A Speech Act Analysis of Political Discourse in the Nigerian Print Media

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Abstract

In any given communicative event whether spoken or written, the speaker/writer makes use of certain verbs referred to as performatives or constatives to perform a speech act. Such speech act carries certain illocutionary force, which is adjudged felicitous or infelicitous depending on whether the illocutionary act resulting therefrom 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 by using retrievable information from memory stored in the form of structures referred variously to as frames, scripts, scenarios, schemata, and mental models. In this paper, we shall seek to analyse discourse in the Nigerian print media, using the speech acts of Bayo Onanuga and Yakubu Mohammed of TheNEWS and Newswatch magazines respectively. Considered against the background of their professional antecedents as editors of these magazines, we shall analyse their speech acts during the reception of the 2005 winner of Pulitzer Prize for International Reporting, Mr. Dele Olojede, to determine their status as felicitous or infelicitous and its implications for journalism as a profession in Nigeria.

1. Background

Joseph Pulitzer was regarded as the greatest American press mogul and newspaper publisher of the twentieth century. For his monumental achievements in the realm of American press, series of prizes were instituted in his name. From then on, Pulitzer Prize remained the most prestigious prize in the journalism profession. On April 5, 2005 a Nigerian-born journalist, Mr. Dele Olojede working with the Newsday newspaper, a New York-based tabloid, became the first African to emerge as a joint winner of the Pulitzer Prize for International Reporting. Olojede’s Genocide Child, which captured the holocaust that swept across Rwanda, resulting in the death of about one million people formed the central theme of his award-winning story, received commendation ‘...for his fresh, haunting look at Rwanda a decade after rape and genocidal slaughter had ravaged the Tutsi tribe’. To mark this unprecedented feat, the Nigerian Liquefied Natural Gas Limited organized a reception for Mr. Olojede at La Scala Restaurant, MUSON Centre, Lagos. The reception, which drew the cream of Nigerian journalism profession, provided the top-flight media practitioners an opportunity to do a critical analysis of the current ethical standards. In this regard, the Editor-in-Chief of TheNEWS magazine, Mr. Bayo Onanuga drew attention to what he called, “the rot and deteriorating standard of journalism practice in the country”; warning that, “the industry might be heading for extinction unless something drastic was done”. In his own critical assessment, the Deputy Editor-in-Chief of Newswatch magazine, Mr. Yakubu Mohammed, bemoaned the
abysmal level of degeneracy that had become an albatross around the neck of journalism in contemporary Nigeria. In his words, “…the kind of Nigerian journalism we are practising today cannot take us to anywhere. Our writing has become very poor; our sense of investigation has become very appalling. Today, we will do a story on one side and tomorrow we will look for the other person to balance up. That is not the tradition of journalism, which we are celebrating today. I hope that my bosses who are here will help us carry this message to our brothers who are doing so much damage to the profession…” (cf. The News Vol. 25 No. 01 11 July 2005 p.41).

In this paper, we intend to analyse those statements credited to the two journalism practitioners within the broad spectrum of discourse analysis and pragmatics. Against the backdrop of the unfolding unethical practices that have tended to characterize journalism profession in contemporary Nigeria, this paper seeks to 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.

2. Framework

Speech act theory, as Brown and Yule (1985.231) note originates in Austin’s (1962) observation that while sentences can often be used to report states of affairs, the utterance of some sentences must, in specified circumstances, be treated as the performance of an act. In every utterance/sentence, as Austin further observes, a speaker/writer performs an act such as stating a fact, stating an opinion, confirming or denying something, making a prediction or request, asking a question, issuing an order, giving a permission, giving a piece of advice, making an offer, making a promise, thanking somebody or condoling a bereaved person. From the foregoing, it is evident that every utterance or sentence is a speech act in which verbs categorized as performatives and constatives play very prominent roles. Although scholars in the field of pragmatics do not agree on the number of speech acts types, three main types have been identified as common to them. These include locutionary act, illocutionary act, and perlocutionary act. According to Osisanwo (2003:58), locutionary act “…is the act of saying, producing meaningful sounds, words with certain reference.” Illocutionary act, on the other hand, as Osisanwo further notes, “…is a non-linguistic act performed through a linguistic or locutionary act.”

The foregoing, by implication, suggests that each utterance has a different kind of what Austin (1962) calls illocutionary force. Nonetheless, every speech act falls into one of the five general categories of verdictives, exercitives, commissives, behavitives, expositives as stipulated by Austin (1962). Also germane to the illocutionary act are what Austin calls felicity conditions. An illocutionary act is adjudged felicitous or infelicitous, depending on how much such an act meets the felicity conditions. Austin, according to Brown and Yule (232) also point out that, in uttering a sentence, a speaker also performs a perlocutionary act, which can be described in terms of the effect, which the illocutionary act, on the particular occasion of use, has on the hearer. In other words, perlocutionary act results from a speaker’s utterance and a product of the hearer’s interpretation.

The foregoing passes as a brief summary of the basic elements of Austin’s Speech Act Theory, which Searle (1969, 1979), Allan (1986), Grice (1975), Bach and Harnish (1979), Leech (1980, 1983), Brown and Yule (1983), Yule (1996) and others have
developed over the years. In discourse analysis and pragmatics, the task of the analyst is first, to establish that there has been an utterance act. The next step would be to determine the locution, denotation, illocution and finally the illocutionary point of utterance. However, the task would have been simple and less problematic if speakers always said what they meant and meant what they said. A central problem for analysis, according to Osasinwo (61) “...is the depth of indirection involved in much discourse; the distance between what is said and what is meant; the multiple layers of meaning between the literal propositional meaning of an utterance and the act, which it performs in context”. In this paper, we seek to tackle this problem head-on by applying the speech act theory in analysing discourse in the Nigerian print media. In this connection, we shall use the statements of Mr. Bayo Onanuga and Mr. Yakubu Mohammed earlier referred to above as our basic unit of analysis. In so doing, we would be in a position to posit that the illocutionary act deriving from their locutionary acts is either felicitous or otherwise and whether they obeyed the general principle of conversation, or what Grice (1975: 45) calls the Cooperative Principles.

3. Textual Analysis
In this analysis, we shall subject the utterance acts of Onanuga and Mohammed to the 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.

3.1. Felicity Conditions
3.1.1. Sincerity Condition
Here, we attempt to ascertain the sincerity of a speaker with regard to a particular illocutionary act. As an illustration, President Yar-Adua, who says to Nigerians and the international community, “I will have zero tolerance for corruption during my tenure as President of Nigeria,” may mean to do exactly what he said. The speech act is adjudged sincere, hence felicitous if he goes ahead to make good his promise by actually fighting corruption. On the contrary, his speech would be considered insincere, and hence infelicitous if he takes after his predecessor in paying lip service to the fight against corruption.

