascension into power, while Gen. Abubakar's maiden speech is characterised by commissive and expressive acts because the speech was made not only to condole Nigerians about the demise of Gen. Abacha, but it was also used to promise a better life for all citizens. Also, Abacha's maiden speech reflects bald on record impoliteness that characterizes autocratic military rule ,while Gen Abubakar's use of deceptive politenees was a tool employed to stabilize his dictatorship on the masses.

Keywords: Speech act, Meaning, military in politics, inaugural address

Introduction

Language, is a 'phatic' communion (Malinowisky,1930). It is often used to start or end a discourse . Language and society are symbiotically related (. Halliday, 1978, Firth 1968). Language is also a human vocal voice or arbitrary

graphic representation of his noise, used systematically and conventionally by members of a speech community for purposes of communication (Osisanwo, 2003). Ingraham (1903) cited by Quirk (1968,p.4) states that language can be used to communicate ideas, transact deals, interact with people, record an event, express our views and set matter in motion. Hymes (1962) also believes that language can be used for emotive, cognitive or directive, poetic, referential, metalinguistic and contextual or situational purposes.

Sociolinguists have been concerned with the use of language to negotiate role-relationship, peer solidarity, exchange of turns, and face-saving in conversation (Adegbite,2020,p.5.). The essence of contextual use of language has made Wittgeinstein (1963) to state that: "Don't look for the meaning of a word, but look for its use." Pragmatics therefore studies how a message is communicated or how the speech act is performed. Pragmaticists study participants that are involved in a communication, the intensions of the participants, their knowledge of the world and its effects on their interactions; what they have taken for granted as part of the context (or the presuppositions); the deductions they make on the basis of the contexts; what is implied on what is said or left unsaid; and the effects of non-verbal cues of interaction on meaning (Adegbija, 1999,p.189).

People everywhere do many things with words. Words are used to rebuke, command, indict, beg, appeal, condole, etc. For instance, green-grocers, artisans, farmers, traders, lawyers, politicians, artistes, judges, journalists, medical personnel, among others perform different acts with words(Aremu,1999,p.2) Be it in the war-front or in parades, in the barracks, military, men do a lot of things with words. African countries have been haunted by the "imps" and "incubuses" of the aberrant military coups. These coups plotters are 'instant heroes' if their coup had succeeded, but become traitors if their mutiny failed (Adegbija, 1995). Adegbija (1995) analyses discourse tacts of the military coup speeches in Nigeria .The coup announcers do a lot of things with words through the use of tactful language to ensure "some measures of cooperation with their invisible audience (Adegbija, 1995). Also, like the politicians who use indirect language to hoodwink, convince, beg, conscientise, appeal and to pledge, the military leaders use words to ensure a face-saving device in conversing with their unseen audience who may misconstrue or misinterpret their intention, when they deliver their maiden broadcasts(Aremu,1999,p.12). The military leaders' maiden

speeches are not ordinary interactions but interactions with unseen hearers. The military leaders, be it in Nigeria, Iraq, Philippines, Sao-Tome, Haiti, Argentina, Libya, Venezuela, or the former Soviet Union do many things with words when they deliver their maiden speeches. Nigeria has experienced military rule between 1965 and 1979, and between 1984 and 1999. During this period, there were different military coups in which new military leaders used to read their inaugural or maiden speeches to announce the end of an era and declare the commencement of a new one. Despite the significance of the military leaders' maiden addresses to Nigerian political history, scanty pragmatic study exist on them. Apart from Adegbija(1988)that examines the discourse tacts in military coup speeches in Nigeria, and Oha(1994)that does the stylistics of the war speeches of Gen Yakubu Gowon and Col Odumegwu Ojukwu, most of pragmatic studies on Nigerian leaders' speeches were based on the inaugural addresses of civilian leaders. Examples are Ayeomoni and Oladele(2012) that study the pragmatics in the victory and inaugural speeches of President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua, Osisanwo(2017) which examines the pragmatic acts in the inaugural address of President Muhammadu Buhari and Aremu(2017)that studies the pragmatics of conceptual mappings in inaugural speeches of Nigerian presidents. This paper therefore attempts to fill the existing lacuna in Nigerian political (military) discourse analysis and also focuses at extending research in the pragmatics and stylistics of Nigerian political texts and talks.

This study also attempts to find answers to what kinds of speech acts are performed in the maiden broadcasts of (Late) Gen. Abacha and Gen. Abubakar ; what frequency of the distribution of the speech acts characterises these maiden speeches; what pattern of pragmatic moves are in both speeches ; what macro and master speech acts are performed by the entire broadcasts; what significance can be derived from relating the military profession with the language use of these two military leaders; and what relationship can be derived from comparing Abacha's maiden broadcast with that of Gen. Abdulsalami Abubakar ?

