



A Speech Act Analysis of the Language of Protest in 2020 Endsars Protest in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This study evaluates the language of protest which has been examined using different approaches. Certain linguistic features such as claim, threat, demand, appeal and dissatisfaction have been reported. However, it appears that similar studies are yet to be done in Nigeria despite constant occurrence of protest in the country. The present study examines the language of protests in Nigeria using the 2020 EndSars protest. The data for the study were collected from social media and reputable news platforms, 36 data were gathered and grouped under their linguistic features. This research reveals that more demands were made during the course of the 2020 EndSars protest. Both quantitative and qualitative methods of findings from the analysis were employed. The statements of the protest were explicitly explained and the percentage for each linguistics feature was drawn and presented in tables.

INTRODUCTION

A protest which is synonymous with agitation, ferment, brouhaha, ruckus, dissent and so on is a public objection or disapproval towards a particular idea, policy or action. Protest, according to Chilwa (2015) is the expression of objection by protesters through words or actions or others forms of social behavior that rejects or resists certain government, policies or the existing sociopolitical structures. A protest usually involves a great number of people expressing a collective disapproval or dissent publicly through means of an organized demonstration to engage in a mass protest. Protest are mostly against government policies, however, there can be social protests, religious protest, and occupational protests among others. The aim of every protest is to systematically campaign to achieve a particular objective through peaceful and non-violence means. Public demonstrations-protest, dates back to before Nigeria's independence. Before her independence, protest such as the Aba Women's Riot of 1925-1930 or Abeokuta Women's Revolt of 27th November, 1947 has been a thing of historical note. After the independence, there have been protest such as Anti-SAP riots of 1989, June 12th protest of 1993 which was against General Sani Abacha, Ali must go protest on 17th April 1978, continuous ASUU strike and recently, the EndSars protest in Nigeria which was experienced in the year 2020.

EndSars is a type of social movement that is typified by nonviolent demonstrations against police brutality and extortion in Nigeria, particularly by young people and activists. Using the hashtag "ENDSARS," the protest got its beginnings on social media (Ujene and Egwu, 2018). The slogan demands the disbandment of the Nigerian police force's special anti-robbery squad, or "SARS," a division of the State Criminal Investigation and Intelligence Department (SCIID). It was founded as a masked police force in late 1992 with the purpose of carrying out covert operations, including the arrest, investigation, and prosecution of those engaged in violent crimes like as carjacking, armed robberies, kidnappings, and the carrying and use of illicit guns (Alamba, 2020).

However, SARS has recently come to be known primarily for a number of human rights violations. It has been accused of kidnapping and enforced disappearances, extortions, torture, illegal arrests and detentions, extrajudicial killings, sexual harassment of women, and brutalizing young Nigerians, particularly those who have unconventional hairstyles or fashion sense (Tayo, 2020; Uwazuruike, 2020).

The unprovoked shooting of a youngster in a Delta State street by SARS agents made headlines on Thursday, October 5, 2020, and was widely disseminated on social media (BBC News, 2020). Following weeks of indignation and fury over viral recordings and images of police brutality, harassment, violations of human rights, and extortion in Nigeria, a national protest campaign on EndSars was launched (Alumba, 2020).

In all six geopolitical areas, the protests were spearheaded mostly by young Nigerians, who joined forces with other activists and celebrities to demand accountability and improvements in police operations. Protests and rallies of solidarity by Nigerians living abroad and their supporters took place in numerous major cities across the globe, including the UK, the US, Canada, and

Germany. Furthermore, it was alleged that Nigerian security personnel had broken up nonviolent demonstrations in a few towns by shooting, hurling tear gas, and using water cannons against unarmed protestors, particularly in Abuja and at the Lekki Toll Gate in Lagos, where they gathered (BBC News, October 20, 2020).

As a result, a disputed number of people died, which heightened their demand for responsibility and change in public operations (Aljazeera.com, October 22, 2020). Following the government's denial of responsibility for these startling indictments made public by newspaper headlines, the public turned to Facebook and the reader's page of the chosen newspaper to expose the political hypocrisy and occurrences like the ones mentioned above in an effort to bring about change and social improvement. The current study examines the demonstrators' claims and pragmatic implications based on this premise.