In its 11 July 2005 issue, TheNews Magazine highlighted the achievements of Governor Chimaroke Nnamani in Enugu State under the cover headline: ‘His Many Feats In Enugu State’. In the same issue, the Magazine carried a news report on pages 40 and 41 titled ‘All For Olojede’ written by Sylvester Asoya. The news report centred on the reception organized in honour of Mr. Dele Olojede, during which Bayo Onanuga and Yakubu Mohammed, perhaps inadvertently, used what Allan (1986) calls constatives and predictives to perform separate but related speech acts, whose illocutionary acts tended to violate the felicity condition of sincerity and Grice’s (1957, 1975) ‘Cooperative Principles’. In his Backstage column (p.17), the Editor-in-Chief of the TheNews magazine, Bayo Onanuga made a pragmatic presupposition, which Yule (1996) would call ‘non-factive presupposition or counterfactive presupposition’. In the said column, he claimed that when he visited Enugu State three years ago, Governor Nnamani had a lot to showcase...When he returned a couple of weeks ago, the Governor had surpassed his...
first-term achievements. The Editor-in-Chief further claimed that he and his team were amazed by what they saw when the Governor took them on a tour of lots and lots of projects, including a brand new University Teaching Hospital,Nsukka... that will gobble close to N40 billion on completion next March. In the news story titled ‘The Unsung Feats of Nnamani’ written by the same Sylvester Asoya with additional reports by Uba Aham, TheNews on page 25 states thus: “And in line with his decentralization of democracy dividends, ‘Nnamani chose the university town of Nsukka as site of Enugu State University Teaching Hospital.’

The foregoing calls to mind the central issue of the general knowledge about the world, which underpins our interpretation not only of our discourse but of virtually every aspect of our everyday experience. As de Beaugrande (1980:30) in Brown and Yule (233) notes, “…the question of how people know what is going on in a text is a special case of the question of how people know about what is going on in the world at all.” Osasinwo (84) expresses a similar view when he observes that the “…knowledge of the world is acquired by man through acculturation, observation, personal experience of different socio-cultural, socio-political and socio-economic events as well as linguistic interaction with people.” If we should use the simple principles of local interpretation and of analogy as a basis, we would be faced with an inescapable option of interpreting the illocutionary act deriving from Onanuga’s speech act as what Yule (1996) calls counterfactive presupposition. This is in the light of the fact that the principles of local interpretation and analogy form the basis of the assumption of coherence in our experience of life in general, hence in our experience of discourse as well, (cf. Brown & Yule 1983:67). In discourse analysis, we take the view that the notion of presupposition required is pragmatic presupposition, one that Givon (1979a: 50) defines, “…in terms of assumptions the speaker makes about what the hearer is likely to accept without challenge”. In addition, Stalnaker (1978:321) reflected the notion of assumed ‘common ground’ in the characterization of presupposition as evident in the following definition: “Presuppositions are what is taken by the speaker to be the common ground of the participants in the conversation.” Closely linked to the assumed common ground in pragmatic presupposition is Bach & Harnish’s (1979) concept of ‘Mutual Contextual Beliefs’ (MCBs). In a speech event, a speaker has an intention and the listener or hearer will make some inferences, both of them will base their role on certain facts shared by them. Such facts, which are considered well known to both interlocutors and instrumental to the encoding and decoding of messages, are called MUTUAL CONTEXTUAL BELIEFS. However, both the non-factive and counterfactive presuppositions violate the preconditions of assumed common ground and MCBs, which are implicit in existential, factive, lexical, and structural presuppositions. In non-factive presupposition, it is not always that the presuppositions are true or assumed to be true.

Therefore, given the benefits of insights accruing from the assumed common ground and mutual contextual beliefs, any given discourse analyst would readily infer a counterfactive presupposition from Onanuga’s speech act. If the Editor-in-Chief of TheNEWS magazine, Mr. Bayo Onanuga, was actually taken on tour of those projects by his host Governor, he could not have been amazed to see an ESUT Teaching Hospital located at Nsukka because there is nothing like ESUT Teaching Hospital, Nsukka, as an existential presupposition\(^8\) in Enugu State presently. Any discourse analyst would benefit from the hindsight deriving from assumed common ground and mutual contextual
beliefs to dismiss Onanuga’s illocutionary act as infelicitous, given that the counterfactive presupposition deducible from the locutionary act states the opposite of what is true. The truth of the matter is that the previous administration had sited ESUT Teaching Hospital at Nsukka, using the defunct National Republican Convention’s (NRC) party house along Enugu Road, situated almost opposite Nsukka General Hospital as its take-off building. However, some two years later (2001) after assumption of office, Governor Nnamani relocated the Teaching Hospital to Park Lane General Hospital, Enugu. In essence, the ‘brand new University Teaching Hospital’, which Mr. Onanuga claimed he saw at Nsukka, used to be the referral Park Lane General Hospital, Enugu, which Governor Nnamani repackaged and branded now as the ‘brand new’ ESUT Teaching Hospital. By implication, the illocutionary act of Onanuga’s speech act is adjudged infelicitous having failed to meet the felicity condition of sincerity.

In the case of Yakubu Mohammed’s speech act, the interpersonal illocutionary act resulting therefrom equally fell short of meeting the felicity conditions of sincerity. No doubt, Mohammed, in his capacity as an interlocutor made good use of constative verdicts in capturing in vivid terms, the unfolding drama of unethical practices that have become the bane of Nigerian print media in contemporary times. Perhaps, a few examples would suffice to drive home Mohammed’s point. Some notable local news magazines have, in recent times elevated sponsored empty rhetoric of some state governments, and government agencies/parastatals, which would in saner world of journalism pass for advertorials, to a higher pedestal of cover headlines. Consider these: Gov. Daniel Rides High in Ogun (TheNEWS 2 May, 2005), Nyame’s Dividends of Democracy (TheNEWS, 27 June, 2005), Maritime Academy: A Transformed Institution (Tell 21 March, 2005), Uniyo: Legacies of a Giant (Tell 30 May, 2005), The Face of Nigeria’s Future: Gov. Turaki’s IT Revolution in Jigawa (TheNEWS 31 May, 2005), Gov. Muazu: The Miracle Man of the Desert (Tell Magazine), Gov. Chimaroke Nnamani’s Many Feats in Enugu (TheNEWS 11 July, 2005), Enugu: Nnamani’s Model State (Newswatch, November 14, 2005), Why We Must Re-order Nigeria- Nnamani (Newswatch, 9 January, 2006). Such screaming cover headlines, which reek of poor writing, unbalanced reporting and poor sense of investigative journalism (as Mohammed rightly observed) have become a bug that has caught TheNEWS, Tell, Newswatch just to mention only these. The ‘dividends’ of unbalanced reporting, which he referred to came to light when the Weekly Details, a Lagos-based news magazine came up with a screaming headline ‘Looting of Enugu State II: “How we spent N5.5billion on Lectures and Media Propaganda to launder Gov. Nnamani’s Image”- Sam Mba, Ex- SA.’ as if to balance up the ‘lopsided’ account of Gov. Nnamani’s Many Feats in Enugu State by the 11 July, 2005 issue of TheNews magazine. The dizzying media blitz, perhaps intended as a subtle innuendo to counterbalance the Weekly Details’s account, continued in the TheNews of 28 November, 2005, Newswatch of 14 November, 2005, and 9 January, 2006. The Source newsmagazine joined the fray later with its 16 January, 2006 issue, in which the treatise on ‘Nnamani’s Miracle in Enugu ‘ by Onyechi Opene painted in lurid colours, Governor Nnamani’s vision of ‘transforming his state into one huge construction yard’.