Theoretical Perspectives

The theoretical focus of the study are Adegbija's(1982) Master Speech Acts and Kecskes' (2010) context. Pragmatic theory is the study of the general cognitive principles in the retrieval of information from an uttered sequence

of words. Mey(2001,p.6) defines pragmatics as 'the language use in human communication as determined by the 'affordances' or conditions of the society'. The pragmatic theory is also concerned with the study of utterances and sentences in use. It deals with the ability to interpret utterances in the context (Kempson, 1986, Leech and Short 1987, Wales, 1989). Yule (1996) defines pragmatics as 'the study of meaning as communicated by a speaker (or writer) and interpreted by a listener (or reader)'. Pragmatics is the study of actual utterances, the study of use of language in the context rather than meaning. Linguists like Firth (1962), Hymes (1962), Halliday (1978), Ellis (1966) have carried out different studies on context. Dell Hymes (1964) gave the following features of context:(a)*participants*,that is,the speaker or writer versus the hearer (or reader) are participants in any discourse; (b)*topic* that deals with what is being talked about; (c) *setting* that deals the place where the discourse occurred and the time of the discourse;(d)*channel* that deals with the medium of communication, whether written or oral;(e)*code* that deals with the language used in the discourse; and (e)*message form* that is used to procure answers to 'What form is the event taking?', and 'Is it a chat or a debate, a story or a sermon?' Hymes(1962) adds '*Key*' and '*purpose*' to be part of the features that characterise context.

Context is therefore the internal and external environments in which a word has been used(Adegbija,1999). It is the 'pith' of meaning exploration in a discourse (Aremu,2016). Hence, Odebunmi (2003) defines it as 'the spine of meaning'. It can be physical, situational, socio-cultural, psychological or linguistic(Adegbija ,1999). An expression can give a determinate(explicit) or indeterminate(i.e implicit) meaning depending on the context in which it has been employed. Mey(2001,p.36) states that context is a dynamic and not a static concept. Austin's (1962) defines context as an 'influence from inside out'; that is, explication of meaning in a discourse through the lexical patterns in the text. Also, Mey(2001) posits that context can be defined as an 'influence from outside in' ; that is, an influence from the 'affordances of the environment'. Kecskes(2010) states that context can be explained as the exploration of meaning in a discourse from both the 'outside in' and 'inside out'; that is, from the use of the lexical patterns in the text , the body moves, extra-linguistic features as well as the affordances of the environment. In this study, Kecskes'(2010) was adopted in explaining the texts of the maiden

broadcasts of Gen Sanni Abacha and Gen Abdulsalami Abubakar from 'outside in and inside out' (Kecskes,2010).

When using or employing words in an utterance, we accomplish some specific social acts like making promise, a request, giving advice, etc. Scholars have classified them into myriads of ways. Austin (1962) classified speech acts into five categories such as verdictives, exercitives, commissives, behabitives and expositives. Austin (1962) makes a distinction between constatives and performatives. Constatives are statements which have the property of truth or falsity. For instance,the statements (a) 'I have #100,000 in the bank' and (b) 'I will go tomorrow'.

Each of the above statements can be either a truism or a falsity. In 'a' above, the constative act is assertive since it states a fact while in 'b' above, the performative act can be sincere (felicitous) or insincere (infelicitous). In performative acts, there must be a conventional procedure. Also, Austin (1962) explains a distinction between 'Illocutionary act' and a 'locutionary act'. A locutionary act is a sentence uttered with a determinate sense and reference. It is an act performed in order to communicate. An illocutionary act is a non-linguistic or locutionary act. Examples includes begging, commanding, warning, threatening, etc. Austin (1962) also explains the meaning of "perlocutionary force." A perlocutionary force is the effect of an utterance on the decoders. The perlocutionary force of an utterance is the intended and unintended effects of, or a reaction to what is said. Austin (1962) explains the meaning of "intention" in speech act. Intention refers to the goal resident in the mind of a speaker. According to Adegbija (1999,p.191), intention of any statement is always indeterminate. For instance, if a teacher has told a female student *"I love you"* after responding well in the class lesson, the teacher could be misconstrued by the students. Austin (1962) states that the force of an utterance is a matter of convention. This is erroneous. There is no conventional act in the act of warning. Contemporary pragmaticians such as Mey(2001) and Kecskes(2010)have identified weaknesses in Austin's speech act .Mey(2001)posits that speech act 'lacks the conept of action' and according to Mey(2001), 'if speech act has action at all ,it is too atomistic and emanates from individual'. Mey(2001) states that, to interpret action and meaning in human interation, this must' be done from the 'outside in' and not from 'inside out' as stated in Austin's(1962) speech act. That is, by utilizing the conditions of the environment, extra-linguistic features, as well as the

prosody and body moves in the text; without considering the lexical patterns in the discourse . On the other hand, Kecskes(2010) suggests the that meaning construction and interpretation of a text should be done from both the 'outside in' and 'inside out'. That is, by employing the conflate of Austin's(1962) speech act and Mey's(2001)pragmeme. Despite its flaws, Austin's (1962) speech act serves as the solid foundation for all other pragmatic theories.