It would also examine how the illocutionary acts embedded in the claims of these protesters portrays their intentions. It is known fact that a protest is incomplete without the use of effective language, as such, language a medium of communicating, interacting and expressing one's self in a protest situation. Language, which performs several functions with regards to communication is used in every field of life including politics, religion, business, sciences and even protests among others. Each of these fields has their distinctive peculiarities and linguistic acts are carried out though the instrumentality of language. Language according to Chaer and Augustina (2004, p. 11) is a "system, which means that language is formed by a number of components that has constant pattern and can be regulated". Traditionally, it is stated that language is a tool to interact or communicate, in the sense, which means to convey thoughts, ideas, concepts, or even a feeling. In sociolinguistics, it is seen as involving activities of "who speaks what language, to whom, when and to what end". Therefore, from the view of sociolinguistics, language functions can be viewed from different angles such as speakers, listeners, the topics, codes and conversation purpose (Chaer and Augustina 2004).

Language fulfills the role of a personal or private identity for speakers; Jakobson refers to this as "the emotive function." It denotes that speakers are voicing their opinions about what they have to say. The speakers display their emotions while giving their speeches in addition to expressing them verbally. As a result, the audience can discern if the speaker is joyful, sad, or furious. From both the speaker and the listener's perspective, language serves as a directive that controls the listener's behavior; Halliday (1975) refers to this as an instrumental function, while Jakobson refers to it as rhetorical.

From this angle, language not only makes the listener to do something, but also shows that the activities are in line with what the speaker wants. This can be done by the speakers through sentences that express a command, direction, demand or suggestion. This study will take a little twist as it will analyze the linguistics features of the language of protest as demonstrated during the 2020 EndSars protest in Nigeria. The Linguistics acts and pragmatic strategies employed by the protesters will also be exposed.

Statement of the Problem

Previously, several research works have examined the language of protests from different perspectives as religion, gender, strike, crime, equality and so on and the protest of 2020 has been discussed and analyzed. The study centers on both the linguistic and pragmatic perspectives, it takes into full consideration a comprehensive analysis of the language used by the EndSars protesters during the period of protest in Nigeria. In other words, it unveils how language was used and the manner in which it was used during the protest.

Research Questions

1. What are the linguistics features of the language used by the protesters?
2. What are the pragmatic strategies used in the choice of language of the protesters?
3. What are the pragmatic features of these languages?
4. What is the implication of the choices of language used i.e what do these languages used by the protesters imply?

The reviewed literatures are centered on the language of protest, and the theoretical framework is built on Searle and Austin's Speech Act Theory.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Language of protest

Protest can be described as cooperative act which involves numerous people to publicly express their views against an idea or policy in order to enact a desired change. Protests are mostly against government policy (political protest), however, there can be social protests, religious protests and occupational protests among others. Eesuola (2015) sees protest demonstration as a means of holding dissents or expressing discontent through public marches. Protest otherwise called demonstration or dissent in a public objection or disapproval towards a particular idea, policy or action. The main aim of any protest is to systematically campaign to achieve a particular objective through peaceful and non-violence means.

Language of Protest

Over the century, protest has become a tool of the public to express their dissatisfaction and kick against policies all over the world. Just like every concept, protest has its own language, that is communicative structure used in expressing the protest objectives. This could be verbal and non-verbal. Verbal in terms of chants, songs, in banners and placards, and non-verbal such as the pitv invasion of the 2018 FIFA world cup by the Pussy Riot members. For the purpose of this study, we shall focus on the verbal language of protest. Pressure and persuasion method are often employed in peaceful non-violent protest. However, it is essential to note that protest can turn out to be violent and non-violent as it shall be examined below. Protest can take several forms, its demonstration and language varies according to its form, some of the forms of protest according to the Dynamics of collective action project includes rally, march (moving from one location to another), picket (the holding of banners or

placards and walking in a circular route), most vigils have banners and placards that informs passers-by the purpose of the protest, civil disobedience, not mob, strike (mostly used among employee of an organization) and attack among others. Protests take place in different forms depending on the situation. Strike would be more appropriate among workers/employees of an organization, whereas civil disobedience might be more appropriate in kicking against laws considered unjust by the protesters.

“protest can spring from different emotions. A sense of personal injury, outrage at injustice, anger and even fear”.

Protest is dialogical in nature; it is a two way interaction between the protesters and the target body. It involves the protesters kicking against some laws or policies or making demands in expectant of some responses or positive outcome. Appropriate interaction is necessary in meeting the demands of a protest that is, demands highlighted in clear terms, and responses from the appropriate bodies should be related to the demands. Searle (1975, p. 368) acknowledges that “a protest involves both expression of disapproval and a petition for change”. As previously stated, the communicative elements of a demonstration are separate from one another as well as from the manner by which an individual chooses to demonstrate. "One is against something - the object, one prescribes something - the demand, and there is a way of communicating these connected stances - the means" are the three things that one is against when they protest (Mathew Chrisman and Graham Hubbs, 2018).

