

The Pragmatics of General Ibrahim Babangida's Independence Day Broadcasts, 1985–1993

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Abstract:

This article examines the pragmatics of General Ibrahim Babangida's Independence Day Broadcasts with particular attention to the speech acts that the speeches are used to perform. It is motivated by the paucity of work on Independence Day speeches most especially in Nigeria and the need to identify the categories of illocutionary acts performed with the broadcasts in order to enhance a better understanding of the broadcasts. Data were collected via the Nigerian national archives and newspaper publications. The data collected were analysed, using insights from the theory of speech acts. Considering the context in which the broadcasts were given and the communicative intention of the speaker, five categories of illocutionary acts namely; representatives, directives, commissives, expressive and declaratives were found to characterize the data. Among these, only the representative and commissive acts were found to be predominant. These could be described as institutional acts associated with Independence Day broadcasts as a genre of political discourse.

The article concludes that reading Independence Day broadcasts from the speech acts lenses has potency of enhancing a better understanding of the broadcasts.

Keywords: Pragmatics, Context, Illocutionary Acts, Independence Day Broadcasts, Ibrahim Babangida

Introduction

Studies on political speeches of some past and/or present presidents or Heads of States at the global level reveal that scholars have largely concentrated on (i) presidential inaugural addresses (e.g; Slagell 1991; Cap 2002; Adetunji 2005a, Zhang 2009, Ayeomoni and Akinkuolere, 2012, Batluk, 2012 etc.); (ii) presidential address to the legislative arm of government-National Assembly (e.g. Ayoola 2005 etc.); (iii) presidential address to Party Congress (e.g; Chilton and Schaffner 1997 etc.); (iv) presidential speeches motivated by political crisis (e.g.; Oha 1994; Ayodabo, 2003; Adegoju, 2005 etc.) and finally, general political talks or speeches of some past and/or present presidents or Heads of

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States (e.g; Wilson 1990; Seidel 1995; Teittinen 2000; Yusuf 2003; Miller 2004; Rudd 2004; Adetunji 2005b; Ayeomoni 2005, Letts, 2008; Li, 2008; Wang 2010 etc.). Independence Day Broadcast as a genre of political discourse is scarcely studied in the literature. The little works that have examined presidential Independence Day broadcasts are Maiyanga (1990), Olaniyan (2008, 2012, 2014). These works have explored the broadcasts using semantic-pragmatic, socio-stylistic, systemic functional linguistic and ethnographic perspectives respectively. The present study, which differs from the previous ones, is motivated by the little attention hitherto paid to independence day broadcasts as a genre of political discourse. This study therefore examines the pragmatics of General Ibrahim Babangida's Independence Day Broadcasts (henceforth, IDB) using the speech act theoretic approach. Within the purview of the speech act, we shall limit ourselves to only the illocutionary acts that the broadcasts are used to perform. With this, we hope to fill the existing vacuum and, simultaneously, complement existing studies on presidential broadcasts or speeches generally.

Besides, a study of IDB using speech act lenses has the value to throw more insight into the significant role that pragmatic context plays in the interpretation of the speech event.

It will equally aid a better understanding of IDB as a genre of political discourse. For data, all the Independence Day broadcasts delivered by General Ibrahim Babangida during his regime as the military president (August 27th, 1985 – August 27th, 1993) were collected from archival sources and photocopied. These were analysed using insights from the pragmatic theory of speech act. Our choice of Gen. Babangida's speeches is informed, among other things, by the fact that his regime marked a significant period of transition to democracy in Nigeria coupled with the eventful nature of his regime.

The Genre of Independence Day Broadcasts in Nigeria

Nigeria became an independent and sovereign nation on October 1st, 1960. Since then, October 1st of every year has been set apart for commemorating the historic event. Besides, as part of his statutory functions, the president or Head of State is expected to give a broadcast reflecting on the state of the nation and congratulating the entire Nigerian citizens on the country's attainment of self governing status. The maiden edition of this broadcast – the Independence Day broadcast was given on 1st October, 1961 by the then prime minister, Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa. Since then, it has become a recurrent annual event for

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the incumbent president to broadcast to Nigerians on October 1st of every year.

