

## **A Pragmatic Approach to the Ideological and Power Perspectives in Our Husband Has Gone Mad Again By Ola Rotimi**

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**Abstract:** *Language mirrors the society and for a better understanding of a writer's work especially, a literary text, language analysis is very important. This study sets out to analyse the text; Our Husband Has Gone Mad Again by Ola Rotimi using pragmatic tool of Speech Acts. There are different studies on this text but this study approached the text from the pragmatic point of view to underscore ideology and power relations in the text. Analysis of utterances using the locutionary, illocutionary and the perlocutionary acts revealed the language elements that dominate interaction situations in polygamous homes and in political gatherings of both educated and uneducated politicians. It concluded that anger is a form of madness that runs in polygamous homes and at political gatherings of people of different classes.*

**Key words:** *Pragmatics Speech Acts, Locutionary act, Illocutionary act, Perlocutionary act, context*

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### **I. Introduction**

Language is a social phenomenon which is linked with the members of the society in which it is spoken. According to Osisanwo (2003), Language is said to be the human vocal noise or the arbitrary graphic representation of the noise used systematically and conventionally by members of a speech community for the purpose of communication.

Meaning is important in communication. The semantic study assumes that meaning is located in a relationship between signs and meaning that are firmly established through social convention. The study of how the meaning of linguistic expressions change, depending on context, is called Pragmatics. Pragmatics is concerned with the ways in which language use is patterned and how these patterns contribute to meaning.

Pragmatics refers to the study of practical aspects of human action and thought and also the study of the use of linguistic signs, (words and sentences). It is a branch of linguistics concerned with the use of language in social contexts and the ways in which people produce and comprehend meanings through language. The study of pragmatics takes into consideration the relationships between linguistic forms and the users of those forms.

It also refers to how we interpret utterances in situational contexts and the manner and style of utterances. It is concerned with characterizing the behavior of language users as performance. Can be said to be concerned with the study of meaning as communicated by a speaker and interpreted by a listener.

A speech act is an utterance that has performative function in language and communication. Speech act is a subfield of pragmatics which is concerned with the ways in which words can be used not only to present information but also to carry out actions. It can be a verb or the acts that may be performed by a speaker in making an utterance, as in stating, asking, requesting, advising, warning, or persuading, considered in terms of the content of the message and the intention of the speaker, and the effect on the listener.

Performance verb refers to a special class of verbs which are special in that they name speech acts, and when they are uttered, they perform the speech acts they name. Thus, they are a direct indication of the power of language to perform various tasks.

Context deals with where the conversation is taking place, what objects are present, what actions are occurring, and so forth. It could be physical, psychological, sociocultural, etc. Context can also be epistemic and this refers to what speakers know about the world; it refers to how background knowledge is shared by the speakers in a conversation situation. Social context is the term for the relationship between a speaker and an audience. One speaks in a variety of styles based on the social relationship between him/her and the speech participant. Linguistic context is the information that has already been shared in the discussion or what has been said in utterances.

Literature is an expression of society. It can also be described as symbolizing man and his environment. Literary works can display enormous teachings about life which offer some profound lessons regarding human nature, society and existence.

The use of language cannot be over-emphasised in the understanding of literary works of different authors. Most of the studies on the text, *Our Husband Has Gone Mad Again*, aim at exposing the futility of most African/ Nigerian politicians in their quest for power but this paper is an attempt at using J L. Austin's Speech Acts theory of locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary acts to analyse majority of the utterances of the

characters as created by Rotimi, to expose some underlying ideological stance and power relations in the text that mirror the nature of the society of the text.

### **Concept Of Pragmatics**

The term pragmatics was first used by Charles Morris and since then scholars like J.L. Austin, J.R. Searle and H.P. Grice developed the different approaches to its study. Hence, the contributions of authors like Austin(1962), Searle (1969) to the theories of speech acts and Grice(1975) contribution to the cooperative principles have marked a watershed in the development of pragmatics. Different definitions of pragmatics also focus on different concepts.

According to Verschueren (1997:7) pragmatics is a “general cognitive, social and cultural perspective on linguistic phenomena in relation to their usage in form of behavior. This implies that one cannot remove the use of language from the social and cultural perspective of the speaker. The understanding of the speaker has to do with the way the speaker uses language.

Mey (2001:6) also maintains that pragmatics studies the use of language in human communication as determined by the condition of the society. That is, the society and culture play an important role in the individual’s use of language.

Furthermore, Atkinson, Kilby and Roca (in Grundy, 2003:3), defines pragmatics as having to do with “the distinction between what a speaker’s words (literarily) mean and what the speaker might mean by his word. According to Udofot (1998:128), pragmatics is the study of meaning interpretation from the perspective of psychology. Kempson (1986:561) sees pragmatics as “the study of the general cognitive principles involved in the retrieval of information from an utterance.”

