

## **A pragmatic exploration of Orji Uzor Kalu's apology to Abians**

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*In pragmatics, we study meanings which transcend beyond the surface structure of a given speech act i.e. meanings drawn from context and not just structure. In doing so, we view every speech act, whether written or spoken as comprising of locutionary act, illocutionary act and perlocutionary act (Austin's speech act theory). Following these laid down parameters, certain speech act carries certain illocutionary force, which is adjudged felicitous or infelicitous depending on whether the illocutionary act resulting thereof meets the felicity conditions as well as conforms to the four maxims as stipulated by the cooperative principles. In a discourse situation, the analyst seeks to ascertain the felicity or otherwise of a given speech act based on previous background knowledge. On February 6, 2013 in an interview with the daily sun, the former governor of Abia state Dr. Orji Uzor Kalu apologized to the people of Abia state for "installing" the present governor Theodore .A. Orji who from all development indicators have succeeded only in further under development of the state. Thus our goal in this study is to critically examine the above speech act using the theoretical frameworks stated, with a view to determine if it fulfils the four basic Gricean cooperative principle and also to determine its felicitous status. From both textual and contextual analysis, certain conclusions were drawn on the future of democracy in the country.*

### **Background**

Chief Orji Uzor Kalu was the governor of Abia State, Nigeria from 29 May 1999 to 29 May 2007 and his word was law in his home state, Abia. His popularity even went beyond the shores of the state. In the neighbouring state of Imo, Kalu was also highly honoured. This explained the Progressive People's Alliance's (PPA) ability to win the governorship elections in these two states after he left the Peoples Democratic Party. He did this shortly before the conduct of the general elections in 2007. Realising the animosity against his desire to contest the

presidential election in the PDP, Kalu moved out of the party to form his own political party, the Progressive People's Alliance (PPA). He moved with the entire members of the party in his state. During his time in office, Orji Kalu worked very closely, with the man who saw him into office by virtue of being the independent national electoral commission (INEC) chairman, Abia state. This man was none other but T.A. Orji, who the then governor Orji Kalu promptly elevated to the position of his principal secretary government house and chief of staff to the governor. This was the beginning of the relationship between Orji Uzor Kalu and T.A. Orji, where the former was the godfather and the later a very loyal godson.

Before we continue with the events that led to the climax of the breakup of such "wonderful" relationship between father and son, we will have to digress a little to enable us understand the nature of the government that was staged as "democracy" in Nigeria in 1999. As cited by Agbedo (2012), the emergence of Obasanjo as the first democratic president in Nigeria, was nothing more than the handiwork of IBB and some of his associates in PDP, with a view to perpetually remain in power even after a change from military to democratic government. Best captured in the view of late music icon, Fela Kuti, it was just a "paddy-paddy and arrangy government" in totality. The military handed over to either ex-military men or friends of the military. Not just at federal level, same transpired even at the grassroots. It was this form of government that saw Orji Uzor Kalu into Abia state government house as their first democratically elected governor. Back in Abia state, the relationship between the two Orji's continued to foster to the extent that T.A. Orji became the governor's most trusted ally (even above the governor's brother who was in the state house of representatives). It was alleged that all the looting that was carried out during 1999-2007 in the state was done with the aid of Theodore Orji on behalf of the governor. It was therefore no surprise in February 2007 (published in *The Nation* March 3, 2007) when the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) brought up charges against Governor Orji Uzor Kalu for money laundering involving more than N2.713.500 billion. But the governor was shielded from prosecution by the constitutional provisions of section 308, immunity for certain public office holders. At this point, Theodore had already resigned as the Chief of staff having been anointed as the successor of Orji Kalu come April election. When the EFCC couldn't get the Godfather, due to the reason stated above, they charged the godson who was also indicted in the financial mess. T.A. Orji being a loyal godson was arrested and charged to court to face persecution for his master's crime, yet he didn't