Searle (1969) asserts that speaking a language is a rule-governed form of behaviour. Austin(1969) classifies speech act into five: assertives, directive, expressives, commissives and declarations. To Searle (`1969), the basic unit of communication is the speech act. Searle (1969) makes a distinction between (i) utterance act" (ii) "propositional act" which refers. The shortcoming of Searle (1969) is that it doesn't explain "intention" in a clearer way.

Bach and Harnish (1979) propose the intention and inference approach to speech act. According to these scholars, the hearer's inference is based on what the speaker says and also on mutual contextual beliefs (MCBs) .Bach and Harnish (1979) state that non-literalness in speech often results in an indirect speech act. Bach and Harnish (1979) assert that a speech act is successful when a speaker's illocutionary intention is recognised by the audience. Bach and Harnish also explain linguistic presumption and communicative presumption. Linguistic presumption (LP) relates to what members of a speech community share in common, while communicative presumption (CP) covers the illocutionary intent with which a speaker says something to another member of the community. Grice (1957, 1975) is the propagator of "cooperative principles" in communication. In any communication, interlocutors enter into agreement when they engage in conversation. This is defined as "Implicature." Implicature accounts for what speakers can suggest or mean as distinct from what they literally say. Grice (1975) proposes four cooperative principle's thus:

(a)*Maxim of Quantity*: Do not say more or less than is required in any communicative utterance; (b) *Maxim of Quality*: Always say that which you have discovered to be true; (c)*Maxim of Relevant*: In contributing to any discussion, the speaker must make sure that his or her utterance is relevant to the context in which it is used; and (d)*Maxim of Manner*: Speakers

should always be clear, brief and orderly in speech. Speakers should always avoid obscurity or ambiguity in their expressions.

If any of the above cooperative principles or maxims is flouted, a conversational implicature will be implied. Implicature is relevant in analysing contexts and competences of speech acts. Each of Adegbija (1982, 1985, 1999) explains that utterance interpretation based on the process of inferencing is very important. Adegbija(1982) explains that there are three layers of meaning which are: (i) literal (ii) non-literal or secondary, and (iii) master speech act or Global speech act. To understand the meaning of an utterance, inferential process based on the context of interaction is essential. Adegbija's master speech act is also known as "Pragma-sociolinguistics" . The speaker, according to Adegbija (1982), depends solely on shared socio-cultural background, psychological disposition and what is presupposed in the exchange situation. Leech (1983) recognises the importance of both the cognitive and the ideational kind of meaning. Leech(1983)also recognises the interpersonal and textual elements of language. Butler (1965, 1986, 1988) asserts that pragmatics is concerned with the relationship between different ways of saying things and between different ways and factors conditioning the choices. Butter (1988) explains that a systemic grammar has made important progress in the areas of deixis and conversational structure which pragmaticians should use. Lawal (1997) identifies six hierarchical contexts of an utterance. These are cosmological, sociological, social, psychological, situational and linguistic contexts and competencies.The theoretical framework for this study was based on the pragmatics concepts of speech acts, context and mutual contextual beliefs.

Methodology

This study is a descriptive one. These broadcasts have been selected since both of them are crucial maiden broadcasts in Nigerian historical heritage. These two speeches were culled in November 19, 1993 issue of The Guardian (for Abacha maiden broadcast) and June 10, 1998 issue of The Guardian (for Gen. Abubakar's maiden broadcast). The researcher randomly selected twenty five explicit performative acts from Abacha's maiden speech and seventeen explicit performatives from Abubakar's maiden address. This study utilises Austin (1962), Bach and Harnish (1979), Adegbija (1982), and Mey's(2001) conttext in analysing the selected data. Locutionary,

illocutionary and perlocutionary acts as well as contexts and competencies of each of the sampled sentences were analysed. Simple percentage statistical tool was employed in analyzing the data. Charts were used to show the frequency of the direct and indirect acts used in both maiden broadcasts.

Data Analysis

Out of 52 sentences in Abacha's maiden speech, 25 which are explicit performatives were analysed under direct and indirect illocutionary acts. Gen. Abacha used face – saving tacts in his maiden broadcast. Hence, tactful language in this speech were analysed under ambivalence of the locutions in this speech. Sampled illocutionary acts of Abacha's maiden broadcast are hereby explained:

SAI: "... *I have had extensive consultations within the armed forces*..."

  (a)   Direct Illocutionary Act: Constative (Assertive) – Stating, asserting.

  (b)   Indirect Illocutionary Act: Constative (verdictive) – Judging.

The utterance was tactically employed by the encoder to convince his hearers that he was in full control of power.

SA2:   *"I will...like to pay a tribute to him (Ernest Shonekan) for his selfless service to the nation."*

  (a)   Direct Illocutionary Act: Constative (Assertive) stating.

  (b)   Indirect Illocutionary Act: Performative (expressive) commending.