Characteristics of Language of Protest

Chrisman (2021) argues that, “there are 3 constitutive norms of the speech act of protest. Firstly, the act must aim at expressing disapproval of something, secondly, it must aim at demanding for changes in response to this disapproval. Thirdly, it must do both of these things by appealing to some presumed shared conception of what is fair”. A protest should generally exhibit these three characteristics. These characteristics are what distinguished a protest from other similar speech acts such as complains.

Speech Act Theory

J.L. Austin, an Oxford philosopher, introduced the Speech Act Theory, and J.R. Searle, an American philosopher, expanded on it. According to the speech act hypothesis, language is more of an activity than a means of expressing one's feelings. The theory highlights that utterances have meanings that are distinct or different from language meanings for the speaker and listener. The theory also distinguished between two categories of utterances: performative and constative utterances.

The differences between constative and performative statements are discussed by Austin (1962). A constative statement is one that indicates or characterizes the circumstances in connection to a true or untrue fact. An utterance that is performative cannot be true or false, nor does it describe anything at all. Here, the primary unit of analysis is largely the performer's moods, attitudes, emotions, and thoughts during the language act. As stated by

Austin (1975), linguistic acts can be divided into three different categories and they are:

- i. **Locutionary act:** This is the act of saying something. In other words, it means the act of producing a series of sounds which means something. This is the aspect of language which has been the traditional concern of linguistics. It is the formal meaning of an utterance without reference to its function within a discourse.
- ii. **Illocutionary act:** This is the intended meaning of what the speaker wants to achieve by using a particular utterance. According to Austin (1962), it is an act performed in saying something i.e saying is doing. Locutionary act says something while illocutionary act uses the location for a particular purpose such as betting, promising, ordering, suggesting, accusing, asking, admitting, apologizing, challenging, condoling, surrendering, offering etc. according to Akinajian et al, (2001) "illocutionary act can often be successfully performed simply by uttering the right explicit performative sentence with the right intentions and beliefs and under the right circumstance".
- iii. **Perlocutionary act:** Austin (1962, p. 119) coined "perlocutionary act" when he argues that saying something will often or even normally produce certain consequential effects upon the feelings, thoughts, or actions of the audience, of the speakers or of the other persons. In other words, it normally creates a sense of consequential effects on the audience, the effect upon the addressee is the main character of precautionary utterances. Speech act theory was further developed by American philosopher Searle. It considers the degree to which utterances are said to perform locutionary acts, illocutionary acts, and or perlocutionary acts.

Searle is responsible for devising a system of speech act categorization from this view, there are only five illocutionary points that speakers can achieve on propositions in an utterance, namely; the assertive, commissive, directive and declaratory and expressive illocutionary points. We tell people how things are (Assertive), we try to get them to do things (Directives), we commit ourselves to doing things (commissives), we express our feelings and attitude (Expressives), and we bring about changes in the world through our utterances (Declarations).

Searle's Classification of Speech Acts (1976, 1979)

Searle (1976), in developing Austin's concept of speech acts, gave a categorization of speech Acts. They are:

- i. **Assertives:** These are acts that commit the speaker to the truth of the expressed proposition, and thus carry a truth value. They express the speaker's belief, sentiment, view, paradigmatic cases which includes asserting, claiming, concluding, reporting and stating.
- ii. **Directives:** These are acts that represent attempts by the speaker to get the addressee to do something. They express the speaker's desire/wish for the addressee to do something.

- iii. **Commissives:** These are acts that commit the speaker to some further course of action. They express the speaker's intention to do something. Cases are offers, pledges, promises, threats, vows and refusals.
- iv. **Expressives:** Expressive express a psychological attitude or state in the speaker such as joy, sorrow, likes and dislikes. Instances are apologies, blames, praise, thanks, pardon, and condolences.

Declarations: They are those acts that effect immediate change in some current state of affairs because they tend to rely on extra-linguistic institutions for successful performance. They may be called institutionalized performatives. Instances are dismissing, bidding, declaring, pardoning, christening, baptizing, appointing, judging.