despair. While in EFCC custody, T.A. Orji made history, Theodore Orji was installed governor under PPA (after pledging to permit the Kalus to continue their stranglehold on the resources of Abia State) in an election whose massive rigging was supervised by Maurice Iwu. Thus he became first governor in the world to win elections while in jail. A feat that could be likened to that of Iyiola Omisore who won elections into the senate in 2007 pools while in custody as a suspect in the murder of Bola Ige. Theodore Orji was thus released from prison and sworn in as the new governor of the state. After his accession to the office of the executive governor of the state, the former governor Orji Kalu hijacked all the governmental appointments in the state. He installed his younger brother as Chief of Staff. He made other sensitive appointments which included the commissioner of Finance, Works, and Accountant-General of the State and others. Council chairmen in the state were accountable and answerable to Mother Excellency -mother of the former governor. The situation remained like that for almost four years. Throughout this period of manna, Orji Kalu never complained or criticised Governor Theodore Orji for anything, not even on non-performance. However, things started falling apart when in 2008, the new governor Theodore Orji could not swallow the level of impetus at which the commissioners who were appointed by Mrs Eunice Uzor-Kalu (the mother of Orji Uzor Kalu), were operating with reckless disregard for his office. A move by him to caution such anointed ones saw the beginning of a new era which will bring the godson and godfather at logger heads. In a very dramatic display of total disregard of the executive powers of Governor Theodore Orji, it was alleged that sometime in 2008, the governor was slapped by Mrs Eunice Uzor-Kalu at Michael Okpara auditorium Umuahia after a heated argument over some threat by the governor to sack her anointed ones in his administration. This among other show of excess display of lack of respect for the governor by the Orji's and due to the fact that his godfather Orji Uzor Kalu did not take any step to curtail the excesses of members of his family, led to the governor's decamping from PPA to PDP.

After then, all hell was let loose, both father and son became bitter rivals in a clash of the titans that ensued afterwards. With the daily sun newspaper owned by Orji Uzor, he began to wage his war at the media end, castigating his once beloved son. The governor on the other hand did not waste time to use every weapon in his arsenal to retaliate, while Abians became spectators. There was a time when there was a move to withdraw the degree awarded the former governor in ABSU, this plan was allegedly orchestrated by Governor Theodore Orji, being the

visitor of the university. The latest of such media attacks and counter attacks forms the basis of this study. Orji Uzor Kalu on the 6<sup>th</sup> February 2013, in an interview with a sun newspaper journalist entitled “I apologise to Abians for installing T.A. Orji as their governor” made some statements which go contrary to our background knowledge and belief about a democratic government. Some vital extract from the interview that will form the basis of our analysis are given below.

**Question 1: Despite Abia state government’s effort to frustrate your re-entry into the PDP, several groups and associations have continued to throng your country home to rejoice over your return; what could be the implication of this on Abia politics?**

**His response:**

There were only two other people that you can equate with what is happening here. I am not talking about people who are in business; if it is about people in business, you can talk of Arthur Eze. He is not a politician and yet, he entertains a lot of visitors at all time. But the only two politicians that did what I do were Chief MKO Abiola and Dr. Olusola Saraki. These are two people that I know threw their gates open the way I do; they cooked food and served people whenever they were at home. The people continue coming (to my house) to show their appreciation that I have returned to partisan politics fully. They know that I brought positive changes despite the current wave of propaganda to discredit me. The governor (Theodore Orji) said he did not know what he did to me. It is not true; he knows. I made him a governor when he was incarcerated by the EFCC. I made him governor without his input even as much as to campaign for one day!..People in Aba are suffering; people in Umuahia are suffering; everywhere, it is so. I expect this governor to work for our people. *I use the opportunity of this interview to apologise to the entire Abia people for bringing this type of governor to them. I never knew. This was not his character when I was working with him.*