Notice the strange recurrence of the clause, ‘transforming Enugu State into a construction yard’ in Onanuga’s Backstage column and Opene’s article. Notice also, the stylistic similitude that characterized the prosaic narratives in TheNews 11 July 2005,
chronicling Nnamani’s ‘miraculous feats’ in Enugu State, as if they were sourcing their information from a common prepared script. Not even the interview segment in each case differed in any remarkable sense in terms of what the interviewers asked and what the interviewee answered. And even where subtle cosmetic innovations were attempted, adequate care was taken to ensure that such risky novelty did not go out of sync with the practised rhyme and rhythm of the seemingly ‘choreographed interviews’. The unethical act of ‘balancing up’ news stories about ‘Nnamani’s feat in Enugu’ continued with the 30 January, 2006 issue of THEWEEK, also a Lagos-based news magazine. In its screaming headline, ‘LOOTING OF ENUGU STATE: EFCC Probes Gov. Nnamani; Alamiseiyia is better- C.C. Onoh’, THEWEEK news magazine reports that “…despite the huge media campaign, Governor Chimaroke Nnamani of Enugu State has been put on the spot as Ribadu’s EFCC took its net to the coal city”. In the cover story titled, ‘Fire in the Coal City’, Anietie Ekong (p.10) observes, “…the EFCC beams its searchlight on Chimaroke Nnamani, Enugu State Governor over massive fraud perpetrated in the state.” In a related news story titled, ‘Looting Spree’ Sylva Okereke (p.17) observes that “…several allegations of financial recklessness, misappropriated allocations, intimidations and siphoning of public funds through pseudo contracts continue to trail the Executive Governor of Enugu State…even as the EFCC swoops on some top government officials of the state.”

Again, the alarming declining standard of writing as explicitly advertised by journalists in their bylines as editors, staff writers or reporters tends to vindicate Mohammed’s unsparing criticism of the current ethical standard. A perusal of most newspapers and news magazines would bring to light intolerable grammatical blunders, which these practitioners commit with an overweening ease as if they were licensed to unleash unbridled violence on the English language. Of all such journalists who have been unrelenting in their spineless ‘jihad’ against all known grammatical rules of the English language, Osa Director, the Editor-in-Chief of the Insider Weekly, stands out, given the egregious impunity with which he violates the rule of ‘concord and agreement’, tense and plural formation rules. A peep into his regular column, From the Inside as well as his following titles: Before OBJ rebukes God, A Macabre Dance, Limit of Executive Rascality, How Much is your Worth? tends to suggest that he draws no distinction between being/been, lose/loose, cause/course/curse, bother/border, site/cite, lock/luck, toe/tow, underlining/underlying, access/assess etc. His column in the magazine’s 10 March 2003, 19 April 2004, 26 April 2004, and 25 April 2005 issues, for instance, contain such pathetic grammatical errors quite unbecoming of an Editor-in-Chief of a supposedly international magazine, one who reportedly won the Hellmann Award in 2004. Errors of such magnitude elicited the sympathy of Charles Caleb Colton when he observes, “...it is almost as difficult to make a man unlearn his errors as his knowledge given that error is always busier than ignorance. Ignorance is a blank sheet, on which we may write, but error is a scribbled one, from which we must first erase. Ignorance is content to stand still, with her back to the truth; but error is more presumptuous, and proceeds in the wrong direction. Ignorance has no light, but error follows a false one.” Even Mohammed’s Newswatch (16 January 2006 p. 14) could not resist the lure of such grammatical blunders when it changed an inherently compound
noun, ‘rip-off’ into a verb as evident in the following statement credited to Alhaji Abubakar Rimi, ‘The GSM companies are actually **ripping-off** ordinary Nigerians…’

Be that as it may, such apt assessment of the current standards in the journalism profession is least expected from Yakubu Mohammed whose news magazine, *Newswatch*, is equally neck-deep in the unethical practices, which he was condemning. To that extent, Mohammed tended to cut the picture of the proverbial pot calling kettle black. In essence, his speech act is adjudged insincere and therefore infelicitous.

### 3.2. Preparatory Condition

This aspect of the felicity condition seeks to determine the appropriateness of the participants in the discourse as well as the circumstances in the successful performance of the speech act. To the extent that the participants in a purely media event were top-flight media gurus and major stakeholders in the journalism profession, the illocutionary acts of both Onanuga and Mohammed could be considered felicitous. Nevertheless, the interlocutors’ verdicts do not absolve them of the unethical practices in their professional constituency, given that *TheNEWS* and *Newswatch* magazines, where they hold sway as Editor-in-Chief and Deputy Editor-in-Chief respectively blaze the trail in the unethical practices of mercantile and jaundiced journalism. It smacks of self-indictment, posturing, hollow pontification, and outright hypocrisy for Mr. Mohammed to appeal to their bosses to exert moderating influences on their colleagues, whom he claimed, were doing damage to the journalism profession. By his pontifications, Mohammed came very close to the Biblical characters called the Pharisees. In chastising them, Jesus said, “Woe to you for you load men with burdens hard to bear, and you yourselves do not touch the burdens with one of your fingers. Woes to you, for you build the tombs of the prophets whom your fathers killed. So, you are witnesses and consent to the deeds of your fathers, for they killed them, and you build their tombs.” In a way, the duo of Onanuga and Mohammed in the speech act context, constituted the ‘unmarked graves’ (Jesus referred to in Luke 11: 44), which the participants might have ‘walked on without knowing’.

### 3.3. Executive Condition

Here, we try to ascertain the proper execution of the speech act. The speech act would be adjudged felicitous if properly executed. In this regard, the discourse analyst would not be in a position to conclude, based on the news report written by Sylvester Soya, that it was properly executed or otherwise since the report did not refer to the reactions of the participants to the speech acts for us to determine the nature of the perlocutionary acts.