Sentence SA2 has indirect speech act in the category of "convivial" (Leech, 1983) and "Expressives (Searle, 1969).Utterance SA2 above also exemplifies Allan (1986) 'acknowledgment". This is in the category of "thanks" being used as a face-saving tact. SA3: *"Many have expressed fears about the apparent return of the military".*

Direct Illocutionary Act: Constative (Assertive) stating

Indirect Illocutionary Act: Constative (Verdictive) condemning.

The above   statement is indeterminate since it can mean any of the following:(i) *Many people have condemned the military; (ii)Military in politics is bad;(iii)Since Nigerians condemn military, the speaker also do so;*and *(iv)Though people condemn the military government, it is very good.*

SA3 has the perlocutionary force of convincing the intended listeners that the speaker had no intention of staying longer in power.

SA4: *"Many have talked about the concernof the international community".*

  (a) Direct Illocutionary Act: Constastive (Assertive)

(b) <u>Indirect Illocutionary Act</u>: Constative Stating (verdictive) – Condemning.

The speaker is satirising the international communities who have been critical against the military in Nigerian politics. The indirect speech act could be inferred that Nigerians should disregard the international community's role in Nigerian politics.

SA5: *"…The survival of our beloved country is far above consideration"*

(c) <u>Direct Illocutionary Act</u>: Constative (Verdictive) Condemning, Indicting.

(d) <u>Indirect Illocutionary Act</u>: Commissives - Pledging.

The above performative is used to condemn critics and international community. It also gives an indirect speech act that the speaker was patriotic. However, this is a false assertion since the statement was used as a face-saving tact and a support garnering tact (Adegbija, 1995) to hoodwink the intended listeners who were the masses. The statement is infelicitous since the speaker had no intention in fulfilling it. Also, the expression "*our beloved country"* is also a face-saving tact. This expression has the perlocutionary force of craving the intended listeners' support and acceptance.

<u>SA6</u>: *"Nigeria" is the only country we have"*

<u>Direct Illocutionary Act</u>: Constastive

(i) (Assertive) – stating.

(ii) Informative – Informing.

<u>Indirect Illocutionary Act</u>: Constative (Verdictive) – Judging, condemning

Contexts/Competencies.

The speaker has condemned the unpatriotic Nigerians through the utterance above. The speaker also utilised a face-saving tact to garner the support of the masses. That speaker used the statement to have mutual relation with his audience.

SA7: *"We therefore must solve our problems ourselves"*

The above utterance has a Direct Illocutionary Act in the category of constatives (Assertive) and Declarations (Dismissing). It also has an indirect Illocutionary Act in the category of directive (commanding), and conflictive (reprimanding, rebuking)

Contexts / Competencies

The statement is used in commanding the intended listeners (Nigerians) to be ready to work conscientiously towards developing the nation. The statement is also an indirect act used to refer to Nigerians as unpatriotic citizens.

SA8: *"We must lay a very solid foundation for the growth of democracy"*

Direct Illocutionary Act (i) Costative (Assertive) – Stating, Suggesting (ii) Directive – Ordering, Commanding

Indirect Illocutionary Act: commussive – threatening

Contexts / Competencies

The above statement is an assertive act and a directive act. It also has an indirect commissive act. The above statement, according to its situational context, is not a felicitous commissive act since the speaker had no intention (or sincerity) in fulfilling the promise made by him through this statement.

SA9: *The following decisions must by him to an immediate effect*:

(a)   *The ING is hereby Dissolved ,*

(b)   *The National and State Assemblies are also <u>dissolved,</u>*

(c)   *The State Executive Councils are <u>dissolved,</u>*

(d)   *All local governments <u>stand dissolved</u> ,and*

(e)   *Two political parties are <u>banned</u> .*

Direct Illocutionary Act: (Directives)Ordering, commanding, banning.

The speaker in the above SA9a-e was exercising authority. Performatives such as: *dissolved, banned, hand-over, abrogated, proscribed,* etc are directive acts used to command.

Indirect Illocutionary Act: Constative (Verdictive) – Judging, Condemning.

The utterance SA9 a – e has been used to command. It has an indirect speech act. The speaker of SA9 a-e is totalitarian. This is shown through a too-much-use of directives.

SA10: *"A Provisional Ruling Council is hereby established."*

Direct Illocutionary Act: (i) Declarations – declaring, establishing.

(ii) (Directives) – Ordering, commanding.

Indirect Illocutionary Act: Constative(Assertive) – Stating, Asserting.

The Indirect speech act employed here shows that the speaker is in full control of power.The analysis of sequence of speech act in Abacha's maiden speech is given below.