**2. The governor said you handled Abia money in a reckless manner; didn’t you?**

**His response:**

This governor was my chief of staff for eight years. I never handled money for one day. What we approved in the executive council was what I implemented. My security vote was handled 100 per cent by this same governor. Anybody in Nigeria knew I never touched that money. When he asked me where we were going to get money to do election in 2003, I asked him, where did we get the money we used in 1999?... Now, I am a thief, when I was the first governor

that Obasanjo named 'action governor' of Nigeria! So, what has changed? Does it mean I became very greedy, stealing everything to become a thief and I forgot the people? If you go to Abia government website, you would see how much I received from 1999. My monthly allocation was the same as the security vote of some of the governors of the Niger-Delta region. Sometimes, my monthly revenue was just half of their security vote. But we managed to drive the system and keep faith with nature; we managed in many aspects to give qualitative leadership to our people. But now, does he show gratitude? He was nothing and I made him the chief of staff. ***Even President Obasanjo called my mother, to change his (Orji's governorship) candidacy to one of my brothers. I said I would not do that. That is the truth. President Obasanjo is alive; he can confirm its veracity or not. He called my mother and said, 'make one of your sons (governor).'*** ***The one in House of Representatives was the other one. He said, 'bring him back; I will not tolerate that one (Orji).'*** ***I said no; that the president should not dictate to us who should be our governor; we must make the choice ourselves.***

From the extracts above, the speech acts (in bold letters) from the interview form the basis of our analysis. Our intent is to see how those statements credited to the former governor of Abia state are interpreted within the broad spectrum of discourse analysis and pragmatics. This will enable us determine how a particular set of linguistic units, uttered within a particular conversational context can be said to be felicitous. This is dependent on how much of such a speech act meets the felicity conditions as spelt out by J. L. Austin's Speech Act Theory, the basic elements of which we shall be examining in the next section.

## **Framework**

Pragmatics studies ways in which context contributes to meaning. Pragmatics encompasses speech act theory, conversational maxims and other approaches to language behaviour in philosophy, sociology, linguistics and anthropology. Unlike semantics, which examines meaning that is conventional or "coded" in a given language, pragmatics studies how the transmission of meaning depends not only on structural and linguistic knowledge (e.g., grammar, lexicon, etc.) of the speaker and listener, but also on the context of the utterance, any pre-existing knowledge about those involved, the inferred intent of the speaker, and other factors. In this respect, pragmatics explains how language users are able to overcome apparent ambiguity, since meaning relies on the manner, place, time etc. of an utterance. Agbedo

(2008:116) avers that in pragmatics, the notions of context, background knowledge, inference, and implicature play equally important roles in the interpretation of language in use. For any given speech event, there are certain basic assumptions, which the speaker needs to make concerning the hearer in relation to the subject matter on ground. Such assumptions are made without unnecessary objections from the interlocutors because they are built on an assumed common ground. In this regard, Osisanwo (2003: 85) identifies pragmatic presuppositions as the conditions required before a speech act can be considered suitable for a given context. In clearer terms, pragmatic presuppositions are assumptions and beliefs about the context or the information. A given speech event is characterized by a network of assumptions based on the three parts of communication - speaker, hearer, context. Closely related to this is, Bach and Harnish's (1979) concept of Mutual Contextual Beliefs (MCBs). Usually, there are two parts to any given interlocation - the speaker's intention and hearer's inference- both of which are based on certain facts shared by them. Such facts, which are well known to both interlocutors and important for the encoding and decoding of messages, are what Bach and Harnish call Mutual Contextual Beliefs. According 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, giving a permission, giving a piece of advice, making an offer, a wish or a promise, thanking or condoling someone. He divides performatives into five categories: (1) *verdictives*, typified by the giving of a verdict, estimate, grade, or appraisal ('We find the accused guilty'); (2) *exercitives*, the exercising of powers, rights, or influences as in appointing, ordering, warning, or advising ('I pronounce you husband and wife'); (3) *commissives*, typified by promising or undertaking, and committing one to do something by, for example, announcing an intention or espousing a cause ('I hereby bequeath'); (4) *behavitives*, having to do with such matters as apologizing, congratulating, blessing, cursing, or challenging ('I apologize'); and (5) *expositives*, a term used to refer to how one makes utterances fit into an argument or exposition ('I argue,' 'I reply,' or 'I assume'). All these constitute speech acts. In spite of the disagreement of scholars on the number of speech act types (cf. Austin, 1962; Levin, 1977; Levinson, 1980; Allan, 1986), three types common to them are locutionary act, illocutionary act, and perlocutionary act. In terms of classification, scholars equally differ remarkably. For instance, Austin's 5-way categorization into verdictives, exercitives, commissives, behavitives, and declaratives differs from Searle's (1969) categories of