### 3.4. 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 fulfillment and can, by extension, be adjudged felicitous. Even if the participants in the speech event were taken in by the pontifications of the editors, the reverse would likely be the case with an informed person who picks up *TheNEWS* magazine issue to read Asoya’s account of what transpired during the Olojede’s reception. By simple principles of local interpretation and analogy, or by taking recourse to the conventional or stereotypic representations of ‘knowledge of the world’ as basis for the interpretation of discourse, the informed reader would likely treat
such speech acts as what Brown & Yule (p.236) call ‘default elements’¹¹. Understanding discourse, as Brown & Yule (p.238) observe, “…is essentially a process of retrieving stored information from memory and relating it to the encountered discourse”¹². In this connection, the notion of frame provides a process of fitting what the informed reader read into the framework established by what he already knows about the antecedents of Onanuga and Mohammed as editors of Newswatch and TheNews magazines. And in doing this, he would likely admonish the editors in the manner, reminiscent of Jesus’ reply to the Pharisees: “You hypocrites, first remove the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother’s eye”, (cf. Matthew 7:5).

3.5. Cooperative Principle

In any given communicative event, there is usually a subtle understanding, which interlocutors reach under Grice’s ‘cooperative principle’. This general agreement of cooperation between interlocutors in a conversation requires each participant to conform to certain conventions in speaking. These conventions or maxims, according to Brown & Yule (p. 83) have to do with the quantity or (informativeness), the quality (truthfulness), the manner (clearness) and relevance of conversational contributions. Violation of any of the maxims would lead to conversational implicature¹³.

3.5.1. Maxim of Quantity

This maxim requires the speaker or writer to make his contribution as informative as is required. In other words, he should not say more or less than is expected of him. In his news report, titled, ‘The UnsungFeat of Nnamani’ (TheNEWS 11 July 2005 P.23), Sylvester Asoya chronicled the N40 billion projects going on in Enugu State, which his editor, Bayo Onanuga referred to in his Backstage column on page 17 in glowing terms:

> With single-minded passion, he has turned his state into a construction yard embarking on multi-billion naira projects simultaneously. He is building a university town from the scratch. He is building an international conference centre similar to the ones found in US cities. He is building several massive estates, a brand new University Teaching Hospital. He is building a new headquarters for the judiciary- lots and lots of projects that will gobble close to N40 billion on completion next March.

In the true spirit of the cooperative principles in a given communicative event, the speaker/writer and the hearer/reader usually conform to the maxim of quantity, the basis of which is the information in the human system. Such information stored in memory in various forms¹⁴ is recalled in circumstances of language use to interpret texts/utterances in order to understand them. If we should use this maxim as a basis for interpreting the TheNEWS magazine’s discourse of Nnamani’s feats in Enugu State, it would be clear that there are other feats left unsaid. These, according to Nweke (2005:7), include the establishment of Mea Mater Elizabeth High School, a privately-owned school estimated at over seven billion naira, a brand new Renaissance University, Rainbownet, a privately-owned telecommunication outfit, a 200-ward ultra modern hospital along Ranger’s Avenue Enugu, a Cosmo FM radio station, another privately-owned business outfit, Capital City Auto company, a fifty-bedroom mansion, Aghani, and another exquisite castle at the Forest Crescent, GRA Enugu. Sylva Okereke of the THEWEEK corroborates
Nweke’s claims about the Governor’s alleged private investments, which did not feature in what Asoya calls ‘The Unsung Feats of Nnamani in Enugu’. These outfits are, by any stretch of imagination, existential presuppositions. What remains is for them to be proved that they were built by the resources of the state government. The Governor tended to provide a ‘proof’ to the contrary when he reportedly admitted to the *Sun* newspaper crew, on a guided tour of his multi-billion naira projects in Enugu State, that those private business outfits belonged to his elder sister, Mrs. Chinero (Chinelo?) Nwaigwe, (nee Nnamani). However, to imagine that Mrs. Nwaigwe, an ordinary housewife who, in 1999, could hardly pay her domestic bills in the United States, as Nweke (p.7) and Onoh (p. 26) claimed respectively, is allegedly sitting atop a multi-billion naira business conglomerate, one that is gradually metamorphosing into *Ebeano Plc*, “should in a sane society, call for deeper probing.” These private investments allegedly owned by Governor Nnamani provided the basis for the one hundred charges leveled against the ex-Governor by the EFCC shortly after handing over to his successor, Sullivan Chime, on the basis of which he was arrested, detained, charged to court and later granted bail. Of course, a Federal High Court had ordered the forfeiture of these mentioned private properties, including over 170 houses in Enugu metropolis pending the determination of the substantive suit. It goes against the grain of the maxim of quantity to exclude the over 170 houses so far identified as belonging to the former Governor in the list of the feats, which he performed while in office as the Governor.

What appeared to be the most incredible feat of Governor Nnamani in Enugu State, which Onanuga’s *TheNEWS* left unsaid, was his demolition of Senator Fidelis Okoro’s residence in Enugu and conversion of the premises into a recreation park, all within a night! Meanwhile, the same ‘Chimäróke’ treatment, as Nweke claimed, had earlier been meted out to the houses belonging to Nnamani’s erstwhile political associates like Nana Ogbodo, U.S.A. Igwesi and Nwabueze Ugwu. Again, Ekong (p.16) corroborated Nweke’s claim in this regard. Perhaps, part of the feats, which also escaped the fine-honed investigative proboscis of the *TheNEWS* crew, was the state government’s gargantuan budget for what Nweke calls ‘crude propaganda and image laundering’. As he observed, Enugu State Government ‘has placed newspaper and magazine adverts on 7554 pages over the past six years with the radio and television stations sharing 1836 slots amongst themselves’. Of course, Nweke’s calculation done in 3 October, 2005 would gain an appreciable geometric progression when one takes a census of such sponsored newspaper headlines and magazine cover stories from the rest of the months in 2005 to February 2006. Between 6 and 16 January 2006 alone, the cost of sponsoring the cover stories on the Southern Leaders Conference (held in Enugu on 19 December 2005), published by *TheNEWS*, Newswatch and Source magazines would undoubtedly lend a quantum leap to the 5.5 billion naira estimates, which Sam Mba (2005:20) claimed was ‘spent on public lecture series and media propaganda to launder Nnamani’s image’. The magazines’ issues brimmed over with similar patronizing lead stories, interview segments couched in effusive and florid language, centre-spread bristling with full colour glossy pictures, Governor Nnamani’s welcome address, and the Conference’s communiqué. In addition, the financial implications of the second serialization of the Governor’s public lectures (earlier delivered and serialized in 2003) in the 30 January, 2006 issues of some news magazines, notably, *TheNEWS*, Insider Weekly, *Tell* as well as the cover stories of the Enugu news conference, (where he openly declared support for the alleged third term
ambition of President Obasanjo, carried by TheNEWS, Tell, and Newswatch magazines of 20 February 2006) would definitely provide Sam Mba a good impetus for fresh financial statistics on Governor Nnamani’s alleged image laundering project.