These definitions include the possibility of literary meaning and other possible meanings derivable from a text. In this case, the text for our analysis has been variously analysed with varied meanings and can as well be subjected to further studies for more meanings from other perspectives of language, literary, psychological and sociological studies.

Some scholars in their definition of pragmatics focus on the utterances in terms of the speaker's and hearer's interpretation. For instance, Yule, (1996:1) opines that “pragmatics is concerned with the study of meaning as communicated by a speaker (or writer) and interpreted by a listener (or reader). Yule in reference to context of utterance, went further to say that pragmatics studies the interpretation of what people mean in a particular context and how the context influences what is said. It requires a consideration of how speaker organize what they want to say in accordance with who they are talking to, where, when, and under what circumstances. In order words, Pragmatic is the study of contextual meaning.

Crystal (1997) posits that “Pragmatics studies the factors that govern our choice of language in social interaction and the effects of our choice on others.” Osisanwo (2003) affirms that pragmatics involves the message being communicated, the participants involved in the message, the shared knowledge of the world, the deductions that can be made from the text on the basis of context, the implication of what is said or left unsaid and the effect of the nonverbal aspect of interaction on meaning. Thus, Pragmatics is the study of how more meanings can get communicated beyond the utterances made and it seeks to explain aspects of meaning which cannot be found in the plain sense of words or sentence structures, as used by speakers or writers and this is where the paper draws its strength.

### **Speech Act**

According to (Austin, 1962) speech acts are types of actions we perform with words. He propounded the theory of speech acts based on the conception that we perform certain actions when we speak, that language also involves performing actions such as making statements, asking questions, giving orders, describing, apologizing, making a promise, thanking somebody, making an offer, congratulating, etc. J. L. Austin’s speech act gives preference to performatives and constatives. He uses the term constatives to refer to utterances that state or report verifiable or falsifiable proposition. While performatives is used to refer to utterances which are uttered to perform actions provided they are uttered in appropriate circumstances. He differentiates between the utterance of an interlocutor and its illocutionary force by propounding locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary act.

According to J.L Austin(1975:92), **Locutionary act** refers to the exact or formal and literal meaning of utterance of the speaker. **Illocutionary act** refers to the intention the speaker has in mind when he makes his utterances. This means that illocutionary is what the speaker intends to communicate to the addressee. **Perlocutionary act** refers to the effect which the utterance has on the hearer. The message that the addressee gets, his/her interpretation of what the speaker says is referred to as the perlocutionary act.

**Classification of Illocutionary:** J.L Austin classifies illocutionary act into five categories of: verdictives, exercitives, commissives, behabitives and expositives.

**Verditives:** These are typified by the giving of verdict, as the name implies, by a jury, arbitrator, or umpire. But they may be, for example, an estimate, reckoning, or appraisal.

**Exercitives:** These are the exercising of powers, rights or influence. Examples are advising, ordering, warning etc.

**Commissives:** These are typified by promising or otherwise undertaking; they commit one to do something, declare or announce intention, which are not promises, but rather vague things which may be called espousals.

**Bahabitives:** This has to do with attitude and social behaviour. Examples are consoling, congratulating etc. John Searle is another contributor to the study of pragmatics. His theory is based on the work of J. L. Austin. He sets out to give an account of the "illocutionary act", which Austin (1962) had earlier introduced. He propounded five categories of illocutionary acts: assertives, directives, commissives, expressives and declaratives.

**Assertives:** These commit the speaker (in varying degrees) to the truth of the expressed proposition. For example: "John called", "the sun will rise tomorrow", etc.

**Directives:** These consist in the fact that they are attempts (of varying degrees, and hence, more precisely, they are determinates of the determinable which includes attempting) by the speaker to get the hearer to do something. [Questions are subclasses here, because by questioning we are trying to get the speaker to do something, namely, to perform a speech act]. Examples are "clean your room!" "I suggest you take the Volvo", "Do you have some change?" (Indirect)

**Commissives:** They are those illocutionary acts whose point is to commit the speaker (again in varying degrees) to some future course of action. Examples include "I promise I'll clean the kitchen", "You'll get it done by Monday!"

**Expressives:** These express the psychological state specified in the sincerity condition about a state of affairs specified in the propositional context. In performing an expressive, the speaker is neither trying to get the world to match the words nor the words to match the world, rather the truth of the expressed proposition is presupposed. Examples: "Congratulations on the award!", "Politics is war".

**Declaratives:** Here, the successful performance of an action is based on the correspondence between the propositional content and reality. In other words, successful performances of propositional context must correspond to the world. Example, "If I successfully perform the act of appointing you chairman, then you are chairman". Declarations do attempt to get the language match the world.