Fig 1:Analysis of Sequence of Speech Acts(or pragmatic moves) in Abacha's Maiden Speech

Sequence of S/Act	Direct Illocutionary Act	Indirect Illocutionary Act
SA1	Assertive (Stating)	Verdictives
SA2	Assertive (stating)	Expressives
SA3	Assertive (Indicting)	Verdictives
SA4	Assertive (Saying)	Verdictives
SA5	Commissive (Pledging)	Verdictives
SA6	(i) Assertive (ii) Informative	Verdictives
SA7	(i) Assertive (ii) Declaration	Directives /Verdictives
SA8	Assertive / Directive	Commissiives
SA9	Assertive / Directive	Verdictives
SA10	Collaborative / Exercive	Verdictives
SA11	Directive (Warning)	Verdictives
SA12	Declaration / Directive	Assertives
SA13	Commissives	Assertives
SA14	Commissives	Verdictives
SA15	Directives	Commissive / Verdictives
SA16	Directives	Verdictives
SA17	Requestives	Verdictives
SA18	Assertive	Assertives
SA19	Requisives	Verdictives
SA20	Commissives	Assertives
SA21	Commissives	Commissives
SA22	Commissives	Commissives
SA23	Commissives	Assertives
SA24	Assertive	Informatives
SA25	**Requestives**	**Verdictives**

From the Fig 1 above, it can be observed that Abacha's maiden broadcast has the following number of frequency of direct illocutionary acts; 11 assertives,

7 commissives, 6 directives, 4 requestives, 3 informatives, 2 declarations, 1 execitive and 1 collaboration. This is represented in the table below.

Fig.2:Frequency of Direct Illocutionary Acts in Abacha's Maiden Broadcast

Direct Illocutionary Act	Number of Frequency	*Percentage (%)*
Assertives	11	*31.4*
Commissives	7	*20*
Directives	6	*17.1*
Requestives	4	*11.1*
Informatives	3	*8.7*
Declaratives	2	*5.8*
Exercitives	1	*2.8*
Collaboratives	1	*2.8*
Total	35	*100*

From the above chart, it could be deduced that Abacha's maiden speech is full of assertives .This is followed by commissives and directives, in that order. The commissives used by Abacha in his maiden speech are in the category of threat. The speaker as an autocrat used his assertives, commissives and directives to threat, command and force the masses to support his palace-coup.

Apart from the foregoing, the following frequency of Indirect Illocutionary Acts of Abacha's maiden broadcast is shown below. These are: 15 verdictives, 5 assertives, 4 commissives (threats), 2 Informatives, 1 Directive , 1conflictive and expressive.

Fig 3:Frequency of Indirect Speech Acts in Abacha's Maiden Broadcast

Indirect Speech Acts in Abacha's Maiden Speech	Frequency	*Percentage (%)*
Verdictives	15	*51.7*
Assertives	5	*17.2*
Commissives	4	*13.4*
Informatives	2	*6.8*

Directive	1	*3.4*
Conflictive	1	*3.4*
Expressive	1	*3.4*
Total	29	*100*

From the above Fig 3, it could be deduced that verdictives have the highest frequency. These verdictives were used by Abacha to condemn the international communities who were not in support of his palace-coup. Besides, the following chart represents the pattern of pragmatic moves of Indirect speech Acts in Abacha's maiden speech. From Fig 3 , it could be seen that the pattern of the pragmatic moves of indirect illocutionary act of Abacha's maiden speech starts from verdictive and ends at verdictive. The fluctuation of the pragmatic moves of this indirect speech acts of Abacha's maiden broadcast shows the indirectness, flexibility, ambivalence and insincerity in utterances employed by the speaker. Also, one can observe from this chart that Abacha's maiden broadcast is permeated by indirect verdictives (such as condemning, judging and rebuking) and indirect commissives (like threatening and warning). The speaker was exercising authority to lull any opposition against his newly established totalitarian government.

Contexts and Competencies in Abacha's Maiden Broadcast

The knowledge of the syntactic configuration and lexical patterns used in this speech can make or mar the hearers' understanding of the speaker's utterance. For instance, in SA8 above, the understanding of the meaning of words like *"democracy",* and *"foundation"* will help the hearer understand the meaning of this speech. The social context of this speech is the leader-masses relationship between the speaker and the audience. The use of directives , verdictives and commissives in this broadcast shows the tenor of the communication.

The situational contexts and competencies of this broadcast revolve round the dastardly and presumptuous annulment of June 12, 1993 presidential election in Nigeria and the subsequent resignation of Gen. Babangida. The state of anarchy, press censorship incarceration and assassination then became the order of the day. The psychological contexts and competencies of this speech vary from the beginning to the end of this broadcast. The speaker has used

support-garnering tact by employing the phrase "*Fellow Nigerians*"to address the audience and to tactically sooth tense physiological disposition of his intended hearers. The use of directives and commissives (threatening expressions) in this maiden broadcast reveals the speaker to be dictatorial and reactionary.

Direct and Indirect speech Acts in Gen. Abubakar's Maiden Broadcast.

Gen. Abubakar's maiden broadcast has 17 performatives which has been numbered SB 1 – SB 17. However, only 5 of these performatives would be reported here as sampled analysis.