3.5.2. Maxim of Quality

This maxim predisposes the speaker/writer to speak or write only, that which is true and authentic. However, in situations where the speaker/writer may not guarantee the truth or authenticity of what he is saying or writing, he would resort to certain expressions called hedges to serve as a warning or caution that what he is saying or writing 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 he said or wrote was not a true reflection of realities on ground. In the tradition of the TheNEWS’ news reporting, Sylvester Asoya, like its peers in Newswatch and Source, hardly reckoned with the maxim of quality. If they had cared a hoot about the truth as a sacred tenet of journalism, which every practitioner is expected to uphold, it could have been more desirable to burrow beyond the cosmetic bounds of what Nweke (p.6) calls ‘the choreographed window dressing exercise’, (which Lagos-based journalists have been treated to in Enugu State since the media blitz to showcase Nnamani’s feats or miracles, to use Openie’s word began), to unveil the truth about Nnamani’s grandiose multi-billion naira projects. Nweke underscored this point when he observed, “…Chimaroke’s touted public achievements as governor are all blowing in the wind. His achievements lie elsewhere, in the metamorphosis that has given birth to Ebeano Plc…” As if to support Nweke’s claims, Ekong (p.14) avers, “…In newspaper adverts, the world is being fed with what the ESUT permanent site would look like upon completion, based on simulated computer graphics. The same computer generated imagery, as Ekong notes further, has also been passed off as the much-hyped Ebeano tunnel crossing. Contrary to the singsong of the news magazines, Nweke claimed that Governor Nnamani did not build the Enugu campus of Nigerian Law School. Instead, the Obasanjo’s military regime in 1977-79 built the edifice intended to serve as a P&T Training School. Even the junior staff quarters serving the Campus, which Nnamani claimed were part of the Law School campus he built, were the set of buildings in the defunct NPN’s low-cost houses built in Agbani between 1981 and 1983. The same thing, as Nweke observed, applied to ESUT Medical School. In the news reports of TheNEWS, Newswatch, Source, and Tell magazines about Nnamani’s feats in Enugu State, nothing was said about the ‘twenty-four brand new Prado jeeps valued at about N10 million each, which Governor Nnamani donated to some Northern Emirs through the deposed Emir of Gwandu, Alhaji Mustapha Jokolo’, (cf. Weekly Details p.29).

Mr. Onanuga knew that he never saw ESUT Teaching Hospital at Nsukka, but he decided to tell barefaced lies in his Backstage column probably because, the truth, according to Miguel de Unamuno, ‘… is perhaps something so unbearable, so terrible, something so deadly, that simple people cannot live with it…’ Or perhaps still, the Editor-in-Chief was only trying to be a good student of Thorstein Veblen”. Even Uba Aham, TheNews reporter based in Enugu, who must have been part of the Editor-in-
Chief’s team that toured Chimaroke’s ‘multi-billion naira projects’, knew the truth about ESUT Teaching Hospital but he chose to follow the admonishments of Stevenson Burton and Baltasar Gracian about truth. “Do not follow truth too near the heels or else it would dash out your teeth”, Burton had advised. For Gracian, “it is hard to tell the truth as to hide it. Without telling lies, do not tell the whole truth; do not live by fixed principles, live by opportunities and circumstances.” On the part of the Editor-in-Chief, the imperatives of lying as painted by Jean-Paul Sartre, the French existentialist philosopher, seemed to hold even more irresistible attraction. Sartre once declared: “I will lie when I must. I was not the one who invented lying. It grew out of a society divided into classes, and each one of us has inherited it from birth. We shall not abolish lying by refusing to tell lies but by using every means at hand to abolish classes.” For Marcel Proust, the French novelist, “…lies are essential to humanity. They are perhaps as important as the pursuit of pleasure and are dictated by that pursuit.” In essence, the dividends of lying coupled with the exigencies of mercantile journalism à la TheNews dictated that Mr. Onanuga recommended John Swinton’s editorial experience to his junior colleagues for emulation.

3.5.3. 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. In the case of the discourse being analysed, the speech act can be said to be relevant if it can be divorced from the speakers. In other words, the attention, which the speech act draws to the deteriorating standard and unethical practices in the journalism profession during a gathering of media practitioners and major stakeholders, is adjudged relevant on its own merit. However, this relevance pales into insignificance when the speakers’ antecedents as practising journalists are subjected to scrutiny. From the analysis so far made, the type of journalism being practised in the print media establishments where the speakers call the shots as editors does not predispose them to pontificate. Surely, posturing not only detracted from the noble ideals of journalism as a profession, but also stamped an incalculable insult on the intelligence of some thoroughbred Nigerian media practitioners that graced the occasion.

3.5.4. Maxim of Manner

Here, the language user in a communicative event is required to be clear, brief, orderly and avoid vague and/or ambiguous expressions. To conform to this maxim, speakers may resort to the use of hedges. Typical of initial clausal structures are; I am not sure if this is correct, but..., It is probable one may not make any meaning out of this, but..., this may sound somewhat contradictory, but..., this may not make much sense.... By using such hedges, the speaker or writer would conveniently avoid possible accusations of ambivalence, circumlocution or opaque expressions. The speech act being analysed here could be considered clear and brief but certainly not orderly or unambiguous. For standing up before a cream of informed colleagues to glow a row of sparkling white teeth, which are rotten inside, the speakers have failed to conform to the maxim of manner. The ‘holier than thou’ attitude implicit in the utterances of the speakers betrays them as hypocrites playing to the gallery.

In the light of the foregoing analysis, we feel justified to conclude that the illocutionary acts deriving from the locutionary acts of Bayo Onanuga and Yakubu Mohammed within
the speech act context under review failed to meet the felicity conditions stipulated by Grice’s cooperative principles, which interlocutors are expected to abide by on the one hand; they also violated the four maxims, on the other hand. Failure to abide by the cooperative principles precipitates violation of the maxims, which in turn, leads to conversational implicatures. The import of the conversational implicatures on the part of both the participants in the speech act event and readers of the reported speech act in the TheNEWS magazine could be anything but positive. Considered from a more global perspective, it seems pertinent to examine the possible ripple effects of the conversational implicatures on the mission of journalism as a profession in Nigeria in particular and the reading public in general. This forms the basis of our discussion in the next section of this paper.