In conclusion, the concept of Speech Act is in the context of situation. The speech Act borrows its ideals from structuralism. Austin admits that his three components of speech act are not altogether separable. "We must consider the total situation in which the utterance is issued – the total speech act. If we are to see the parallel between statements and performances and how they can go wrong. Perhaps indeed, there is no great distinction between statements and performative utterance", Austin. The basic unit of linguistic communication as suggested by Searle Speech Act. It can be a word, a phrase, a sentence or a sound. It should fulfill the task of expressing the intention of the user. Understanding the user's intention can lead to complete understanding of the speech act.

Protest and Speech Act Theory

Chrisman and Hubbs (2018) argue that the language of protest expresses an implicit communicative structure that speech act theory can make explicit. The essay distinguishes the language of protest from similar sorts of complain and demand. This is distinguished in three stages. "First, we make some preliminary distinctions that help to identify protest as a complex, dual-aspect speech act. We improve on this analysis by mobilizing the idea of a felicity condition of a speech act, specifically, we will argue that the speech act of protest can be understood as having a complex felicity condition stemming from the felicity conditions of making a specific kind of evaluation claim and a connected prescription. We then kick away the ladder of felicity conditions, further improving the analysis by arguing that the structure of the two connected communicative aspects of protest can be understood in terms of the normative status presumed by and affected through protest", Chrisman and Hubbs (2018, p. 179).

Chrisman and Hubbs (2018) make some preliminary distinctions on the varying degree of protest. They argue that the communicative aspects of protest are distinct from one another – the means of protest varies. They posit that when one protests, the thing one is against is referred to as the object, what one prescribed (solution) is referred to as redress, and the way of communicating the stance is referred to as means. In some basic cases, the object a protester opposes corresponds with a single prescription, that is, a protest may oppose some wrong doings and the redress is simply an acknowledge or and in apology for that wrong. However, in some cases, a single object may correspond with a number of distinct prescriptions (demands). Chrisman and Hubbs (2018) draw instances

from the police killing of an unarmed person of a colour. A protester may seek any of a variety of redresses. She might want the officer who committed the killing to lose his badge, or for that officer to be put on trial, or for the police chief to step down, or for the police force to undergo an independent investigation, or all these, or something else. Chrisman and Hubbs (2018) in their essay argue that the means, intended audience and communicative goal of protest differs from communicative actions. Chrisman and Hubbs (2018) further identify some felicity conditions which distinguish process from other similar communicative actions. Austin (1975, p. 14-24) argues that we can identify conditions for different kinds of speech acts. Felicity conditions themselves can be divided into distinct classes. Chrisman and Hubbs (2018, p. 182-183). They claim that for a speech act to be considered a protest, there are some distinguishing speech act norms that must be noted. Chrisman and Hubbs further argue "that protest involves conveying oppositions to something not merely by expressing disapproval (however justified), but by doing so in a way that amounts to publicly making an evaluative claim, one which appeals to a wider audience, and in effect says that the object of protest is in some way unfair and unjust" that is, for a speech act to be considered a protest rather than other acts, it has to convey opposition to something in such a way that it will make the public support the claim and appeal to the wider audience that the object of protest is unfair or unjust.

In conclusion, not all protests are about unfairness or injustice and not all protests typically make claims about what the presumed shared conception of fairness or justice would rule out. To address these concerns, Chrisman and Hubbs (2018) turn to Kukka and Lance's (2021) idea of a normative functionalist analysis of speech acts to advance the view that protest are a complex speech act constituted by dual input normative statutes and dual output normative status, with some general elements and some particular elements. On the input side, they claim that a protest presumes entitlement to negatively evaluate the object of protest, and a protest presumes settlement to prescribe redress from the addressees. On the output side, they have claim that a successful protest generates entitlements and reasons for others to negatively evaluate the object of protest, and a successful protest generates obligation for the addressee to perform redress.

The language of protest. Lynne (2018) in her essay describes protest as an expression of social, political and cultural dissent. A protest is "the expression of social, political and cultural dissent from a policy or a course of action, typically by means of a public demonstration". She further argues that protest are successfully made possible due to four components - opportunities, relationships, frames and shared ideas of action-in conjunction with emotion, provide a basis for political efficacy: the "feeling that political and social change is possible and that the individual citizen can play a part in bringing about this change", (Lynne, p.4). Lynne (2018) uses Austin's speech act theory and felicity conditions in demystifying the performance of the speech act of protest. However, Austin's speech act theory does not totally fit in analyzing performance act of protest in all cases. For instance, with Austin's (1994) first

