



Pragmatic Analysis of Felicitconditions in Selected FGN/INGOS Discourse on IDP Camps

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ABSTRACT

IDPs have become the new norm in the present day Nigeria especially in the North –Eastern region of Nigeria. Equally, managing them has grown over the years to become a daunting challenge for the government. The activities of the insurgents intensify continuously, and the aim of the IDP programme is continuously placed in the balance. Media reports on many occasions, recorded cases of revolts by people in the IDP camps who register their dissatisfaction with their conditions of living in these camps. Thus, the relevance of language in this program cannot be overemphasized. Resolving internal displacements and prevention of future displacements are entities that inextricably linked to the language of diplomacy used. This contextual use of language is the focus of pragmatics thus this research investigates the language used by the actors –Federal government of Nigeria and the INGOs in assuaging the fear and misgivings of the displaced persons in the camp. Emphasis is on the felicitous or infelicitous nature of the language used and its implication on the programme. Using a qualitative method, Data was gathered from print and digital media outlets of the internally displaced commission on the mediation agreement utterances. The utterances were taken from both the NGO representatives and FGN representatives with the authority to speak on behalf of Nigeria and I-NGOs. Findings showed that the speech acts that led to the eventual collaboration of the both parties towards efficient and effective administration of the IDPs were felicitous.

Introduction

Insurgency of terrorist ragtag group, Boko Haram accounts for the irrevocable social, economic and political setbacks experienced by the Nigerian nation for over a decade. Larson's (2016) remarks, "Boko Haram sprung from poverty, from poor education, from limited opportunities for young people, and religious fanatics seizing an opportunity to enhance their own power ..."

Nigeria has suffered great set back from the Boko Haram insurgency for many years and this has resulted into many of its populace especially in the North –Eastern region being displaced out of their natural habitat. This alarming scenario led to the establishment of make shift settlements for the Internally Displaced People (IDP). The emergence of these category of the citizenry brought along with it, its own attendant problems .The IDPs were distraught, forlorn, helpless and dejected, they saw not just the insurgents as the evil against them but also wary of the actual motives of moving them into these camps especially where the host communities are not willing to fully integrate them into their society.

More so, the ease with which the government allowed International NGO donor agencies to swamp on the IDPS increased their suspicion; though hungry and yearning for food there remains that underlying fear of the unknown bearing in mind the spurious media claims that these insurgents are bankrolled by some of these international communities. Thus there is lack of trust and therefore government and the INGOs needs to assuage this fear and gain trust in other to achieve the aim. The existence of insurgency, the attendant IDPs, and the donor agencies are all part of politics and politics is all about conviction and trust which depends a great deal on the language spoken and written and how parties involved make meaning out of it. This research therefore seeks to examine the discourse between the Federal government, I-NGOs and IDPs in North –Eastern Nigeria with a view to explicate how language is deployed to firmly guarantee the trust and peace needed in implementing durable solutions for IDPs. Of particular interest is the discourse from the government bodies trying to give credibility to the IDP program and gain the trust and confidence of the people. Language, thus, has become a weapon for diplomacy, defence, mitigation, mediation and negotiation in the complex affairs of man in the modern world. The success of the IDPs programme and the resultant re-integration of the IDP persons, relies heavily on the ability of both parties to trust the intention of each other by using language that firmly guarantees that. The language of diplomacy becomes an integral defining tool in the success of the IDP programme. For words, however, as simple or negative they may look on paper or when not situated or interpreted appropriately, can be quite explosive, mitigating, emotive, calming or even revolutionary. Words which can mean different things to different people or even change from place to place or from time to time contain not only sound but intention. They can please, cajole, pacify, or wound. (Kamel, 33).

Consequently, language is often a cause for misunderstanding and conflict. The selection of words or phrases, their structures and how they are rendered sometimes become a communication within a communication. (Kamel, 36.) Thus, the relevance of context in any discourse cannot be overestimated.

Words mean more than they appear and given the actors in this context, what they said will matter because of their position and popularity. The statements of these actors form the kernel of this paper and is evaluated whether it is true or not in order to avoid false hopes or hoaxes. This study is hinged on pragmatics, examining the contextual use of these linguistic items to achieve mitigation, diplomacy and negotiation thereby achieving sustainable trust and peace. The basic tool in any communication is Language. From the linguistic side, the felicity condition is a part of pragmatics that can be used to determine whether the news is factual or not. This research aims to identify the expressive speech act and its felicity condition uttered by the identified actors -FGN. It specifically attempts to recognize the types of expressive speech act, the intended meaning of those expressive speech act types, and their felicity conditions... This research can be useful for all parties in order to aid in restoring hope in the minds of the displaced people, trust in the government and eschew false hope and hoaxes.