The method of data analysis is descriptive. The analysis will be based on the pragmatic tools of analysis as propounded by J.L. Austin and J. Searle to see how these tools are employed in the text and our conclusion will be based on the context of these utterances. And context here refers to the setting of the utterances in the text which include physical, social, linguistic and psychological. The context of the data is very important as it gives more meaning and understanding to what has not been expressly said by the author through his characters but which is overtly clear in the interpretation of the text based on context.

## **Background To The Text**

The play, "*Our Husband Has Gone Mad Has Gone Mad Again*", is a political satire. It shows the follies and fables of the entire political system in Africa and Nigeria in particular. It lampoons the protagonist Major Lejoka-Brown a former military officer who takes to politics with the motif that looks more of vanity patriotism. Ola Rotimi takes a comic swipe at the ideological misfits of the opportunists who strut the political landscape of Nigeria and Africa.

The play is a hilarious and comical satire of the political terrain of the Nigerian society. The play depicts the naivety and ignorance of a former military major-Rahman Taslim Lejoka-Brown in his bid to go into politics. Lejoka\_Brown is also a successful business man who decided to go into politics with the motive of taking his part of the national cake. His problem is that he does not understand the tenets of politics and thus engages military tactics of "surprise and attack" and manoeuvres to address issues.

Major Lejoka\_Brown is also a polygamist who married three wives at three different occasions. The first wife, Liza, he married to himself after the war in the Congo (the westernised woman} because she was the one that treated him and took good care of him when he was sick during the war in Congo. The second wife, Mama Rashida, was the wife of Lekoja-Brown's late elder brother who he married by default. The third wife, Sikira, was

married to him in order to help him with his political ambition so as to obtain the votes of the market women, since Sikira's mother was the president of the National Union of Nigerian Market Women.

Liza after completing her medical studied in the United States of America, arrives at Lekoja-Brown's house unannounced as a result of the fact that her plane arrived before the scheduled time. Liza feels she is the only wife of Major Lekoja-Brown. Major didn't want her to stay in his father apartment as a cover-up. Lekoja-Brown went to pick her up from the airport, but Liza was taken to her husband father's apartment and there she met the other two wives of Lekoja-Brown. Things didn't go on well among the three wives. Situation changes as Liza and the other two women unexpectedly formed an alliance which affected Lekoja Brown's political ambition.

### **Author's Background**

Olawale Gladstone Emmanuel Rotimi, best known as Ola Rotimi was born in Sapele, former Bendel State of Nigeria on 13th April, 1938, to an Ijaw Mother and Yoruba Father, making cultural diversity a recurring theme in his works. He was a playwright, stage director, producer, actor, critic, scholar and a teacher. In his early age, he was exposed to a traditional Nigeria heritage of arts. He was educated at Methodist Boys High School in Lagos from 1952 to 1957.

He went to Boston University for a bachelor's degree in Theatre Arts where he studied play writing and directing. He later went to Yale University where he had Masters in the Arts after three years and returned to Nigeria in 1966. He got married to a French- Canadian lady, Hazel, a renowned artist, actress, singer and pianist while in the US. In Nigeria, Ola Rotimi took a job at the University of Ife, where he was a research Fellow from 1966 to 1969 at the Institute of African studies. He later became the head and director of creative arts at the University of Port Harcourt. The dramatic works of Ola Rotimi have made him one of the most significant playwrights in the continent of Africa. While he was at Yale University on a Rockefeller fellowship, his socio-political comedy *Our Husband has Gone Mad Again* was chosen as Yale's students play of the year in 1966. Ola Rotimi examines Nigerian's history and ethnic traditions in his works. Some of his published works are: *Introduction to Nigerian Literature, The Gods Are not to Blame, Kurunmi, Oavourumwen Nogbaisi, A Tragedy of the Ruled, and Our Husband has Mad Again*. Until his death in 2001, he demonstrated theatrical and dramatic abilities in his creative works that reveals the thinking and the ways of acting in his society.

### **I. Data Presentation/ Analysis**

Utterance by characters in the text are drawn and analysed according to the different Speech Acts.

#### **Locutionary Act.**

This refers to the formal and literary meaning of an utterance by a speaker. It can also be a performance of an utterance: the actual utterance and its apparent meaning, comprising phonetic, phatic and rhetoric acts corresponding to the verbal, syntactic and semantic aspects of any meaningful utterance. The examples below show locutionary act. The utterances show the apparent meaning of the utterance.