4. Implications

There is no doubt that the type of mercantile journalism, which the ilk of Onanuga and Mohammed nurture and promote, portends very grave implications for the profession in Nigeria. The sanctity of the press and its sacred mission as a profession, which is the pursuit and defence of truth, has been defined from the earliest times. The function of the press, as Louis Brandeis, former U.S. Supreme Court Justice observed, “…is very high. It is almost holy. To misstate or suppress the news is a breach of trust….” Hugo Black, another U.S. Supreme Court Justice, drew attention to the centrality of the press. In the First Amendment, he noted, “…the Founding Fathers of America gave the free press the protection it must have to fulfill its essential role in our democracy. The press was to serve the governed, not the governors. The Government’s power to censor the press was abolished so that the press would remain forever free to censure the government. The press was protected so that it could bare the secrets of government and inform the people….” The press also was no less regarded by President Thomas Jefferson of the United States, hence his assertion that to the press alone, the world is indebted for all the triumphs which have been gained by reason and humanity over error and oppression. In his letter to Col. Edward Carrington in January, 1787, Jefferson averred: “…the basis of our government being the opinion of the people, the very first object should be to keep that right; and were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspaper, or newspaper without a government, I should not hesitate for a moment to prefer the latter…..” During a get-together to mark his retirement on April 10, 1907, Joseph Pulitzer had cause to reiterate the official policy statement of his two great newspapers – the New York World and St. Louis Post-Dispatch. The American press lord stated among other things that the policy is to “….always fight for progress and reform, never to tolerate injustice and corruption, always fight demagogues of all parties, never to belong to any party, always oppose privileged classes and public plunderers, never lack sympathy with the poor, always remain devoted to the public welfare, never be satisfied with merely printing news, always be drastically independent, never be afraid to attack wrong, whether by predatory plutocracy or predatory poverty….” The professional duty of a journalist, in the words of a U.S. Supreme Court Justice, William O. Douglas is “….to explore and investigate events, inform the people about what is going on, and to expose the harmful as well as the good influences at work…..”

Such was the high esteem at which journalism as a profession was held. Unfortunately, in spite of such intrinsic noble trappings of the profession, a cursory scrutiny of the media
outfits where Onanuga and Mohammed hold sway as chief executives would reveal a sustained effort to turn the Nigerian press into a replica of the nineteenth century America press, which Edward Wyllis Scripps captured vividly in his article titled, Damned Old Crank. According to the American press chief, “…the America press has been so thoroughly dominated by the wealthy few of the country that it cannot be depended upon to give the great mass of the people that correct information concerning political, economic, and social subjects which is necessary that the people shall have, in order that they shall vote and in all ways act in the best way to protect themselves from the brutal force and the chicanery of the ruling and employing class…..” During those inglorious days of junk journalism in America, Thomas Jefferson, America’s 3rd President, had in a letter to John Norvell decried the rot in the following words: “Nothing can now be believed which is seen in a newspaper. Truth itself becomes suspicious by being put into that polluted vehicle.” His total loss of confidence in the American press came out more succinctly in his letter to Thos Seymour and colleagues of Hartford in 1807 when he declared: “The man who never looks into a newspaper is better informed than he who reads them; inasmuch as he who knows nothing is never to think than he whose mind is filled with falsehood and errors.” The same tone of resignation and utter disenchantment rang out clearly when an American writer, Theodore Dreseiser described the American press, with a few exceptions as “…a kept press, one kept by the big corporations the way a whore is kept by a rich man.”

Such was the air of pervasive pessimism and cynicism that fouled the 19th century journalism practice in America that the practitioners were in a panicky hurry to consign the evil of junk journalism to the dustbin of history. But here, in the 21st century Nigeria, a good number of journalists are engaged in the titanic struggles to put in reverse gear the ugly trend of base journalism, raise its ghost and transform it into a hallowed art. In their desperate quest to do their payers’ bid, these news magazines have demonstrated that the press, according to Henry Brooks Adams, “…is the hired agent of a monied system, and set up for no other purpose than to tell lies where their interests are involved….” Not a few would agree that the ‘jumping jacks and intellectual prostitutes’, whom John Swinton referred to above, are increasingly polluting journalism in contemporary Nigeria. The press, in the opinion of William Cullen Bryant, “…important as its office, is but the servant of human intellect and its ministry is for good or evil, according to the character of those who direct it. The press is a mill that grinds all that is put into its hopper. Fill the hopper with poisoned grain and it will grind it to meal, but there is death in the bread.” In Nigeria, the jumping jacks bereft of all moral and professional scruples have chosen to fill the hopper with tissues of lies and which the mill has been grinding to a lethal meal. Perhaps, Soren Kierkegaard, the Danish theologian had this crop of journalism practitioners in mind when he posited, “…the capacity of the press for degeneration is sophistically without limit, since it can always sink lower and lower in its choice of readers. At last, it will stir up all those dregs of humanity, which no state or government can control….”

A comparative analysis of the accounts of Governor Nnamani’s governance in Enugu State as recorded by TheNEWS, Newswatch, Source, Tell news magazines on the one hand and Weekly Details, THEWEEK magazines on the other would reveal a world of difference both in terms of news reporting and pictorial illustrations. The accounts of TheNEWS and co capture in glowing and patronizing narratives, Governor Nnamani’s
unprecedented feats (miracles) in Enugu State. Such florid narratives are backed by a full compliment of glossy pictures of only those wonderful state-of-the-art projects costing well over N40 billion that have been completed or nearing completion, thereby giving an arresting picture of Governor Nnamani as a spotless saint in the Enugu Government House. On the flip side are the likes of Weekly Details and THEWEEK magazines, whose accounts, (laced with only pictures of Nnamani’s failed projects and his alleged private investments) portray Governor Nnamani as an undiluted evil who presides over a depraved art of governance characterized by primitive accumulation, misappropriation of public funds, intimidation of political enemies backed by orchestrated media hype. Such biased journalism also characterized the reporting of the EFCC probes in Ekiti, Enugu and Plateau States by TheNEWS and Newswatch magazines. While TheNews (06 February, 2006) and Newswatch (06 February, 2006) found it convenient to splash details of the probes in Ekiti and Plateau respectively on their cover pages, the details of the same EFCC probe going on in Enugu State about the same time did not even receive a mention probably because it would go against the interest of their advertiser as Veblen theorized. This unethical practice of biased reporting was evident in Tayo Odunlani’s claim (in his news report titled, A Gov’s Bird Flu and other scandals (p.18-24) that ‘the state (Ekiti) government splashed money on special reports in selected electronic media to debunk the fact that the project (Ekiti State Integrated Poultry Scheme) was a fraud’. Perhaps, in the same spirit of biased journalistic practice, TheNEWS has been using the medium in the service of its erstwhile Executive Director, Dare Babarinsa who had resigned to pursue his gubernatorial ambition in Ekiti State. In this connection, any slip on the part of Governor Fayose provides a veritable opportunity for the news magazine to lampoon and haul tirades on him, raking up spurious reasons why he should be kicked out during the 2007 polls.