This broadcast is being used, among other things, to send congratulatory messages to the people of the nation, review the country's progress, problems and prospects. Through this broadcast, government keeps the populace informed of its programmes and aspiration for the country. For example, in the famous October 1st, 1970 broadcast, the then Head of State and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, General Yakubu Gowon (in Babatope, 1978: 13ff) said, among others:

The Supreme Military Council has decided on a *programme of the major tasks which it must accomplish* before the government of the country can be handed over with a full sense of responsibility. *The nine point programme which* is to guarantee peace, stability and progress in the country covers... (Emphasis mine).

As informative as the above extract is, it has some declarative forces that are intended to prepare Nigerians for what the government has in stock for them. Apart from this, considering the italicized portions, the choice of language there has some linguistic implications.

It is particularly important to note that since the first Independence Day broadcast was given, its subject matters have become precedents which each successive administration adheres to with some peculiar variations and innovations to meet the contemporary challenges of the government in power. This is perhaps, due to the fact that irrespective of who is the president at a particular period, the process of governance remains the same. It is the style of administration that may be different from one individual to another.

Besides, it is equally observed that whenever this broadcast is given, it is intended to influence certain kinds of behaviour in the hearers. These might be to encourage the hearers into accepting a change of behaviour, thought pattern, action, accept a suggestion, an opinion or a decision. Therefore, these speeches are characterized by a kind of deliberate persuasive discourse peculiar to our politicians. This persuasive nature of discourse is what Lyons (1977: 725) has in mind when he says:

When we communicate some propositions to another person, we do so, normally, because we wish to influence in some ways his beliefs, his attitudes, or his behaviour.

Thus, whenever the hearer(s) act in compliance with any of the behaviour, he has secured "an uptake" (J.L. Austin, 1962: 15). For

Austin (*op. cit.*), securing an uptake means that the hearer has fully understood the speaker's message and its illocutionary force. This understanding, at times, is indicated in form of responses, reactions or criticisms in line with the message coded by the speaker. No wonder that every Independence Day broadcast in this country is followed by reactions, responses or criticisms by members of the listening public. These form a kind of public opinion indicating the acceptance or rejection of some of the vital issues raised in the broadcast. For instance, the famous incessant hike in prices of petroleum products and the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) etc. made public by the government through special broadcasts like these are typical examples.

Finally, because this annual presidential Independence Day broadcast has become a permanent speech event in Nigeria, we deem it appropriate to analyze its speech acts. By so doing, the communicative intention of the speaker and the significant role that pragmatic context plays in the interpretation of the speech event will be realised. The study therefore, promises a better understanding of the broadcasts.

Speech Act Theory and Independence Day Broadcasts

Speech Act Theory was first formulated by a famous language philosopher, J.L. Austin (1962) in his posthumously published epochal book, *How to do things with words*. Austin's idea of speech act is based on the idea that utterances by the speaker(s) are not made in a vacuum but they are used to perform various kinds of actions such as stating, directing, promising etc. i.e. to do something (c.f. Adegbija 1987: 4). In other words, language is not only used in saying things, but in performing actions. Actions that are performed through speakers' utterances are called speech acts (Yule 1996: 47). Speech acts are the language functions that we perform with our words.

Quite a number of utterances can be used to perform various kinds of actions such as apology, command, compliment, invitation, complaint, promise, threat and a host of others. To Austin (1962), in every utterance, a person performs an act such as stating a fact, stating an opinion, confirming or denying something, making a prediction or a request, asking a question, issuing an order, making a promise, thanking or condoling somebody. All these are speech acts. For instance, utterances such as: 'Go out of this office'; 'Stop disturbing us; 'Don't touch that; etc. are used to perform actions of command while utterances such as: 'you are welcome' 'We shall expect you' etc. are intended to perform the action of invitation.

Within Austin's (1962) postulation, the different kinds of speech acts that can be performed with utterances are largely dependent on the

speaker's communicative intention in producing an utterance and the circumstances surrounding the utterance. These circumstances, together with other utterances have been tagged the speech events (cf. Yule 1996: 47). As noted by Yule (*op. cit.*), it is the nature of the speech event that determines the interpretation of an utterance as performing a particular speech act.