LEKOJA-BROWN: Are you there.....? politics is the thing now in Nigeria, mate. You want to be famous? Politics. You want to chop life? - No, no - you want to chop a big slice of the National cake? - Na Politics. *[Clears his throat]*. So I said to my party boys - when was it? Last week, or so. I said to them..... I said: *[Striking an oratorical pose]*. Cakes are too soft, Gentlemen. Just you wait! Once we get elected to the top, *wallah*, we shall stuff ourselves with huge mouthfuls of the National chin-chin *[Munches an imaginary mouthful]* something you'll eat and eat, brothers, and you know you've eaten something.....pg 4 *[They both laugh slouching in the smile]*.

LEKOJA-BROWN. Abi? Yoruba man say: "man-u way go chop-u frog, make he kuku chop-u di frog-u way get-I egg-I for belle!" Abi, no be so? .....pg 4-5.

SIKIRA: ooh no, my lord, I wasn't thinking so

LEJOKA-BROWN: Y-e-s, go ahead: think-think whatever you want to think. *[Hoists OKONKWO's arm up]*. This man here is that same brave soldier, Gideon Abednego Okonkwo, who fought shoulder to shoulder with me in the Congo against those long-nosed Belgians during.....pg 5

SIKIRA AND MAMA RASHIDA. E-he-en!

LOKOJA-BROWN: H-e-en, just returned from..... *[hiccups]* from England. Are you there.? So you take good care of him whenever he comes here.

SIKIRA AND MAMA RASHIDA. We will my lord.....pg 5-6

OKONKWO: Di Major! Hey, when did you leave the army, by the way? .....pg 6

SIKIRA: [offstage]. Coming, my lord.

LEJOKA-BROWN: Don't come empty, o! Woman, I want two beers!

SIKIRA [still shouting from offstage]. I've heard you my lord.....pg 6

LEJOKA-BROWN: Bad news

OKONKWO: Bad news?

LEJOKA-BROWN: Gamalin-20!

OKONKWO: Your politics?

LEJOKA-BROWN: My wife.

OKONKWO: Your wh-a-at?

LEJOKA-BROWN: She's arriving at five o'clock!

OKONKWO: Arriving?

LEJOKA-BROWN: From America!

OKONKWO: America? Another wife? .....pg 7-8

OKONKWO: [chuckles incredulously] Oh, come now!

LEJOKA-BROWN: *Wahallahi!*[raises a hand piously] Mama Rashida? Mama Rashida was the oldest wife of my late brother's wives! My oldest brother... two days before my wedding to Liza, I got a letter from my father. Oh, he had taken pity on Mama Rashida, he said, and had gone ahead and married her off to me! Can you imagine that! Married the older woman off to me, while I...was in Congo, busy collecting Belgian bullets in my belly.....pg 9

The main function of most of the utterances above is to provide information and to establish and maintain social contact. This can be seen in the conversation between Lejoka-Brown and Okonkwo. The information are also true and they are not ambiguous for the understanding of the hearers.

Two sets of ideologies played out in the conversation between Lejoka-Brown and Okonkwo. These include the belief that being elected into any Nigerian political office is a means to loot Nigerian money which is referred to as "national cake or chin chin". The second is the powerlessness expressed in the belief of most African/Nigerian cultures that a younger brother to a deceased must marry the wife of his late elder brother. This he cannot question as is seen in the case of Lejoka-Brown whose father married his late elder brother's wife for, without his consent and he accepted it. In addition, the woman that is being married off to a man without his consent has no choice because tradition demands so. This also shows the effect of family or cultural traditions in the African society and the dehumanizing effect it has on the side of the woman who is being passed from one member of the family to another and her opinion does not matter.

### **ILLOCUTIONARY ACT.**

The concept of an illocutionary act is central to the concept of a speech act. Some kinds of acts which are widely accepted as illocutionary include promising, ordering someone, and bequeathing. This can be affected through performative sentences even when they do not contain performative verb. Illocutionary act it is classified into different levels by Searle 1975. Which include:

**Assertives:** Speech acts that commit a speaker to the truth of the expressed proposition, e.g. reciting a creed.

Examples:

MAMA RASHIDA: .....Arhamni Ya-Allah.....pg14

LIZA : Hail Mary, Mother of God...help me out of these zoo.

[She flops dejectedly into a chair.].....pg 26

LEJOKA-BROWN: Lai la!.....pg30

In this illocutionary act Mama Rashida, Liza and Lejoka-Brown are recite a creed each. The creeds are statements of their religious beliefs.

**Directives:** These Speech acts cause the hearer to take a particular action, e.g. requests, commands, advice etc

### **Command**

LEJOKA-BROWN:.....[Barks out an after-thought at Sikira]

Are you there? Stout beer, woman- stout beer. Two .....pg 7

MAMA RASHIDA: When you finish , clean up the middle room

POLYCARP : Yes ma

MAMA RASHIDA: And lock Freedom up under the bed.