Such extremist tendencies, which leave no room for objective reporting of situations, may have informed Gbenga Obasanjo’s derisive comments about the unbecoming attitudes of some Nigerian journalists. Such lopsided and biased approach to the art of news reporting leaves the reading public at sea as to which account to believe. It then becomes difficult if not outright impossible to discern the type of philosophy that informed these two diametrically-opposed accounts of one and the same existential presupposition called Governor Nnamani and his government in Enugu State by Nigerian journalists who are reasonably expected to be subscribing to the same code of conduct and professional ethics as members of one professional body, that is, the Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ).

5. The Way Forward

In the light of the sordid state of our modern day journalism practice, what then could be done to pull the chain and stop the train of journalism from tipping over and down the precipice of extinction as predicted by Mr. Onanuga? Surely, such posturing and intellectual grandstanding as mounted by the ilk of Onanuga and Mohammed cannot improve the fortunes of journalism in any appreciable way. In fact, the organizers could have avoided their presence at the Olojede grand reception intended to celebrate journalistic excellence as one sure step in the self-cleansing exercise aimed at rescuing the profession from the claws of the buccaneers. Such spoilers need to be educated on the sanctity of the press and its sacred functions in a fledging democracy such as ours.
contemporary world, especially the more developed and saner societies, the sacred duty of the journalist as a professional writer has even gained greater recognition. The writer, according to Leon Uris, in his contribution to New York Herald Tribune, “…is one of the most important soldiers in the fight for the survival of the human race. He must stay at his post in the thick of fire to serve the cause of mankind.” To play this all-important role creditably, Anton Chekhov, the Russian writer, believes that “…the writer must be as objective as a chemist; he must abandon the subjective line; he must know that dung-heaps play a very respectable part in a landscape and that evil passions are as inherent in life as good ones.”

As a writer, the journalist must embrace truth, which is essentially the bastion of journalism profession. Absolute truth, in the words of Confucius, “…is indestructible. Being indestructible, it is eternal. Being eternal, it is self-existent, being self-existent, it is infinite. Being infinite, it is vast and deep. Being vast and deep, it is transcendental and intelligent.” There is no gainsaying the fact that the truth, as Johann Wolfgang Goethe posited, “…is a torch, but a terrific one; therefore, we all try to grasp it with closed eyes, fearing to be blinded.” In trying to grasp the truth in the course of their professional practice, the journalists must endeavour to resist the lure of lending undue embellishments to the bored existence of the politicians and ascribing credence to their pristine executive rascality. They need to refrain from consoling the rich in the trivial troubles of their lives and embroidering white stitches on the inebriated vestments of the politicians – that old and filthy fabric, besmeared so thickly with the blood and sweat of the toiling masses. They should for the sake of professional ethics, aim at factual and sincere reporting, one free from the enslaving manacles of misinformation. The evils of disinformation cannot be put in better perspective than what Arthur Hays Sulzberger, publisher of New York Times said while addressing the New York State Publishers Association on August 30, 1948. According to the press mogul, “…a man’s judgment cannot be better than the information on which he has based it… give him no news or present him only with distorted and incomplete data, with ignorant, sloppy or biased reporting, with propaganda and deliberate falsehoods, and you destroy his whole reasoning process and make him something less than a man.” By distorting facts deliberately and dressing bare-faced lies in the borrowed robes of truth simply to massage the vaulting ego of the politicians and reap the spoils of gutter journalism, such crop of journalists would only succeed in deepening the rot that has become the bane of journalism in Nigeria. Of course, Dele Olojede would not have won the coveted Pulitzer Prize if he had stayed back in Nigeria with his colleagues (who ironically were eager to join him in celebrating journalistic excellence) to help himself to the spoils of yellow journalism. It is not enough for Messrs Onanuga and Mohammed to bemoan the evils of base journalism practice in Nigeria whereas the media outfits, where they hold sway as editorial chiefs appear to be neck-deep in mercantile journalism. It smacks of rank hypocrisy to teach virtue and yet to practice vice. If anything, they should imbibe the virtue of sincerity in their sacred duty of disseminating information without undue encumbrances of mercantile attachments. “Sincerity,” according to Confucius, “is the way of Heaven. The attainment of sincerity is the way of men. He who possesses sincerity, is he who, without an effort, hits what is right, and apprehends, without the exercise of thought; he is the sage who naturally and easily embodies the right way. He, who attains sincerity, is he who chooses what is good, and firmly holds it fast.” Perhaps,
it would not be out of place to recommend the Confucian doctrine as well as Jesus Christ’s warning about the ‘leaven of the Pharisees’\textsuperscript{21} to the supposedly ‘gentlemen and ladies’ of the Fourth Estate of the Realm. In so doing, the journalism practitioners may see the need for a radical policy shift directed at stemming the stinking rot in the profession in Nigeria and reliving its noble ideals, for which Joseph Pulitzer lived, worked and died.

\textbf{Conclusion}

In this paper, we have tried to analyse discourse in the Nigerian print media, using the speech acts of Bayo Onanuga and Yakubu Mohammed, which they performed during the Dele Olojede’s reception to mark his Pulitzer Prize award. In line with the specifications of the Felicity Conditions as stipulated by J. L. Austin’s Speech Acts Theory, we examined the illocutionary force of their speech acts in the light of their peculiar type of journalism practice as evident in the \textit{Newswatch} and \textit{TheNEWS} magazines, where they hold sway as Deputy Editor-in-Chief and Editor-in-Chief respectively. The result of the analysis tended to show that the illocutionary acts deriving from their individual speech acts failed to meet J. L. Austin’s felicity conditions. These include sincerity, preparatory, executive, and fulfillment conditions. As a result, their individual speech acts are adjudged infelicitous. Their infelicitous speech acts equally failed to meet Grice’s cooperative principles, which participants in any given communicative event are expected to adhere to. Consequently, the four maxims of quantity, quality, relevance, and manner are violated, thus giving rise to conversational implicature. The implication of the foregoing for the journalism profession in Nigeria is to say the least gravely unsavoury. This necessitates a radical policy shift intended to stem the tide of unethical practices that have become an albatross around the neck of the noble profession in Nigeria.

\textbf{Endnotes}

1. Performatives constitute a subset of the utterances in the language, which can be used to perform acts. Such words are usually verbs, which are classified as explicit or implicit performatives. In the sentence, ‘I hereby sentence you to two years imprisonment.’ the verb, \textit{sentence} is performing the function of an explicit performative. In implicit performative speech act, the utterance may not contain a performative verb, for example, ‘Dumping of refuse here is hereby prohibited’ but it can be used by a State Environmental Protection Agency to issue a warning to the members of the public.