The most attractive portion of Austin's work, as noted by Odebunmi (2006a: 13), is the distinction he makes between the utterance of a speaker and its illocutionary force. This distinction is said to be anchored on the three-tier division of locution, illocution and perlocution. Locution refers to the exact utterance, that is "the locutionary act is the act of (i) uttering certain noises (ii) uttering certain words (of a certain grammar) (iii) using these words with a more-or-less definite "meaning" (Yusuf 1996: 42). Illocution is the intention behind the utterance and perlocution is the effect the utterance has on the hearer (Odebunmi 2006a: 13). We shall limit ourselves to only the illocutionary acts in this study because our intention is to examine both the Independence Day speeches and the communicative intention behind them. We therefore attempt a more detailed discussion of this below.

Illocutionary Acts

An illocutionary act is the act performed in saying something. It refers to the intended meaning of a speaker. A speaker performs an illocutionary act when his communicative intention (the intention of saying what is said) is communicated to the hearer and the hearer understands such an intention correctly (cf. Odebunmi, 2003: 44). The speaker's intention might be to command, apologize, campaign against something, promise or threaten etc. depending on the context. Before effective communication can be said to have taken place therefore, the speaker has to get his intention expressed to the hearer and the latter has to understand such appropriately. Therefore, for the hearer to understand the speaker's communicative intention correctly, he (the hearer) needs to interpret what the speaker says beyond the propositional content of the sentence. For example, the sentence such as: "I will buy a dog tomorrow." could be (a) a promise (b) a prediction or (c) a threat depending on the context and intention of the speaker (Odebunmi, *op. cit.*). The attitude of the speaker towards the propositional content has also been identified as a strong determining factor in differentiating between one speech act and another. Four attitudes such as belief, desire, commitment and evaluation have been identified in the literature (see Frazer 1986: 36). Frazer (*Ibidem*: 37) contends that "we succeed in linguistically communicating when we get the hearer to recognize what

we have said and what attitude we hold towards the propositional content of our utterance”.

Classification of Illocutionary Acts

Illocutionary acts are the central concern of study in speech acts. An illocutionary act is the complete speech act while a perlocutionary act is the effect of illocutionary act on the hearers. Thus, Austin (1962) and Searle (1969) have separately classified illocutionary acts into five general classes identified by their illocutionary forces. Austin's classification identifies five groups such as: Verdictives, Exercitives, Commissive, Behabitives and Expositives. It has been argued that Austin's classification is defective in some respect because he (Austin) assumed that English Language verbs correspond accurately with speech act categories – a claim that is not necessarily so (see Leech (1983), Levinson (1983); Thomas (1995)).

In his own case, Searle (*op. cit.*) identified five types of illocutionary act, namely: Assertives/Representatives, Directives, Commissive, Expressives and Declarations. These shall be explained in turn.

Representatives: These are utterances which describe situations through information, claims, assertions, conclusions, descriptions etc. In representatives, the speaker presents the world as he or she believes it is (Yule, 1996: 53).

Directives: These are those kinds of utterance that speakers use to get someone else to do something. They (utterances) express what the speaker wants through ordering, commanding, instructing, begging, requesting, suggesting etc. Yule (*op. cit.*) observes that directives can be positive or negative.

Commissives: These are utterances that speakers use to commit themselves to some future action. They are used to express what the speaker intends. These are promising, threatening, vowing, refusals, pledging one's allegiance etc. They can be performed by the speaker alone, or by the speaker as a member of a group.

Expressives: These are utterances or acts that state what the speaker feels. In other words, they express the psychological state or feelings and can be statements of pleasure, pain, likes, dislikes, joy, or sorrow. Examples are thinking, apologizing, congratulating, condoling etc.

Declarations: These are those utterances or acts that change the world through their utterance. In order to perform a declaration appropriately, Yule (1996b: 53) argues that the speaker has to have a special institutional role in specific context, for example, naming a baby or an object, declaring a workshop opened, etc. A speech act such as: 'I now pronounce you husband and wife.' is a declaration. It is pertinent to

note that before speech act like, ‘I now pronounce you husband and wife’, can be performed, certain conditions have to be met. Some of these are: The speaker has to be a priest saddled with such a responsibility, the act must take place in a particular place (either a church or mosque) with some people in attendance, the two people to be joined together as husband and wife must have agreed to live together as husband and wife etc. These are known as felicity conditions.

Finally, Odebunmi (2003: 47) observes that some of the acts stated, e.g. declarations have already been incorporated in Austin’s performatives. He notes further that Searle’s classification of illocutionary acts has been observed to have some positive effects in cross-cultural pragmatics, developmental pragmatics and interlanguage pragmatics. For the purpose of the present study, we shall embrace Searle’s classification of illocutionary acts as our guide.