POLYCARP : Yes ma.....pg 14

MAMA RASHIDA: This is good , Now hurry and warm the stew.

[SIKIRA now raises her gaze , bear it down on LIZA - an acid , biting through LIZA. MAMA RASHIDA secretly , and gestures SIKIRA to leave . SIKIRA turns slowly , and goes back into the kitchen , sulking. LIZA, baffled by her attitude looks in her direction into the kitchen then turns to MAMA RASHIDA for some explanation .

POLYCARP appears from rear-rooms.]

MAMA RASHIDA: Oh Polycarp.... take this [give him money].

Get a taxi quick, go to the airport , tell Master sister Liza is here already.

[POLYCARP runs off].....pg21

LIZA: Get that snake out of my room, will you, please? .....pg 23

MAMA RASHIDA:[roughly , pulling her up]. Go prepare food..... do something - anything , I beg of you... yam is on the fire....pound it ... anything ... just go!

[She succeeds in hustling SIKIRA out towards the kitchen] .....pg19

LEJOKA-BROWN: Hurry along now and put on the type of dress human beings wear.

SIKIRA: But this is the type of dress they wear in America, and in England, and in.....

LEJOKA-BROWN: The devil take you and your America.

SIKIRA: B-u-t I l-i-k-e it!

LEJOKA-BROWN: [*meanly whining in imitation*]. w-e-l-l I d-o-n-'t l-i-k-e it! Now, woman, you do just as I say quick Or I'll tear off that half peeled banana from the rest of your body!

SIKIRA: Do as you say, do as you say! It is always do as you say.

Always command, command, command! Why don't you show some respect and let me do what I want just once!

[*LOKOJA-BROWN is bewildered by this sudden, unwanted boldness. He scowls accusingly at LIZA, then turns again to SIKIRA*]

LEJOKA-BROWN: For the last time, Sister, let your feet take you into your room before thunder rumbles down your throat!

SIKIRA: [*tearfully*]. What am I in this house, anyway?

LEJOKA-BROWN: Go on!

SIKIRA: Am I a slave?

LEJOKA-BROWN. You heard me!

SIKIRA: Or a hosuewife?

LEJOKA-BROWN: [*berserk*]. You are one of the crazy headaches I've been crazy enough to get into my crazy head! Now get out of here!

SIKIRA: [*to LIZA*]. You heard that?

[*To LEJOKA-BROWN, backing away*]

All right, all right, I will! I will get out of here.

[*Rushes toward the rear door, stops, pokes her head round, and coos.*]

Men and women are created equal!

LEJOKA-BROWN: What was that you said, Sister? .....pg 57

In the examples given above there are different relations of power based on age and sex. MAMA RASHIDA commands Sikira on the bases of being an older person and a senior wife. On the other hand, LEJOKA-BROWN also commands Sikira on the bases of being the husband and as well the one who determines what is right or wrong in the family. Here Sikira's freedom is restricted as she cannot do what she likes except what the husband wants. LEJOKA-BROWN's use of language depicts the language attitude of most African men in their interaction situations with women. No respect or regard is accorded the feelings of woman ones they perceive anything they do not like about that woman.

### **Request/ Advice**

MAMA RASHIDA: The master says Freedom likes breeze, so he put him in that room.

LIZA: Listen, Mama, do me a favour , get someone to... [*urgently*] .....pg 22

LIZA: Get that snake out of my room, will you please? ...

OKONKWO: Better do something quick man .....pg10

OKONKWO: Okay , so you move out of this house , rent yourself a room somewhere , and rent another separate flat for Liza. That way you can still have all the women and not make one suspect you are favouring the other.....pg 11

It is observed that request and advice do not necessarily have to come from the superior.

**Commissives:** These are Speech Acts that commit a speaker to some future action, e.g. promises and oaths etc

LIZA:NO! [She collapses on the settee, exhausted, angry.] What kind of a man are you, anyway? Your whole world is falling apart, and all you think is your past army life and your crazy !Ugh!  
*She get angry to storm out again , but this time LEJOKA-BROWN catches her, wraps her in a tender embrace, kissing her forehead.*

LEJOKA-BROWN : Are you there...Elizabeth, I'm really very sorry for everything that has happened .I'll go back to the cocoa business . No more monkey politics for me. But first I'll build you the clinic I promised on this very land. I'll make sacrifice to my fathers, and then break down this old house. I'll build a new one on its soil. Three stories. You'll use two for the clinic, and we'll live in peace on the top floor.

[Angry with himself.]

This speech act commits the speaker Lejoka-Brown to some future action to please Liza.

**Expressives:** This involves Speech acts that express the speaker's attitudes and emotions towards the proposition.

SIKIRA: I've slept more nights with the master than you have, therefore..... LIZA: More what?