assertives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declaratives. Allan's (1986) more detailed classification principle has two major categories - (a) interpersonal illocutionary acts and (b) declaratory illocutionary acts. Included in the first group are speech acts used during interactions between speaker and hearer at the individual level. Under the declaratory illocutionary acts, hearer's interaction is not required for the speech act (usually performed by effective and verdictive performative verbs) to take effect. We have such expressives as baptizing, marrying, sacking, sentencing, naming, and verdictives such as casting verdicts, declaring decisions, umpiring and refereeing decisions, judging, vetoing, voting etc. In this paper, we shall adopt the notions of context and background information to examine the declaratory illocutionary acts listed above and determine their suitability or otherwise in the socio-political context of contemporary Nigeria.

In the light of this central role which the context of situation plays in interpreting language in use and determining the suitability of any given speech act, we shall examine the speech acts earlier delineated as declaratory illocutionary acts within the context of Nigeria's constitutional democracy. Bearing in mind that democracy is a government "by the people for the people". In more technical terms, *Oxford advanced learner dictionary of English 7<sup>th</sup> edition* defines democracy as: 1. a system of government in which all the people of a country can vote to elect their representative. 2. A country which has this system of government. 3. Fair and equal treatment in an organization etc and their right to take part in making decisions.

### **Textual analysis**

In this section, we shall subject the above outlined speech acts of Orji Uzor Kalu to felicity conditions as spelt out by J. L. Austin (1962), and Grice's cooperative principles. Austin's felicity conditions include; (i) sincerity condition, (ii) preparatory condition, (iii) executive condition, and (iv) fulfillment condition while Grice's principles are anchored on the four maxims of quantity, quality, manner, and relevance.

#### *Felicity Conditions*

Felicity conditions according to Turnbull (2004), are conventions that speakers and addressees use as a code to produce and recognize actions. Speakers use the felicity conditions for actions as a device for encoding their actions into sentences with a particular linguistic structure that speakers then utter (i.e. they produce appropriate utterance unit). Hearers in turn

use the same set of felicity conditions for actions as a device for decoding the speaker's action from the linguistic structure of the sentence the speaker produced (i.e. from the speaker's utterance units).

### *Sincerity Condition*

At a simple level these show that the speaker must really intend what he or she says. In the case of apologizing or promising, it may be impossible for others to know how sincere the speaker is. Moreover sincerity, as a genuine intention (now) is no assurance that the apologetic attitude will last, or that the promise will be kept. There are some speech acts - such as plighting one's troth or taking an oath - where this sincerity is determined by the presence of witnesses. The one making the promise will not be able later to argue that he or she didn't really mean it. Going by our background knowledge about what has happened in the past in Abia state, one cannot but question the sincerity condition of the second speech act "I use the opportunity of this interview to apologise to the entire Abia people for bringing this type of governor to them. I never knew. This was not his character when I was working with him." The obvious reason is this, during the period of T.A. Orji's administration when he was still loyal to Orji Uzor Kalu, there was no news in the media of any wrong doings on the part of the governor. Let's recall that Orji Uzor Kalu was actively involved in the appointment of his younger brother as Chief of Staff. He made other sensitive appointments which included the commissioner of Finance, Works, and Accountant-General of the State and others. Throughout this period when he was relevant in the government, when he played active role in the administration of T.A. Orji no complaints were heard, no apologies were given. Years later in 2013, we have Orji Uzor castigating the very foundation which he laid and playing on the intelligence of Abians in form of apology to elicit public sympathy. This is typical of modern Nigerian politics where everything is alright when godfathers and godsons are active participants in the looting business, however, when one party is estranged from participating in the duty of the national cake, he takes to the media to castigate the same institution which he was a part of not long ago. One similar instance was the media outburst between two former presidents of Nigeria; OBJ and IBB, which Agbedo (2012) captured in his article *Underpinning the Foolery Concept of OBJ and IBB: The Gricean Conversational Maxims Perspective*. Based on these obvious reasons, one can therefore see that the "apology" of Orji Uzor is a mere political statement rather than an apology whose intent is to only make Abians who can't read in-between the lines to sympathize with



him. Best described in the words of Achebe, the “apology” is just an *antic of a man that is sunk*.