Illocutionary Acts in Gen. Ibrahim Babangida’s Independence Day Broadcasts

In this section, we shall attempt to analyze the illocutionary forces of the utterances or speeches observed in the data. As noted by Yule (1996b: 47), the illocutionary forces of utterances are the intended illocutionary effects that the speaker wants his utterances to have on the hearer(s). This shall be discussed in relation to the different kinds of illocutionary acts performed by the speaker’s utterances. As our findings revealed, Gen. Babangida’s Independence Day speeches are used to perform different kinds of illocutionary acts namely, representatives, directives, commissives, expressive and declarations. About 660 utterances are considered for illocutionary acts analysis in our data. The table below shows the percentage distribution of the illocutionary acts performed with the speeches considered.

Table 1: Distribution of Illocutionary Acts performed in Gen. Babangida’s Independence Day Broadcasts

S/N	Features	Distribution	Examples
1.	Representatives	59.2%	Ex. 1: What really lies at the bottom of our past dilemma is the absence of a viable political arrangement. (1985 IDB)
2.	Directives	9.1%	Ex. 2: ...the state governments are hereby directed to hands off all items of functions which are specified in section 1 of the fourth schedule. (1988 IDB)

3.	Commissives	16.2%	Ex. 3: ...with this in mind, we shall in the course of 1986, announce a political programme for the country (1985 IDB)
4.	Expressive	15%	Ex. 4: I thank you all and wish you a happy twenty-sixth anniversary. (1986 IDB)
5.	Declaration	0.45%	Ex. 5: Thus, in order to fully realize this goal, ensure their integrity as an autonomous level of government, the ministries of local government in all states are hereby abolished with immediate effect (1988 IDB)

Table 1 above clearly shows that representative acts constitute about 391 (59.2%) of the illocutionary acts performed with the speeches considered. This is followed by commissive acts which constitute about 107 (16.2%) of the speech acts performed. Our findings further reveal that expressive acts take about 99 (15%) while directive acts constitute about 60 (9.1%) of the illocutionary acts performed with the speeches or utterances. Declaration has the lowest percentage in the data. It could therefore be claimed that Gen. Babangida's Independence Day broadcasts or speeches are generally characterized by a lot of representative acts and commissive acts. As our data revealed, Gen. Babangida used his speeches to perform some other sub-acts of representatives. Prominent among these, as our findings showed, are sub-acts of informing, stating, asserting, assessing and reviewing etc. These shall be discussed in turn based on the context of the utterances or speeches, the communicative intention and/or illocutionary force of uttering the said speeches.

Our findings show that informing is the most common sub-speech act of representative performed by the speaker (Gen. Babangida) in the broadcast/speeches. This might not be unconnected with the fact that the process of governance requires, among others, the president to constantly inform the governed about his administration's programmes, political ideologies, policies and aspirations. This sub-act of informing the populace is frequently performed by Gen. Babangida in some contexts. Examples below can be considered.

Ex. 6: The fundamental objectives of this administration are ECONOMIC RECONSTRUCTION, SOCIAL JUSTICE, AND SELF RELIANCE. (1985 IDB)

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Ex. 7: We came back with a determination to grapple with the problems of gross mismanagement of the economy, social indiscipline, corruption, greed and the loss of a common national sense of direction. (1986 IDB)

The obvious communicative intention of Gen. Babangida's utterances in examples (6) and (7) above are first, to inform Nigerians of the objectives of his government and second, to state categorically the determination of his administration. In actual fact, the illocutionary forces of informing Nigerians as reflected in the above extracts are two. First, it is intended by the speaker to influence Nigerians to support the government and also, to arouse in some sections of Nigerians the sense of confidence in the ability of Gen. Babangida's administration or government to find solutions to the country's retinue of problems.

It is observed that in some contexts where the speaker performs the action of informing Nigerians with his utterances, other sub-acts of reviewing, assessing and stating are also simultaneously performed with his utterances. Extract below substantiates this claim.