SIKIRA: More nights, therefore, by native law and custom, I hold the senior place in this house. ....pg25

The speech act preceding Sikira utterance shows that the two speakers are expressing their emotion towards a particular proposition and it is the continuation of that attitude and emotion toward that proposition that continue in this speech. It also reveals the nature of power tussle that exist amongst women in polygamous homes.

**Declaratives** are Speech acts that change the reality in accordance with the proposition of the declaration, e.g. baptisms, pronouncing someone guilty or pronouncing someone husband and wife. However other scholars mention the fact that in illocutionary act of declaratives, the speaker may also be questioning, apologising, warning, greeting, condemning etc.

### Questioning

SIKIRA: [as if addressing the orange]. Has my lord finish eating? .....pg 3

MAMA RASHIDA: Who is it ?.....pg16

MUSTAFA: It is me, Alhaji Mustafa (*Mama Rashida and Sikira primp themselves, fidget with their veils in readiness for Alhaji Mustafa's entrance*).

LEJOKA-BROWN: Did Mama Rashida and Sikira make introduction to Liza?

POLYCARP : I no know, Major.

LEJOKA-BROWN: Did Liza ask Mama Rashida and Sikira who dem be ?

POLYCARP : I no know, Major.

LEJOKA-BROWN: Well then, did Mama Rashida and Sikira say anything to Liza ? Anything at all?

POLYCARP : I no know, Major.

Lejoka-Brown questions Polycarp severally in order to elicit information about the situation at home in order to know the reaction of Mama Rashida and Sikira to Liza's arrival.

### Greeting

MAMA RASHIDA : Good day , my lord.

[MUSTAFA shuffles further into the living-room, still backwards. About eight paces in, he hails]

MUSTAFA: I am turning around .

SIKIRA: [with disgust] Good day, my lord!.....pg17

### **Condemning**

MAMA RASHIDA : It is your duty , just as it is my duty, to make sure that when the woman steps into this house , she has no doubt that it is real human beings who live in it , and not bush pig!

SIKIRA: I don't care what she thinks!

MAMA RASHIDA : Unless you have no shame, you ought to care.....pg 15

In this speech act Mama Rashida condemns Sikira attitude of lack of corporation in preparing the house for the coming of Liza which also shows lack of hospitable and accommodating spirit on the side of Sikira. This can reveal further the type of relationships that exist in polygamous homes.

### **PERLOCUTIONARY ACT**

Perlocutionary act refers to the actual effect, such as persuading, convincing, scaring, enlightening, inspiring, or otherwise getting someone to do or realize something, whether intended or not. It is a speech act that produces an effect, intended or not, achieved in an addressee by a speaker's utterance. This refers to how saying something often, or even normally, produces certain consequential effects upon the feelings, thoughts, or actions of the audience, or of the speaker, or of other persons: and it may be done with the design, intention, or purpose of producing them.

### **Scared**

OKONKWO: Your politics?

LEJOKA-BROWN: My wife.

OKONKWO: Your wh-a-at?

LEJOKA-BROWN: She's arriving at five o'clock!

OKONKWO: Arriving?

LEJOKA-BROWN: From America!

OKONKWO: America? Another wife?.....pg 8

Lejoka-Brown wasn't expecting Liza to arrive that early and he hadn't put things in place. He was expecting Liza to come after the election, by then he would have been able to cover up some things. But Liza suddenly sends a message to inform Lejoka-Brown that she will be returning the next day which put Lejoka-Brown under a tensed situation.

MAMA RASHIDA: The master says Freedom likes breeze, so he put him in that room.

LIZA: Listen, Mama, do me a favour , get someone to.... [*urgently*] .....pg 22

LIZA: Get that snake out of my room, will you please? .....pg 23

Liza was scared when she discovered that Freedom as mentioned by Mama was a snake contrary to what she thought that Freedom means. The fear in her created a tone of urgency.

### **Persuading**

OKONKWO: Better do something quick man .....pg10

LEJOKA-BROWN: What? What can I do ? Read it ! She hardly gives a man to think.....pg11

### **Anger**

Anger is highly exhibited in the text; *Our Husband Has Gone Mad Again*. Rotimi through this medium establishes a major element that characterizes a polygamous family.

Examples

SIKIRA: I don't care what she thinks!

The effect of Mama Rashida utterance elicited anger in Sikira

SIKIRA: Shame! My spit!.....

MAMA RASHIDA: [*lost*] Miss World? .....

SIKIRA: Ha! I know her kind. They think because they've been to England or to American-Toronto, they think they can come and kick everybody round and round like a... football....pg 15-16

LIZA:[*cooly caustic*] Someone ought to have told you , my dear girl, that isn't proper for a housemaid to go peeping into the bedroom of her master at night or at any other.....