Felicity Condition: An Overview

The word felicity conditions are used in pragmatics to describe the conditions that must be in place and the criteria that must be met for a speech act to achieve its goal. According to Liberman (in Nordquist, 2020), 'A sentence must not only be grammatical to be correctly performed. It must also be felicitous,' both the speaker and the audience must thus accept certain assumptions about the speech act for performatives to truly "perform." A speech act can only be measured by its validity (Austin, 1962). A speech act can be said to be valid if it fulfils the felicity condition.

According to Austin, the felicity condition of an utterance meets at least these three categories (Hadiati, 2019).

- a) There must be a conventional procedure having a conventional effect. (ii) The circumstances and persons must be appropriate, as specified in the procedure.
- b) The procedure must be executed (i) correctly and (ii) completely.
- c) Often (i) the person must have the requisite thoughts, feelings and intention, as specified in the procedure, and (ii) if consequent conduct is specified, then the relevant parties must do so.

In general, what has been introduced by Austin is then explained in term of felicity which is divided into four conditions by Searle, namely preparatory condition, propositional content, sincerity condition, and essential condition (Searle, 1969). Preparatory condition is the presence of a conventional procedure that has a conventional effect. In this case, the speaker has the ability to say what he wants. The speaker is not in a state of compulsion (or under the threat of another party). Propositional content is the state of the environment and the speaker that allows a procedure / action to be carried out. The speech act of promising, for example, cannot be done for something that has passed. The act of promising can only be done for something in the future. Sincerity condition is a condition that indicates that a procedure/action must be carried out correctly and completely. Essential condition is a condition which indicates that the speaker involved in the procedure/action has an intention like what is in the procedure and if the speaker does have to do an action, the speaker has the ability to do it. The four conditions must be met by an utterance in order to become a valid speech (felicitous) as shown below:

Preparatory condition	The speaker wants to make an evaluation through his utterance (X).
Propositional content	The speaker can produce utterance (X) well. The listener can get and interpret the utterance (X) well.
Sincerity condition	The speaker sincerely wants to make an evaluation (X) through his utterance.
Essential condition	The utterance produced by the speaker is intended to make an evaluation (X).

Context

Context is an essential component in analyzing pragmatic utterance because it aids speakers in achieving conversational goals. Language function is separated into two categories when it comes to the context of language use: referential function and affective function. Language is classified as referential when it carries referential information, and as affective when it expresses personal feelings. (Holmes, 2001 in Hadiati, 2019). Context is crucial in determining the felicity conditions of speech acts because it provides information about its propositional content.

Yule (2010) called this a "physical environment"; a term he considered most crucial in analyzing utterances, because the meaning of an utterance depends on the context that followed the utterance. Context also can help people understand or interpret the meaning of an utterance. If the context is ignored, misinterpretation of the meaning of the utterance may happen.

In this research, the researcher also uses the theory of context by Holmes (1992). He explains that the way someone speaks is influenced by the situational context in which the conversation or speech takes place. Holmes then adds that the social factors and social dimensions influence the choice of the

appropriate ways of speaking in a different social context. Context of situation or situational context is important in communication. According to Holmes (1992), this type of context requires the following four components:

- a) The participants: (who is speaking and who are they speaking to?),
- b) The setting or social context of the interaction: (where are they speaking?),
- c) The topic: (what is being talked about?), and
- d) The function: (why are they speaking?).

The first important thing in a situational context, as seen above, is the participant. Holmes further said that in a given social context, there will be a social element associated with the "participant" in a certain discourse. Context has become a crucial concept in language studies since a change in linguistics from the paradigm of language as a formal system to language user (Mey, 1993). Chomsky's (2002) presentation of language and the language user as abstract entities inspired a spike in interest in how language is used in real-life settings and what people intend when they utilize its meaning potential. Questions about actual language use have been raised, and it has become clear that they can only be resolved if the scope of linguistics is broadened and the context in which language occurs is considered. Because context is a feature that distinguishes pragmatics from semantics, it is commonly mentioned in pragmatics definitions (Ezirim, 2020). Thus, pragmatics has been defined as the study of contextual and speaker meaning (i.e., the interpretation of what people mean by their utterances in a given situation and how the context effects what is said (Yule, 1996).

Methods

The research was conducted in a qualitative manner. The data was gotten from one of the major news outlets in Nigeria , www.channelstv.com . The choice of this outlet is because of its credibility and wide acceptance . The researchers downloaded all speeches relating to IDP camps in the North East part of Nigeria . However a purposive sampling was done to extract utterances made by the FGN and INGOs during the maiden visit and establishment of the Borno IDP camps . The identified utterances were then categorised and analysed within the principles of felicity conditions to ascertain how felicitous or infelicitous they are.