Ex. 8: Since our independence in 1960, we have experimented with the parliamentary and presidential systems of government. It seems that neither system has been able to deal adequately with some of our more thorny political problems. (1986 IDB)

In the above example, the speaker has not only implied that Nigeria has political problems. He has equally reviewed, assessed and evaluated the political systems of the period before 1983 to 1993. The illocutionary force of the above utterance is to let the hearers prepare their minds for the introduction and acceptance of an alternative system of government that would guarantee stability in the country. Considering the context of the utterance, the speaker believes that the introduction of an alternative political system is imperative so that the country could achieve its 'goals in the economic and social spheres'.

Sometimes, informing involves clarifying. The example below clearly explains how the speaker clarifies issues while informing his audience.

Ex. 9: We have assumed the reigns of government to serve not to be masters of our own people. (1985 IDB)

In the above extract, the speaker informs his audience the purpose of his assumption of power and simultaneously clearly states his ultimate objective which is to serve the people. The illocutionary force of the above utterance is that Gen. Babangida wanted his audience (Nigerians) to support his government. This is confirmed by the fact that 1985

Independence Day broadcast was given barely three months after he assumed the power.

Our data also reveal that representative act of informing could involve warning. We can consider the example below:

Ex. 10: Let me warn that this new political order at the local level is no license for political and administrative recklessness (1988 IDB).

With the above utterance, the speaker informs the populace about the ‘new order’ and warn those at the helms of affair at the local government level to desist from all acts of administrative recklessness or misconduct that are capable of jeopardizing the government’s intention. The illocutionary force of the speech act of warning here is to let the public office holders at the local government level have the correct perspective and/or value of being called to serve which, according to Gen. Babangida, is not synonymous with involvement in administrative misconduct and perhaps, financial improprieties.

Table 1 above also shows that commissive acts record about 107 (16.2%) of the speech acts performed with Gen. Babangida’s speeches. Sub-acts of commissive generally include promising, threatening, vowing, refusal, pledging one’s allegiance, predicting etc. Commissives in our data manifest largely in promises, predictions and a few instances of threats. As our data reveal, Gen. Babangida largely performed the speech act of promising at the very early period of his administration most especially between 1985 and 1988. The reason for this relative preponderance of the speech act of promising is not far fetched. Considering the social reality of the time, it is apparent that the former military president, Gen. Ibrahim Babangida was perhaps personally conscious of the fact that Nigerians had no hope in military rulership coupled with the widely held belief that military government is an aberration. He had to enumerate a lot of promises, programmes etc. with a view to proving the capability of his government to deliver. The following instances of utterances that perform the speech act of promising can be considered.

Ex. 11: With this in mind, we shall in the course of 1986, announce a political programme for the country. (1985 IDB)

Ex. 12: We shall continue to address the inherent structural imbalances by a combination of demand management, aggregate supply expansion and export promotion. (1988 IDB)

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Ex. 13: Government will also seek to provide opportunities for greater employment in order to boost aggregate labour real income and reduce excessive inequalities of income. (1985 IDB)

The illocutionary force of promising in example (11) is to get members of the political class informed that Gen. Babangida's government would hold on to power for a while and to encourage them to start warming up for the political transition programmes that would follow. The communicative intention behind uttering (12) above is to inform Nigerian industrialists of the government's plans for them and the attendant illocutionary force is to rekindle their hope of getting constant source(s) of raw materials for their industrial products. Promise in example (13) above is intended to give relief or succour to the unemployed Nigerians and that when they are eventually employed, they would engage themselves meaningfully, stay out of trouble and this would in turn reduce 'excessive inequalities of income'.

Another sub-act of commissive observed in our data is predicting. As part of his government programmes, Gen. Babangida made quite a number of predictions in his speeches. We can consider the following utterances.

Ex. 14: (a) There may be an initial rise in the prices of imported – based goods.
(b) Imported consumer goods will cost more. (1986 IDB)
(c) The era of inefficient performance and easy profit will be over. (1986 IDB)

The intention behind uttering (a) and (b) above is to get the hearers (Nigerians) to change their consumption pattern in favour of locally produced goods whereas that of (c) above is to encourage Nigerians to be more hardworking and committed to the task of economic reconstruction and sustainable development which, according to Gen. Babangida, might involve some sweat and pain.

Sub-act of threatening in our data is performed with the speaker's utterances in order to put sanity into some operations or national occurrences and also to gain people's commitment to and cooperation with government programmes.