[MAMA RASHIDA and SIKIRA exchange glances. To them, Liza must be one thing- out of her mind.]

SIKIRA: Housemaid!

[Incensed, to MAMA RASHIDA.]

Did you hear that grasshopper? I told you she would come and kick everybody round and round.....

LIZA: What did you say ?

SIKIRA: Oohoo!

[Grids her wrapper tightly, ready for a fight.]

Come on! You say you are a doctor? I will show you who I am!

[Feign a charge at LIZA.]

[MAMA RASHIDA hurries over, and intercepts SIKIRA. They struggle.]

MAMA RASHIDA: Patience, you patience, I say....

SIKIRA: Let go, MAMA RASHIDA ! that fowl wants her proud feathers plucked!

LIZA:[rising]. Now wait a minute!

MAMA RASHIDA: Calm down!

SIKIRA: I'd rather die than let that cockroach kick me around!

MAMA RASHIDA: I said calm.....

LIZA: Who is a cockroach?

SIKIRA: Who is a housemaid ?

MAMA RASHIDA :[ pinioning SIKIRA's arms behind her]. Now you....calm that hot temper right now, or I'll hit you!

SIKIRA: Didn't you hear what that antelope called me?

LIZA: I'm sorry, there must be a .....

MAMA RASHIDA: Listen to that, she says she's sorry.

SIKIRA: I don't want to hear.

MAMA RASHIDA: [Whacking SIKIRA's arm]. Quiet! Ta-ta-ta-ta-ta! What has got into you?

SIKIRA: First thing that mosquito did was land on my head, biting me all over the....

MAMA RASHIDA: All right, that enough –listen to what she has to say, now, will you? Abah?

[With the self –assured calm of a sophisticate who wouldn't be lured into any form of female caterwauling, LIZA stands a couple of feet away from the other two.] .....Pg 24

LIZA: Think things over! Oooh no. There's nothing...totally, clearly, absolutely...[Hysterically.]... nothing to think over, Mama. I cannot ..... repeat :cannot, I cannot and will never surrender my person to be devoured in this ... blatantly, decadent, third-rate domestic circus! Nor will I ever condescend to sharing the same monster of a husband with that .....that...

[Points toward rear-rooms after SIKIRA.]

.....that smutty, ill-bred, foul-mouthed, uncouth, mangy, grossly ribald, whipper-snapper of a chipmunk!

MAMA RASHIDA:[mild protest]. Now, now, the master is not a monster!

LIZA: I don't care what he.....pg26-27

The encounter between Sikira and Liza typifies the level and type of madness women exhibit on one another especially in polygamous homes. The use of abusive language and name calling to express anger is a common factor amongst women and this, in most cases, leads to exchange of blows. In some of these situations, it is the eldest of these wives that intervenes for peace making. Rotimi captured through Mama Rashida, Sikira and Liza the attitude of most women in contexts of marriage or family relationships.

It is a common sense that when women fight in a polygamous homes, they turn their anger to the man of the house as they see him to be the reason for whatever insult they receive from their mates. Liza resolves to name-calling directed to their so called husband who she refers to as a monster.

LEJOKA-BROWN: [hostly, spring to his feet and seizing POLYCARP by the scruff of the neck]. Don't "Major" me, you goat! What are you good for, anyway? This you don't know; that, you don't - what are ? A banana? Don't you have ears? Or you mean to tell me that Mama Rashida and Sikira became dumb all of a sudden and didn't say one word to Liza ? Not one word that you heard.....pg 31

Lejoka-Brown also exhibits another level of madness at Polycarp because Polycarp couldn't give him the information he needed. He portrayed a form of power relation between the so called 'masters' and their servants. He poured his venom on Polycarp as if he had a hand in his situation even to the point of giving him labels that depict him as less than human.

At the political meeting, anger dominated every discussion thus:

MALLAM GASKIYA: Aahhh... (furious). Courtesy be damned! Now listen, Mr. Chair....

LEJOKA-BROWN (*striking gavel*). I recognize Mr. Osagie.

OSAGIE (*trying to be courteous*). Mr. Chairman...er... I...I regret to say that I...er...have some doubts as to .....

MALLAM GASKIYA. This is beyond doubts...it's sheer...Oh, hell...

[Rises again; hotly]

Now listen, everybody....

A MEMBER: Mallam Gaskiya, you're out of order.

MALLAM GASKIYA: Protocol be hanged! Listen, fellows. Let's stop fooling ourselves. Please! This military Surprise and Attack nonsense just won't work in a political campaign

ANOTHER MEMBER: Hear, hear!