person singular subject exposes contradictions, “we all deserve the freedom to marry” or “love is a Human Right” from the 2012 world pride gatherings. These are perfectly acceptable instances of language performing protest with no “I” involved or even the presence of a performative verb (Lynne, 2018, p. 44) Lynne (2018) study therefore refines Austin’s conditions to focus solely on the performance of protests to account for how such slogans may function as speech acts of protest despite their flaunting or abuse of the established conditions of a performative utterance. Just as Chrisman and Hubbs (2018) Lynne also posits that for a protest to successfully take place there has to be some conditions. “One of the underlying conditions connected with or relevant to a protest performative is that of a disagreement, a conflict, between at least one person and a hegemonic power in control of a social, political or cultural issues. These disagreements are often rooted in long-term patterns of oppression or suppression that are sustained through extra linguistic, political and sociological variables, as well as institutional and hegemonic discourse” Lynne (2018, p. 58). In conclusion, Lynne (2018) further goes into highlighting the different languages use din protests. She identifies that language of protest can come in four broad ways-protest language of chants, protest language of songs, protest language of poetry and protest language of prose.

Protest Demonstrations, Political Participation and the Law

Protest is “a form of political participation,” according to Eesuola (2015). Before voters can effect any political or social change, they frequently have to submit to the ritualistic and periodized nature of elections, which is the most popular type of government. Nonetheless, protests give a nation's inhabitants a chance to voice their disapproval of particular political concerns or to show that they need political reform. They frequently accomplish this by organizing protests, strikes, street fights, sit-ins, and other events.

Eesuola (2015) claims that demonstrations are currently the most popular form of protest in use worldwide. For a demonstration to be considered a protest, demands and claims must be made and displayed. Bowman and Boyton (1974, p. 205), who state that "they (citizens) may make their views felt thorough communication of their preferences on policy matters to government officials, (and) this can be as simple as writing a letter to a public official or it may involve the organization of a group to communicate their views," are cited by Eesuola (2015) to support his claim that protest is a form of political participation. He further adds that “high involvement types of participation would be campaigning, writing letters and getting involved in political demonstration?” (p. 206).

Furthermore, Eesuola (2015) points out that terrorists have also been claiming to be protesting in an effort to defend or explain their activities, as protests are open rallies against government policy. Al Qaeda's 2003 attack on the United States was a protest against Western encroachment on Islamic principles and territory in the Middle East, according to an analysis of Osama Bin Laden's statements made between 1999 and 2004 (Halminton 2006, Payne 2008). Because of the ways that Christians and the educated elite in Nigeria have twisted western education to produce a number of incomprehensible

inconsistencies in the nation, Book Haram claims to be revolting against it (Eesuola, 2014). In conclusion, Eesuola (2015) makes the following argument: "Protest demonstrations must be regulated by law if the world is to continue democratizing through high levels of political participation and yet protect the global public in the age of terrorism, but efforts must be made to ensure that such regulations are not manipulated to serve individual and group advantages." Strengthening the judiciary's independence and promoting hegemonic order in a young democracy like Nigeria are two effective ways to do this (Eesuola 2015, p. 8).

Protest in social movement. Donatella (2016) described protest as "nonroutinized ways of affecting political, social and cultural processes". According to social science research, among the unconventional "forms of political participation" listed were signing, petitions, lawful demonstrations, boycotts, withholding of rent or taxes, occupations, sit-ins, blocking traffic, and wildcat strikes. Donatella, like Eesuola (2015), views protest as part of political participation and it occurs in different forms. According to Donatella (2016), protest is the use of deceptive means to persuade decision-makers. It initiates a process of persuasion facilitated by the media and strong allies. Protest considers a variety of goals, striking a balance between maintaining members' commitment and influencing public opinion and decision-makers.

Conclusion. Several works have been written and studied on the language of protest from the different countries such as the United States of America and United Kingdom. It appears that the language features of protest in these different countries correlate. This study elucidates the language features of protest in Nigeria. It describes the pragmatic strategies employed in making demands and also explains the pragmatic function and implication of the language used by the protesters. This study is rooted among Youngsters in Nigeria taking into account that the majority of the EndSars protesters are youths.

METHODOLOGY

Research methodology; It presents the style and approach used for data collection, the research design, area of study, sampling and sampling techniques, justification of data, and the method of data analysis.

Method of data collection; The data used in carrying out the research is a secondary research method. The data is extracted from articles, social media post, press release and encyclopedias. Excerpts from the protests are analyzed using related literatures. The reason for this choice lies in the fact that the EndSars protest is unarguably the largest protest which got international attention since independence of Nigeria. Protest is a form of political participation and political apathy is a trend in Nigeria. However, millions (including those in diaspora) took to the protest, breaking the existing political apathy in Nigeria. Besides, the role of language use in protest and other forms of speech act is significant. Analyzing the language used by the parties involved in the protest and how the language filled the protest would help readers, protesters and other interested parties in the field of protest to understand the role of language in the speech act.