Ex. 15: ... at the same time, we shall not hesitate to deal firmly with all those who may attempt to frustrate the new political process. (1987 IDB)

The speaker's intention here is to threaten those seemingly unco-operative members of the populace in order to encourage them to see seriousness of the government's effort at entrenching a new democratic ideal.

The illocutionary act of expressive in our data constitutes about 99 (15%) of the utterances considered. Expressives are utterances that state what the speaker feels. They, in other words, reveal the psychological states or feelings of the speaker and can be statement of pleasure, pain, likes, dislike, joy or sorrow (cf. Odebunmi 2003: 46). Sub-acts of expressive are thinking, apologizing, condoling, congratulating, assuring, empathizing, sympathizing, complaining, thanking, appealing, appreciating, etc. Sub-acts of expressive that are observed to be common in our data are appealing, assuring, congratulating, expressing belief, wish, like and happiness. Among these, appealing and assuring are found to be the most common expressive acts performed by Gen. Babangida's speeches. Let us consider the following examples.

Ex. 16: I appeal to you individually and collectively to rebuild our image abroad. (1986 IDB)

In example (16) above, the speaker appeals to the psychological working of his audience or hearers. Appeal in the above extract is a sort of begging. The illocutionary force (intention) of appealing in example (16) is to cause the listeners (Nigerians abroad inclusive) to be good ambassadors of their country whenever they travel abroad. In a bid to canvass for Nigerians' support for the political transition programme of his government, Gen. Babangida appeals further thus.

Ex. 17: I still want to appeal to those of you in this category wherever you may be to give the political programme the respectability it deserves. (1988 IDB)

The expressive act of assuring is performed in the extract below.

Ex. 18: I wish to assure you that we are determined to do all that is necessary to bring and keep the situation under control. (1986IDB)

Considering the relevant circumstances surrounding the above utterance, assuring in the extract could be interpreted as having two illocutionary forces. First, it is intended to let Nigerians know government's plan and determination for them and second, to cause or urge Nigerians to have confidence in the ability of Gen. Babangida's government to alleviate their (Nigerians) sufferings.

As our data reveal, congratulating as a sub-act of expressive is performed as part of greeting. As a form of greeting Nigerians on the occasion of the Independence Day celebration, Gen. Babangida said:

Ex. 19: I salute and congratulate you all on the twenty-eight anniversary of our country's political independence (1988 IDB).

In another context, Gen. Babangida expressed his appreciation for the support he enjoyed from Nigerians and also extended his best wishes. We can consider the extract below.

Ex. 20: I thank you all and wish you a happy twenty-sixth anniversary. Long live the Federal Republic of Nigeria. (1986 IDB)

The illocutionary force of appreciating in the above example is to encourage the hearers (Nigerians) to do more in their efforts at building a virile nation.

Expressive act is also used to show or express the psychological feelings of the speaker. Example below substantiates this further.

Ex. 21: ... I am glad to announce that the economic recovery fund deductions which have already been made over the past year from the wages and salaries of employees earning N300 and below will be refunded to them in full before the end of the year. (1986 IDB)

Just as the speaker (Gen. Babangida) expressed his happiness, he has also influenced the psychological working of the minds of his audience (hearers) most especially those employees concerned. The illocutionary force of the utterance is to cause the affected people to be happy and to cause the entire Nigerians to have hope of a better living condition. Besides, despite the status differential between the former president and other Nigerians, it is observed that the following expressions such as:

Ex. 22: Fellow countrymen and women
Fellow Nigerians
Fellow Compatriots etc.

are used to perform illocutionary act of expressive. With these expressions, the speaker expresses solidarity and sense of oneness and equality between himself and other Nigerians. The expressions or utterances are also intended to arouse the sense of comradeship in Nigerians.

About 60 (9.1%) of the utterances sampled are used by Gen. Babangida to perform the illocutionary act of directives. Directives are utterances that are intended to produce some effects through action by the hearer. Sub-acts of directive act are ordering, commanding, requesting, recommending, advising, instructing, begging, suggesting, giving or seeking consent etc. As our data reveal, Gen. Babangida employed a fraction of his utterances to direct Nigerians in some ways.

As observed by Jones and Wareing (1999: 32), “directives are inherent part of governance”. In our own view, certain directive utterances are found in our data perhaps because political office holders are often imbued with directive power that always enables them to achieve their desired objective(s) of being in control. After all, politics is concerned with power: the power to make decisions, to control resources, to control other people’s behaviour and often to control their values (Jones and Wareing, *op. cit.*). Let us consider the following utterances that perform directive act.