SB 1: *"I pray that the Almighty God will give us the fortitude to bear the irreparable loss"*.

- (a) <u>Direct Speech Act</u>: Constative (Assertive) – stating
- (b) <u>Indirect Illocutionary Act</u>; Acknowledgement (Expressive) – condoling, commiserating

In this statement, the speaker was trying to commiserate with the intended hearers (Nigerians) about the untimely demise of (Late) Gen. Abacha.

SB 2: *"It is not a question that Gen. Abacha died on a very active and patriotic service to our beloved fatherland."*

<u>Direct Illocutionary Act</u>: (i) (Assertive) – Stating

(iii) (Informative) – Informing

<u>Indirect Illocutionary Act</u>: Acknowledgment(Appreciative) – Praising, Eulogising.

The speaker is indirectly eulogising the Late Nigerian Head of States(Gen.Abacha). The socio-cultural contexts and competencies of this statement are that Africans belief that the dead must not be condemned most especially when he has been assassinated. Hence, Gen. Abacha was praised by the speaker so as to serve as a face-saving and a support garnering tact. The speaker did this since he was craving Nigerian's (audience's) support for his government.
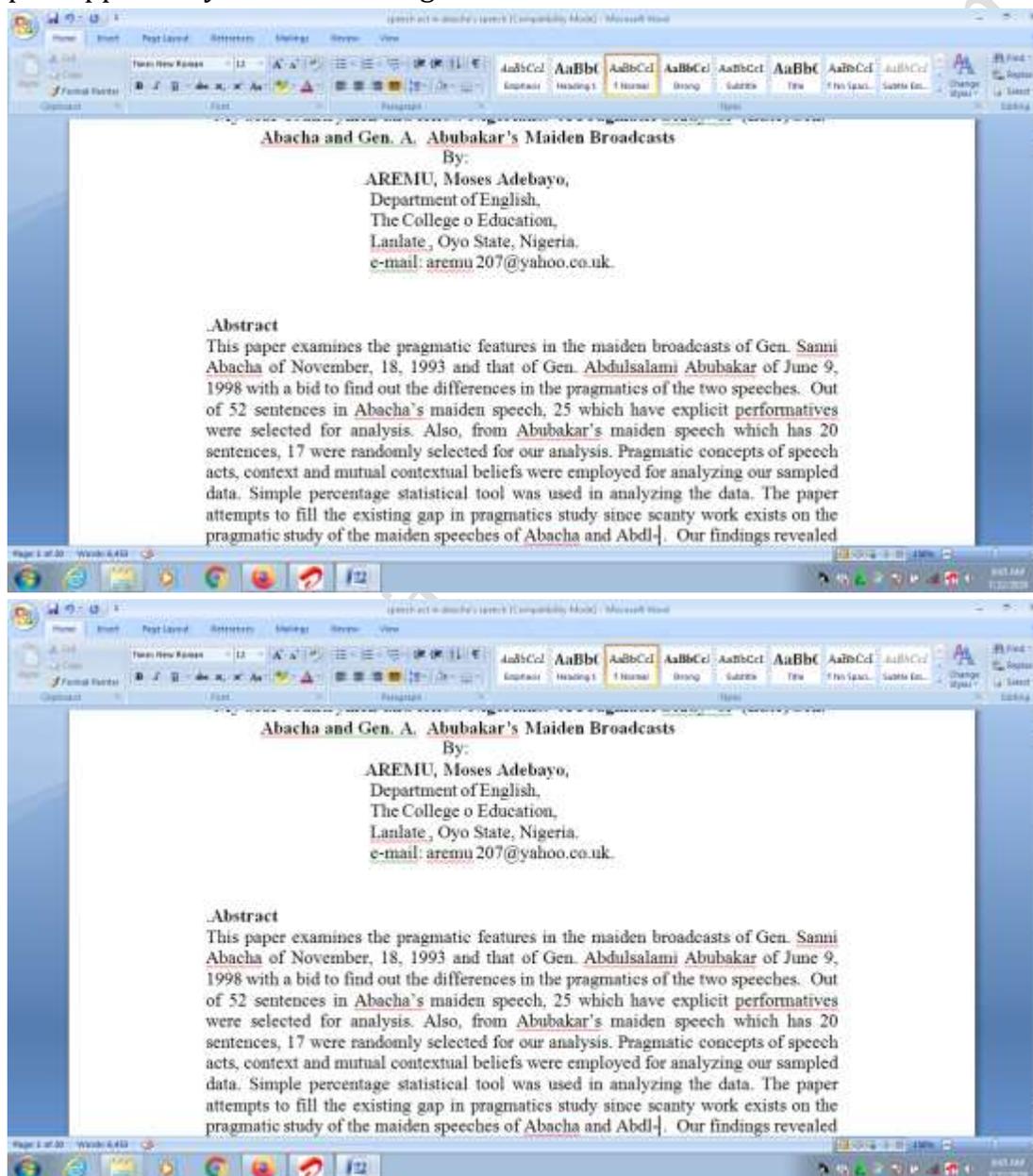
SB 3: "*We shall forever remember him for his innovative ideas*".