Method of data analysis Qualitative and quantitative methods of analysis that identified features of language of protest proposed in the speech act theories as discussed in the literature review chapter of this work will be employed. The qualitative analysis focuses on the meanings of the statements made. It also seeks to answer “why and “how” these protesters used the language. It further explains the intention of the protesters and interprets the language the employed. Common data will also be grouped together so as to as to fit either the demand. Appeal, claim, threat or dissatisfaction speech acts. The quantitative analysis on the other hand, is a technique that uses mathematical and statistical modeling, measurement and research to understand behavior. It represents terms in numerical value. To this effect, the numerical value of the speech acts will be presented in a table and the percentage of each of the acts as used by the protester will be calculated and presented.

Data analysis and presentation. The analysis was done using both quantitative and qualitative methods of analysis. A greater part of this data were extracted from the internet where vied clips, pictures and posts from the protest went viral. The characteristics of speech acts such as demands, appeals, claims, threats and dissatisfactions will also be analyzed.

Method of analysis. This section analyses the gathered 2020 EndSars protest data using both qualitative and quantitative analysis method. The analysis is carried out under five speech act labels, demand, appeal, claims, threat and dissatisfaction. These acts will be thoroughly explained under each section. However, it is also important to observe that some of the statements analyzed consist of more than one acts.

RESEARCH RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Acts that Portray Demand

- i. “say no to police brutality”
- ii. “You cannot edit evil, you end evil”
- iii. “immediate release of all arrested protesters”
- iv. “justice for all deceased victims of police brutality and appropriate compensation for their families”
- v. “Setting up an independent body to oversee the investigation and prosecution of all reports of police misconduct (within 10 days)”
- vi. “in line with police act, psychological evaluation, and retaining (to be confirmed by an independent body) of all disbanded Sars officers before they can be redeployed”
- vii. “increase police salary so that they are adequately compensated for protecting lives and properties of citizens”
- viii. “we need to be protected, nobody should be harassing us”
- ix. “we don’t want Sars redeployed, Sars must end”
- x. “end police brutality, enough is enough”
- xi. “Kadunna state government should take Sars to Birnin Gwari, there are many people dying there”
- xii. “stop killing our dreamers”
- xiii. “government is the people not the cabal”
- xiv. “SWAT is an affiliate, we don’t want!”

The above highlighted data are demand acts exercised by the 2020 EndSars protesters.

Statements (I and ii) expresses the demand of the protesters to the Sars operations.

The act "say no to police brutality" is a demand to those in authority to stop police brutality.

Statement (ii) rejects the amendment/reformation of Sars, it demand a total dissolution.

Statement (iii-vii) consist of acts of demand. These statements are intended to evoke changes in the police system and a creation of compensation (adequate compensation) to families that lost their loved ones.

Statement (viii) "we need to be protected, nobody should be harassing us" states the obligation of the police force, demanding that they carry out their primary assignment- which is protection of citizens. This statement is a demand for change and also reminds the police force of their duty-protection and not harassment.

Statements (ix-x) is a call for change in the police force. The act "we don't want Sars re-deployed, Sars must end" is an ultimatum for change. The protesters demand total end to the Sars project by the government.

Statement (xi) however demands that Sars be redeployed to a more useful environment- "Kaduna state government should take Sars to Birnin Gwari, there are many people dying there". This act is an order for change in the allocation of the Sars officers.

Statement (xiii) "government is the people not the cabal" is a demand by the protesters that the government should be run by the people and for the people, not for the cabals and the cabals. This is a clear call for a change in the government's leadership style.

Statement (xiv) "SWAT is an affiliate, we don't want!"

The protesters also rejects SWAT (Special Weapon and Tactics) team which was to fill up gaps left from the dissolution of Sars, the protesters cried that SWAT is associated with Sars, and that it's only a temporary change of name.

Appeal; To appeal is to make a serious, hones, urgent and heartfelt request to someone or for something. It is used to make an urgent request for something that is necessary or desired. Appeal, which is a heartfelt request in a solemn tone was used by some of the protesters in airing their plea to the government. A major characteristics of an appeal act is that the act must first, be a heartfelt request and second, it must be directed to someone in authority.