2. Constative verbs’ as Osisanwo (p.57) noted, are verbs used in making statements, describing situations, events, state of affairs, observing phenomena and asserting their truth or otherwise. Constatives can be categorized in terms of functions: ascriptive (ascribe), retractive (deny), assentive (accept), disputative (dispute), responsive (reply), suggestive (suggest). Allan (1986) classifies constatives in terms of assertives (assert), informatives (inform), retrodictives (recount), concessives (concede), dissentives (dissent), suppositives (assume), constative verdicts (judge).

3. Note the differences in terms of the theoretical approaches adopted by Austin (1962), Levin (1977), Levison (1980), and Allan (1986).

4. Lyons’(1977:177) pragmatic concept of reference, which the discourse analyst is interested in, draws support from Strawson’s (1950) claim that ‘“referring” is not
something an expression does; it is something that someone can use an expression to do’. The same pragmatic content is implicit in Searle’s (1979:155) view that, ‘in the sense in which speakers refer, expressions do not refer any more than they make promises or give orders’, (cf. Brown & Yule 1983:28).

5. Searle (1969) criticized Austin’s classification on the basis of too much overlapping and came up his own five categories of assertives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declaratives.

6. The principle of local interpretation, as Brown & Yule (p.59) noted, instructs the hearer not to construct a context any larger than he needs to arrive at an interpretation. In the case of analogy principle, the discourse analyst is constrained in his interpretation by past similar experience. In line with the fundamental heuristics, which hearers and analysts adopt in determining interpretations in context, the analyst assumes that everything will remain as it was before unless he is given specific notice that some aspect has changed. This tallies with Dahl’s (1976:46) principle.

7. Inference, according to Wales (1989:248), “…is the deductive process through which something is worked out or made explicit in terms of what is unspoken or unwritten”.

8. Yule (1996) classifies the two main types of presupposition (semantic and pragmatic) into six types, namely: existential, factive, lexical, structural, non-factive, and counterfactive. An existential presupposition is inferred from an interlocutor’s reference to a proper noun like ‘Prof. Chinedu Nebo’ or definite noun phrase like ‘University of Nigeria’.

9. Uche Nweke’s allusion to this statement in his article titled ‘Apologia for Gov. Nnamani’ and published in the Weekly Details news magazine issue of 3 October 2005 is quite instructive. According to Nweke, ‘… the Vice President, Abubakar Atiku had on his working tour of Enugu State in 2001, laid a foundation stone for the ESUT Teaching Hospital project at Nsukka. After five years on, and with no work ever done at this site and over 1.8 billion naira purportedly spent, there was no option than to relocate this project from Nsukka to the Park Lane Specialist Hospital, which has been in place as a referral hospital since the days of Dr. Ukpabi Asika…’

10. The participants included Dr. Dele Cole, Alhaji Alade Odunewu, Sully Abu, Lade Bonuola, Emeka Izeze, Dr. Yemi Ogunbiyi, Henry Odukomaya, Dr. Beko Ransome–Kuti, Dapo Olorunyomi, Taiwo Obe, among others.

11. Given a particular situation such as a typical local beer parlour in Nigeria for instance, the writer/speaker does not need to inform his reader/listener that there are palm wine, lager beer, and such escorts as  ndwobi, isi-ewu, bush meat, pepper soup etc. given that knowledge of this sort about beer parlour is generally assumed. In essence, knowledge representation of a beer parlour scene is organised in a fixed way as a complete unit of stereotypic knowledge in memory. It is a type of knowledge stored in memory as ‘a single, easily accessible unit, rather than as a scattered collection of individual facts, which have to be assembled from different parts of the memory each time a beer parlour is mentioned. Therefore, in representing knowledge, conventional aspects of a situation such as a beer parlour can be treated as default elements.

12. One way of representing the background knowledge, which is used in the production and understanding of discourse, as Brown & Yule (p.238) observed, can be found in Minsky’s frame-theory.
13. Implicature (conventional and conversational), as a pragmatic aspect of meaning, refers to the distinction between what the speaker (or writer) implies, suggests or means and what he literally says/writes.

14. Minsky (1975), notes Osasinwo (p.82-3) calls the form of data structures frames, while Abelson (1976), Schank & Abelson (1971) propose the notion of scripts. Sanford & Garrod (1981) extended the domain of reference used in interpreting the script notion and call it scenario. Van Dijik (1981) makes mention of schemata, that is higher-level structures, which function as ‘ideational scaffolding’ in the organization and interpretation of experience. For Liard (1981a), a mental model is a representation in the form of an internal model of the state of affairs characterized by the sentence.

15. These, according to Okereke (p.18) included Rainbownet Telecommunications, Capital City Motors, Capital Airlines, Cosmo FM Radio and TV stations, Marlmur Construction Company, Mea Mater Elizabeth International School, etc.

16. In a congratulatory message to mark the 14th anniversary of the creation of Enugu State and published as an advertorial in the Weekly Details (p.40), the Enugu State Development Association (ESDA), among others undertook an assessment of governance of Enugu under Governor Nnamani. In the assessment, it scored education, health, employment, security, infrastructural development, enthronement of excellence, etc very lowly (some as low as 10%) but scored publicity on government policies and actions 99%.

17. Veblen (1904) theorized that ‘…the primary duty of an editor is to see that nothing is said in the news items or editorials which may discountenance any claims or announcements made by the advertisers, discredit their standing or good faith, or expose many weaknesses or deception in any business venture that is or may become a valuable advertiser’.

18. Swinton (1893) declared that there is no such thing as an independent press in America. “…I am paid for keeping my honest opinions out of the paper I am connected with. Any of you who would be so foolish as to write honest opinions would be out in the street looking for another job... We are the tools and vassals of the rich men behind the scenes. We are the jumping jacks; they pull the strings and we dance. Our talents, our possibilities and our lives are all the property of other men. We are intellectual prostitutes…”

19. In an interview with the THEWEEK magazine, Chief C. C. Onoh, the former Governor of old Anambra State, ‘revealed a failed plot by Nnamani to assassinate him, accusing the Governor of maintaining a killer squad in each of the 17 local council areas of the state’. He invites the EFCC to Enugu to have a look at Governor Nnamani’s ‘massive private investments totaling about N42.8 billion’.

20. Gbenga Obasanjo, according to TheNEWS news magazine, said, “…One day, I was at Abeokuta with the Ogun State Governor, Gbenga Daniel. These press guys came and started asking hard questions. The moment they were served food, they left their scrap papers and rushed the food. Of course, the next day, their reports were shiny….”

21. In Luke 12:1, Jesus warned his disciples, saying, “Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.”
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