[LEKOJA-BROWN is rocking back and forth agitatedly in his chair, his eyes riveted acrimoniously on MALLAM GASKIYA]

MALLAM GASKIYA. And, aside from the act that the present Leader of our Party is so old-fashioned and autocratic about the risky implementation of his whimsical strategy, this whole mumbo-jumbo about military exercise in a political set-up is a sham!

LEKOJA-BROWN [*rearing wup*]. Now, you wait a min....

[Bedlam: everybody talking, nobody listening. LEKOJA-BROWN's voice, however, booms over the others.]

LEKOJA-BROWN [*declaiming wildly*]. How do you know Surprise and Attack won't work in politics? What do you people know about politics - I mean hard-bone politics? Small, small boys, all of you..... went to Europe and America, studied book, came back, talk big talk. You think politics in book is politics in real life? You lie, Book-heads! Politics means action, and means war. Therefore, Military Surprise and Attack can win us votes if only we.... [*MEMBERS begin to walk out*]

This is sabotage! Come back.... Mallam Gaskiya.....I said come back! Things must be done constitution-like. All right, all right, every jackass go home..... go.....

[Tears map off board].

OKONKWO. Major!

LEKOJA-BORWN. What did I do wrong?

OKONKWO. The way you talked to them know-what-I-meant?

You seem to make them feel you want to order them around like in the army. This cannot work among people who are not in the army, Major.

LEKOJA-BROWN. Order them around! Ha! Me..... order them! What are you talking about? [*Fiery*]

It's them who are ordering me around. They think because I didn't go to America-Toronto or to England-Oxford as they did, that I am a bat with my head downwards. But they forget, they forget that even a bat, head-downwards, notices the way the birds fly. Oh, but you wait! Whether they like it or not, I'm going ahead with my Surprise and Attack plan for the campaigns. [*Raises an arm Heavenwards*].

And Allah help any crab among them who dares stop me!

[Strides out, followed by OKONKWO]

I'll show them that I'm different.....pg 52-53

Anger in the text, expresses the hard feelings and the mindsets of the interlocutors. Nigerian political aspirants have different notions about getting to power. The Likes of Lejoka Brown believe in getting power by all means. And most of them are not educated and for the reason of lack of education, they go into the use of force and threat to achieve their goals. They find it difficult to adjust to new ideas on how things should work, rather, that mindset of forcing their ideas and doing as they want, is all they care about.

The spirit of anger also results in name-calling and rude interruptions in the above excerpt. The attitude of the men at the political meeting is a reflection of what happens in the political terrain in Nigeria whether at the campaign level, House of Assembly or Senate sittings. And just as the meeting came to an abrupt end, so do Nigerian politicians end most of their meeting in anger.

## II. Findings

The Speech Acts analysis of the text "Our Husband has Gone Mad Again" reveals different power relations and some ideological stances between interlocutors in the text. Power relations are very important between the interlocutors in any given conversation situation. Speakers of plus-higher role or class, that is, speakers who see themselves as superiors in conversation situations tend to use more of command, forceful and condemning languages in their conversations with other participants which leads to subordination. They use more of command than request.

The analysis of the text also reveals that factors such as age, culture, occupation, personality and education influence the characters' use of language in different conversational situations.

The perlocutionary act analysis reveals that anger dominates more than any other act in exchanges in polygamous homes and in the gatherings of political juggernauts. Such anger is expressed in name-calling, dehumanising labels and rude interruptions.

One of the major problems of Nigerian politics is overtly captured here which is described by Lejoka-Brown as looking at politics as 'war' and therefore requires the military strategy of 'Surprise and Attack' to commandeer power. It is also evident that such leaders with such ideology are mostly illiterates.

### **III. Conclusion**

The Speech Acts analysis of Ola Rotimi's *Our Husband Has Gone Mad Again* shows that the text cannot be understood completely by only looking at it through the lens of literary analysis. Through the pragmatic analysis, we have been able to see that language plays a vital role in the society. In other words, language mirrors the society and for a better understanding of what a literary writer has embedded in a text, language analysis is important.

Pragmatics as a tool of analysis can reveal more than meaning in context to include power relations and ideologies contained in a text as is evident in the analysis of this paper. From the interactions in the play, the perlocutionary tool of anger dominated which also shows why the main character, Lejoka-Brown is described as a mad husband. Every thing that revolved around him in the play had much of elements of anger and anger is described as a small madness. The accumulation of anger, results in madness. There is therefore, the need to create a healthy environment with less of anger, otherwise, there will be much madness in the heads of people.

### **IV. Recommendations**

This study made use of the three Speech Acts in its analysis and therefore recommends that further studies should be done using other pragmatics tools of analysis namely: implicature, entailment, world knowledge, background knowledge, inference, mutual contextual belief. These will enrich the study of this text much more.

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