- Ex. 23: (a) Nigerians must learn to fit into the two- party system. (1991 IDB).
 (b) I therefore call for your co-operation to enable the commission perform its duties faithfully and with integrity. (1987 IDB)

The directive in example (23a) involves ordering which has element of compulsion whereas that of (23b) entails an appeal to Nigerians to co-operate with the said National Electoral Commission, an agency of the government saddled with the responsibility of organising election in Nigeria during Gen. Babangida’s regime. The illocutionary force of the above utterances is to influence the hearers to act in accordance with the speaker’s expectations. No wonder that Hayakawa (1974: 89) points out that statesman give speeches with a view to influencing our conduct sometimes for our good, or at times for their own good.

It is also observed that in some contexts, Gen. Babangida employed his directive utterances to direct, enjoin and at the same time, exercise his authority over the people he governed. Below is an example.

- Ex. 24: ... government accordingly *directs* sense of pride and that all employers of labour are *enjoined* and *authorized* to encourage and assist workers cooperative societies... (1986IDB) (Our Emphasis)

Gen. Babangida’s directive utterances also involve some threats, all with a view to effect some changes or improvement in the hearers’ behaviour.

- Ex.25: ... we must also be prepared for some less pleasant side effects that may result from the introduction of the second-tier market. (1986 IDB)

The illocutionary force of the above utterance is to get the hearers prepared for what was to happen and to cause them to change their behaviour.

Finally, utterances that perform illocutionary act of declaration record the lowest percentage of about 0.45% in the speeches considered. Declarations, as noted by Odebunmi (2003:47), go, to a large extent, with institutionalized situations. They therefore, have the potency of causing a change to be in such situations. The extract below is an example of declaration.

Ex. 26: Thus in order to fully realize this goal, ensure their integrity as an autonomous level of government, *the ministries of local government in all states are hereby abolished with immediate effect.* (1988 IDB) (Emphasis Mine)

The abolition of the ministries of local government in all the states of the federation would cause a change in situation of things. One likely effect of such a change is perhaps, the redeployment of workers in those ministries and/or a termination of appointment of some of them. Yule (1996b: 50) has however, argued that for a performative utterance such as declaration above to be successful (i.e. felicitous), it must satisfy certain expected or appropriate circumstances known as felicity conditions. Considering the above example, before the declaration could be effective, the speaker must occupy a particular position of authority that gives him or her power to abolish and that the act performed by the utterance has to be performed in a particular context. Therefore, it could be said that the illocutionary act of declaration performed in the above example has been successful for some reasons. Firstly, at the time of giving the speech, Gen. Babangida (the speaker) was the president and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces – a position that gave him the power to perform the act. Second, the declaration is also made in the context of public address – Independence Day broadcast. The speech act performed with the declaration is an institutional act which could only be performed by the president or his delegate or any political office holder who possesses the same power. The extract below is another copious example of declaration.

Ex. 27: In view of the magnitude of our economic problems from today. *I declare a state of Economic Emergency for the next 15 months.* (1985 IDB) (Emphasis mine)

Our data reveal that as soon as the above declaration was made, certain stringent economic measures such as Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), Second-Tier Foreign Exchange Market (SFEM) etc. were introduced as part of the economic emergency declared. Invariably therefore, the illocutionary force of the utterance is that it caused a change in situations of things at that time.

Conclusion

The foregoing has extensively examined the pragmatics of Gen. Ibrahim Babangida's Independence Day Broadcasts (IDB). Our analysis has focused on the speech acts in the broadcasts with specific attention to the illocutionary acts that the broadcasts are used to perform. Our findings reveal that the speaker used his Independence Day speeches to perform different kinds of illocutionary acts but the most common among them are representative and commissive acts. These could be described as institutional acts associated with political discourse and/or that can be found in speeches of political office holders. Besides, the illocutionary acts performed by the speeches are also found to be largely dependent on the context of the speeches and the communicative intention of the speaker. The article concludes that reading Independence Day broadcasts from the speech acts lenses has potency of enhancing a better understanding of the broadcasts as a genre of political discourse in Nigeria. It also illuminates the discourse value of illocution and provides additional material for political communication.

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