(a) <u>Direct Illocutionary Act</u>: (Commissive) – promising

(i) Expressive – pitying

(b) <u>Indirect Illocutionary Act</u>: (ii) Verdictive – Criticising

The statement "*We shall forever remember him (Abacha)*" means more than the speaker intended or literally said in his broadcast. At the primary layer of meaning, it could be inferred from this statement that the speaker was pitying the late Head of State(Abacha). But different locutions could be inferred from the secondary and the tertiary layers of meaning (Adegbija, 1982) in this utterance. The indeterminacy and the elasticity of this utterance could presuppose any of the following.

Abacha and Gen. A. Abubakar's Maiden Broadcasts

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Abstract
This paper examines the pragmatic features in the maiden broadcasts of Gen. Sanni Abacha of November, 18, 1993 and that of Gen. Abdulsalami Abubakar of June 9, 1998 with a bid to find out the differences in the pragmatics of the two speeches. Out of 52 sentences in Abacha's maiden speech, 25 which have explicit performatives were selected for analysis. Also, from Abubakar's maiden speech which has 20 sentences, 17 were randomly selected for our analysis. Pragmatic concepts of speech acts, context and mutual contextual beliefs were employed for analyzing our sampled data. Simple percentage statistical tool was used in analyzing the data. The paper attempts to fill the existing gap in pragmatics study since scanty work exists on the pragmatic study of the maiden speeches of Abacha and Abdl-|. Our findings revealed

We shall not forget what Gen. Abacha introduced into Nigerian military and politics.

(i)   We shall never forget "innovative leadership" such as: assassination, drug baroism, fraudulence, carnage and other indecorums which Abacha and his cohorts introduced to Nigerian milieu.

(ii)   We shall never forget Abacha's autocracy. On the literal level of meaning, this utterance is an eulogy of Gen. Abacha, but on the Master Speech Act level, this utterance is a subtle indictment of Abacha regime.

SB 4: "*We salute his honesty..*"
-    (a) <u>Direct Speech Act:</u> (Appreciative) – Praising, thanking.
-    (b) <u>Indirect Illocutionary Act</u>: (Expressive) – Pitying.

This above statement has been used as a face-saving device to win the support of Abacha's acolytes in the rank and file of Nigerian military.

SB 5:   "Fellow Nigerians, I enjoin you to bear this national tragedy with courage and faith in God."

(a)   Direct Illocutionary Act: Conatative (Assertive) – Stating

(b)   Indirect Illocutionary Act: (Expressive) – Condoling

The utterance (SB5) has the perlocutionary force and pragmatic effect of convincing the audience that he would be a humane leader

Contexts / Competencies In Abubakar's Maiden Broadcast

SB5 also shows that__the situational and psychological contexts and competencies of this broadcast is that Abacha's death has created a tense atmosphere; and that, Abacha's death has equally created a relief for the masses. Gen Abubakar's maiden broadcast has not only been used to mourn but to serve as a face-saving device to win the masses' support for the new government of Gen. Abubakar

Fig 4: Pattern of pragmatic moves in Abubakar's maiden Broadcast

Sequence of Speech Act	Direct Speech Act	*Indirect Speech Act*
SB 1	(Assertive) – stating	*(Expressive) – Condoling*
SB 2	(Asswertive) – saying	*(Appreciative) – praising*
SB 3	(Commissive) – Promising	*(i) (Expressive-Pitying*

		(ii)(Verdictive)- Criticizing
SB 4	(Appreciation) – Thanking	*(Expressive) – Pitying*
SB 5	(Assertive) – Stating	*(Expressive) – Condoling*
SB 6	(Informative) – Informing	*(Expressive) – Pitying*
SB 7	(Expressive) – Praying	*(Expressive) – Pitying*
SB 8	(Requestive) – Begging	*(Expressive – Vowing*
SB 9	(Asserting) – Stating	*(Commissives) – Vowing*
SB 10	(Commissive) – Pledging	*(Verdictives) – Judging*
SB 11	(Commissive) – Pledging	*(Verdictives) – Judging*
SB 12	(Commissive) – Vowing	*(Expressive) – Threatening*
SB 13	(Commissive) – Pledging	*(Verdictives) – Judging*
SB 14	(Commissive) – Promising	*(Assertive) – Stating*
SB 15	(Requestive) – Begging	*(Assertive) – Stating*
SB 16	(Commisive) – Vowing	*(Expressive) – Mourning*
SB 17	(Expressive) – Praying	*(Expressive) – Condoling*

The following is the frequency of both Direct and Indirect Illocutionary Acts in Gen. Abubakar's maiden Broadcast.