In the same speech event, Orji Uzor said that “This was not his character when I was working with him.” Here he claims that T.A. Orji was not corrupt all the while he was in office as the former’s chief of staff. However on the contrary, it is a general knowledge that in February 2007 (published in *The Nation* March 3, 2007) the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) indicted and arrested T.A. Orji in connection with the embezzlement of N2.713.500 billion from Abia state. During the period of Theodore Orji’s trial, Uzor Orji Kalu publicly declared that he was being witch haunted and that he was totally convinced that Theodore Orji was innocent of all the charges brought against him by the EFCC. Also during T.A. Orji’s first administration before he decamped from PPA to PDP, Orji Uzor Kalu never complained about the character of Theodore Orji. However, immediately the bridge between both T.A. Orji and Orji Uzor was burnt, the media theatrics started and the campaigned of calumny enraged from both camps. So what this implicates is that Orji Uzor knew that T.A. Orji was corrupt and still made him the governor of Abia state for his own gains. So, for Orji Uzor to say that he wasn’t aware that Theodore Orji is corrupt is a fallacy. Thus from the foregoing, his speech act is adjudged insincere and therefore infelicitous.

### **Executive condition**

Here, we try to ascertain the proper execution of the speech act. The speech act would be adjudged felicitous if properly executed. With a critical examination of the speech act and our background knowledge on what a typical Nigerian politician does, one can dismiss the fact that this is merely a political statement which is intended to elicit the support of Abia indigenes. Obviously there is no evidence of honesty in his words, because if truly he has repented and wants the forgiveness of Abians, certain measures would have been in place to show as evidence of his genuineness. Offering apology to Abians just to gain political popularity shows he is not actually sorry. The speech act therefore is not intended to pacify the hearer, but a deliberate attempt by the speaker to score cheap political score. Thus, the speech act is infelicitous, because his apology is not properly executed.

### **Fulfillment condition**

This condition seeks to determine the perlocutionary effect of the speech act on the participants. If it achieved the desired effect on the participants, then, its illocutionary act is considered to have met the felicity condition of fulfilment and can, by extension, be adjudged

felicitous. For the sake of space, we shall look at some of comments made by people online to see their reactions after reading the interview, to enable us to determine whether the speech act is felicitous or not.

**Bonny February 6, 2013 at 1:41 pm**

OUK i forgot to tell u above that u should get 80% of the blame for the rot & rust in Abia state today. How come that u cannot very well understand the character of ur chief of staff for 8 solid yrs? This is misapplication of ur popularity to enthrone a mediocre& non performer & now it is Abians that are bearing the consequences.

**Prince Adu / Tokyo. February 6, 2013 at 2:43 pm**

Orji Kalu is a Scavenger and am so disappointed in what the Old Fool said that Orji Uzor Kalu for president of BIAFRA or NIGERIA....We cannot forget what Kalu and the Mother did to Abians in their 8 years of looting the state to dry...Kalu was going and put his Boy T.A Orji Kalu that later out smarted him and that's the problem....Orji Kalu ought to have been thrown to LIONS in Tokyo or sent to Kenya where TIGER would had feast on him, but he is talking of ruling Biafra and not Nigeria...Igbo should talk of People like ROCHAS and not the Pen Rubber like Kalu and the Mother, in fact, those of us Abroad will not allow that happen to that State again...All the Kalus should go....Even BORNO STATE with all the distructions by BOKO HARAM is better than ABIA STATE in 14 years of democracy....FUCK Kalu,.....Please stop passing comments in his favor if you have not visited Abia State. My family is there till date while am Abroad and has lived there for over 15years before i travelled...Orji Kalu and the mother destroyed the State and now. Orji Kalu is just a trader and you can see his command of English as been too raw and undiplomatic, that's the nature of a real Igbo Trader....He can never rule Nigeria but Biafra.....I know him too well, please he should be prosecuted.....Igbo people are just traders, otherwise Kalu ought to have been banished from Igbo land.