Acts that Portray Appeal

xv. "please, end police brutality"

xvi. Our call to the federal government is that they should end Sars now or take them to Maiduguri, there are bandits there".

The above data shows appeal acts used by some protesters during the EndSars protest. The data consists of language features of appeal. "Our call" and "please" as used in statement xv and xvi respectively denotes an appeal act. The

acts are heartfelt request to the Nigerian government and certain people in authority to end police brutality.

Claims; Claim is an assertive speech act. It states that something is true or is a fact. To make a claim is to say that something is true or is a fact. To make a claim is to say that something is true or is a fact, although you cannot prove it and other people might not believe it. It is to assert in the face of possible contradiction.

One major characteristic of claims according to Searle (1979) is that it is assessable on the dimension of assessment which includes true and false. A claim should be debatable, though specific and focused, a claim should also be logical.

Acts that Portray Claim

- xvii. "They started firing ammunition towards the crowd"
- xviii. "I saw the bullet hit one or two persons"
- xix. "your job is to protect us"
- xx. "We are hunted and brutalized"
- xxi. "the power of the people is stronger than the people in power"
- xxii. "Sars kill our brothers and sisters and go back to their own families"
- xxiii. "we can't be the future of the nation if we are dead"
- xxiv. "Iphone, laptops, style hair, living fresh is not a crime"
- xxv. "you said we are the leaders of tomorrow and you are killing us"
- xxvi. "the police is robbing is"

The claim acts highlighted above are used by the protesters in various ways. Statement (xcii and xviii), "they started firing ammunition towards the crowd" and "I saw the bullet hit one or two person", are verifiable statements with truth value. This is because short videos of the shootings at the protest ground at Lekki Toll-Gate went viral online. Hence, this makes the statements claim acts.

Statement (xix) "your job is to protect us" is an assertive speech act with a truth value. One of the duties of the police force as stated in the constitution is the protection of lives. It is verifiable that one of the functions of the government in every nation is to protect its citizens and this statement is both specified and logical and therefore passes for a claim act.

Statement (xx), "we are hunted and brutalized", is a claim act. The act is specific and asserts a truth value. The protesters claim that police brutality and killing of youths is the cause of the protest. The act can also be a show of dissatisfaction. It expresses the discontent of the protesters on how the police has been killing and harassing innocent Nigeria Youths.

Statement (xxi) "the power of the people is stronger than the people in power" denotes claim and threat. First, the act is logical and has a verifiable truth value. Truly, in every democratic country, the power of the people is stronger than that of the rulers.

Also, this statement has an element of threat; force. It denotes that if the government fails to perform their duties, the protesters (i.e the people) will force them to perform their duties.

Statements (xxii, xxiii and xxvi) consist of elements of claim, demand and dissatisfaction acts.

The first statement states facts of the brutal killings of innocent Nigeria youths. As demand, they are requesting that the killings should stop. As an act of dissatisfaction, they show discontent by saying “we can’t be the future of the nation if we are dead”, and “you said we are the leaders of tomorrow and you are killing us”. These acts consist of elements of claim, dissatisfaction and demand.

Statement (xxiv) consist of an assertive truth value.; The act s logical and specific. The act truth “Iphone, laptops, styled hair and living fresh is not a crime” denotes a verifiable claim that citizens with good gadgets and comfortable lifestyle do not necessarily need to engage in cyber-fraud to afford the lifestyle.

Threat; Threat acts, often times, suggest that something unpleasant or violent will happen especially if a particular action or order is not followed. Threat act in protest denotes that the protesters might use force and violence to resolve their demands if the demands are not being met. Threats are intentional acts performed by a speaker/speakers to make s hearer do something, which may cause some harm, trouble, danger and fear to him as required by the speaker (Brauch, 2011). A treat is a commissive speech act whose illocutionary purpose is to express a future consequence for the recipient under a certain condition in order to encourage the hearer not to make the condition true (Searle, 1969, Blanco Salgueiro, 2010). One characteristics of threat acts is the use of force and violence.

Acts that Portray Threat

Xxvii “change will happen! It’s time”

The above statement (xxviii) denotes threat acts “change will happen! It’s time” shows that the protesters are tired of the current government and they are ready to evoke the change with all means necessary. The phrase it’s time” shows that they are ready to enact the change. Also, it is paramount to note that a change of government without an election being conducted usually involve the use of force and violence.

Dissatisfaction; Dissatisfaction is an expressive speech act that shows lack of satisfaction. Dissatisfaction shows discontent. One characteristics of dissatisfaction is that it shows rejection to a current state.