Analysis

In this section, the researchers presented the analysis in a tabular form to make it easier for the reader to compare each speech act in the data

Pragmatic Technique	Data	Felicity Conditions in the Data
Felicity Conditions	1	This utterance is valid because of the status of the speaker. Had the speaker not been the representative of FGN the felicity condition of speaker appropriateness would have been questioned.
	2	The preparatory condition of the speech establishes that the circumstances of the speech act and the participants in it are appropriate.
	3	Only the commander-in-chief could make this assertion. And because the speaker fits into such position, his utterance becomes valid.
	4	One of the primary duties of the president to guarantee the safety of his citizens. This statement here was made by the president and the persons involved took him by his words.
	5	The illocutionary force of this assertion is valid and the authority of the speaker and the event where the speech is made is also appropriate.
	6	The felicity condition of essentialness was not used here. Although the speaker intends that his utterance be acted upon, there is no clue as to whether or not it will.
	7	This speech act is felicitous of the following reasons: the speaker has the right to give the instructions and believes that it will be carried out, the persons to carry out the instructions have the ability to do so and it's also their obligation.

Felicity Conditions	8	Here, having accepted the agreement the speaker tried as much as possible to be sincere and serious in order to allay the fears of displaced Nigerians
	9	The propositional content of the speech is clear and the speaker is qualified to make it.
	10	This statement fulfils the felicity condition of declaration because both the speaker and the means used for his speech were appropriate
	11	Only someone in a presidential position or designated by the president can make such assertion and it will become valid. Again, the occasion where the statement was made also increases its validity.
	12	Although we are not certain of the sincerity or truth condition of this statement, we are sure its felicitous status was upheld because of the status of the speaker and the reason for the speech.
	13	This statement by the representative of the president is null and void and thus infelicitous. Since the two parties are adherents to the principles of rule of law, and supports judicial independent, the signed memorandum supersedes any other pronouncement.
	14	Because this matter is a national case, only the president or his designators, speaking in official event and capacity can make any statement valid and felicitous. This is the case here.
	15	Doublespeak is at play in this utterance. To the layman, the government is interested in the foreign currency/counterpart funds from the INGOs But since the utterance by the government counters the thought of the masses, its sincerity condition has become questionable.
	16	Here, the president of Nigeria indirectly reminds the NGOs that they do not have the legal right to determine the fate of Nigerians outside the allowances given to them within the agreement other words, doing so will be infelicitous. Indirectly, the speaker expects that his utterance be acted upon, thus fulfilling essential felicity condition.
	17	On the one hand, the preparatory condition of the speaker is valid since he is a ruler of his people. But on the other hand, we cannot ascertain the sincerity condition of his utterance since only Nigerians could tell if the impression claimed is true or false.
	18	At a first glance, one may consider this assertion trite and banal had it been made by a layman. But because it emanates from a political diplomat, its weight is heavier. The felicity condition of the utterance is ambiguous in the sense that we do not know where the speaker made the statement.
	19	It is the job of the executive to execute or implement. Hence, the speaker stating and indirectly requesting such implementation fulfils the sincerity condition.
	20	What makes this utterance felicitous is the status of the speaker and the occasion where the utterance is made. Although the speaker is a president, had he made the utterance at a marriage or birthday ceremony, the validity and effect would have waned.
	21	Only the president of a country or in few occasions, his designators, could make a valid statement on national broadcasts and they will be considered valid and taken seriously. Having made the assertions in a national broadcast, the president's utterance fulfils the preparatory felicity condition.
	22	Here, the speaker (the president) has the authority to perform the speech act and the recipients displaced Nigerian are in the correct state to have the act performed on them.
	23	The speaker, the NGOs designator, fulfils a sincerity condition by believing that Nigeria will be able to support peace and security. However, the occasion where the utterance was made was not indicated, thus questioning the felicity of the speech act.
	Felicity	24

Conditions	25	Here, we see the speaker indirectly questioning the Operations of the IDPs thus, revealing some lapses in the sincerity of his utterance.
	26	The felicity condition of this statement cannot be fully ascertained since both the speaker and the event when the speech was made is unknown.
	27	The speaker, as the president of his country, is qualified to make the statement and the occasion in which it was made was also appropriate.
	28	The felicity and/or infelicity of the utterance cannot be accounted for since the speaker and the occasion where the speech is made is unknown.
	29	Both the felicity conditions of preparation and sincerity are upheld since the speaker is legally empowered as a national designator and diplomat to speak for his country.
	30	Again, here we see the felicity condition of preparation upheld via the legitimate status of the speaker.
	31	The sincerity felicity condition is fulfilled here. This speech act is valid because it is in the power of the speaker to make the utterance and the occasion of where the speech was made was also appropriate.
	32	On the issues of threat and security, only the president and the security heads can give the people assurance. This is the case here.
	33	First, this allegation was strong because it was made against the right person- someone who has the authority to sign a national document. Had the allegation ben made against someone of lower political status, it would have been infelicitous.
	34	Although the speaker has the authority to make the utterance, the situation and occasion where the utterance was made was inappropriate.
	35	In the absence of a speaker, hearer and occasion, the felicity condition of this utterance cannot be ascertained.
	36	Whoever it is that made the utterance has failed to realize that it is null and void and subject to presidential nod
	37	The speaker and event appropriateness make the speech act felicitous.
	38	As a Minister of Defense, the speaker has the authority to make the utterance.
	39	Both the speaker-event suitability makes the utterance felicitous.
	40	The Internally displaced commission, headed by an executive secretary is qualified to make a statement on IDP Camps thus fulfilling the felicity condition of preparation.
	41	The effectiveness of this utterance which, of course, made it felicitous, was dependent on the position of the speaker: the executive secretary of Internally Displaced people commission
	42	Although the event from which this utterance emanates is formal, the makeup of such gathering was not known. This affects the sincerity condition of the utterance.
	Felicity Conditions	43
44		Like the speaker in 49, this speaker is a designator speaking for a commission which has been empowered by law to oversee displace issues