**The insider February 6, 2013 at 4:32 pm**

What I see in the life of Kalu is humility, which most Igbo political leaders do not possess. He has apologised enough to Abians, he should stop feeling guilty for installing T.A. Orji as gov of Abia, because his colleagues did it in 2007. It is very bad, but it has become Nigerian system. All we know is that Kalu performed as a gov in Abia, but his performance was below the expectations of Abians. If we should keep sentiments aside, Kalu did some good and remarkable things in office.

**Anonymous February 6, 2013 at 5:10 pm**

This idiot boy would never cease to amaze! I'll give to him because he epitomizes braggadocio. It sickens me to the core at the garbage this opportunist spews at the slightest prodding. Isn't it ironic that the "Pot is blaspheming the Kettle?" The Okija boy, T.A., worked with Orji Kalu. But Orji Kalu didn't tell Abians [& the world] that, in fact, T.A. worked for Orji Kalu. He was your bag boy, who did all the dirty money laundering & stealing for you. You sacrificed him to the EFCC & paid him back by rigging him into Abia government house to cover up the underbellies of your 8yrs of profligacy. You rigged him into office [undeservedly], with the instrumentality of your mother's evil Reality Structure, to continue your family's locked-jaw strangle hold on the Abia purse strings. He even swore by the famed Okija palace shrines, where you are a palace red cap. But your boy suddenly woke up from the spell put on him & grew some cahones & a small amount of Ibeku brains to match. All of a sudden, the scales fell off his beclouded eyes & he appears to see clearly what he can do for himself and his family. Orji Kalu is now shocked to his thieving cold heart because all the mago mago he perpetrated with Abia resources and on Abians, T.A. is doing it even more & brazenly. This abracadabra you are preaching now will never fool Abians again. Fool us once, shame on you. But fool us twice; the shame will be on us!

**Discussion**

From the above reactions we can see that the effect of the "apology" which the governor intended would pacify Abians did not yield its planned outcome. Most Abians see this apology as a deliberate attempt to further insult their intelligence, adding salt to injury. Thus since the precolutionary effect of the speech act on the participants (in this case the commentators on behalf of Abians), was seen as an insult rather than an apology, the speech act does not satisfy the fulfilment condition, therefore it is infelicitious.

**Cooperative principle**

We can view utterances as acts of various kinds and the exchanges of utterances that we call conversations as exchanges of acts, not just exchanges of words, although they are this too. However, we may well ask how we can make such exchanges without achieving some prior agreement concerning the very principles of exchange. In fact, we do not. According to philosophers such as Grice, we are able to converse with one another because we recognize common goals in conversation and specific ways of achieving these goals. In any conversation,

only certain kinds of moves are possible at any particular time because of the constraints that operate to govern exchanges. These constraints limit speakers as to what they can say and listeners as to what they can infer. Grice (1975:45) maintains that the overriding principle in conversation is one he calls the *cooperative principle*: ‘Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged.’ You must therefore act in conversation in accord with a general principle that you are mutually engaged with your listener or listeners in an activity that is of benefit to all, that benefit being mutual understanding. Grice lists four maxims that follow from the cooperative principle: quantity, quality, relation, and manner. Violation of any of the maxims would lead to conversational implicature.