Acts that Portray Dissatisfaction

Xxix - “we are tired of being oppressed”

Xxx - “the violence and killings are horrendous. All because of people saying they want to live in peace?”

Xxxi - it is alarming to learn that several people have been killed and injured during the ongoing protests against the special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) in Nigeria.

Xxxii - “they deserve to be there, not inside the town. We don’t deserve their brutality”.

Xxxiii - “you said we are the leaders of tomorrow and you are killing us”.

Xxxiv - “Nigeria is bleeding”.

Xxxv - “we have no leaders”.

Xxxvi - “I’m and I’m broken. I’m not the kind of guy that talks about politics, but I can’t keep quiet anymore for what is going on back home in Nigeria. I would

say, Nigeria government you guys are a shame to the world, for killing your own citizens, sending military to the streets to kill unarmed protesters, because they are protesting for their rights? It's uncalled for".

The above highlighted acts are dissatisfaction acts as expressed by the EndSars protesters.

Statement (xxix) "we are tired of being oppressed" shows discontent and unrest of the citizens. We also know that the protesters dissatisfaction and rejection to the police brutality is the reason for which the protest started.

Statement (xxx and xxxi) express discontent to the brutal killings of innocent Nigeria youths and protesters by the armed force.

Sentence (xxxii) also contains some elements of claim. This assertive act claims that several people had been killed in the course of the protest and this act can be assessed to verify its truth or even false value.

Statement (xxxiv) "Nigeria is bleeding" expresses dissatisfaction in the state of the country. Figuratively, the act expresses that the country is hurt and not in the right state. The brutality and killings by the Sars officers and the shootings at protest ground denotes the bleeding state of the country.

Statement (xxxv) :we have no leaders' shows dissatisfaction and discontent at the style of governance. The protesters act shows that the government has failed them.

Statement (xxxvi) expresses dissatisfaction at the method of governance employed by the Nigeria government.

Quantitative Analysis

Table 1. Frequencies of Elements of Protest

Speech Act	Frequency	Percentage
Demand	13	36.1%
Appeal	2	5.6%
Claim	12	33.3%
Threat	1	2.8%
Dissatisfaction	8	22.2%
	36	

Table 1 show that demand is 36.1%, appeal is 5.6%, claim is 33.3%, threat is 2.8% and dissatisfaction is 22.2%

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

From the result above, the analysis shows that all the linguistics characteristic demand, appeal, claim, threat and dissatisfaction are found in the language of protest used by the EndSars protesters. The demand act (36.1%) was used more than other acts. After demand, claim takes the next place as several claims were made against the police (SAR), brutality and government negligence to the brutality. Dissatisfaction is at 22.2% appeal acts and threat acts (5.6%; 2.8%) respectively were less used by the protesters. The research is a detailed study of

the language of protest using the 2020 EndSars protest in Nigeria as a case study, it reveals three features that distinguishes a protest from other forms of similar acts; the act must aim at expressing disapproval of something.

Second, it must aim at demanding a change in response to the disapproval; third, it must do both of these things by appealing to some presumed shared conception of what is fair.

Also, a quantitative and qualitative analysis of the data gathered discussed the language features of the EndSars protest under 5 headings; demand, appeal, claim, threat and dissatisfaction. Several works have been written on the language of protest, but the current study is based on the language of protest used by young people in Nigeria.

Recommendation

The current study has been able to look at the linguistic features of the language of protest as exhibited in 2020 EndSars protest in Nigeria by the protesters (Nigerian youth). The research could be furthered by examining the language features of the government's response to the EndSars protesters. This would further improve the studies on the EndSars protest in Nigeria. Research on other groups of people protesting in Nigeria can be analyzed. The study is rooted on the language features of protest used by youths in Nigeria. Other mature organized bodies such as ASUU (Academic Staff Union of Universities) can be studied. This will enable us know more if the language features of protest demonstrated by the Nigeria youths is also found in other forms of protest in Nigeria; this will consequently solidify the characteristics of the language of protest.

Also, theories other than speech act can be adopted in analyzing the language features of EndSars protest and any other protest in Nigeria. This will expose us to more different approaches to analyzing the characteristics and language feature of the language of protest.

ADVANCED RESEARCH

Considering the researchers' own limited knowledge and skills, the researcher has come to the realization while producing this article that there are still numerous deficiencies in language, writing, and presentation style. As a result, the researcher anticipates helpful critiques and recommendations from a range of sources to ensure the piece is flawless.

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