Fig 5:Frequency of Direct and Indirect Illocutionary Acts in Gen Abubakar's Maiden Broadcast

Direct Illocutionary Act			Indirect Illocutionary Act		
Speech Act	Frequency	%	Speech Act	Frequency	*%*
Commissives	7	38.8	Expressives	9	*50*
Assertive	4	22.2	Verdictives	5	*27.8*
Informative	2	11.1	Assertives	2	*11.1*
Expressives	2	11.1	Appreciative	1	*5.5*
Requestives	2	11.1	Commissive	1	*5.5*
Appreciative	1	5.5			
Total	18	100%	Total	18	*100%*

From the above chart, if the indirect and indirect illocutionary act are combined, the following overall number of frequency of the speech acts in Gen. Abubarkar's maiden broadcast could be derived.

Fig.6: Frequency of combined direct and indirect Illocutions in Gen. Abubakar's Maiden Broadcast

Speech Act	Number of Frequency
Expressvies	11
Commissives	08
Assertives	06
Verdictives	05
Informatives	02
Requestives	02
Appreciatives	02
Total	36

Conclusion

Speech is an inherent quality of all homosapiens. When man communicates, he does myriad of things with words such as rebuking or praising, threatening or appealing, commanding or begging, condoling or warning, among others. Gen. Abacha and Gen. Abubakar did many things with words in their maiden broadcasts. Abacha used his maiden broadcast to command, proscribe, threaten, warn, ban and deceive (the masses), besides others. Abubakar also employed his maiden address to commiserate with the masses, appeal to, plead, beg, among other things. The pragmatic moves of Abacha's maiden address has the illocutionary acts in the category of constatives (assertives and verdictives), followed by performative acts (such as commissives, directives, informatives, exercitives, etc).

On the other hand, Gen. Abubakar's maiden broadcast has the illocutionary acts in the category of performatives (such as expressvies, commissvies, directives, informatives) and a few constastive acts (3 verdictives).

Secondly, the indeterminacy of meaning and pragmatic ambivalence are more pronounced in Gen. Abubakar's maiden address. Gen Abubakar employed his commissives to make a promise while Gen. Abacha used his commissives to threaten his intended listeners. When words 'stumbles', it 'breaks'

ungatherably (Osundare, 2003). The maxim "style is the man" is shown through the cunning, indirect, indeterminate, and elastic utterances observed in Abacha's maiden broadcast. The listeners could only utilise the knowledge of implicature, presupposition, and face-saving devices or tacts as well as mutual contextual beliefs (MCB) to infer the locutions in the flexibility and inderterminacy of the illocutionary acts used by the speaker (Grice 1975, Brown and Levinson 1976, Bach and Harnish 1979, Adegbija 1982). Hence, when the speaker (Gen. Abacha) uttered the following in his maiden broadcast: "*Give us the chance to solve our problems in our own ways"*, his utterance might imply either *'Give Nigerians the chance to solve Nigeria problems in Nigerian way'*; or '*Give Nigerian military the chance to solve Nigeria problems in Nigerian military way'.*

The speaker might intend to condemn the foreign nations as a pretext that he had intended to provide a succour to or alleviate the compounded problems of his intended decoders (Nigerians). Hence, Abacha's maiden address is esoteric. Only meticulous reader or a careful listener could adjudge its esoterism through the use of inference. In understanding the meaning of Gen. Abacha's maiden broadcast, each of the utterances employed in this speech must not be treated in isolation. If any of the utterance is treated in isolation from the text of the address, knowing the illocutionary acts performed by the utterance will be a Gordian knot. The indeterminacy of the meaning of Gen. Abacha's maiden broadcast is not just an "utterance –level-phenomenon", but also occurs at the level of discourse function (Brown and Levinson, 1978).

Thirdly, the analysed utterances show that Abubakar's maiden broadcast are more persuasive rather than giving a military forceful locution (as in Gen. Abacha's maiden address). This study also revealed that Gen. Abacha's maiden broadcast is packed with threatening commissives while that of Gen. Abacha is full of promising commissives and condoling acknowledgements.

Abacha's maiden address can be described as a para-coup broadcast since it is 'garnished' with too elastic and forceful locutions which are prevalent in the address of the military coup announcers (Adegbija, 1995). It is not a normal maiden address but an aberrant maiden broadcast of a new Head of States.

By and large, speech communication should always be tactfully employed so as not to be misconstrued by the audience (Grice, 1975). Therefore, the study of Abacha and Abubakar's maiden broadcasts reveals that how a person has

done different things with words often unearths and reveals not only his idiosyncrasies but also his style. Gen. Abacha's maiden broadcasts' esoterism reveals and shows the man himself. Likewise, the chilling and lulling commisives and condoling acknowledgments in Gen.Abubakar's maiden broadcast epitomises the speaker. Hence, in doing different things with words, man needs to always be tactfully use 'chilling' ones since words are fragile. Words build and destroy, make and mar. Hence, they must often be rationally and tactfully utilized in our speeches.

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