*Maxim of quantity*

This maxim of quantity simply states that a speaker should say no less than the conversation requires and also say no more than the conversation requires. In other words by the maxim of quantity, the speaker is expected to make his contribution as informative as is required. The headline of the daily Sun Newspaper for February 6<sup>th</sup> 2013, reads; “***I apologize to Abians for installing T.A. Orji as their governor***”. However, going through the interview, one can see that the very essence of that interview was not to apologize rather it was an avenue to settle scores with the governor T.A. Orji and also to brag about his political weight in the country having returned to PDP. By the maxim of quantity, the content of that interview should have been apologetic, not a forum to trade words, pour encomiums on himself or something else. The tone of the interview does not depict the headline which it carries. It dedicated more time in singing his praise during his reign as the governor of the state, rather than soberly recounting his wrong deeds and honestly apologizing to Abians. The excess information which does not show any atom of apology violates the maxim of quantity. Thus what it implicates is that Orji Uzor Kalu’s chief aim of granting that interview is not really to apologize to Abians but to woo them by all means necessary which in this case includes apologies.

*Maxim of quality*

The maxim of quality requires the speaker to say only that which he believes is true and which he has evidence of. A critical look at the content of the interview shows some inconsistencies in the narratives of the speaker. For instance, Orji Kalu gave two different accounts of how he first met Governor T.A. Orji. Just within a range of seventy-four words,

Kalu had given two contradictory versions of his first contact with the Governor; (1) "There is a man called Mba Abali, from Ohafia; he was the one who introduced him to me", (2) I met this man (Orji) in former Abia Head of Service, Mark Agu Ogo's house for the very first time. Also in the interview, Orji Kalu claimed he was not aware that T.A. Orji was corrupt, yet he admitted he made him governor while he was still in EFCC custody. These obvious inconsistencies flout the maxim of quality. Agbedo (2012) suggested that the maxim of quality predisposes that where the speaker may not guarantee the truth or authenticity of what he is saying, he would resort to certain expressions called hedges to serve as a warning or caution that what he is saying may not be true in its entirety. Such hedges could be in form of the following phrases: *to the best of my knowledge, as far as I know..., I may be mistaken, but..., I am not sure if..., It may be possible...,* In journalistic writings, hedges often find expressions in such words/phrase as *allegedly, reportedly, unconfirmed reports* etc. In essence, hedges provide the speaker/writer an escape valve when it is discovered that what was said or wrote was not a true reflection of realities on ground. In the case of Orji Uzor Kalu, he outrightly violates this maxim by stating two opposing statements.

#### *Maxim of relevance*

This maxim requires the speaker/writer to ensure that his speech/write-up is relevant in the context of the speech act. Orji Uzor Kalu knowingly imposed T.A. Orji on Abians and in the midst after his eight years rule in Abia state during which funds which were meant for the development of the state were cornered into private pockets. During the first tenure of T.A. Orji when Uzor Orji Kalu had much hold on the administration, he did not see anything wrong with the looting of state funds and lack of development going on in the state. He waited till 2013 before he felt it was time to apologize. The question here is why exactly is he apologizing now? What is his apology going to do in correcting all the wrongs he has done in the state? The apology will only be deemed relevant if it were backed by some sort of action of genuine repentance like returning his own part of money he stole during his administration and surrendering himself to EFCC. It is only then his apology might be viewed as an act or remorse not a political statement.

#### *Maxim of manner*

In observing the maxim of manner, the speaker is expected to avoid obscurity and ambiguity. It also requires the speaker must be brief and orderly. A critical examination of the

interview shows that the speaker is not usually brief in his contribution. There is evidence of every attempt to paint his personality in good light in order to obtain public sympathy and approval, while discrediting his perceived enemies. In one instance during the interview, the speaker claimed that he was among the uncorrupt government officials, whereas he is still being prosecuted by the EFCC.

He presents two contradictory statements by saying *I use the opportunity of this interview to apologise to the entire Abia people for bringing this type of governor to them. I never knew. This was not his character when I was working with him.* Later on in the interview, he said: *The day I handed over to him (Orji) before the public, I handed him the handover notes; and I said, I leave you this book with your conscience. I knew he would change.* From these two statements it is obvious that the speaker is not clear in stating if he knows that the governor was going to change and still went ahead to impose him on the people of Abia state or that the governor was a wolf in sheep clothing all the while he was his chief of staff. These inconsistencies and lack of clarity runs contrary to the maxim of manner.