45	Because the speaker is unknown, it is difficult to ascertain the felicity condition of the utterance.
46	The performer of the speech act is qualified and the occasion where the act was performed is appropriate.
47	The performer of the utterance is qualified but the occasion is hidden. Thus, the felicity condition is unknown.
48	This speech act is similar to the one above. We could not ascertain the appropriateness of the occasion where the act was performed.

Discussion of findings

Because we are dealing with a diplomatic discourse, it is important that we look into the speakers' positions, sources, and authority in order to determine the authenticity or otherwise of their statements. According to our findings, the utterances were felicitous. This may have been the reason the conflict was not only settled amicably, but also prevented the settlers on both sides of the split from being violent, knowing very well that the speakers were authorized to speak for them and at the appropriate times. However, there are a few cases in which the speakers' sincerity is ambiguous (See data 13 in the appendix). This study gave some insights on the use of language in diplomatic discourse and negotiations in particular, which can assist diplomats in real-world circumstances, but it also demonstrated the vigor and viability of a discourse-theoretical approach to diplomatic negotiations. The study demonstrates that during the negotiation of roles of both parties, not only was diplomatic language employed, but other pragmatic signals such as speech acts were also dominating in the diplomats' utterances and these speech acts satisfied certain felicity conditions. The two parties also demonstrated a strong awareness of each speaker's assumption, revealing their shared understanding of many events.

Conclusion

Speech acts carry either referential or affective meaning and to be able to measure whether the speech act is felicitous or infelicitous, felicity condition is worth considering. Felicity condition includes preparatory condition, propositional content, sincerity condition, and essential condition in which each of them must be completed by an utterance to be felicitous. In case, a requirement is violated, the speech act will be infelicitous. Consequently, if the participants in the conversation consider the felicity condition of each speech act, they can genuinely grasp the meaning of the speech act since not all of them can be analyzed merely by referring to the real world. Felicity condition can give evidence whether the speakers say what they mean and mean what they say. Considering the importance of felicity condition in pragmatic studies, felicity condition becomes indispensable in pragmatic studies; therefore, the analysis of felicity condition gives many chances for pragmatic researcher to make a deeper research to get deeper insight of felicity condition by applying various language data.

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Appendix

1

FGN: Our agreement today is a great achievement in curbing terrorism and mitigating its devastating effects on our people prevention,

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2

Reason and wisdom have been our main guides by signing the present agreement we have armed ourselves with an efficient instrument to bring to fruition hope and succor

.....
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3

we have taken measures for protection, security, well-being of Nigerias in North East.

.....
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4

As a great advocate of the observance of the rule of law nationally and internationally and a great believer in the settlement of disputes, peacefully, we accept to bring our expertise to bear moreso thriving on our core value of humanism

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5

That resettlement exercise has progressed smoothly and it will continue until all Nigerians in the area who wish to be resettled are resettled.

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6

human beings are involved and we are concerned about them and their interest will be protected

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....

7

However, the camps will also have to be physically demarcated and secured.

.....
....

8

I thank the governor of Borno state and his officials for support. I thank the Nigerians living in North East for their patience and confidence in us that we will never let them down.

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10

I thank all Nigerians who have exercised patience, good comportment and stood by us as we work in the best interest of our people. I thank the international NGOs for willingness to stand by us and give us support.

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11

We accept it whole heartedly and we will scrupulously implement it.

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12

I would like to state for the umpteenth time that what is of utmost interest to the Government and people of Nigeria is the fate of its people that have been affected by the terrorists.

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13

It is unfortunate that some Nigerians carry the impression that the government do not care about her citizens and is helpless in tackling terrorists

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14

Our people are feeling betrayed, and abandoned by the government but we are committed to protecting our sovereignty and that is why we have put in place these camps to provide succor while efforts are made for eventual return to your different homesteads.

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