### **Implications of such speech act on Nigeria's democracy**

In Nigeria today, we have leaders who make incessant comments all over the media without considering the implication of such statements both nationally and internationally. In a democratic dispensation, certain modes of behavior runs contrary to the approved norm which everyone is expected to abide by. And certain statements are considered an aberration to the basic tenets of a democratic society. In this country however, our leaders do not care what they say, because at the end of the day, no one holds them responsible for what they say or do. One popular leader who is guilty of this crime is former president Olusegun Obasanjo. Recently, he was reported to have advised the president that the best way to curb this issue of boko haram that has engulfed the northern states of Nigeria is to adopt his genocidal approach which he used in 1999 to murder both women and children. Such statement undermines our nation's democracy and draws question from both national and international bodies on the exact nature of our today's government. During the events that led to 2011 April polls, CPC candidate Mohammadu Buhari was quoted to have said that the country would experience bloodshed if he loses the election. Right after the elections, elections crisis broke out in northern states claiming thousands of lives and millions of properties. Till date, the government through its various security parastatals has

not deemed it necessary to invite Buhari to give an explanation for such ridiculous statement. This shows that our leaders in this country have the political license to say or do whatever they want and still walk freely.

Another important observation is the issue of verbal warfare which is usually waged on the pages of newspapers between political leaders. An instance of this was a case reported by Agbedo (2012) in his article “*Underpinning the Foolery Concept of OBJ and IBB: The Gricean Conversational Maxims Perspective*”. There he gives a critical analysis of the verbal warfare between the two former Presidents of Nigeria, Olusegun Obasanjo (OBJ) and Ibrahim B. Babangida (IBB) as was reported in the Nigerian print media. A show of shame waged on the pages of newspapers painting the country in bad light before the international community. Elder statesmen who are out to serve as adviser and models for upcoming leaders are the ones who are too quick due to their ease of accessibility to the media to wash their dirty linings outside. In this study, we have seen how Orji Uzor Kalu used his position as the sole owner of Sun Newspaper to propagate his own message of antagonism against Governor Theodore Orji. The Governor in his own capacity has not also failed to react to such media attacks, leading to an unending circle of verbal warfare. The media on the other hand has a part to play in all this because they are always too quick to blow the trumpets of the wealthy and privileged individuals in the society at the cost of the true tenets of journalism. But what does one expect when media houses and newspaper companies are owned by these same leaders. They are the same cabal who control the flow of information as such they only tell us exactly what they want us to hear.

Such acts by the government have only resulted in the further decay of our country’s democracy. No wonder the average Nigerian does not see the need to stand under the scorching sun to vote. Having known full well that the powers that be have already selected their candidate who would definitely turn up as the eventual winner, even from prison. In many countries of the world, after elections, candidates who lost congratulate the eventual winner and government continues, in the case of Nigeria, what we have is post election crisis followed by a period of setting up tribunal which might eventually after two years, upturn the results of the election and order for fresh polls. In the international community, election in Nigeria is seen as a mere formality where rigging and other electoral malpractices are the order of the day. As a result of all these, people no longer have faith in government to do what is right.

## **Conclusion**

Having critically analyzed the content of Orji Uzor Kalu's interview, using Austin's speech act theory and Grice cooperative principle, it is evident that the interview was not an apology, rather it was more of propaganda, and a political statement intended to solicit public support for the sole purpose of warming his way into the hearts of feeble minded Nigerians. This is because the speech failed to fulfil certain principal preconditions stated by Austin's felicity conditions and Grice's cooperative principles. It therefore implicates the deliberate manipulation of language to make the man with an "ordinary eye" believe that he is truly sorry for the level of corruption which he instituted in the state. Whereas he is only regretting installing someone who at the end of the day has refused to grant him a place in Abia paradise where there is enough money to loot. If Nigeria was a country where political leaders are held accountable for their actions, Orji Kalu should have been arrested and prosecuted for openly admitting to have rigged an election in Abia state.

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